

SHERLOCK HOLMES: TRUE OF FICTION?

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Данная статья является реферативным изложением основной работы. Полный текст научной работы, приложения, иллюстрации и иные дополнительные материалы доступны на сайте III Международного конкурса научно-исследовательских и творческих работ учащихся «Старт в науке» по ссылке: <https://www.school-science.ru/0317/3/29391>

The aim of research project: To know the truth about Sherlock Holmes and to clarify whether Sherlock Holmes is the fact or fiction.

The methods and techniques used in the research project:

- The method of observation and information-gathering: the exploration of literary and Internet resources about Sherlock Holmes, the collection of facts and photos.

- The theoretic analyze: analyzing the information received about Sherlock Holmes, re-analyzing after the questionnaire and experiment, the final conclusion.

- The survey method: conversation with classmates and questionnaire.

- The experiment: writing the letter to Sherlock Holmes to London.

Data received while the project research:

- Holmes being is based on primarily three individuals: Dr. Joseph Bell, Henry Littlejohn and Jerome Caminada. Holmes appearance was created by artist Sidney Paget. Holmes had brothers, a sister and a grandfather.

- More than half of students think Sherlock Holmes is a real person, had read the books about him and even want to ask him several questions. Almost all students knew that Sherlock smokes a pipe. Two-thirds of students want to meet Sherlock Holmes in a real life or at least to join a secret society behalf of Sherlock Holmes.

- I still didn't get the answer to my letter. This may indicate that Sherlock Holmes is a fiction or just a very busy man.

The conclusion of my research project:

There is no fiction without a deal of truth in it. Nowadays the character of Conan Doyle is not only its intellectual property, but also the heritage of people all over world. Now he lives and grows in our collective imagination and will surely go on doing so for time untold. He became immortal.

The topic of my research project: «Sherlock Holmes: True or Fiction?»

The relevance of the topic: It's been more than a hundred years since Sherlock Holmes first appeared on the pages of books and

fascinated a millions of people. Since that time Arthur Conan Doyle's methodical detective has been stirring imaginations – even now, the Holmes popularity continues to grow up. He has appeared in many books, TV series and films, cartoons, radio and stage. He became one of the most well known heroes in the world literature, and has made his creator, Arthur Conan Doyle, immortal. Small wonder, then, that many fiction and riddles have grown up around the famous detective.

The object of the research: Mr. Sherlock Holmes.

The subject of the research: the biography of writer Conan Doyle, literature and internet resources about Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle, photos, museums and societies behalf of Sherlock Holmes, the public opinion about Sherlock Holmes.

The tasks: to find the answers to the next questions.

1. What do we know about Sherlock Holmes from the history?

2. What do we know about Sherlock Holmes appearance?

3. What do we know about Sherlock Holmes from novels by Arthur Conan Doyle?

4. What is the life of Sherlock Holmes in our days?

5. What is the public opinion about the Sherlock Holmes?

6. Who is Sherlock Holmes – fact or fiction?

To find the answers to these questions I took this project “Sherlock Holmes: True or Fiction?”. Working over this project, I travelled through the time and made many great discoveries.

To know the truth let me follow the footsteps of Sherlock Holmes. Books, internet resources, friends and classmates will be my helpers and companions in such exiting time travel.

What Do We Know About Sherlock Holmes From The History?

The famous writer Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle was born in a usual Catholic family

in Edinburgh on 22 May 1859. Arthur's parents, Mary Foley and Charles Altamont Doyle, had left London and came to Scotland, thinking that Charles could promote career as an architect. Charles was an inattentive father and husband, becoming so far away from reality that he ended his life in a mental hospital. As the only one vigorous parent, Mary Doyle had a deep influence on her son, the eldest surviving son of seven children, inculcating into him a love of knightly romances and a strong confidence in the English code of honor.

At the university, Doyle's instructor was the Dr. Joseph Bell, later recognized as Conan Doyle's inspiration for Sherlock Holmes. To obtain a true diagnosis, Dr. Bell taught his students the importance of observation, using all the senses of man. He gained amusement from impressing students by guessing a people's profession from a few indications, through a combination of deductive and inductive thought, same as Holmes. The Dr. Bell's methods fascinated Conan Doyle; his cold disinterest to his patients repelled the young medical student. Some of this coldness found its way into Sherlock Holmes's nature in the early stories.

Dr. Bell's lessons were bombastic, fascinating and entertaining. Using his amazing extraordinary deductive abilities, he could make instantaneous conclusions about the sicknesses of his patients.

Pursuant to Doyle himself, as written in his autobiography, Bell's "strong point was diagnosis, of not only disease, but of occupation and character."

Though there were main elements of Dr. Joseph Bell in Sherlock Holmes, he wasn't the only inspiration. The famed Edinburgh native forensic scientist, public health inspector, and dissector of human bodies, Henry Littlejohn was also credited for giving Holmes some of his qualities of personality. Littlejohn took a part in the investigations of any accident, tragic death, or murder that were in Edinburgh that time. He used the fingerprinting and photography in criminal investigations and was first on the way cases which were cracked right when Doyle was creating Holmes in the 1880s and 1890s.

Doyle ended his first Sherlock Holmes story "A Study in Scarlet" in 1886 and in 1887 he printed it. Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson were started from this work.

After writing three series of twelve Holmes stories, receiving the incredible sum of £1000 for the last one, Conan Doyle was exhausted to death of the popular detective and in 1893 decided to kill him off at the "The Final Problem." Conan Doyle considered his stories as a light fiction, pretty good for earning

money, but designed to become a thing of the past, the literary equivalence of junk food. And the blustering public reaction to Holmes's death appalled Conan Doyle. Many people wore black armbands and wrote him imploring or forbidding letters. It took him several years to succumb to public opinion and bring Holmes back. During 1901 – 1902 the third Holmes novel "The Hound of the Baskervilles" was published in nine parts in The Strand Magazine, but it was presented as an old story from Watson's notes, accomplished before Holmes's death. Conan Doyle did not make up his mind to raise Holmes from the dead until 1903, when he wrote "The Empty House." He continued unwillingly to write Holmes stories up to 1927, three years before his own death.

The First World War destroyed the familiar world of Conan Doyle. He lost close family members in this conflict as other people. Sherlock Holmes also served England in the war. In the novel that designed to be the concluding Holmes outing "His Last Bow", printed in 1916, Holmes tricks a German spy agent.

Speaking about the name, "Sherlock Holmes" it is thought to have been taken from two persons – "Sherlock" from Doyle's favorite musician, Alfred Sherlock and "Holmes" from the eminent and fellow doctor, Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Some keep the theory that there was another person for real Sherlock. Jerome Caminada was a true detective whose life seemed to be like Holmes. He also had a Moriarty like an enemy. Caminada began to be famous just as Doyle was writing his first Sherlock novels. He had many informants, was known for his great disguises, and became popular for solving the seemingly unsolvable puzzles. Only Doyle himself would be able to answer how much of Caminada went into Sherlock.

It goes without saying that Henry Littlejohn helped inspire Doyle. Doyle himself said that Littlejohn was one of his inspirations for the private investigator. Littlejohn was the Surgeon of Police and Medical Officer of Health in Edinburgh, so he helped with incidents where medical knowledge was necessary. Littlejohn was even rumored to give advice in the investigation of the famous "Jack the Ripper" murders.

Conclusion: Holmes being is based on primarily three individuals – Dr. Joseph Bell, Henry Littlejohn and Jerome Caminada.

What do we know about Sherlock Holmes appearance?

Initially the readers of the very first Holmes novel "A Study in Scarlet" had to do with four featureless illustrations by D.H. Friston,

but, when the novella was printed as a book, Holmes seemed to be looking like Arthur Conan Doyle's own father, Charles Altamont Doyle and factually was the elder Doyle's illustration.

The author's father made a series of lackluster sketches that unfortunately failed to show the excitement of the story. He gave Sherlock his own appearance, including his messy beard. There are no notes to his son's reaction.

In 1891, when "A Scandal in Bohemia" was published in *The Strand Magazine*, readers were greeted with Sidney Paget's dismal drawings, which introduced Holmes as a tall man, handsome and genteel, despite Conan Doyle's real description, according to which Holmes was pretty thin, with a big expressive nose and small eyes set close. Probably Paget's younger brother Walter, whom the artist used as a model for drawing, was quite a handsome guy. Some years later, after his brother's passed away, Walter himself illustrated a few of Conan Doyle's novels. Shortly Conan Doyle grew attached to Sidney Paget's elegant look of Holmes, and when he met the American actor William Gillette, who wanted to play a role of Holmes on the stage, he understood that his creation had become alive.

While Conan Doyle's lifetime, silent film versions of Sherlock Holmes adventures were filmed in England and in the U.S. The U.S actor John Barrymore played Holmes in a film based on Gillette's stage plays, and British actor Ellie Norwood played Holmes in 47 silent films from 1920 to 1923. Typing "Sherlock Holmes" into the search engine of the "Internet Movie Database" at www.imdb.com we will get hundreds of films, including drama and comedy, pastiche and cartoons, all types of other stories that use the characters of Holmes and Watson.

Conclusion: Holmes appearance was created by artist Sidney Paget.

What Do We Know About Sherlock Holmes From Arthur Conan Doyle's Novels?

The author Conan Doyle was a highly educated man with incredible imagination. His specialty was an ophthalmologist, but he earned so less money and had so few clients that he started to write to fight tedium. He could to create realistic bright characters. Reading the stories about Baker Street's detective duo everybody was sure that Sherlock was alive person. The tall and skinny, hawk-nosed, with his deerstalker hat on and Inverness cape he is immediately recognizable in every place of the world.

Sherlock was firstly named Sherrinford. He was born on January 6, 1854, in the North

Riding of Yorkshire, on the farmstead of Mycroft (named as his older brother). He solved his first accident during a twenty-year-old student at Oxford. After graduation, he became the world's consulting private detective — a mission he was loyal for twenty-three years.

Holmes has essentially an obsessive nature. He works deeply on all his cases and his deductive method is astonishing. He can suffer from a deep depression between cases. He is also known to conduct chemistry experiments in his free from work time. He's not known to have an intimate or romantic relationship with someone.

In January 1881 he was looking for a man to share his new apartment at 221B Baker Street when one from his friends introduced him to Dr. John H. Watson. He also smokes a disgusting shag tobacco and does experiments with nasty-smelling chemicals. Even he regretfully notes his fondness for scratching away at his violin while of thinking; he seems to be a virtuoso who can calm his neighbor's raw nerves with a beautiful melody.

Holmes has not only excellent deductive powers but also an enormous intellect. He is great in anatomy, chemistry, mathematics, British law, and sensational literature. But at the same time a few parts of his vast sphere of knowledge, although he is obviously not well versed in astronomy, philosophy, and politics.

When he needs some information that his brain does not recall, he returns to not large, carefully selected library of inquiry notes and a series of usual books. Holmes ignores whatever he considers superfluous because he cares only about facts that help his investigation.

An athletic figure complements Holmes's prominent intelligence. He looks even taller than his six feet because he is skinny. His nose and sharp, piercing eyes give him an appearance like a hawk.

We know nothing about of Holmes' parents. He does mention, however, that his ancestors were "country squires". He says that his granddad was the artist Horace Vernet and we know that he has a seven years older brother Mycroft, who was a civil servant. Mycroft was an early and significant member of the British intelligence establishment.

Quite natural to wonder whether Holmes had any more brothers in his family. None are mentioned in any of the original Sherlock Holmes stories. But the 1975 film "The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother", starring Gene Wilder, is not about older brother Mycroft; instead, Wilder presents a maniacal third brother, Sigi Holmes. Apparently the name is short for Sigerson, taken from the Holmes pseudonym in "The Empty House".

A plenty of Sherlockians have ventured to think about a brother named Sherrinford. This name is taken from Arthur Conan Doyle's original notes for "A Study in Scarlet", in which the name Sherrinford is used for the private detective who would appear for the short time in print under the name of Sherlock.

So what about his sisters? There is no proof, apart from a few wistful phrases in "The Copper Beeches" to the effect that "no sister of mine" should avoid the risk that met Violet Hunter. Only on TV adaptation of that year we could meet crazy Holmes sister.

He often surprised his friend Watson with demonstration of strength and dexterity; he is an excellent boxer, fencer, and singlestick player. He needs all his power when he meets his old nemesis, the criminal Professor James Moriarty, in a fight at the edge of the Reichenbach Falls in Switzerland.

The evenly matched rivals, locked in the fight, fell down over the cliff; both of them were reported to be dead. All England wept the passing of the grand keeper of the law, but in 1894, after being absent for three years, Holmes came back. He had not been killed, after everything, but had seen a nice possibility to fool a lot of his enemies in the underworld. He had taken over the personality of a Danish researcher, Sigerson, and traveled to many countries, including New Jersey; where he is suppose to have had the meeting with Irene Adler, and to Tibet, where he learned the secret of Dalai Lama's longevity.

Miss Adler passed away in 1903; Holmes retired to keep bees on the southern hills of the Sussex Downs with his old housekeeper, Mrs. Martha Hudson. He came out of retirement shortly before World War I, but his life after that was calm.

Holmes has survived the people who took part in his adventures at different times. Besides Mycroft, Watson, Moriarty, Irene Adler, and Mrs. Hudson, the best-known secondary personalities in the novels is Billy the Page Boy, who from time to time declared visitors to 221B; Mary Morstan, the future wife of Mr. Watson; The Baker Street Irregulars, street boys with a Wiggins at the head, who bout after information for Holmes's coins; Lestrade, an unable Scotland Yard inspector; Stanley Hopkins, a Scotland Yard man with a great way of thinking; Gregson, the "smartest of the Scotland Yarders," according to Holmes; and Colonel Sebastian Moran, "the second most dangerous man in London."

Holmes was a private detective for 23 years and retired in the Sussex Downs shortly before 1904. The circumstances of his death are unknown for us.

Conclusion: Holmes had brothers, a sister and a grandfather.

Sherlock Holmes in Our Days.

Even in our days there are a lot of followers of Sherlock Holmes. People create many societies behalf of Sherlock Holmes to debate, promote and think over his life and achievements. They have a wide variety of joiners from 14 to 80 years of age and from all walks of life. But how did it start?

The first Sherlock Holmes society was based by Christopher Morley in 1902, at age 20 with his three friends on the streets of Bolton Hill in Baltimore. They called themselves "The Sign of the Four." During the 1920s, Morley helped found of the SRL. (See Appendix 1). He never lost his enjoyment of Sherlock Holmes. In 1926, he began to plant Sherlockian references in his post in the SRL.

In 1933, the Saturday Review of Literature published several newspaper columns on Sherlock Holmes, including Morley's declaration that Holmes's birthday was January 6 and the critique of some aforementioned books.

Later Morley noticed that the SRL would be publishing the material on January 6, 1934, the date of Sherlock Holmes' birthday. He called the admirers of Sherlock Holmes for a cocktail party at the Hotel Duane to celebrate the event. Thus, the BSI society (See Appendix 1) was born. Following that, mention of the BSI regularly presented itself in Morley's articles in the SRL. His brother Frank drew up the Sherlock Holmes "crossword puzzle" and it was published by Morley in the SRL newspaper, using it as an application for membership in the BSI. He asked people to mail him their completed puzzles. Men and women from all over the country did so.

But the BSI, as a formal association, seemed to be fading out in Morley's interest. He would quite enjoy having lunches with his close Irregular friends, but the BSI members would not meet again until 1940. In 1938, Edgar W. Smith, a Vice President at General Motors, began writing to Morley and Starrett. Smith proposed to take over many of the activity of planning the dinner from Morley, and Morley agreed with him. Thereafter, the BSI met every year at the initiative of Edgar W. Smith, who arranged the BSI. He did all the work, and the BSI escaped being Morley's trifling trick. Morley may have been the official head, but Smith became the engine that drove it. After Morley's death, Smith continued to run it. Later he shared his seat with Julian Wolf, then Tom Stix, and now Mike Whelan.

Membership is generally given after meaningful achievement, and, thus, BSI members

are mostly accomplished adults, either in the Sherlockian community or in their professions.

The BSI has approximately 300 members from around the world. About half attend the annual BSI Dinner in New York City every January, which attract people from all over the U.S., and also from the other countries like: U.K., Canada, France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Australia, Japan, and others.

The other Sherlockian society “Who’s Who” has been appointed in November 2001. The main aim of this society is to let Sherlockians to put a face on a name. Worldwide Sherlockians are corresponding via letters, emails, internet chatting or even phone, but they never had the chance to meet each other not in virtual life. And there was a real necessity about knowing more about their foreign members. In conclusion, the society “Who’s Who” is a good place to know more about the Sherlock fans from the societies in your own country and around the World.

From one of my Japanese friends who has recently visited me I knew that Sherlock Holmes Society also exists in Japan. It has more than 1,000 devoted members. And there is a statue of Holmes in Karuizawa. He told that in Japan I can find the English House in the typical Western colonial-style. Having returned home my friend visited it and sent me a lot of interesting photos from this place.

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