



# Doctor Watson's Neglected Patients

A Scion Society Of The Baker Street Irregulars

## medical bulletin

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"His medical practice had been so punctuated by scandals that he had practically abandoned the practice the better to apply himself to the scandals."

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### A SHERLOCKIAN WEEKEND

by Robert N. Alvis

"You say Sherlock Holmes was short?"  
"And he had long curly hair?" "And a  
moustache?" "Surely a clever disguise?"

There is no question that Sherlock was in heavy disguise on Friday, May 8th, at Heritage Square. Moriarty, in top hat and black cape, was also in disguise, as was a certain play by William Gillette. But then this was "mellerdramer" not "melodrama." Each has its own conventions, each has its own special enjoyments. Booring the villain, and even Sherlock himself on occasion, more than made up for the fact that this was not John Watson's friend up on the stage.

It was an exhausting evening. Starting with the buffet where there is always the temptation, usually yielded to, for over-eating, it ended with a raucous oleo which left the audience as tired as the players. There was a steady banter between the actors and the audience:

SHERLOCK: "I don't write 'em. I just  
say 'em."

LADY IN THE AUDIENCE: "And not too well!"

Moriarty was villainous. Sherlock was brilliant, the heroine beautiful, the evening fun.

But the main event was the next day. As we drove in from Boulder, we could see that

there was going to be a big crowd at the Auditorium Theatre. All the cars seemed to be headed in that direction. It must have been so, not a seat was vacant. There was a hush as the lights went down in the house and the curtains opened. Fog swirled in the dim light on stage and a violin played a plaintive tune. Then the stage lights came up, the game was afoot, and we were in the London of Sherlock Holmes. It would be easy to criticize the play for what it was not, or worse, to apologize for it because of its age. The play is melodrama, and Mr. William Gillette's Sherlock Holmes is not the same as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. They are fair country cousins, but not the same.

One newspaper critic stated that Leonard Nimoy "made a perfect Sherlock Holmes--until he walked or talked." I could be neither as generous nor as hard on Mr. Nimoy. He may not have been Sherlock Holmes, but he gave a very good portrayal of the master detective. He was more histrionic than others who have played the role. But he was very much in the spirit of the production, which played it just a little on the broad side. He had a tendency to strike poses. Near the end of the play, he got quite a laugh when he noted to Alice Faulkner that to love her would not be logical (the line is not in the Gillette play).

Alan Sues was exceptionally villainous as Professor Moriarty. His extra heavy make-up and fine acting made it impossible to

associate him with the madcap comedian who used to inhabit Laugh-In. But the real scene-stealer was Geoff Garland as Sidney Prince. From long experience with the part, he had all of his bits of business down pat and provided many moments of sheer fun.

There were many reasons for the audience being in the theatre that day. But in the main there were two, Sherlock Holmes and Mister Spock. Not a few Star Trek buttons were in evidence. I was there for three, for I was curious about the Gillette play. I was not disappointed on any score. And in addition there was the magnificent scenery. Mounted on a turntable which enabled the scene changes to go smoothly. I believe that all who were there will agree that Moriarty's door stole more than one scene.

The play was delightful as only a live performance can be. It was not the Sherlock that we have become accustomed to on the screen. The story was much less complex and the characters not so well drawn as we have come to expect. It was probably played just a little more for laughs than we might have hoped. But it was good fun, well done, and beautifully produced.

But there was more. Just across the street from the Auditorium Theatre, in the Executive Towers, we gathered just outside of the Symphony Ballroom to hoist a drink or two honoring "the best and wisest man we have ever known." No, these were not the formal toasts, those were to come later. This was just a wee wetting of the throat after the play and to help bail Ron DeWaal out of a guaranteed \$100 bar bill. Being good Sherlockians, I trust we did at least that.

Dinner was delicious and was interspersed with toasts to The Literary Agent, William Gillette, Frederic Dorr Steele, Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson, Irene Adler, Billy, and under protest John Bennett Shaw gave a toast to Professor Moriarty.

A number of papers were given to an excellent reception. Ron DeWaal read a

paper entitled, "I hear of Sherlock Holmeses and Dr. Watsons Everywhere," which among other things enumerated Ron's search for people with the name Sherlock Holmes or John Watson. Scott Bullard and Michael Collins read selections from their recently completed novel, THE GOLDEN FLEECE, concerning Sherlock Holmes' investigation of the theft of the Declaration of Independence from the U.S. Patent Office in 1876. The excerpts were tantalizing enough to hope that the novel finds a publisher soon.

John Bennett Shaw gave an outstanding talk on his recent visit to Europe. The title was "The Air of London is NOT Sweeter, but I was There, and in Copenhagen and Edinburgh, Too." The trip was ostensibly for the christening of his grandchild in Edinburgh, but curiously enough he managed to visit a few of his Sherlockian friends as well. John must be seen and heard to be believed. He is a fabulous raconteur.

But this was not all. There were movies. There was a recording of Sherlock Holmes past with a hope for Sherlock Holmes future. There was a full band and chorus from St. Michael's High School in Santa Fe. (Ron DeWaal said, "If a city cannot provide a band to welcome John Bennett Shaw when he arrives in town, he brings one with him!") We were treated to Mr. Nimoy again in THE HIDDEN MOTIVE. Here Holmes is asked to deduce the interior of the earth on the basis of external evidence. In a film made by The Sherlock Holmes Society of London, MR. SHERLOCK HOLMES OF LONDON, for 43 minutes we followed in the footsteps of Holmes and Watson to many of the most famous London locations described in the canonical tales.

It was well past midnight when we returned to Boulder and to welcome sleep. But it was not yet over. On Sunday the other Denver Scion Society, the Circle of Four, had their theatre party. The play was even better on second viewing and the cast received a standing ovation for their closing performance.

It is a weekend that will not soon be forgotten.

## THE QUESTION ABOUT WATSON

Among the amusing and informative toasts which ornamented the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Birthday Dinner on May 8th, there was one--Jill Stone's to Dr. Watson--which seems an indispensable introduction to our feature article, WATSON WAS A WOMAN. Rex Stout has provided one answer to some of the questions Jill's toast raised. She herself is half-inclined to believe Watson could have been a woman. This is how Jill said it:

I have always thought there were "unexplored possibilities" about Dr. Watson. What we know of Sherlock Holmes comes almost exclusively from Watson's Sacred Writings, and it has become customary to observe that there are many mysteries about the Great Detective. There is much we do not know about him, either because Watson did not know or because Watson did not choose to tell us. Holmes' past was a mystery even to Watson; the Giant Rat of Sumatra must, alas, forever remain a mystery to us.

Yet too often we fail to realize how very much we do not know about Dr. Watson himself. He gives us a thumbnail sketch of his past, to be sure--but beyond that, all we know of Dr. Watson is what we observe of his reactions to the adventures of Sherlock Holmes.

One of my favorite Watsonisms is the statement: "Mediocrity knows nothing beyond itself, but talent immediately recognizes genius." Let us not underrate Watson's powers of observation. Although he rarely knew what was going on when it was going on, he always managed to describe it very effectively afterwards. Furthermore, let us not undervalue Watson's courage--or his capability. Time and time again, in a situation he did not understand, he would act quickly and correctly--and save the day! In "The Adventure of the Dying Detective," Holmes says to him, "You never did fail me," and Holmes was telling the truth.

Finally, of course, we must pay tribute to Watson's loyalty. In a life that included travel and travail--war, women and wounds--getting up at all sorts of ungodly hours--and even, occasionally,

the practice of medicine--Watson always managed to be there when Sherlock Holmes needed him.

Such loyalty--to a man who was more than a trifle trying at times--can only be called love. I trust I may safely use that term, since both Holmes and Watson did: each, characteristically, to describe the feelings of the other!

Genius is uncommon, certainly. But such talent as Watson possessed--and such loyalty: these qualities are every bit as rare. Therefore I give you Dr. John H. Watson: a physician...in emergencies...a friend, indeed.

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## WATSON WAS A WOMAN

By Rex Stout

(Grateful acknowledgement is made to the Saturday Review of Literature which first published this article in its March 1, 1941, issue. The Medical Bulletin was granted permission to reprint it by Richard L. Tobin, Executive Editor.

When Rex Stout, the creator of Nero Wolfe, read the following paper at the January, 1941, dinner of the Baker Street Irregulars, he was thrown out of the meeting. And thereafter he attended the annual dinner only when accompanied by a personal bodyguard.)

## Gasogene: Tantalus: Buttons: Irregulars:

You will forgive me for refusing to join your commemorative toast, "The Second Mrs. Watson," when you learn it was a matter of conscience. I could not bring myself to connive at the perpetuation of a hoax. Not only was there never a second Mrs. Watson; there was not even a first Mrs. Watson. Furthermore, there was no Dr. Watson.

Please keep your chairs.

Like all true disciples, I have always recurrently dipped into the Sacred Writings (called by the vulgar the Sherlock Holmes stories) for refreshment; but not long ago I reread them from beginning to end, and I was struck by a singular fact that reminded me of the dog in the night. The singular fact

about the dog in the night, as we all know, was that it didn't bark; and the singular fact about Holmes in the night is that he is never seen going to bed. The writer of the tales, the Watson person, describes over and over again, in detail, all the other minutiae of that famous household--suppers, breakfasts, arrangement of furniture, rainy evenings at home--but not once are we shown either Holmes or Watson going to bed. I wondered, why not? Why such unnatural and obdurate concealment, regarding one of the pleasantest episodes of the daily routine?

I got suspicious.

The uglier possibilities that occurred to me, as that Holmes had false teeth or that Watson wore a toupee, I rejected as preposterous. They were much too obvious, and shall I say unsinister. But the game was afoot, and I sought the trail, in the only field available to me, the Sacred Writings themselves. And right at the very start, on page 9 of "A Study in Scarlet," I found this:

"...It was rare for him to be up after ten at night, and he had invariably breakfasted and gone out before I rose in the morning."

I was indescribably shocked. How had so patent a clue escaped so many millions of readers through the years? That was, that could only be, a woman speaking of a man. Read it over. The true, authentic speech of a wife telling of her husband's--but wait. I was not indulging in idle speculation, but seeking evidence to establish a fact. It was unquestionably a woman speaking of a man, yes, but whether a wife of a husband, or a mistress of a lover...I admit I blushed. I blushed for Sherlock Holmes, and I closed the book. But the fire of curiosity was raging in me, and soon I opened again to the same page, and there in the second paragraph I saw:

"The reader may set me down as a hopeless busybody, when I confess how much this man stimulated my curiosity, and how often I endeavored to break through the reticence which he showed on all that concerned himself."

You bet she did. She would. Poor Holmes!

She doesn't even bother to employ one of the stock euphemisms, such as, "I wanted to understand him better," or "I wanted to share things with him." She proclaims it with brutal directness, "I endeavored to break through the reticence." I shuddered, and for the first time in my life felt that Sherlock Holmes was not a god, but human--human by his suffering. Also, from that one page I regarded the question of the Watson person's sex as settled for good. Indubitably she was a female, but wife or mistress? I went on. Two pages later I found:

"...his powers upon the violin...at my request he has played me some of Mendelssohn's Lieder..."

Imagine a man asking another man to play him some of Mendelssohn's Lieder on a violin!

And on the next page:

"I rose somewhat earlier than usual, and found that Sherlock Holmes had not yet finished his breakfast...my place had not been laid nor my coffee prepared. With...petulance...I rang the bell and gave a curt intimation that I was ready. Then I picked up a magazine from the table and attempted to while away the time with it, while my companion munched silently at his toast."

This is a terrible picture, and you know and I know how bitterly realistic it is. Change the diction, and it is practically a love story by Ring Lardner. That Sherlock Holmes, like other men, had breakfasts like that is a hard pill for a true disciple to swallow, but we must face the facts. The chief thing to note of this excerpt is that it not only reinforces the conviction that Watson was a lady--that is to say a woman--but also it bolsters our hope that Holmes did not through all those years live in sin. A man does not munch silently at his toast when breakfasting with his mistress; or, if he does, it won't be long until he gets a new one. But Holmes stuck to her--or she to him--for over a quarter of a century. Here are a few quotations from the later years:

"...Sherlock Holmes was standing smiling

at me...I rose to my feet, stared at him for some seconds in utter amazement, and then it appears that I must have fainted...  
--"The Adventure of the Empty House," page 4.

"I believe that I am one of the most long-suffering of mortals."  
--"The Tragedy of Birlstone," page 1.

"The relations between us in those latter days were peculiar. He was a man of habits, narrow and concentrated habits, and I had become one of them. As an institution I was like the violin, the shag tobacco, the old black pipe, the index books, and others perhaps less excusable."  
--"The Adventure of the Creeping Man," page 1.

And we have been expected to believe that a man wrote those things! The frank and unconcerned admission that she fainted at sight of Holmes after an absence! "I am one of the most long-suffering of mortals," --the oldest uxorial cliché in the world; Aeschylus used it; no doubt cave-men gnashed their teeth at it! And the familiar pathetic plaint, "As an institution I was like the old black pipe!"

Yes, uxorial, for surely she was wife. And the old black pipe itself provides us with a clincher on that point. This comes from page 16 of "The Hound of the Baskervilles":

"...did not return to Baker Street until evening. It was nearly nine o'clock when I found myself in the sitting-room once more."

"My first impression as I opened the door was that a fire had broken out, for the room was so filled with smoke that the light of the lamp upon the table was blurred by it. As I entered, however, my fears were set at rest, for it was the acrid fumes of strong coarse tobacco which took me by the throat and set me coughing. Through the haze I had a vague vision of Holmes in his dressing-gown coiled up in an armchair with his black clay pipe between his lips. Several rolls of paper lay around him.

"Caught cold, Watson?" said he.

"No, it's this poisonous atmosphere."

"I suppose it is pretty thick, now that you mention it."

"Thick! It's intolerable!"

"Open the window, then!"

I say husband and wife. Could anyone alive doubt it after reading that painful, banal scene? Is there any need to pile on the evidence?

For a last-ditch skeptic there is more evidence, much more. The efforts to break Holmes of the cocaine habit, mentioned in various places in the Sacred Writings, display a typical reformist wife in action, especially the final gloating over her success. A more complicated, but no less conclusive piece of evidence is the strange, the astounding recital of Holmes' famous disappearance, in "The Final Problem" and the reasons given therefor in a later tale, "The Adventure of the Empty House." It is incredible that this monstrous deception was not long ago exposed.

Holmes and Watson had together wandered up the valley of the Rhone, branched off at Leuk, made their way over the Gemmi Pass, and gone on, by way of Interlaken, to Meiringen. Near that village, as they were walking along a narrow trail high above a tremendous abyss, Watson was maneuvered back to the hotel by a fake message. Learning that the message was a fake, she (he) flew back to their trail, and found Holmes was gone. No Holmes. All that was left of him was a polite and regretful note of farewell, there on a rock with his cigarette case for a paperweight, saying that Professor Moriarty had arrived and was about to push him into the abyss.

That in itself was rather corny. But go on to "The Adventure of the Empty House." Three years have passed. Sherlock Holmes has suddenly and unexpectedly reappeared in London, causing the Watson person to collapse in a faint. His explanation of his long absence is fantastic. He says that he had grappled with Professor Moriarty on the narrow trail and tossed

him into the chasm; that, in order to deal at better advantage with the dangerous Sebastian Moran, he had decided to make it appear that he too had toppled over the cliff, and, while he was doing so, Sebastian Moran himself had appeared up above and thrown rocks at him; that by herculean efforts he had eluded Moran and escaped over the mountains; that for three years he had wandered around Persia and Tibet and France, communicating with no one but his brother Mycroft, so that Sebastian Moran would think he was dead. Though by his own account Moran knew, must have known, that he had got away!

That is what Watson says that Holmes told her (him). It is simply gibberish, below the level even of a village half-wit. It is impossible to suppose that Sherlock Holmes ever dreamed of imposing on any sane person with an explanation like that; it is impossible to believe that he would insult his own intelligence by offering such an explanation even to an idiot. I deny that he ever did. I believe that all he said, after Watson recovered from the faint, was this, "My dear, I am willing to try it again," for he was a courteous man. And it was Watson who, attempting to cook up an explanation, made such a terrible hash of it.

Then who was this person whose nom de plume was "Doctor Watson"? Where did she come from? What was she like? What was her name before she snared Holmes?

Let us see what we can do about the name, by methods that Holmes himself might have used. It was Watson who wrote the immortal tales, therefore if she left a record of her name anywhere it must have been in the tales themselves. But what we are looking for is not her characteristics or the facts of her life, but her name, that is to say, her title; so obviously the place to look is in the titles of the tales.

There are sixty of the tales all told. The first step is to set them down in chronological order, and number them from 1 to 60. Now, which shall we take first? Evidently the reason why Watson was at such pains to conceal her name in this clutter of titles was to mystify us, so the number to start with should be the most mystical number, namely seven. And

to make it doubly sure, we shall make it seven times seven, which is 49. Very well. The 49th tale is "The Adventure of the Illustrious Client." We of course discard the first four words, "The Adventure of the" which are repeated in most of the titles. Result: "ILLUSTRIOUS CLIENT."

The next most significant thing about Watson is her (his) constant effort to convince us that those things happened exactly as she (he) tells them; that they are on the square. Good. The first square of an integer is the integer 4. We take the title of the 4th tale and get "RED-HEADED LEAGUE."

We proceed to elimination. Of all the factors that contribute to an ordinary man's success, which one did Holmes invariably exclude, or eliminate? Luck. In crap-shooting, what are the lucky numbers? Seven and eleven. But we have already used 7, which eliminates it, so there is nothing left but 11. The 11th tale is about the "ENGINEER'S THUMB."

Next, what was Holmes' age at the time he moved to Baker Street? Twenty-seven. The 27th tale is the adventure of the "NORWOOD BUILDER." And what was Watson's age? Twenty-six. The 26th tale is the adventure of the "EMPTY HOUSE." But there is no need to belabor the obvious. Just as it is an easy matter to decipher the code of the Dancing Men when Holmes has once put you on the right track, so can you, for yourself, make the additional required selections now that I have explained the method. And you will inevitably get what I got:

Illustrious Client  
Red-headed League  
Engineer's Thumb  
Norwood Builder  
Empty House

Wisteria Lodge  
Abbey Grange  
Twisted Lip  
Study in Scarlet  
Orange Pips  
Noble Bachelor

And, acrostically simple, the initial letters read down, the carefully hidden secret is ours. Her name was Irene Watson.

But not so fast. Is there any way of checking that? Of discovering her name by any other method, say a priori? We can try and see. A woman wrote stories about Sherlock Holmes, does there appear, anywhere in the stories, a woman whom Holmes fell for? Whom he really cottoned to? Indeed there does. "A Scandal in Bohemia" opens like this:

"To Sherlock Holmes she is always the woman...In his eyes she eclipses and predominates the whole of her sex."

And what was the name of the woman?  
Irene!

But, you say, not Irene Watson, but Irene Adler. Certainly. Watson's whole purpose, from beginning to end, was to confuse and bewilder us regarding her identity. So note that name well. Adler. What is an adler, or, as it is commonly spelled, addler? An addler is one who, or that which, addles. Befuddles. Confuses. I admit I admire that stroke; it is worthy of Holmes himself. In the very act of deceiving and confusing us, she has the audacity to employ a name that brazenly announces her purpose!

An amusing corroborative detail about this Irene of "Scandal in Bohemia"--according to the narrator of the tales--is that Holmes was present at her wedding at the Church of St. Monica in the Edgewood Road. It is related that he was there as a witness, but that is pure poppycock. Holmes himself says, "I was half-dragged up to the altar, and before I knew where I was, I found myself mumbling responses..." Those are not the words of an indifferent witness, but of a reluctant, ensnared, bulldozed man--in short, a bridegroom. And in all the 1323 pages of the Sacred Writings, that is the only wedding we ever see--the only one, so far as we are told, that Holmes ever graced with his presence.

All this is very sketchy. I admit it. I am now collecting material for a fuller treatment of the subject, a complete demonstration of the evidence and the inevitable conclusion. It will fill two volumes, the second of which will consist of certain speculations regard-

ing various concrete results of that long-continued and--I fear, alas--none-too-happy union. For instance, what of the parentage of Lord Peter Wimsey, who was born, I believe, around the turn of the century--about the time of the publication of "The Adventure of the Second Stain"? That will bear looking into.

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#### HOLMES-WATSON BIBLIOGRAPHY WINS AWARD

Ronald Burt DeWaal, BSI, a founder of Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients and member of our Medical Board, will be in New York in June to accept the John H. Jenkins Award for Bibliography from Union College at Schenectady. The Jenkins Award, in the amount of \$500, has been given only three times previously: in 1971 to Thomas Tanselle of the University of Wisconsin for his two-volume Guide to the Study of United States Imprints, in 1973 to Jacob Blanck for his Bibliography of American Literature (volume six), and in 1974 to Philip Gaskell of Trinity College, Cambridge, for A New Introduction to Bibliography. Ron DeWaal's World Bibliography of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson is a 526-page volume listing all editions, both English and foreign-language, of the Canon, along with information about radio and movie versions of the stories, and other related material such as cartoons, sculpture, games. The present output of Sherlock Holmes items is so great that DeWaal was at work on the second volume of his bibliography before this first one was in print.

In the Denver POST of June 2, 1976, Carol Bell did a profile on Ron DeWaal which reveals that as a child he thought of himself as Sherlock Holmes, and went around with fingerprint set and detective kit. Now, Ron says, he sees himself as more of a Dr. Watson.

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Correction: BASIL AND THE LOST COLONY is not out of print. Autographed, inscribed copies can be had from:  
Eve Titus, 11740 Wilshire Boulevard,  
Apartment A503  
Los Angeles, California 90025

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Walking is one of the simple pleasures which brighten my life. A very special pleasure when I can walk in a beautiful city like London. And this time still more rewarding for a Sherlockian interest.

In A Tourist Guide to the London of Sherlock Holmes, Charles Merriman calls it "the gentle art of walking in which Holmes and Watson indulged, in Hyde Park, Oxford Street, Regent Street." So did I. Holmes must indeed have done a considerable amount of walking, he points out, to be able to claim "an exact knowledge of London." And the changing face of London has not obliterated many of its Snerlockian corners, he says, proceeding to prove his statement through the itineraries set out for six walks which will introduce you to Sherlock Holmes' London.

The flavor of Victorian London indeed is still there. By a happy coincidence, my hotel in the Marble Arch area was in Mandeville Place, a street just one block long in the heart of the part of London where Holmes and Watson lived at 221B. A few steps away is Manchester Square, and the Wallace collection of Vernet paintings. Surely Manchester Square cannot have changed except for the automobiles now parked outside its period townhouses. I mailed packages to myself from the Wigmore Street Postoffice, on my way to Baker Street. And every time I left the hotel, I crossed carefully at the first corner, for this was Bentinck Street, where Holmes was nearly killed by the furiously-driven two-horse van which dashed round from Marleybone Lane, arranged for by Moriarty.

A few blocks away, I found an address most guidebooks, including this one, do not mention--No. 2 Devonshire Place. Here, where Arthur Conan Doyle set up his London practice as an eye specialist, and waited without a patient for three months, deciding then to give up medicine forever and live by his writing, Dr. A. S. Paterson and Dr. J. Dominian have their offices. I think the Society should see that this is marked with the Wedgewood blue and white plaque which designates other historical sites

I walked to Simpson's-in-the Strand and caused a brief sensation when I tried to check my coat in the cloakroom just outside that famous diningroom where women have never been allowed to mingle with the lunching gentlemen. I hadn't known coats and umbrellas would be segregated, too! Fortunately, I had a card of introduction to Mr. A. J. P. Mumford, the Manager, who, when he arrived on scene, not only took me in to show me around the forbidden room but saw to it that I ate at the very same corner table in the upstairs diningroom where Holmes and Watson dined and watched the traffic in the Strand. If you phone Mr. Mumford ahead, you can reserve that table.

My host at the Sherlock Holmes Pub was one of the best of guides, who could explain all the authentic Sherlockiana in the crowded sitting room of 221B. There a plate with a piece of toast with a bite out of it and a half-drunk cup of tea add the homely touch.

Even in Suffolk, a County where Holmes never pursued a recorded chase, there were echoes. To Aldeburgh Conan Doyle hurried answering a call for help from his friend, J. M. Barrie. The two of them must have walked Crag Path above the sea, as I did, and stayed in one of the quaint guest-houses, while they wrote the book and lyrics for JANE ANNIE. Market Hill in Woodbridge is the Island of Uffa, locale of one of the "untold tales," according to Christopher Morley, who spent part of his youth there with his Morley relatives. And in Woodbridge I met a charming lady who knew Morley. I like to think that the memory of her bubbly laughter may have inspired some of his unforgettable humor.

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The Guide and/or the Sherlock Holmes Journals may be obtained from the Secretary of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London:

Captain W. R. Michell, R.N.

5 Manor Close, Warlingham

Surrey CR3 9SF, England

Full Membership in the Society.....\$12

Magazine only (2 issues a year).....\$10

A Tourist Guide to the London of

Sherlock Holmes.....

These prices include surface postage.



## ABOUT THE WHEREABOUTS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

On Sunday, March 28th, at Marathon Oil Company's Denver Research Center, Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients heard Dr. J. Gordon Milliken report on The Discovery of the Current Whereabouts of Sherlock Holmes.

Dr. Milliken, who was on sabbatical at the University of Sussex last year, spent his free time walking "every mile of Sussex" and also tracing the steps of Holmes and Watson as mapped in the Sherlock Holmes Society of London's publication, A Tourist Guide to the London of Sherlock Holmes.

The narrative for his collection of evocative color stills was drawn from the stories themselves, in a geographical arrangement illustrating the six walks in the Society's Guide. Gordon was often fortunate to be in the right place at the right time, as when in Vere Street (where Holmes was almost struck by a falling brick on the same day he escaped death in Bentinck Street) brickmasons were working on a rooftop just as they were that day a century ago.

The slides, like the Society's walks, ranged from Hyde Park to St. Bart's, from Praed Street to the Thames. They included shots of Simpson's-in-the-Strand and of the Sherlock Holmes Pub where a reproduction of the consulting room at 221B, originally created for the Festival of Britain in 1951, has been relocated.

Scenes illustrating The Hound of the Baskervilles were included, and beautiful, moody shots of the Sussex downs, where Gordon Milliken says he found the one and only house which answers to the Canon's description of Holmes' retirement dwelling. It can hardly be coincidental that there a sign on the gate says H O L D--which to the initiate cryptically translates--"Holmes. Detective."

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Please add to your membership list:  
Thomas A. Dandrew, II  
832 Thompson Street  
Schenectady, New York 12306

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## A POSTHUMOUS MEMOIR OF JOHN H. WATSON, M.D.

The West End Horror  
as edited by Nicholas Meyer  
Dutton, 1976. \$7.95.

In 1974 Dutton published The Seven-Per-Cent Solution as edited by Nicholas Meyer. It was presented as a theretofore unpublished adventure of Sherlock Holmes by his biographer, John H. Watson, M.D., and it stayed on the best-seller list of the New York Times for 40 weeks.

So here it comes, another and even better Sherlock Holmes story, never before published.

In view of renewed interest in Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, surely everyone now must know that Holmes' fans--who call themselves Holmesians or Sherlockians--pretend that these, and other new adventures of the matchless English sleuth, are always newly discovered works of Dr. Watson. The effort is to reproduce, as well as possible, the language and spirit of the original stories by Arthur Conan Doyle.

The pretense is that for one reason or another the studies were suppressed by Holmes or Watson. The world, the Holmesian belief goes, wasn't ready for the truth. Now, thanks be, it is.

So it is with The West End Horror which is published as "a posthumous memoir of John H. Watson, M.D., as edited by Nicholas Meyer."

It is a harmless and joyful embroidery, especially as the story turns out to be an excellent mystery, wildly improbable, as most of the Holmes stories are, but full of the thrill of the chase and the atmosphere of the time--1895.

This case takes Holmes into the world of the theatre and introduces real persons as characters: George Bernard Shaw, Sir Arthur Sullivan, W. S. Gilbert, Oscar Wilde, Sir Henry Irving, Bram Stoker, who, like Shaw comes under suspicion for a time, and Ellen Terry.

It deals with ghastly murders, sex, the

theft of corpses and sinister night errands through the mists of London streets.

Unlike Watson, Nicholas Meyer is an American. He is 30, if he can find and edit an unpublished memoir of Watson each year for the next 30 years, we shall have a new and worthy Canon. The West End Horror is highly recommended.

by Bernard Kelly  
(from the Denver POST, May 9, 1976)

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### COMING

July, the Neglected Patients will dedicate Colorado's first Sherlock Holmes restaurant, "Baker Street", in Greeley. September, Dr. Watson's Birthday Party and a Sherlock Holmes weekend at Northglenn Mall. Nancy Wynne and her Telephone Committee will keep you informed of these and other events.

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### DR. WATSON'S MAIL

Harald Curjel (Suffolk, England) sends a clipping from an English newspaper about radio "programmes" on literary fan clubs, in one of which the Baker Street Irregulars was featured. In that program, broadcast on March 10th, Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients was especially mentioned when the matter of Scion Societies of the United States came up. Surgeon Captain Curjel suggests this may have been because of "the originality of the name."

Thomas Dandrew (Schenectady, New York) is looking forward to meeting Ron DeWaal when Ron goes to Union College to receive the Jenkins' Award. Dandrew is skeptical about the authenticity of the name Mary Holmes. Hopefully Ron DeWaal will be able to convince him she is a real person, not just another "Ann Pillsbury" created to represent a product.

Garrett Ray (Littleton, Colorado) also forwarded a clipping, from the Rocky Mountain NEWS, which in an editorial apparently written for shock value states "Sherlock Holmes never smoked a curved pipe!" This is one of the findings made

by William Sanders, a University of Florida sociologist, during a year-long study of police investigators and as a sidelight on his research observing the Santa Barbara, California, Police Department! The NEWS goes on to report that Sanders found curved pipes like those associated with Holmes were not sold in England until 1899, "long after the publication of most of the Holmes stories." Sociologist Sanders says William Gillette adopted the curved pipe because a straight pipe got in the way of his lines, and that this Holmes' trademark was established by illustrations modeled on Gillette's stage characterization.

While the facts are basically correct (Martin Dakin develops the same point in A Sherlock Holmes Commentary), this reportage raises some questions. According to John Dickson Carr (in The Man Who Was Sherlock Holmes) curved pipes were unknown in England until they were imported from South Africa during the Boer War, which officially began on October 11, 1899. Since SHERLOCK HOLMES opened at the Garrick Theatre in New York on November 6, 1899, it seems more likely that Gillette adopted the curved pipe for the London opening in 1901, after he had seen Sir Arthur Conan Doyle smoking the new pipe he had brought back with him from the war in South Africa. Since this is not really a debatable question, would anyone like to document the first appearance of Holmes' calabash?

If your Sherlockian items do not lend themselves to full-length articles, please send them along for DR. WATSON'S MAIL.

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