

H.C. "Blair
Stb

High - May 13 '38
Comment

OUT IN THE HEADLINES

Todhunter Stout, born in Noblesville and who was the son of Mr. John W. Stout, Mr. Stout at one time the half-owner of the Noblesville Ledger, breaks into the headlines once more, and this time he appears in person at the apollis—with a six-inch beard.

Stout's column has written several columns about Rex and his doings in the literary world, as he is the author of several readable books. In this column will just give a little advertisement of a story he is appearing for the delight of the people. Noblesville shines brightly in the Times says:

When a deep voice bids you to open the door of Rex Stout's office as elegant as set of trained rats as you are apt to find this in Russia.

Stout is the Indiana-born author who created the very fat and lazy Nero Wolfe, champion chair sleuth. He was at the apollis Athletic Club today with a troupe of American Magazine and executives who were at a luncheon for Indianapolis officials. Others in the party were Gene Sarazen, Betty Hapworth, modeled the cover of the June issue of the magazine, and several

10:30 a. m. Mr. Stout had just stepped into his room and was looking at his beard which is gray and about six inches long, trained in the shape of a crescent that Mr. Stout has made up out of his own hair. Even for a one-night stand, Stout had everything in his office in a definitely ordered place. Stout is away. That's because, he was an accountant before he started writing and has that accountant's mind of an accountant.

"After I had made what was a good deal of money for me," he said, "I retired and wrote so-called serious novels. Aldous Huxley praised one of them and I got a letter from George Bernard Shaw on another. Then the depression came and I had to write some kind of book that would sell more than 10 copies. So I took up detective fiction.

"I imagine that Nero Wolfe is a combination of characteristics of many people I have known. He eats like a Count Rosetti I once knew in Paris. And I suppose he drinks beer all the time as an eccentricity that probably stemmed from the shots in the arm Sherlock Holmes always took.

"He raises orchids because, after I decided he was going to stay at home and not run around all the time, I had to have something for him to do. So I had him grow orchids. I grow them.

"Really, I like Archie better than Nero. In my next book, as yet unpublished, Nero gets to upstate New York because some fellow he doesn't like claims to have him beat on orchid growing."

"Mr. Stout said he was born in Noblesville and that his father once went to school under James Whitcomb Riley. His father and mother were Quakers and both were graduated from Earlham College.

"The best detective book ever written in America, he said, was 'The Maltese Falcon', by Dashiell Hammett. Any police reporter knows fifty thousand times more about solving a crime than he does, Mr. Stout readily admitted.

"He turns each book out in under 40 days, writing five hours and budgeting 2000 words a day."

Dayton Daily News.

J-4 FRIDAY, JUNE 3, 1938

ALICE HUGHES

"A Woman's New York"

Writer "week-ends" with John-Frederics and Rex Stout at their country homes . . . J. P. Morgan receives congratulations on arrival of first great-grandchild . . . Large snakeskin hats seem popular . . . White nail polish is new.

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NEW YORK, June 3.—The New York Week-End Season is now in high. Come here, come there, and those of us who haven't a little shanty (eight bedrooms, nine baths) in Jersey, Westchester or Connecticut can usually spend Saturday and Sunday getting fine grub, good beds and mosquito bites 45 minutes from Broadway. I dress a pretty good week-end, though I'm a city lover, but the little old man is a problem. He hates fancy sports clothes, and the most he will do is put on a pair of grey pants and an old left-over coat. He is a regular week-end bum.

Sometimes we split week-ends between friends fighting for our patronage, to their ultimate sorrow. Saturday evening we spent at the lake and woods-surrounded spot of John Frederics, milliners—an hour from town, and yet as remote as a fishing hideaway in Maine. Three fine servants minister to those who rough it, including a magnificent chef who can roast a squab with any cook in Gotham. On Sunday we drove to the hilltop home of Rex and

Pola Stout at Brewster, N. Y. Rex, bearded and outdoorish, writes the Nero Wolf mystery fiction, while lovely Pola designs and weaves wondrous fabrics, and mothers Rex and two children.

Rex broiled about 50 pounds of two-inch steak on an open fire for the 30 guests, and we went glutton. Half the crowd was writing folk, like Rex, Joseph Wood Krutch of the "Nation," and Gilbert Gabriel, critic, novelist and movie writer. The rest of us were in or around the "rag business." Plenty of talk, lots of eating, bright sunshine and a panorama of country toward the Hudson. Lovely, hectic week-end—good food, good talk, good friends, and by today we feel almost normal again. The menace and joys of New York week-ends are an inexhaustible subject. I'm afraid you're in for plenty more!

The perfect writer seems to be my friend, Rex Stout, thinker-upper of Nero Wolf, the fat detective. Visiting the Stout farm at Brewster to get reports of his Pola's recent trip to her home in Poland, I found Rex working in a tent on the grounds—since there is a new and very vocal baby in the family. He's doing a serial with a Reno background, and when I looked at his copy I found it absolutely flawless—no mistakes, no exing out, no interlining. And that perfect first draft, if you please, is the way the stuff goes to the publisher! What-a-man Stout! . . .