



The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure XXII – The Adventure of the Crooked Man

Publishing History

22 of the 60 stories

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Part of *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* collection by

George Newnes, Ltd., London, 1894

Harper Bros., New York, 1894

The British illustrator - Sidney Paget

American illustrator - W. H. Hyde



Chronology

Baring-Gould places the date as Wednesday, September 11 to Thursday, September 12, 1889 which makes it 27th of the 60. This means that Holmes is 34 and Watson 36.

Christopher Morley Says

“This is one of the few times when Holmes left Baker Street to stay overnight in Watson’s home – perhaps the unfamiliar surroundings dulled his faculties, for the case of Colonel Barclay’s death is one of the least absorbing. The best element of suspense is, what sort of animal can run up a curtain?”

Dummies Short Summary

“The mysterious death of Col. Barclay unveils a terrible, heartbreaking secret.”

How Many Words

At 7,183 words CROO has the 15th most words (#1 is VEIL – 4,499, #56 if NAVL – 12,701)

Classifying This Case

This case is one of 3 classified as fear of retribution. The others are ILLU, and REDC.

The Best Of Sherlock Holmes

- 1944 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it #2 on their worst list
- 1999 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it 40th of the 56 short stories
- 1999 – The Sherlock Holmes Society of London voted it 47th of the 56 short stories

What Else Happened That Year (1889)

- British South Africa Company Charter awarded.
- Early use of photographs in newspaper: *Illustrated London News* runs Cambridge and Oxford boat crews.
- Woolwich Ferry starts.
- Act to prevent cruelty to children.
- Establishment of telephone company.
- Italy takes Somalia and Ethiopia.
- The Moulin Rouge first opens its doors.
- North and South Dakota, Montana and Washington admitted as U.S. states.
- Treaty of Acciali: Ethiopia made Italian protectorate.
- End of Portuguese Empire in Brazil; republic proclaimed.
- Abdication of King Milan of Serbia; accession of Alexander.
- Brunner-Mond Salt Union formed; combine of 64 firms.
- Bismarck introduces Old Age Insurance in Germany.
- Erection of Tacoma Building in Chicago. First skyscraper, 13 stories high.
- Conan Doyle publishes *A Sign of Four*.
- Mark Twain publishes *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.
- Renoir paints *Girls Picking Flowers*.
- Van Gogh paints *Man with a Pipe* (self-portrait), *The Olive Grove*.

- Tchaikovsky introduces *The Sleeping Princess* ballet music.
- Eiffel Tower completed, 985 feet high, taller than the Great Pyramid, become highest structure on earth.
- Eastman's Kodak camera comes into production, using photographic film.
- Mering and Minkowski show that the pancreas prevents diabetes.
- First linotype machine in use.

Holmes And Watson – Personal Information

Watson has been married a few months and was living with wife in their house and practicing medicine.

Holmes is still at 221B.

Dramatis Personae

Another story with a cast member with four legs

- **Col. James Barclay**, the murdered man. Commander of the Royal Munsters
- **Nancy Barclay**, nee DEVOY, his wife.
- **Henry Wood**, the crooked man.
- **Miss Morrison**, neighbor of the Barclays who accompanied Nancy to the church mission.
- **Sgt. Devoy**, color sergeant of the Munsters and Nancy's father.
- **Major Murphy**, called Holmes into the case.
- **Dr. Jackson**, covered Watson's practice.
- **Jane Stewart**, housemaid to the Barclays
- **Simpson**, a Baker Street irregular who followed Wood.
- **Teddy**, a mongoose.

Quotable Sherlock

Only 3 quotables in this story but all 3 are memorable ones.

- “Come at once if convenient – if inconvenient come all the same.”
- "You never learn that the gravest issues may depend upon the smallest things.”
- “Always look at the hands first, Watson. Then cuffs, trouser knees, and boots.”

Sherlock Holmes On The Big And The Little Screen

- 1991 *The Creeping Man* with Jeremy Brett as an episode in his Sherlock Holmes series
- 2001 *The Adventure of the Creeping Man* as an episode of *Sherlock Holmes in the 22nd Century* (Animated TV series)

Fainting In The Canon

In this tale Nancy Barclay almost fainted and, then, she and “more than one” person in Colonel Barclay’s household actually did faint.

Annotated Sherlock

- “a tangled skein” This was originally ACD’s title for *A study in Scarlet*.
- “a cannula” A tube to be inserted into a cavity, through which pus may be drained or medicine introduced.
- “lumbago” rheumatism of the lumbar muscles in the lower back, frequently
- “alienist” a psychiatrist; from the French *aliéne*, meaning insane

Weapons

- **Half a Battery of Artillery** - Which the Seventeenth Regiment of the British Army in India used to hold back the ten thousand rebels attacking Bhurtee.
- **Carved Stick** - Of Henry Wood, which was found lying beside Col. Barclay’s body. The police assumed it was the murder weapon.
- **Weapon** - Which was used by an Indian Mutineer to knock Henry Wood insensible.
- **Betrayal** - Of Henry Wood into the hands of the Indian Rebels by Col. (then Sargeant) Barclay, thus eliminating Wood from the contest for Nancy Devoy’s hand.
- **Collection of Weapons** - Of Col. Barclay.
- **Weapons** - Used by the Indian Rebels to torture Henry Wood, after he had been betrayed into their hands by Sgt. Barclay.
- **Weapons** - Used by the hill folk of Darjeeling to kill the Rebels holding Wood.

Frank Mentzel