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Bay Slaying 'Elementary' to Armchair Sleuths Here

BY GEORGE J. BARMANN

One damp, foggy London night, a woman, quite out of breath with excitement and horror, was let into the fire-lighted room of the great detective, Sherlock Holmes. She wished to consult him on a most distressing case.

"I am greatly puzzled, sir," she said. "In one week I have lost a motor horn, a brush, a box of golf balls, a dictionary and a bootjack. Can you explain it?"

"Nothing simpler, madame," said Holmes sternly, sucking on his curved pipe. "It is clear that your neighbor keeps a goat."

The Baker Street Irregulars, those vicarious residents of 221-B, where the master is said to have lived, probably would call this deduction extremely elementary. And the dense Dr. Watson, notably unsure in these matters, undoubtedly would have exclaimed: "By Jove! Eh, what?"

Many Figure Angles

Since the strange Fourth of July murder in Bay Village, the number of Greater Cleveland "irregulars," with a whole case book of solutions to the crime, is scattered across the map from one end of the county to the other.

Somewhere beyond the stars Holmes, his razor-like face, small, closely set eyes and hawk's bill of a nose visible between the curtains of his celestial four-wheeler, may be having trouble solving this case. It could conceivably shade the tough Prof. Moriarity incident.

But Greater Clevelanders by

the thousands are encountering little difficulty in handling the murder of Marilyn, wife of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard. They are certain they know who hacked her to death in her bed. Some of them say they plan to give police just so long to act.

There are those, of course, who are not so sure yet, but they are hot on the trail and they don't hesitate to announce their verdicts.

No Time for Food

Probably no murder in recent history here has so captured the imagination—and the amateur detective abilities or disabilities—of Clevelanders as has the Bay Village slaying.

The self-appointed detectives are operating from bars, women's clubs, offices, curbstones and neighborhood back porches. They are telephoning their theories to police headquarters and to newspapers without letup. Some even delay meals to rush the news to the Plain Dealer.

"I haven't thought much about eating since this thing happened," a man said yesterday. "This case has got to be cracked."

When the game was afoot Holmes often skipped lunch and supper. His landlady, Mrs. Hudson, inquired once over her rashers and eggs: "When will you be pleased to dine, Mr. Holmes?"

Self-Taught Sleuths

"Seven thirty, the day after tomorrow," he answered crisply.

Police of Cleveland and Bay Village said they had received calls from men and women who announce they read detective stories and therefore know how the case is going to turn out.

"I'm just a citizen," a man notified the Plain Dealer last night. "But look under the beach house in Bay Village."

"I read a lot of these detective stories, and here's the way it happened—," explained another.

Letters and notes to the Plain Dealer also report theories and possible solutions. One note recently was signed: "True, Not a Crackpot."

Interest Widespread

Interest in the slaying has spread far beyond Greater Cleveland. Newspapers in New

York and Chicago are covering the case with daily stories from the nationwide wire services and, in some cases, from special correspondence.

A Cleveland newspaperman, traveling in Arkansas reported he met a woman, a former Cleveland, who was following the case like a detective.

Sherlock Holmes, they say, could look at a bicycle track on a damp moor and tell which way it was heading. Greater Clevelanders, apparently, could also, if pressed, tell the color of the bicycle.