**The** **Norbury Chronicle**

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"Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed." (Mark 4:22)

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##### **From Facebook**

**P**hillip Minden writes “I remember there's a story that starts with Watson saying something like "One should think" and Holmes interrupts him "Indeed one should" or the like. Which is that? I just can't remember.” to which Lynn Walker answered, “The Valley of Fear ... chapter 1. One of my favorite exchanges ...”

**D**avid Lipton wrote, “Just read [Alt.Sherlock.Holmes](http://Alt.Sherlock.Holmes/), a collection with novellas by three different authors, portraying Holmes as the leader of an American carney in the early 1900's (enjoyed it), Holmes as a woman (just didn't work for me), and Holmes as a 60's druggie type living in the village (interesting, integrated some real incidents with gays, the Black Panthers, and the 1970's raid of a Philly FBI office). All in all an interesting diversion.” To which Lynn Walker commented, “In the 1970's, Bruce Kennedy wrote an essay to assert that Holmes was a woman. He kind of based it on Rex Stout's assertion, many years before, that Watson was a woman. Great fun.”

[**Alt.Sherlock.Holmes**](http://Alt.Sherlock.Holmes/)

**A**mazon's blurb describes the new book as "Sherlock Holmes as you’ve never seem him – or is it her? – before, as the Great Detective travels through time and across continents to master a set of three new mysteries.'' It is available on kindle. The Great Detective seems almost, but not quite, unrecognizable in these incarnations from Abaddon, publishers of the previous *Two Hundred and Twenty-One Baker Streets* edited by David Thomas Moore ,to those of us readers who grew up on the original stories. We can certainly imagine Holmes in other roles and times. I did that in my own timetravel book, ***Sherlock Holmes and the Mad Doctor***. Christian Bone at *Starburst Magazine* wrote "It is a testament to Conan Doyle’s creations that the core elements of the characters and their stories can endure even after undergoing such radical reinvention. As such, this anthology is definitely worth a read for any Holmes fan that thinks something like Sherlock doesn’t push the character far enough out of his comfort zone."

"**H**alf There/All There" by Glen Mehn puts makes Holmes and Watson gays in the Big Apple with Andy Warhol, drugs and the late 1960's. "A Study in Starlets", a punning reference to "A Study in Scarlet", by the Gini Koch. the one in which Holmes is a female investigating a murder in contemporary Los Angeles. Bone calls her "a vibrant character all on her own, possessing a love for reality television and a James Bond-like Aston Martin." She was also in "All the Single Ladies" in which Dr. Watson was the prime murder suspect.

**I**n "The Case of the Tattooed Bride" by Jamie Wyman, Holmes working for the Pinkertons in Peru, Indiana, when the Soggiorno Brothers’ Traveling Wonder Show's Tattooed Lady and the Strong Man wedding day in the 1930's gets disturbed. This is in the same sideshow as the first book's "A Scandal in Hobohemia" by Wyman.

**I**n one of the promised, but not yet delivered, 221 alternatives, "Black Alice" by Kelly Hale, our dynamic duo are witchhunters in the Seventeenth Century Worcestershire. In "The Adventure of the Speckled Bandana" by JE Cohen set in 1977 Watson mentions "The Case of the Grassy Knoll" and the Watergate Scandal.

**"A** Woman's Place" by Emma Newman is a Mrs. Hudson story that takes place in 2031. "A Study in Scarbourough" has Holmes dead of bee stings in the 1980's.

**Viva la Difference**

**N**ew member Julius Marold writes, “I have read the complete canon several times over as well as the first "Annotated". I also have the complete Jeremy Brett series on DVD. I don't believe Sir Arthur intended Watson to be the bumbling fool early movies portrayed him as.”

**P**hillip Minden: “I think you might not be alone with these. (I first read the novels and stories as child or youth. I like the wealth of background in the annotated edition, but I find it doesn't win through the author's playing 'the Game'. I enjoyed the Brett series in its closeness to the text, the settings and the actors -- with the big exception of Brett, who was frightful.)”

**M**arold: “I agree with all you say except about Brett. I enjoyed his performances except toward the end when it became obvious that he was having health problems. I recently saw the Rex Harrison/Audrey Hepburn version of 'My Fair Lady'. Brett had a small part in the movie. In the trailer, he complained that the director wouldn't let him sing 'On the Street Where You Live'. I can't imagine him singing.”

**M**inden: “I can imagine him complaining. The two things I can't ignore are his general overacting like a conceited provincial-stage Shakespeare actor in 1950, and his very visible lack of intelligence, at least on a Holmesian level, made up for by more acting.”

**M**arold: “The only conceit I saw in the program was from Holmes and Sir Arthur wrote him as conceited - but logical. As for the acting, I don't watch enough programming of any sort to judge, so an actor would have to be pretty bad for me to notice.”

**Return to the*Valley of Fear***

**T**his novel does have several memorable features including one of my favorites, Holmes's performance over the missing dumb-bell. Watson was NOT the missing dumb-bell, though it seems to be a inside joke that he. The German Shatfers became "Swedish" with the outbreak of World War I, like the von Brauns of "Back to the Future" became Browns. There has been much serious analysis of the story that enhances every re-reading.

**B**aring-Gould, based on the deletions and corrections of the original, much different, manuscript version, believed Watson just edited it. "John Douglas" was John Dur(r)ant or Desmond. "John McMurdo" murders "Red Mike". "Vermissa" has been identified with Pottsville, Shenandoah Valley, Pensylvania, so the "VV" would actually have been "PP".

**P**orlock's message that spells out the names Douglas and Birlstone were obviously not the original names as Karl Krejei-Graf points out in "Contracted Stories". The *Strand*'s uncorrected time of death confirms this.

**J**ohn Hall in *Sidelights on Holmes* says Moriarty "persuaded" Porlock to write the message. D. Marin Dakin suspects he was eliminated, since he is never heard from again. Charles B. Stephens proposes in he Birlstone Hoax" that Cecil Barker was "Birdy Edwards" and "Porlock". Klinger however wrotes "it is beyond question that the basis for Birdy Edwards ... was James McParlan", alias "James McKenna".

**H**ugo Koch in *Some Observations Upon the Tragedy of Birlstone: The Evidence of Whitaker's Almanack: 1890* noted that only that year and 1904's contain the needed words on the Mahratta page. Leslie S. Klinger notes that the Rudge and Whitworth bicyclemakers did not merge until 1894, but suggests that Watson substituted the name more familiar to his readers. Ian McQueen dates VALL after EMPT and identifies Col. "Moriarty" Sebastian Moran as the succesor to Moriarty, implying that it was a house not a family name. It was John Bennett Shaw who promoted the idea that there were three brothers named James Moriarity. Madeleine B. Stern in "Sherlock Holmes: Rare Book Collector" credits Holmes rejetion of the Bible as a codebook since his was the *Complutensian Polyglot Bible*.

**T**he pageboy Billy first appeared in Gillette's play "Sherlock Holmes" played by young Charlie Chaplin and only later in the published stories. The historical criminal mastermind Jonathan Wild became legendary with Henry Fielding's T*he Life of Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great* and Daniel Defoe's *The true and genuine account of the life and actions of the late Jonathan Wild.*

**T**he "Hugo de Capus" who built the original Birlstone has been identified by Julian Wolff in his *Practical Handbook of Sherlockian Heraldry* with the son of William the Conqueror's half-brother. H. W. Bell indetified "Birlstone" with Brambletye Manor twelve miles from Tunbridge Wells. James Montgomery in "A Case of Identity" identifies it with Groombridge House three miles from Tumbridge Wells based on James Keddie, Jr.'s facimile of VALL's title page. David L. Hammer in *The Game's Afoot* and Charles O. Merriman in "A Case of Identity No. 2" attribute the discrepancies to Watson's poetic licence. Catherine Cooke in "The Ancient Manor House of Birlstone" concurs, while D. Martin Dakin does not.

**L**eslie S. Klinger give a rather extensive note on the use of the word "rum" citing John Camden Horten's *Slang Dictionary* for the meaning "indifferent, bad, or questionable", possibly connected to Rome. Alternatively F. Cobham Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*'s gives "queer, quaint, old-fashioned" from books tradable for rum in the West Indies. Klinger concludes Sgt. Wilson may have meaning or some combination of both.

**H**olmes's familiarity with the Pennsylvania Small Arms Company logo is explained by Barrett Porter with his observation of it on a prop in "H. M. S. *Pinafore*" in 1879, while in New York with the Susanoff Shakespeare Company.

**B**. M. Castner identifies the writer of "The Scowrers" chapter as that of "The Country of the Saints" from *STUD* as well, none other than, Arthur Conan Doyle. Colin Prestige in "A Study in Fear or the Scarlet Valley" suggests "John Douglas", while Edgar W. Smith in "On the Authorship of the Tales-Within-the Tales" suggests Allen Pinkerton. The "Scowrers", slang for wild, boisterous, wanderers, is a pseudonym for the "Mollies" or "Molly Magires", that Anthony Bimba called "labor's martyred pioneersin the coal fields". "The Ancient Order of Freemen" is the Ancient Order of Hibernians which advocated striking rather than compromise like the Workman's Benevolent Association.

**"T**ed Baldwin" is identified with Tom Hurley "the chief assassin of the Mollies" by H. T. Crown. Walter Klinefelter notes in Origins of Sherlock Holmes the similarity of "Boss McGinty" and Jack Kehoe. Wayne Melander in "The Early American Holmes" identifies "Capt. Marvin" with Holmes himself, though Klinger writes that it likely refers to Robert Linden.