

The Case of This Issue's Column

Gear Technology's bimonthly aberration — gear trivia, humor, weirdness and oddments for the edification and amusement of our readers. Contributions are welcome.

221B Baker Street

We've always said that gears show up in all the best places, even, it turns out, among the papers of that most famous of detectives, Sherlock Holmes. "The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb" is, according to Dr. Watson, a case "so strange in its inception and so dramatic in its details," that it merits a mention even in our exalted pages.

Young Victor Hatherly, the hydraulic engineer, is having a hard time getting his business off the ground, so he's tempted by the mysterious Colonel Lysander Stark, who's offering him 50 guineas (about \$262.50 in 1890s money) for an hour's work diagnosing the problem with his hydraulic stamping machine, which has "got out of gear." The only kicker is that Hatherly is sworn to absolute secrecy: he must tell no one where he's going, and he has to be there at midnight.

We won't say more except that there's a beautiful lady with a foreign accent, a creepy old house, unusual applications for a hydraulic press and other matters of interest to the "world's first consulting detective." The engineering theory may be a bit dodgy (Watson was an M.D., after all), but as a mystery story, it has its moments.

Meanwhile, in Traverse City, MI...

If detective stories strike you as too frivolous, and you just can't get enough metal cutting at work, we have the solution—*The Home Shop Machinist*. According to its tagline, this bimonthly magazine published in Traverse City, MI, is "dedicated to precision metalworking." Its audience is those millions (well, maybe thousands) of people driven by lathe lust to hang out in their basements and garages working on handy home metalworking projects. The issue we saw covered

"Serious Milling With the Lathe," "Reviving a Lunch Break Shaper" and "Chatterless Countersinks," among other things. It also has great ads for tooling, equipment, videos and books. We intend to include *The Machinist's Bedside Reader*, Vols. 1, 2, & 3, in our letter to Santa. For more information, call 800-447-7367.

... enter a gentleman wearing the ribbon of a foreign order ...

Feeling megalomaniacal? Having delusions of grandeur? Fed up with your life as you know it? Addendum can help. For \$13.00 you can buy a book called *How to Start Your Own Country* by Erwin Strauss. According to the publicity blurb, the book contains information on acquiring land, picking a flag, establishing diplomatic relations, printing stamps and money, collecting taxes (of course) and other information vital to wannabee potentates. Available from *Real Goods*® in Ukiah, CA. 1-800-762-7325.

The Interactive Section

Surely we at Addendum can't be the only people stumbling across gears and their applications, odd and otherwise. If you have an Addendum weirdness, fact, joke or piece of trivia you'd like to share, send it to us at *Gear Technology*. The keepers will throw it into our cage along with our dinners. Your reward—same as ours: the notice, if not the respect and admiration, of your peers and all the Gummi Bears you can eat (but the Addendum editor gets all the pale yellow ones). 🍬

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"Our real problem is these damn charts."