

# Oliver Wendell Holmes

*Physician and Man of Letters*

Scott H. Podolsky

Charles S. Bryan

*Editors*

*Published for the*  
**Boston Medical Library**

*by*

Science History Publications/USA

*a division of*

Watson Publishing International LLC

Sagamore Beach

2009

# *Contents*

Acknowledgments ix

Preface xi

## PART I—ESSAYS

“The Greatest Brahmin”: Overview of a Life 3

*Charles S. Bryan*

Oliver Wendell Holmes’s 1842 Lectures  
on “Homœopathy and Its Kindred  
Delusions”: A Retrospective Look 23

*John S. Haller, Jr.*

A Private Pestilence: Holmes and Puerperal Fever 39

*Amalie M. Kass*

Medical Therapeutics and Its Kindred Delusions:  
Oliver Wendell Holmes on Drugs, Disease,  
and Rational Care 59

*Charles E. Rosenberg*

Doctor Holmes: The Life in Conversation 71

*Peter Gibian*

Oliver Wendell Holmes’s Depth Psychology:  
A Reconstruction 93

*Michael A. Weinstein*

## PART II—THE QUOTABLE HOLMES

Holme the Physician	107
Education	108
Medical Science	112
Medical Art	124
Medical Practice	136
The Medical Profession	146
Medicine and Society	153
Homeopathy and Its Kindred Delusions	155
The Contagiousness of Puerperal Fever	162
Medical Critics	165
Selected Poems	166
<i>"The Stethoscope Song"</i>	
<i>"The Morning Visit"</i>	
Holmes the Man of Letters	173
The Human Condition	174
Epistemology, Wisdom, and Truth	190
Metaphysics, Psychopathology, and Religion	198
Communication and Creativity	212
Society and the Body Politic	226
Selected Non-Medical Poems	233
<i>"Old Ironsides"</i>	
<i>"The Last Leaf"</i>	
<i>"The Chambered Nautilus"</i>	
<i>"The Deacon's Masterpiece, or the Wonderful 'One-Hoss Shay'"</i>	
"Introductory—Sept. 26th, 1879"	243
Bibliography	259
Notes on Contributors	263
Index	267