

THE MEDICAL BULLETIN

Roy Hunt

Volume 11, Number 1

Spring 1985

THE MEDICAL BULLETIN is issued quarterly for Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients, a scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars.

Editor: Dorothy N. Ellis
2851 South Reed Street
Denver, Colorado 80227

Canonical Consultants: Yvonne Bryant, Roy Hunt, Ron Lies, Stan Moskal, and Charlene Schnelker

Caligraphy designed by Nancy Iona

Membership and subscription information may be obtained from the Transcriber:

Judith Talmadge, 4341 Andes Way
4341 Andes Way
Aurora, Colorado 80014

Please submit manuscripts, puzzles, quizzes, and other correspondence to the editor.

" Good old Watson!
You are the one
fixed point in a
changing age."

From the Chief Surgeon
by Ron Lies

This column is being written at Lesh Motors in Pratt, Kansas. If you can help it, never allow a timing belt to break on your vacation.

Our dinner in January was, by all accounts, a fine affair - the location appropriate, the food great, the service superb, and the program excellent. My thanks to Sally Kurtzman, John Stephensen, Debbie Laubach, and Guy Mordeaux for their contributions.

From the auction held at the dinner, our group was able to obtain funds to enable us to purchase items at the estate sale of Chuck Hansen.

We purchased the painting of Chuck done by our own member, Roy Hunt. This fine work gives our group visual record of who Chuck was and captures his Sherlockian spirit. We also acquired the Sherlock Holmes video cassettes Chuck had recorded over the years. These items will be valuable additions to our C. F. Hansen Memorial Library, a memorial to him.

The Library is presently at the home of Charlene Schnelker, our Staff Surgeon. More details will follow in later BULLETINS and our thanks to Charlene for allowing us to use her home.

She has also volunteered to catalogue all new additions to our library. Some members have already taken her up on this: Jim Butler has donated several new video cassettes; Debbie Laubach numerous items she purchased from Chuck's estate auction. John Stephenson has

donated a valuable Sherlockian Collier's Magazine. Even I have donated some duplicate paperback books. All of this will keep our collection growing, and make it a source of pride for Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients. Donations from members would be greatly appreciated

At our last Board Meeting, your officers voted Pill Boxes to Roy Hunt and John Stephenson. Roy and his wife Nancie have been loyal members for many years. Roy's paintings of Sherlock Holmes in his Something Hunt Portfolio has made a valuable contribution to Sherlockian art. Roy has generously donated the book collection (Sherlockian) he received from Chuck's estate. This collection is the basis for our group's Memorial Library.

John Stephenson has faithfully served the group in many roles. He has held a variety of offices, and is currently serving his second term as Burser. He has organized many activities, and devoted many hours, cheerfully and tirelessly. He contributes columns to the BULLETIN, and had compiled a list of 50 affordable books for a good paperback Sherlockian collection. He has assembled a superb private collection, which he is constantly extending.

At present, your officers are wracking their brains for a summer activity for the Patients. Any suggestions would be warmly appreciated. Well, I leave you now, to read the rest of the BULLETIN. Take care, have a good summer and spread the name of SHERLOCK everywhere.

A LIST OF MONOGRAPHS and
OTHER WRITINGS by Sherlock Holmes

Upon the Distinction between the Ashes of the
Various Tobaccos.

Upon the Tracing of Footsteps.

Upon the Influence of a Trade upon the Form
of the Hand.

The Book of Life.

On the Typewriter and Its Relation to Crime.

Upon the Dating of Old Documents.

Of Tattoo Marks.

On Secret Writings.

On the Surface Anatomy of the Human Ear.

On Early English Charters.

On the Polyphonic Motets of Lassus*

Chaldean Roots in the Ancient Cornish Language.

Malingering.

Upon the Uses of Dogs in the Work of the Detective.

Practical Handbook of Bee Culture.

The Whole Art of Detection.

* To be continued



NORBURY AGAIN
BUT WHY WHISPER?

"Watson," said Sherlock Holmes, "If it should never strike you that I am getting a little over-confident in my powers, or giving less pains to a case than it deserves, kindly whisper 'Norbury' in my ear, and I shall be infinitely obliged to you." This was at the end of the day in Baker Street, following the revelation that Holmes's theories about the Yellow Face had been completely at fault. Grant Munro had taken "a nice eighty-pound-a-year villa at Norbury"; so as Holmes and Watson turn to leave the scene of the revelation to Grant Munro of his stepdaughter, Holmes has naturally said, "I think that we shall be of more use in London than in Norbury."

But why Norbury? It must be taken as an axiom that no illusion, no name, no incident in the Canon occurs at hazard. Why should the case be sited in Norbury? Like some of the punning punch-lines of parodies in certain scion newsletters, I submit, it was so Holmes might utter that final line. To what then does it refer? To the first Earl Norbury, who had died sixty-two years before The Yellow Face appeared.

John Toler was a Tipperary Irishman who emerged from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1766, and was called to the Bar in 1770. One cannot do better than quote a recent biographical note about him:

... he is reputed to have begun his legal career with 150 and a brace of dueling pistols. (He) according to his contemporaries had a poor knowledge of law - an ignorance which was eventually to become notorious. He began his political

(c) 1984, Donald A. Redmond

By Donald Redmond

career in 1776 as MP for Tralee Co. Kerry. As a politician, he placed his services at the disposal of the government, trimming his beliefs to the prevailing political wind. A leading opponent of Catholic Emancipation and political reform, he became Solicitor-General in 1789, in which capacity he ruthlessly prosecuted the leading United Irishmen. He voted for the Union in 1800 and received a Chief Justiceship and a Baronetcy as reward.

His appointment to the bench was opposed by his political supporters and opponents. Lord Clare protested that (he) was unfitted to sit on the bench. Their fears were confirmed (he) ran his court like a circus, attracting a large segment of Dublin's loungers to the free 'entertainment'. He displayed a complete indifference to the feelings of those in the docks; having acquitted a manifestly guilty defendant, he informed an astonished prosecution that he was attempting to compensate for having sentenced six innocent men to death at an earlier court-sitting. ... Despite the attempts of Daniel O'Connell and other leading advocates to have him removed, he remained on the bench until 1827 when his senility and outrageous behavior forced his removal. He was raised to the peerage as Earl Norbury in 1827.

John Toler, first Earl Norbury died in 1831.

Now the reason becomes much more evident for the naming of Effie Munro's first husband - John Hebron of Atlanta, a "man strikingly hand-

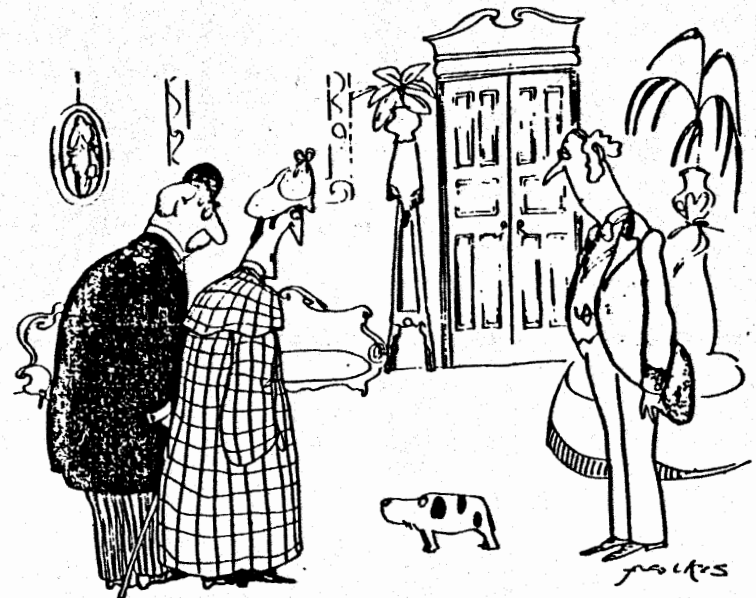
some and intelligent-looking, but bearing unmistakable signs upon his features of his African descent". More than one commentator has noted that the name Hebron is intended to be reminiscent of William Habron, who was wrongfully executed in the 1870's for the murder of police constable Cock -- a murder to which Charlie Peace (ironically mentioned by Holmes as "my old friend" in the much later 3Gar) later confessed. Hebron, oppressed by the authorities because of his race and romance; Habron, wrongfully prosecuted; Norbury/Toler, judge wrongfully sentencing innocent men, and himself ignorant of the law-- these become symbols, and their names are incorporated into a ringing statement in the Canon: Let us not presume to make hasty assumptions, let alone hasty judgements, about guilt or innocence in the relationships between persons.

Despite the early date of The Yellow Face (1893), the sentiments which later became strongly expressed in Thor Bridge, The Abbey Grange and other cases are already evident: that British law of marriage and divorce, and by implication, the laws of other countries as well, was infuriatingly unfair, presumptuous, and unjustly adjudicated. Holmes is in effect saying, as he did in that later case (Abbe): "Watson, you are a British jury, and I never met a man who was more eminently fitted to represent one. I am the judge. Now, gentlemen of the jury, you have heard the evidence. Do you find the prisoner guilty or not guilty?" And Watson, in whispering "Norbury" in Holmes ear, would remind him of the fallibility of judges, the farcicality of laws, and society's

presumption in intruding into the relationships of marriage and family.

In passing may be remarked the resemblance between the name of John Toler, and the drunken, loutish Toller in the slightly earlier Copper Beeches (June 1892). Here, however, the resemblance is less exact than that with Dr. Ebenezer Toller, former superintendent of insane Asylums. The allusion to the incarceration in Copper Beeches is obvious.

¹ D. J. Hickey and J. E. Doherty
A Dictionary of Irish History Since 1800.
 Gill & Macmillan, Dublin, 1980, pp399.



"I must say, Mr. Baskerville, we had expected something larger."

A Testimonial

x2473

(Ron Lies)

I like Sherlock Holmes! Why do I like Sherlock Holmes? Many people have, and continue to ask me that, and similar questions on the subject.

What does a transplant from Kansas to Colorado, who has never been to England, indeed physically speaking, has never been East of Carbondale Illinois, see in a Victorian detective? One from another culture and era?

For many years, my long-suffering family, my teachers, my unSherlockian friends, my wife, my wife's family, and anyone else I have cornered on the subject has asked why?

What does he see? Why does he pick on us? Is he high on the 7 percent cocaine solution the movie made so much of? They chortle.

The answer is no - and yes. No I am not high on cocaine, and yes I am high on Holmes. In this modern world of high paced computer technology, and even faster paced personal lives, Holmes allows me to step back and slow down. Holmes does not use the telephone to speed up his cases, or his life. He uses telegrams and trains, both slower paced to my way of thinking.

His telegrams announce either his arrival, or phrase inquiries about his cases. He uses trains for longer, more leisurely travels. He may arrive by train, by carriage, by Hansom cab, by foot, or even arrive unexpectedly, but he never phones his answers in. He delivers in person. He does this in his own style, admittedly theatrical, high-handed, and yes, a bit snobbish, but always worth the waiting.

Holmes is accompanied by his loyal, and, in

the films, highly underrated companion, Dr. Watson. (However, Dr. Watson looks surprisingly like me, handsome devil that I am).* But above all, Holmes never uses a computer. If given one, he would toss it into Grimpen Mire. (Are my own feelings coming through here?). Holmes and Watson and I are from another era that never existed---as far as the real world is concerned.

The illness, the incredibly rich, as contrasted by the desperately poor, these problems don't touch me in the world of Holmes. I know they existed then and exist now, and I do what I can to change what I can, but when I am with Holmes, I know good will triumph over evil, the Professor will never win, Stapleton will perish with the hound, Charles Augustus Milverton will die where he falls (the dastardly cur), and Holmes and I will keep the secret of a certain gracious lady. In the spirit of the season, we will let Roper of the Cosmopolitan escape to a new life, and return Horner to his family for the Holidays. We would give comfort and aid to Mary Morstan, care to Helen Stoner, grieve with Nancy Barkely and Eugenia Rounder. But above all, we take our time, and give comfort to me.

The stories allow me to live and breathe at my own pace. This has been one reason, and only one of many why I like Sherlock Holmes. James Bond, Mike Hammer and the like, eat your hearts out!

If you do not recognize any of the names mentioned above, pick up your Canon, search out their stories and enjoy yourself. I always do when I read the stories, and I always will. They give me hope when I am low, and rest when I need escape.

* True

Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients
2851 So. Reed Street
Denver CO 80227

To: