

THE GAME'S AFOOT "the scholarship is a very valuable one" [3STU]

For over a hundred years, Sherlockians have pursued "the game" —the pseudo-scholarly effort to understand the Sherlock Holmes stories as having been written by John H. Watson, MD rather than by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

This was first undertaken by Monsignor Ronald Knox in a paper delivered at Oxford University in 1911.

*Michael Crowe covered it extensively in his **Ronald Knox and Sherlock Holmes: Origins of Sherlockian Studies**, published by Wessex Press (now out of print, but occasionally available from other sellers).*

*Dorothy Sayers summed up the hobby in **Unpopular Opinions** in 1946, demonstrating the application of Higher Criticism to the Canon had "the aim of showing that, by those methods, one could disintegrate a modern classic as speciously*

*as a certain school of critics have endeavoured to disintegrate the **Bible**.*

Since then, the thing has become a hobby among a select set of jesters."

Further, she specified:

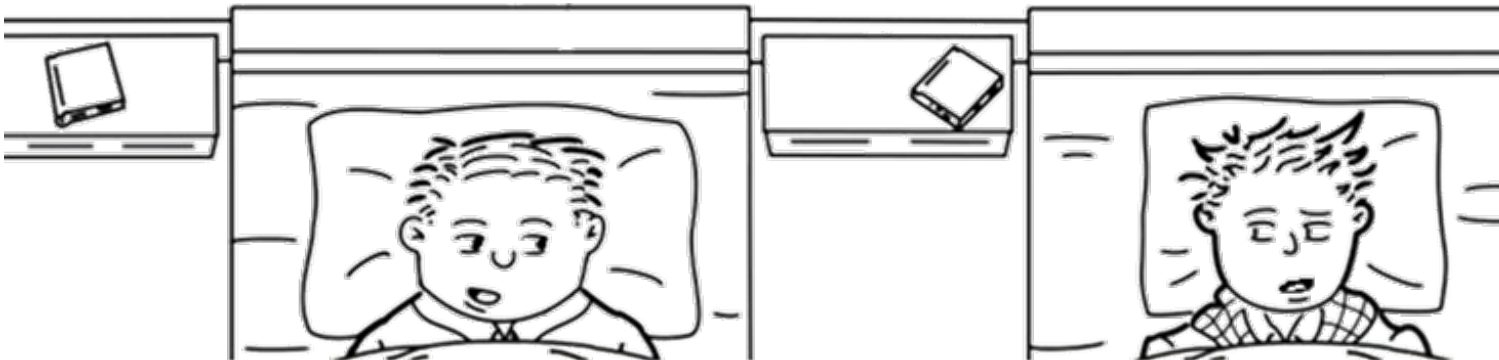
"The rule of the game is that it must be played as solemnly as a county cricket match at Lord's; the slightest touch of extravagance or burlesque ruins the atmosphere."

And so, we acknowledge Conan Doyle's important role—that of literary agent—and Watson's eternal contribution to the world of detective fiction (fact?).

And to think it all began at Baker Street Elementary...

**HOLMES, I HAVE
SOMETHING TO
CONFESS TO YOU...**

**I KNOW YOU TOOK
THE LAST
CHOCOLATE OUT OF
MY BED STAND... I
FORGIVE YOU...**

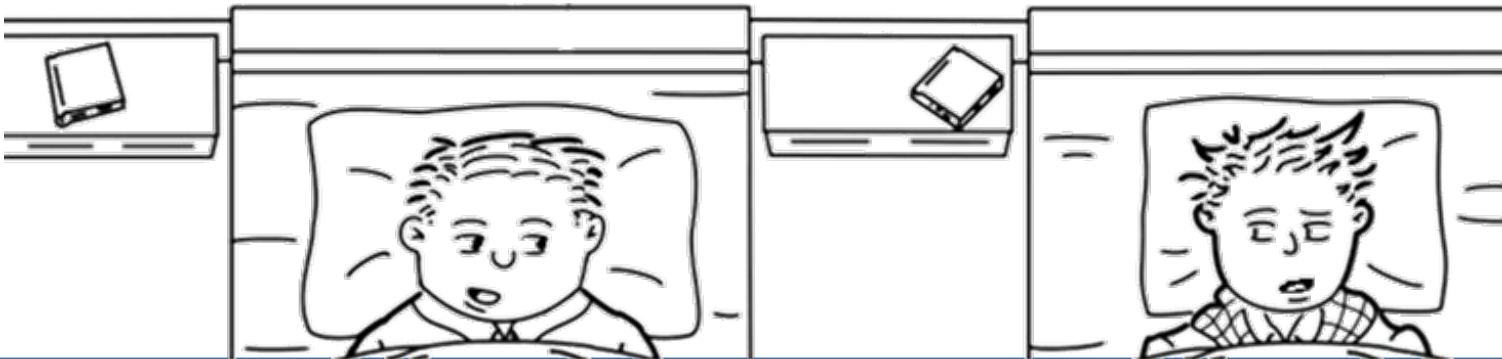


**THANKS, BUT THAT WAS NOT IT...
AS YOU KNOW, THE SCHOOL
PAPER HAS PUBLISHED ONE DOZEN
TALES OF YOUR EXPLOITS, WITH
ME LISTED AS THE AUTHOR...**



**I MUST ADMIT, I
WAS NOT
ACTUALLY THE
WRITER OF THE
STORIES...**

**WATSON, I HAVE
KNOWN THAT SINCE
THE FIRST ONE
WAS PUBLISHED...**



—
HOW COULD
YOU
POSSIBLY
KNOW THAT ?

EASY... I HAVE
HELPED YOU WITH
MANY OF YOUR
SCHOOL ESSAYS
AND THEME PAPERS...

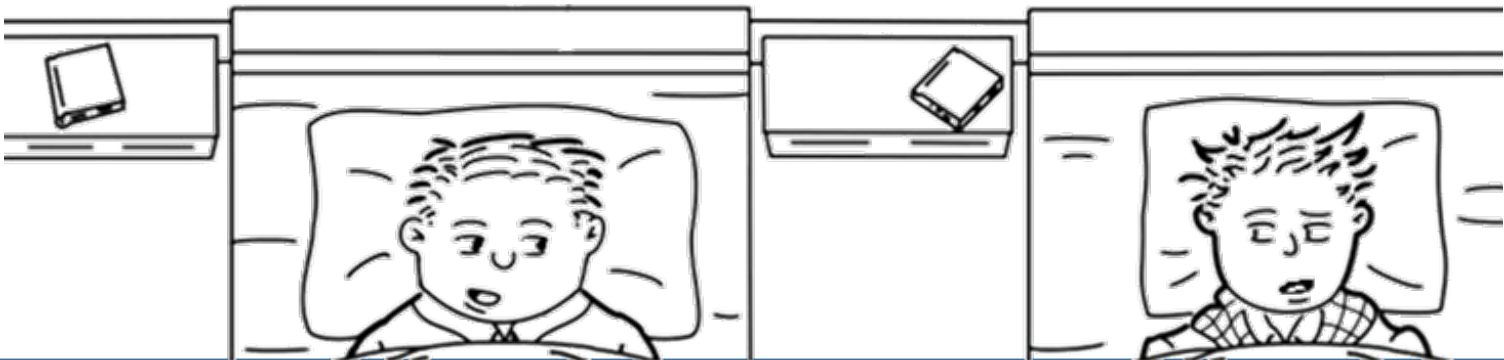


**WHILE YOU ARE ABOVE AVERAGE IN
WRITING TALENTS, YOU ARE NOT CAPABLE
OF TURNING A PHRASE AS EVIDENCED IN
THE SCHOOL STORIES...**



THE ACTUAL
AUTHOR OF THE
EXPLOITS IS --

I AM ALSO AWARE
IT IS OUR
ESTEEMED FRIEND,
MASTER DOYLE...

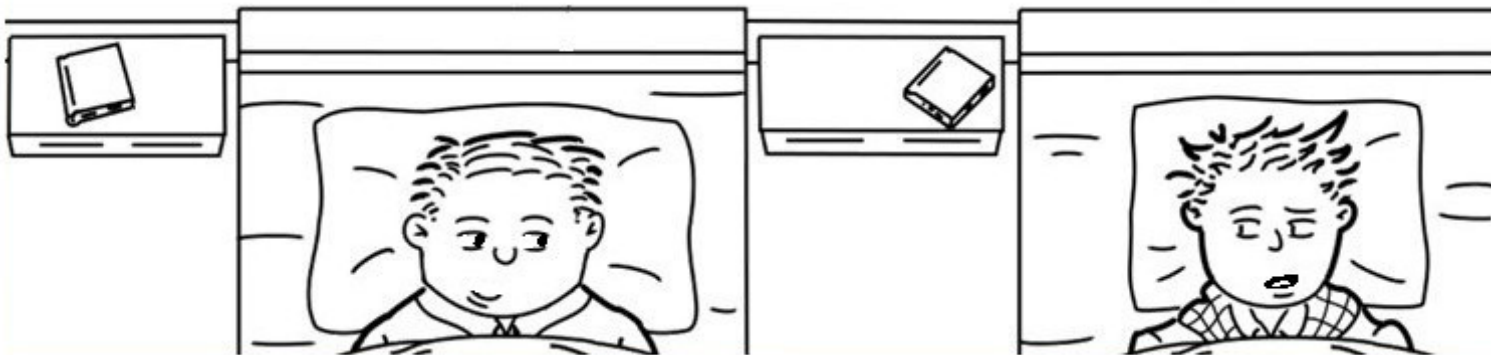


AGAIN, HOW
DID YOU
FIGURE THAT
OUT ?

ONLY MASTER DOYLE
USES THE TERM
'SINGULAR' AS
FREQUENTLY AS USED IN
THE PUBLISHED TALES...



... AND WHILE CATCHY, I DO NOT BELIEVE I HAVE USED THE PHRASE, 'THE GAME IS AFOOT...'



IS IT SCOTCH-HOPPERS... ?

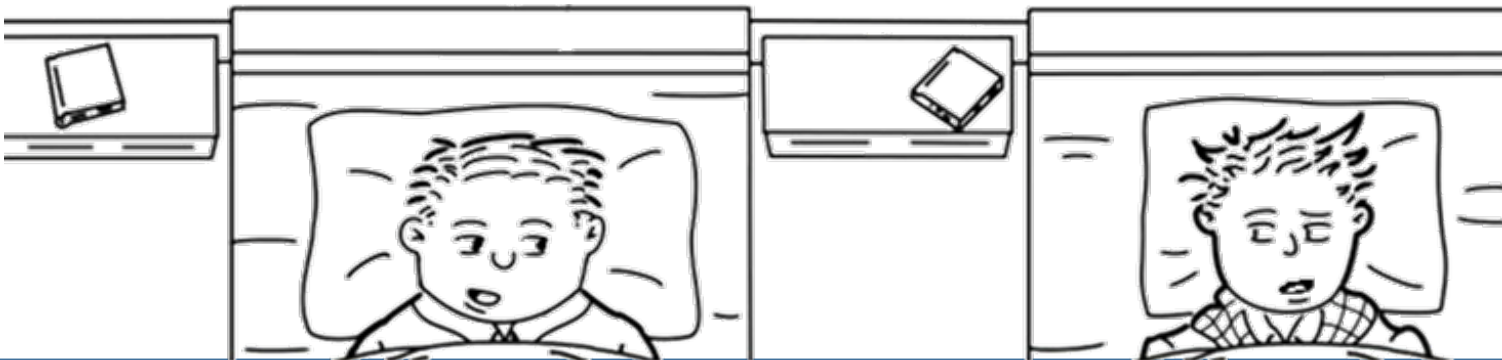
IS WHAT ?

*A GAME INVOLVING A
FOOT ?*



**GOING FORWARD,
ALL THE STORIES
WILL LIST DOYLE
AS THE AUTHOR...**

**HOW DOES THE
PROCESS WORK ?**



**I WILL CONTINUE TO CHRONICLE YOUR
EXPLOITS IN MY JOURNAL, THEN I WILL TAKE
MY NOTES TO DOYLE, WHO WILL TURN THEM,
ALONG WITH MY OWN THOUGHTS, INTO THE
ADVENTURE TO BE PUBLISHED...**



OF COURSE, YEARS
FROM NOW, PEOPLE
WILL PROBABLY STILL
THINK I ACTUALLY
WROTE THE TALES,
ASSUMING YOU MAKE
THIS YOUR CAREER...

THAT WOULD MAKE
FOR A FUN GAME...

