



The Medical Bulletin

The Official Newsletter of
Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients
a Scion Society of **The Baker Street Irregulars**

Winter 2011-2012

Annual Birthday Dinner

The Annual Birthday Dinner will be held Sunday January 20, 2012 at 5:00 pm at the Lumber Baron Inn, 3555 West 37th Avenue, Denver. The Lumber Baron Inn is a beautiful Victorian mansion in northwest Denver. This year we will be joined at the dinner by the Victorian Society of Colorado Springs. After dinner the members of the Victorian Society of Colorado Springs will introduce us in the mysteries of Victorian ballroom dancing. The dinner will also feature the Doctor's Oath, the usual toasts and the Brick Award Trivia contest. Please see the enclosed reservation form for more details. Questions about the dinner can be addressed to Darlene Cypser at scribe@foolscap-quill.com or 303-587-9792.

Medical Board Elections

We will also be holding our annual elections for officers. The following officers have been nominated:

Chief Surgeon: Darlene Cypser
Staff Surgeon: Larry Feldman

Transcriptionist: Ron Lies
Bursar: Priscilla Licht
Interns: To Be Announced

Any members who would like to run for any of these offices should contact Ron Lies at relies1@msn.com. The nominations will be put before a vote of the membership at the annual dinner.



The Outpatients

An Outpatient "clinic" of Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients has been meeting weekly on week days and monthly on weekends to dine, watch movies related to Sherlock Holmes, and discuss the Canon and books and movies related to it. Pictures from these meetings have been posted on the DWNP Facebook page: www.facebook.com/DrWatsonsNP For more information about the Outpatients, e-mail Lawrence Feldman at lawrencefeldman@comcast.net or Ron Lies relies1@msn.com.

The Changing Face of Sherlock Holmes

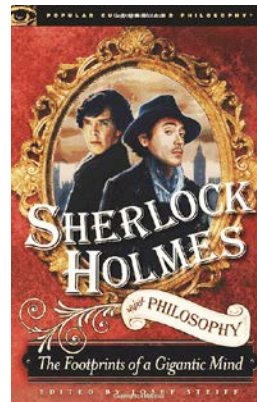
By Larry Feldman

One of the new books I have come across is *Sherlock Holmes and Philosophy: The Footprints of a Gigantic Mind*, an anthology of essays edited by Josef Steiff, published by Open Court. One of the things that struck me is that the cover has the pictures of Benedict Cumberbatch and Robert Downey Jr. I read recently that there was a period in the early 20th century when, in the United States at least, William Gillette was the default image for The Great Detective on book covers. Later in the 20th century, I have many books where the Holmes on the cover is meant to suggest Basil Rathbone and, later, Jeremy Brett. Are Cumberbatch and Downey destined to be the new faces of Sherlock Holmes?

Those of us who will probably live more decades in the 20th century than the 21st, may need to accept this new reality. New young readers growing up today may be drawn to the Canon by these new faces of our old familiar character, and may always have these images in their mind's eye, even when reading the original classics. Now that there is yet another generation between ourselves and the age of Victorian and Edwardian London, the new creative forces producing the character's media image are shifting the

Sherlock Holmes gestalt, so that he will not emerge unchanged. Doyle's words remain eternal, but the context in which they are read must alter, as they did in the 20th century.

What are these new shifts in the public sensibility? Are we to see perception change to a younger, more action-packed adventure character than the stolid gentleman of yesteryear? I once read of an “upset” defined as an “unfulfilled expectation.” For this reason, long-standing fans of the character are bound to be “upset” by new interpretations of the long sacred character. I often think of a friend of mine who refuses to even watch the Downey movie. Still, we also have the opportunity, like Holmes himself, to approach the 21st century versions with unemotional and detached interest, like true scholars and scientists. Observing and noting this phenomenon should be of interest to the modern Sherlockian scholar. It is an interesting challenge. Will you take it on?



The Proper Use of Stamford

By Larry Feldman

One of the Canonical characters who has always fascinated me is good old Stamford, the ultimate literary device. He appears once, makes us like him, introduces Watson to Holmes, and then vanishes forever into the literary ether. Still, his accomplishment while here on earth is so significant, so earth shattering, that one can't help but marvel at his functional, yet mysterious, nature. What ever happened to him?

One author who understood and appreciated the pathos of this character was Nicholas Meyer. When I read *The Seven Per Cent Solution* as a young man, I felt immediate kinship with this author when reading of his use of Stamford. Meyer, of course, had the idea of teaming Holmes up with another great mind of literary history, Sigmund Freud. It's hard to remember that back in the early 1970s, this was actually an original idea. How to have Watson meet such a great historical figure? Once again, Stamford comes to the rescue, appearing to Watson to make the referral, and then disappearing

again from Watson's consciousness. Meyer understood the true power of the character and allowed him to do what he does best.

I was certainly surprised when reading the pastiche "The Affair of the Aluminum Crutch" by Paul D. Gilbert, a part of the collection of stories by Mr. Gilbert published under the title *The Chronicles of Sherlock Holmes*. The story begins as Watson gets an urgent summons from Stamford himself. It's ultimately a sad tale, as Watson and Holmes end up investigating Stamford's murder. One must give the author some credit for an original, if somewhat upsetting, premise for a Sherlock Holmes story. Had poor Stamford lived, who knows what great introductions he might have made? It was gratifying to hear from the character again, and yet somehow I feel a penalty needs to be called for "improper use of Stamford."



The Medical Bulletin is the official newsletter of **Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients**, a Scion Society of **The Baker Street Irregulars**, dedicated to keeping green the memory of Sherlock Holmes. On the web: www.dwnp.com

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Interim Medical Board of **Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients**:

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