

**Hudson Valley Sciontists**  
**Toast to Dr. Watson**  
**by Will Walsh**  
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When Candy asked if I was willing to provide a toast to Dr. Watson, I readily accepted the challenge. Candy even suggested that the toast might look at the changes in Doctor Watson found within the Case Book; and that was a marvelous suggestion.

As I reread the story, however, I had to put Candy's suggestion aside. There is too much in the Illustrious Client that defines Watson to look beyond the tale.

But first, a digression. Early in the story, we learned that Watson had just moved to a new location on Queen Anne Street. While this opens up consideration for Watson's second, third or fifth wife, research revealed something far more interesting. The Kelly Post Office Directory for 1882, lists #37 Queen Anne Street, a fine corner building and ideal for a medical practice, as the home of one Walter Hayle Walshe, physician. Personally, I enjoy the idea that twenty years later Dr. Walshe sold or leased his home and offices to Dr. John H. Watson.

Now, let's consider the traits of Dr. Watson, which the Illustrious Client illustrates.

When the duo first hear the details of the case and Holmes accepts the challenge, Watson's immediate words are "I should think you had better see the young lady herself." Here, we have Watson the bold campaigner. He sees the problem and he confronts it head on. While Holmes offers a sounder approach, Watson demonstrates the heart to tackle the issue.

Now second, another digression. Does anyone else here still endure those stress-induced dreams where you find yourself in college and discover that you have an exam in an hour or a paper due that day for a course you had forgotten you signed up for? I confess that I do.

Against that, imagine the depth of character that Watson exhibits in undertaking a cram course on Chinese pottery in an effort to hold his own against a man who has written on the subject. It is the equivalent of someone today, who has never heard of Holmes or Watson, suddenly deciding to attempt to fool Al Rosenblatt on the subject of the Canon. Lots of luck. Yet, Dr. Watson conducts a 20-hour dive into the world of ceramics, without a can of Red Bull, in order to face off against a virtuoso in the field. This highlights Watson's commitment to his friend and a willingness to undertake any task, no matter how daunting, for a just cause.

Finally, let us consider Dr. Watson's actions towards the villain, Baron Gruner. Watson knows that Gruner is responsible for the murder of two men. He has heard testimony demonstrating that Gruner is an abuser and manipulator of woman. He is particularly aware that Gruner is behind a villainous attack on Holmes, which has sidelined Holmes for days. Yet, when Kitty Winter splashes Gruner in the face with vitriol and the acid is eating away at the man's features, Dr. Watson becomes the consummate physician and bathes the man's wounds, applies the necessary bandages and administers morphine. Even as he recognized Baron Gruner as loathsome, Watson allowed the man to cling to his hand and receive human contact in his moments of terrible pain.

A Sherlockian Toast (posted 2025-5-4)

So, ladies and gentlemen, without further ado or tangents, let us raise our glasses and toast Dr. John Hamish Watson, stout of heart, relentless, diligent companion and compassionate physician. Dr. Watson.