

## Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem

Name: Bill Mason

Canonical Name: The Hydraulic Press."

Email Address:

1. How did you become interested in Sherlock Holmes?

I first became interested in the stories when my mother gave me the Whitman Classics edition of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* when I was 13 years old.

2. What is your favorite story or stories?

“The Man with the Twisted Lip.”

3. Who are your favorite characters other than Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson?

Victor Hatherley. His thumb was “torn out by the roots” after an attempt on his life. He wrapped his hand in a handkerchief, took himself by train to Watson where he had it stitched “without wincing” and with no more anesthesia than brandy and water. He told his tale to Holmes, visited Scotland Yard and returned to scene of the crime—all before taking any kind of rest. What a man!

4. What do you enjoy about our monthly meetings?

Visiting with fellow Sherlockians and enjoying their friendship.

### Biographical Sketch

Bill Mason has been a Sherlockian for more than four decades. He was introduced to the Canon as a teenager when his mother gave him a copy of the Whitman Classics edition of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. He has assembled a significant and very large Sherlockian and Doylean library that includes first editions of the original stories and early Sherlockian scholarship.

**Writings** include a well-received book, *Pursuing Sherlock Holmes* (2010), and his essays have appeared in *The Baker Street Journal*, *Canadian Holmes*, *The Serpentine Muse*, *Baker Street West 1*, *Beaten’s Christmas Annual*, *The Holmes & Watson Report*, and *The Three-Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles*, as well as in various Sherlockian newsletters. His monographs include

*Deeper Shades: The Dressing-Gowns of Sherlock Holmes and the Psychology of Color* (1998) and *Hints of Holmes in the White Company* (2003). His essay, "Sherlock Holmes in the Golden Age of Invention" appears in the anthology, *Sherlock Holmes: The Man and His Worlds* (2013). His works have been cited by Sherlockian scholars in *The Baker Street Journal* and *New Annotated Sherlock Holmes* (by Les Klinger) and other works.

**Symposium Presentations.** Bill is sought as a speaker at Sherlockian gatherings and has made presentations in Minneapolis, Toronto, St. Louis, Bennington, Norwalk, Chattanooga, Dayton and Nashville. In addition he has attended Sherlockian conferences and events in Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Chicago, Tampa, Washington, Santa Fe, Atlanta, New York, and other cities.

**Scions.** Bill is the founder and leader of the Fresh Rashers of Nashville, a breakfast oriented scion that has met weekly for many years. The scion received official recognition from Wiggins of the BSI in June 2001. He is also a member of the Nashville Scholars of the Three-Pipe Problem, The Red Circle of Washington, The Sound of the Baskervilles, and the John H. Watson Society. A member of The Beacon Society, he was recently appointed to the awards committee for the Jan Stauber Grant.

**Educational and Professional History.** Bill is a graduate of Trevecca Nazarene University of Nashville, where he majored in human resource management, and he did additional undergraduate work at Middle Tennessee State University. He was a reporter for the *Tennessean*, Nashville's daily newspaper, and was News Director at WGNS Radio in the 1970s. He served for several years a vice president of a small printing company before being hired by then-Congressman Al Gore in the 1983. He stayed with Gore in the Senate and at the White House before becoming Chief of Staff to Congressman Bob Clement. He retired from federal service in 2004, after which he was CEO of the Tennessee Alternative Educators Association and Executive Director of Tennessee Citizen Action. Governor Phil Bredesen asked Bill to join his personal staff as Director of Community Affairs, and he retired from full-time work in January of 2011 at the end of the governor's second term.

**Current Activities.** Mason Professional Services has an office in Springfield, and does occasional consulting for local governments, small office-based businesses, and nonprofit organizations. Bill was appointed in 2011 to a seven-year term as a member of the Board for Licensing Contractors, which is attached to the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance. He is President and Board Chairman for Tennessee Citizen Action, and a past member of the Board of Trust of Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity. (He was president of ATO as an undergraduate.) he is also a court-appointed trustee for a historically-significant cemetery in Rutherford County and a member of the State Finance Council of the Tennessee Democratic Party.

**Personal.** Married since 1987 to the former Cynthia Ann Gibson, They have been living in Greenbrier, Tennessee, since 2000. Both are active in community and civic groups.