

In early 2020, an epidemic of the dread **WOO-HAN CORRUPTION** erupted in the United States with unprecedented virulence. Hotels and restaurants everywhere were shuttered. The latest edition of *Bradshaw's* showed dramatically reduced train and aeroplane schedules. Local magistrates banned gatherings of more than fifty persons.

In response to the epidemic, **THE AGRA TREASURERS** *cancelled* the 2020 **Holmes, Doyle, & Friends**, a conference begun (under a different name) in 1981 that we have sponsored since 2014. Consequently, the question arose: How best to convey refunds to those who had registered for the event?

While we cannot claim to match Josiah Amberley (who traveled third-class by train), Lord Mount-James (who used an omnibus when he could readily afford a coach and coachman), Jonas Oldacre (who prepared a “frugal supper” for his intended victim), or any of the other misers mentioned in the Canon, the management of **THE AGRA TREASURERS** have earned the reputation of keeping costs down and delivering good value for registration, banquet, and hotel fees. In keeping with our thrifty spirit, we are taking the following actions:

- First and foremost, **the Clarion Airport Inn informed us (19 March) that all HD&F room reservations have been automatically cancelled!** Earlier versions of this document urged attendees to cancel their own room reservations, *but no action on your part is required*. Earlier editions also reported rumours that the Inn will close for the duration of the epidemic. This is not true. If you plan to visit the Dayton area on other business even though HD&F will not be held, the Manager (somewhat ruefully) assures you that rooms *will* be available.

- **If you want us to hold your Conference (not your hotel) registration for next year, we shall be pleased to do so.** Please let ANN SIEFKER, our Chancellor of the Exchequer (Business Manageress) know promptly. Her wire (e-mail) address is near the top of the [Contact Us](#) page. In return, you will be protected against any rise in fees. This does not extend to new registrants (those who sign up in 2021) or to hotel or banquet fees. Prices for the hotel and the restaurant where the banquet is held are largely beyond our control—except for hard bargaining on the part of Mrs. Siefker, our Woman of Business (that’s Victorian English for “Business Manageress”)!

For persons desiring a refund ...

- **Those who have registered in the traditional fashion** (*i.e.*, by filling out and mailing a form with a cheque or money order for fees enclosed) **will be mailed a refund cheque.** (The postal authorities frown on sending gold or notes via the mails.) **THE AGRA TREASURERS** will cover the cost of postage — yes, even to Canada!
- **Those who registered by wire** (*i.e.*, via the Internet) **will also have cheques mailed to them** for the amount we received from Pay Pal[®], the service we use for Internet registration. Pay Pal charges us a fee of 2.95% plus 30¢ per transaction, which we cannot refund. We do not claim to be entirely familiar with Pay Pal’s definition of a “transaction,” but judging from fees, a transaction occurs whenever the **Check Out** button is selected (clicked or tapped). If you register, and your spouse registers later, *two* transactions are

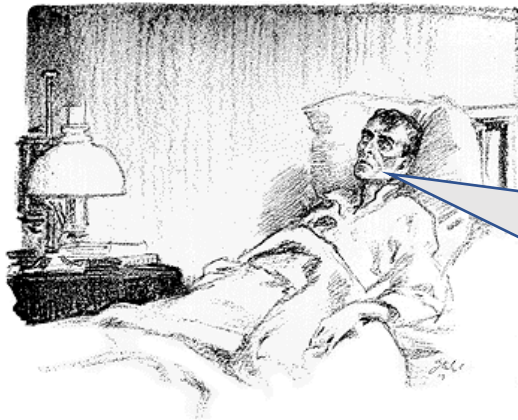
recorded. If both of you register at the same time, there is only *one* transaction and one fee.

- **Why mail a refund for a registration that was originally wired?** Pay Pal would count the refund as a “transaction,” and deduct yet *another* fee for wiring it! While it takes longer, using the mails means there is no further cost to you, since we cover postage and other costs. *But remember that the original charge will remain on your monthly credit card bill and should be paid.* Had we wired the refund via Pay Pal, it would have shown up instantly as a credit on your bill. However, it would have been about 3% less than the refund that was actually mailed to you.

- **Out-of-towners** (yes, even Tanker-villains, members of THE TANKERVILLE CLUB in nearby Cincinnati) **receive priority.** Members of **THE AGRA TREASURERS** will have their refunds mailed last.

This document will remain posted through 30 September.

Watch for an announcement about **Holmes, Doyle & Friends** for 2021 in late October or early November of this year!



It's the dreaded WOO-HAN CORRUPTION, Watson—call Culverton Smith at once!

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