

= John Gardner (British writer) =

Not to be confused with John Gardner (American writer)

John Edmund Gardner (20 November 1926 ? 3 August 2007) was an English spy and thriller novelist , best known for his James Bond continuation novels , but also for his series of Boysie Oakes books and three continuation novels containing Sir Arthur Conan Doyle 's fictional villain , Professor Moriarty .

Gardner , an ex @-@ Royal Marine commando , worked for a period as an Anglican priest , but he lost his faith and left the church after a short time . After a battle with alcohol addiction he wrote his first book , the autobiographical Spin the Bottle , published in 1964 .

Gardner went on to write over fifty works of fiction , including fourteen original James Bond novels , and the novel versions of two Bond films . He died from suspected heart failure on 3 August 2007 .

= = Early life = =

John Edmund Gardner was born on 20 November 1926 in Seaton Delaval , a small village in Northumberland . His parents were Cyril Gardner , a London @-@ born Anglican priest who had been ordained in Wallsend in 1921 , and Lena Henderson , a local girl ; the couple were married in 1925 . In 1933 the family moved to the market town of Wantage in what was then Berkshire , where Cyril took up the position of Chaplain at St Mary 's , Wantage and Gardner was educated at the local King Alfred 's School .

During the Second World War he joined the Home Guard , despite being only 13 at the time . Gardner subsequently served in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm , before transferring to the Royal Marines 42 Commando for service in the Middle and Far East . Gardner considered himself " the worst commando in the world " and , despite being " a small @-@ arms expert ... [who] also knew a lot about explosives " , he admitted that " I bent an aeroplane I was learning to fly " .

After the war he went up to St John 's College , Cambridge , to study theology and was subsequently ordained as an Anglican priest in 1953 . He realised that he had lost his faith and made an error in his career ; he later admitted that during one sermon , " I didn 't believe a word I was saying " . He was released from the church in 1958 and took up a position as a drama critic with the Stratford @-@ upon @-@ Avon Herald . It was whilst at the Herald ? aged 33 ? that Gardner realised he was an alcoholic , drinking two bottles of gin a day . He overcame his addiction and produced his first book as part of his therapy : the autobiographical Spin the Bottle , published in 1964 . Critic and scholar John Sutherland says that of all the books Gardner published , " it 's the one that most deserves to survive . "

= = Writing career = =

In 1964 , Gardner began his novelist career with The Liquidator , in which he created the character Boysie Oakes who inadvertently is mistaken to be a tough , pitiless man of action and is thereupon recruited into a British spy agency . In fact , Oakes was a devout coward who was terrified of violence , suffered from airsickness and was afraid of heights and Gardner admitted of him that , " though I have denied it many times ? he was of course a complete piss @-@ take of J. Bond " . The book appeared at the height of the fictional spy mania and , as a send @-@ up of the whole business , was an immediate success . Upon reviewing the novel in The New York Times , Anthony Boucher wrote , " Mr. Gardner succeeds in having it both ways : He has written a clever parody which is also a genuinely satisfactory thriller . " The book was made into a film of the same name by MGM and another seven light @-@ hearted novels and two short stories about the cowardly Oakes appeared over the next eleven years .

Following the success of his Oakes books , Gardner created new characters : Derek Torry ? a Scotland Yard inspector of Italian descent ? and Herbie Kruger , the latter of which appeared in a series of novels published simultaneously with his Bond works . In the mid @-@ 1970s Gardner also wrote the first of three novels using the character of Professor Moriarty from the Sherlock

Holmes series , the last of which was published posthumously . The third of this series , titled simply Moriarty , was delayed due to a dispute with the publisher , but was finally released shortly after his death . Erik Lee Preminger bought the film rights to the first of the trilogy - The Return of Moriarty - and wrote a script . Edgar Bronfman , Jr . , for Sagittarius Entertainment and Nat Cohen , for EMI Productions were to produce . Donald Sutherland was to portray Moriarty . Funding however fell through shortly before filming was to begin .

In 1979 Glidrose Publications (now Ian Fleming Publications) approached Gardner and asked him to revive Ian Fleming 's James Bond series of novels . Between 1981 and 1996 , Gardner wrote fourteen James Bond novels , and the novelizations of two Bond films . Gardner stated that he wanted " to bring Mr Bond into the 1980s " , although he retained the ages of the characters as they were when Fleming had left them . Even though Gardner kept the ages the same , he made Bond grey at the temples as a nod to the passing of the years . With the influence of the American publishers , Putnam 's , the Gardner novels showed an increase in the number of Americanisms used in the book , such as a waiter wearing " pants " , rather than trousers , in The Man from Barbarossa . James Harker , writing in The Guardian , considered that the Gardner books were " dogged by silliness " , giving examples of Scorpius , where much of the action is set in Chippenham , and Win , Lose or Die , where " Bond gets chummy with an unconvincing Maggie Thatcher " . Whilst Gardner 's Bond novels received a mixed reaction from the critics , they were popular and a number appeared in The New York Times Best Seller list , bringing the author commercial success . Gardner had an ambivalent view on being the Bond author , once saying that " I 'm very grateful to have been selected to keep Bond alive . But I 'd much rather be remembered for my own work than I would for Bond " , while saying on another occasion that " I remain proud that my contribution to the Bond saga played a great part in its development " . In the mid @-@ 1990s , after discovering he had esophageal cancer , Gardner officially retired from writing Bond novels and Glidrose Publications quickly chose Raymond Benson to continue the literary stories of James Bond .

His break from writing lasted for five years , following the death of his wife , but after battling his illness he returned to print in 2000 with a new novel , Day of Absolution . Gardner also began a series of books with a new character , Suzie Mountford , a 1930s police detective .

The Globe and Mail crime critic Derrick Murdoch said , " John Gardner is technically a highly competent thriller novelist who never seems to be quite at ease unless he is writing in the same vein as another writer . (He has worked John le Carré and Graham Greene this way , and it 's what makes him so well qualified to continue the James Bond saga .) "

The Crime Writers ' Association short @-@ listed The Liquidator , The Dancing Dodo , The Nostradamus Traitor , and The Garden of Weapons for their annual Gold Dagger award .

= = Personal life = =

In 1952 Gardner married Margaret Mercer and the couple had two children , Simon and Alexis . Gardner also had another daughter , Miranda , the result of a long affair with Susan Wright , former PA to Peter Sellers . In 1989 , Gardner and his family moved to the US and it was in America that he was diagnosed with cancer ; firstly for the prostate and then , six years later , of the oesophagus . The subsequent medical treatment in the US left him near bankrupt and he returned to the UK in November 1996 . Shortly after his return , in February 1997 , Margaret died unexpectedly .

When Gardner returned to writing , his second book , Bottled Spider , introduced a new character , Detective Sergeant Suzie Mountford . Gardner took the surname from Patricia Mountford , an ex @-@ girlfriend to whom he 'd been engaged in 1949 . When she read the book Mountford contacted Gardner through his publishers and the two were subsequently engaged .

= = Death = =

Gardner died on Friday 3 August 2007 from suspected heart failure . He collapsed while shopping in Basingstoke ; he was later rushed to hospital , where he died .

= = Works = =

= = = Autobiography = = =

Spin the Bottle (1964)

= = = Boysie Oakes novels = = =

The Liquidator (1964)

Understrike (1965)

Amber Nine (1966)

Madrigal (1967)

Founder Member (1969)

Traitor 's Exit (1970)

The Airline Pirates (1970) - published in the U.S. as Air Apparent

A Killer for a Song (1975)

Two Boysie Oakes short stories appear in The Assassination File (A Handful of Rice , Corkscrew)

Two Boysie Oakes short stories appear in Hideaway (Boysie Oakes and The Explosive Device , Sunset At Paleokastritsa) .

= = = Derek Torry novels = = =

A Complete State of Death (1969) - reissued in the U.S. as The Stone Killer

The Corner Men (1974)

= = = Professor Moriarty novels = = =

The Return of Moriarty (1974)

The Revenge of Moriarty (1975)

Moriarty (2008)

= = = Herbie Kruger novels = = =

The Nostradamus Traitor (1979)

The Garden of Weapons (1980)

The Quiet Dogs (1982)

Maestro (1993)

Confessor (1995)

Herbie Kruger also appears in The Secret Houses and The Secret Families .

= = = The Railton family novels = = =

The Secret Generations (1985)

The Secret Houses (1988)

The Secret Families (1989)

= = = James Bond novels = = =

Licence Renewed (1981)

For Special Services (1982)

Icebreaker (1983)

Role of Honour (1984)
Nobody Lives for Ever (1986)
No Deals , Mr. Bond (1987)
Scorpius (1988)
Win , Lose or Die (1989)
Licence to Kill (1989) ? novelization of a film script
Brokenclaw (1990)
The Man from Barbarossa (1991)
Death is Forever (1992)
Never Send Flowers (1993)
SeaFire (1994)
GoldenEye (1995) ? novelization of a film script
Cold (1996) ? published in the U.S. as Cold Fall

= = = Detective Sergeant Suzie Mountford novels = = =

Bottled Spider (2002)
The Streets of Town (2003)
Angels Dining at the Ritz (2004)
Troubled Midnight (2005)
No Human Enemy (2007)

= = = Other novels = = =

The Censor (1970)
Every Night 's a Bullfight (1971) (Published in the U.S. in a bowdlerized edition as " Every Night 's a Festival " in 1972 .) [1]
To Run a Little Faster (1976)
The Werewolf Trace (1977)
The Dancing Dodo (1978)
Golgotha (1980) - published in the U.S. as The Last Trump
The Director (1982) (A re @-@ working of his 1971 novel " Every Night 's a Bullfight " .)
Flamingo (1983)
Blood of the Fathers (1992) (as by " Edmund McCoy " . Later published under his own name in 2004 .)
Day of Absolution (2000)

= = = Short story collections = = =

Hideaway (1968) (Contains two Boysie Oakes stories .)
The Assassination File (1974) (Contains two Boysie Oakes stories .)