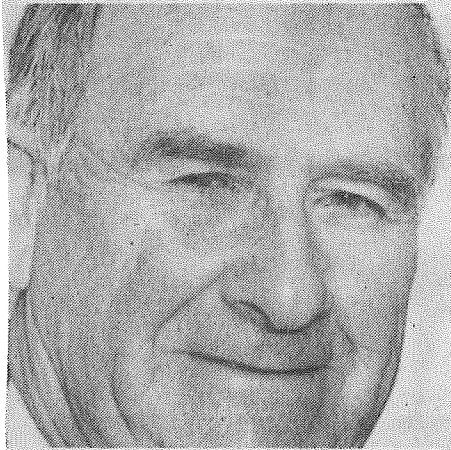


Sherlock Holmes of Port Credit

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Sherwood Walters has become one of the country's top researchers of the "Black Donnellys."

After about 10 years of obsessive research, long-time Port Credit resident Sherwood Walters figures he knows as much about the legendary "Black" Donnelly family as anyone in Canada.

"Was it Marx who said religion is the opiate of the people?" Walters asked during a recent interview. "Well, the Donnellys are my opiate."

Walters, 70, developed an early interest in the story of the Donnellys, slaughtered by vigilantes one winter night in the late 1800s.

"I'm interested in it because of my grandmother's stories to me," he said.

His grandparents had lived within miles of the family in Biddulph Township, a rural section of western Ontario.

The research has also attempted to clear the Donnelly name — unjustly smeared, Walters says, by years of "slander" — and

what are they doing now?

bring to light a 100-year-old coverup.

A judge and jury acquitted the vigilantes involved, despite eyewitness testimony, to avoid what many feared would be a revolution by Irish Catholics, Walters says.

"If it wasn't a conspiracy, then we've never had conspiracy in this country." Putting the story together has been as

time-consuming as a jigsaw puzzle, he said.

"It's like Sherlock Holmes. You find something and it leads to something else. Frankly, I don't know how doors open."

However, they have opened well enough to produce a handful of speaking engagements, several newspaper articles and an 800-page manuscript, which Walters says has attracted a major Canadian publisher.

"I've got to finish it this coming year, or else I'm going to burn it."

He also expects to keep up with his work as a chartered accountant in Toronto.

But in the meantime, he's anticipating Christmas at the Port Credit home where he's lived for the last 39 years.

"I'll be just sitting down and reading a bit of Dickens and watching the snowflakes fall."

Red King, BL

December 26, 1981 MN

WALTERS, SHERWOOD