



Arthur Conan Doyle: Beyond Baker Street

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It is impossible to think of Arthur Conan Doyle without Sherlock Holmes coming to mind as well. Though Doyle was the author of numerous successful works of fiction, today he is recalled almost solely for his creation of the famous detective. Even during his lifetime, many of his fellow Englishmen knew the character far better than the author.

Doyle never really accepted being eclipsed by his fictional character, and, in fact, his life was far more fascinating than any of the mysteries investigated by the famous sleuth. Pascal provides valuable insight into the life of this remarkable man, who was far more than merely the creator of Sherlock Holmes. Adventurer, medical doctor, war correspondent, historian, knight of the realm—Doyle was all these things.

Though Arthur Conan Doyle was not Sherlock Holmes, he had many of the qualities of character that made his fictional counterpart so beloved. He was honest, forthright and passionate about important causes, such as working to right injustices done to individuals or to his beloved England. Perhaps the only drawback to this intelligent and cheerful man's life came in his later years, when he became devoted to the cause of spiritualism, the popular but misguided belief that deceased loved ones could be contacted at seances and even photographed by "spiritualists." Ironically, the logical Sherlock Holmes would never have believed in ghosts!

This biography is written with the younger reader in mind, though anyone who has read the adventures of Holmes and Dr. Watson will thoroughly enjoy "discovering" the multifaceted man who penned them.

ALAN J. COUTURE (March / April 2000)

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