

A STUDY GUIDE TO SHERLOCK HOLMES

By William S. Dorn



**The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes
Adventure XXIII -- The
Adventure of the Resident
Patient**

THE RESIDENT PATIENT DATE OF THE ADVENTURE*

(When Blessington aka Sutton was hanged)

CLUES:

1. "... the other three (of the Worthingdon gang) got 15 years a piece" in 1875 (434)
2. "When they (the Worthingdon gang) got out the other day, which was some years before their full term ..." (434)
3. Time off for good behavior was usually about three years.
4. "It had been a close, rainy day in October" when the case opened (422)
5. The only days in October, 1887 when there was more than a trace of rain in London were the 9th, 10th, 29th and 30th.
6. "Their (the mysterious patient and his supposed son) reason for choosing so unusual an hour for a consultation was obviously to ensure that there should be no other patients in the waiting room"
7. October 9, 1887 was a Sunday.
8. October 10, 1887 was not a 'close day'.
9. October 30, 1887 there were gale force winds in London.
10. The visits by the mysterious patient to Dr. Percy Trevelyan's office were on the day before the case opened and the day the case opened.
11. Blessington's body was discovered by Dr. Trevelyan early in the morning after the second visit by the mysterious patient.
12. Holmes was summoned by Dr. Trevelyan at 7:30 am on the morning when the body was discovered (431)
13. Watson says, "... he (Blessington) has been dead about 3 hours." (432)

*The story may contain other clues to the date of the adventure. However, use only the clues shown here. Your only goal should be to use logical reasoning to find a date based on the clues shown here.

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. 1, 2 and 3 imply it was 1887.
- B. 4 and 5 imply the case opened October 9, 10, 29 or 30.
- C. 6 and 7 imply the case did not open on October 9.
- D. 4 and 8 imply the case did not open on October 10.
- E. 4 and 9 imply the case not open on October 30.
- F. A, B, C, D, and E imply the case opened on October 29, 1887
- G. 10, 11, and 12 imply that Blessington was hanged late night the day the case opened or early in the morning the day after the case opened.
- H. G and 13 imply that Blessington was hanged early in the morning the day after the case opened.
- I. F and H imply Blessington was hanged early in the morning on October 30, 1887.

Blessington aka Sutton was hanged on October 30, 1887

THE RESIDENT PATIENT VOCABULARY WORDS

tour de force (422, 423) – a feat of remarkable skill or strength
Scylla and Charybdis (422) – figuratively ‘between a rock and a hard place’; in Homer’s *Odyssey* Scylla was a sea monster with 6 heads, 12 feet, and the voice like a yelp of a dog; it lived in a cave by the sea from where it reached out to snatch sailors from passing ships; Charybdis was another sea monster that lived opposite Scylla; in later times Scylla was a rock on the Italian side of the Gulf of Messina and Charybdis was a whirlpool on the Sicilian side

glades (423) – open space

shingle of Southsea (423) – pebble beach of Southsea

brown study (423) – musing; a state of mental abstraction

reverie (423) – being lost in thought

General Gordon (423) – Charles “Chinese” Gordon (1833-1885), British general sent to Khartoum in the Sudan in 1884 to rescue English garrisons that were under attack by the Mahdi, Mohammed Ahmed. Gordon himself was besieged for 10 months. A relief expedition arrived on January 28, 1885 to find that Khartoum had been captured, and Gordon killed two days before.

Henry Ward Beecher (423) – US Congregational minister and militant opponent of slavery; he traveled to Britain and helped turn British sentiment against the South

brougham (424, 429, 431) – four-wheeled enclosed carriage, named for Lord Brougham, statesman (1778 – 1868)

- wicker basket (424) – **basket made by weaving flexible willow tree branches**
- sanctum (424) – **private place where one is free from intrusion**
- taper-faced (424) – **with a narrow face**
- frock-coat (425) – **close fitting, double-breasted, knee-length coat**
- coachman (425) – **driver of any carriage**
- lesions (425) – **sores on some part of the body**
- singular (425, 426, 429, 434) – **beyond what is ordinary or usual; remarkable**
- pathology (425) – **scientific study of the nature of disease and its causes, processes, development, and consequences**
- catalepsy (425, 427, 430) – **seizure or trance in which sensation and consciousness are suspended**
- plate (425) – **gold or silver-plated tableware**
- Lady Day (426) – **March 25; observed in honor of the Virgin Mary commemorating the Feast of the Annunciation**
- first floor (426) – **second floor in the United States**
- five and three-pence (426) – **5 shillings and 3 pence = 0.2625 of a pound**
- guinea (426) – **a pound plus one shilling = 105% of a pound**
- demure (427) – **modest and reserved**
- filial (427) – **relating to a son or daughter**
- sombre (429) – **dark; gloomy**
- reedy (429) – **thin or fragile**
- hard put to it (431) – **in great difficulty**
- morbidly (432) – **sickly, unhealthily**
- page (433, 434) – **young male servant whose primary duties are to answer the door and show people in to the building or room**
- ejaculated (433) – **suddenly and passionately cried out**

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wicker chair (433) – **chair made by weaving flexible willow tree branches**

surmised (434) – **inferred something without sufficiently conclusive evidence**

THE RESIDENT PATIENT OPEN QUESTIONS

1. The thought reading episode with which the story begins appeared earlier in *The Strand* edition of “The Adventure of the Cardboard Box”. However, that latter adventure was omitted from the book, *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*. “The Resident Patient” was included in the book, and Doyle lifted the thought reading episode and put it in “The Resident Patient”. Why do you suppose the “Adventure of the Cardboard Box” was omitted from *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*?

(HINT: “The Cardboard Box” was first published in *The Strand* magazine in January 1893. When the book, *The Memoirs*, was published in 1894, that story was omitted although “The Resident Patient” was included in the book. “The Cardboard Box” was included in a later volume, *His Last Bow*, published in 1917.)

“The Cardboard Box” was not published in *The Memoirs* because Doyle thought it would not be proper to use a story about marital infidelity in a book that would be widely read, more widely read than the magazine in which the story first appeared. However, he (Doyle) was loath to omit the thought reading episode, so he lifted it and inserted it verbatim in “The Resident Patient”. “The Cardboard Box” was later included in the volume *His Last Bow* published in 1917. By that time, Doyle thought including such a story in a book would be acceptable to the general public.

THE RESIDENT PATIENT SIMPLE QUIZ*

1. The resident patient was killed by
 - a. poison
 - b. a stab wound
 - c. hanging
 - d. none of the above

2. The resident patient was killed because
 - a. he buried a valuable treasure
 - b. he betrayed his friends
 - c. his murderers would inherit his wealth
 - d. none of the above

3. The murderers of the resident patient were
 - a. captured by Sherlock Holmes
 - b. killed by the police
 - c. not found
 - d. none of the above

* The Simple Quiz is designed to determine if the student has read the story. Anyone who has read the story through should have no trouble in completing this quiz. The Intermediate and Advanced Quizzes are more challenging.

THE RESIDENT PATIENT INTERMEDIATE QUIZ[#]

1. What American is mentioned in the story?
 - a. Abraham Lincoln
 - b. Harriet Beecher Stowe
 - c. Henry Ward Beecher
 - d. none of the above

2. What kind of attacks was the elderly Russian gentleman supposedly subjected to?
 - a. cataleptic attacks
 - b. epileptic attacks
 - c. attacks of severe depression
 - d. none of the above

3. Every day Blessington settled his accounts with Dr. Trevelyan. After doing so, where did Blessington put his share of the money?
 - a. under his mattress
 - b. in the strong box in his room
 - c. in a safe in the attic
 - d. none of the above

4. Which one of the following was NOT a member of the Worthingdon bank gang?
 - a. Biddle
 - b. Moffat
 - c. Sutton
 - d. Lanner

[#] The Intermediate Quiz is designed to test whether the student has read the story with reasonable attention to detail. The Simple Quiz is an easier test while the Advanced Quiz is much more challenging.

THE RESIDENT PATIENT ADVANCED QUIZ[&]

1. After arriving at the scene of death, how long did Watson say Blessington had been dead?
 - a. not more than 2 hours
 - b. about 3 hours
 - c. at least 6 hours
 - d. none of the above

2. According to Watson, what was the population of London at the time of this case?
 - a. two million
 - b. four million
 - c. five million
 - d. none of the above

3. What was the name of the police inspector in the case?
 - a. Cartwright
 - b. Gregory
 - c. Lanner
 - d. none of the above

4. Where were Dr. Trevelyan's consulting rooms at the time the story began?
 - a. Brook Street
 - b. Harley Street
 - c. St. Anne Street
 - d. none of the above

[&] The Advanced Quiz is designed for aficionados of the Canon. The questions are quite challenging. The Intermediate and Simple Quizzes are designed for the more casual reader of the stories.

ANSWERS TO QUIZZES

QUESTION	1	2	3	4
Silver Blaze				
Simple	c	b	d	xx
Intermediate	c	a	a	b
Advanced	c	c	b	a
The Yellow Face				
Simple	b	c	c	xx
Intermediate	b	b	c	a
Advanced	c	b	b	c
Stock-Broker's Clerk				
Simple	a	b	c	xx
Intermediate	c	c	a	a
Advanced	a	a	b	b
'Gloria Scott'				
Simple	b	b	a	xx
Intermediate	b	a	b	c
Advanced	c	c	a	c
Musgrave Ritual				
Simple	b	d	a	xx
Intermediate	b	a	a	c
Advanced	a	b	c	a
Reigate Puzzle				
Simple	c	b	b	xx
Intermediate	a	c	b	c
Advanced	b	a	c	b
Crooked Man				
Simple	b	b	a	c
Intermediate	b	a	c	c
Advanced	c	d	a	b
Resident Patient				
Simple	c	b	c	xx
Intermediate	c	a	b	d
Advanced	b	c	c	a

Answers to Quizzes

QUESTION	1	2	3	4
Greek Interpreter				
Simple	b	c	c	xx
Intermediate	b	c	b	a
Advanced	c	a	b	b
Naval Treaty				
Simple	c	a	b	xx
Intermediate	b	a	c	a
Advanced	c	b	c	b
Final Problem				
Simple	c	b	c	xx
Intermediate	b	c	c	a
Advanced	a	a	b	b