



Ineffable Twaddle

"It is my business to know what other people don't know."

The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle

A monthly publication of
The Sound of the Baskervilles
A Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars • Since March 31, 1980
Serving the Greater Puget Sound Region of Western Washington



Volume 31, Issue 1
January 2012



Last June, I brought in a copy of the graphic novel, "The Trial of Sherlock Holmes." (For the uninitiated please, translate "graphic novel" as "big thick comic book," often an anthology of a work originally printed in series form.) To my surprise, this work was news to all. When I informed my fellow SOBs that there were, in fact, quite a flock of graphic novels on Holmesian themes either in print or shortly to appear, I was, accordingly, instructed to get busy and produce an article on the subject. At first this was to have been a massive scrawl intended for the Christmas Annual, but it's been decided that bite-size chunks in *Twaddle* would better meet the scale of the undertaking. (As I would never review a book I hadn't read, I naturally used this as an excuse to buy a bunch of new books.)

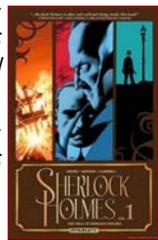
Except where noted this text is not mine; the titles, publisher's information and reviews are extracted from Amazon.com, and other more reputable sources than your humble correspondent.

"Sherlock Holmes, Vol. 1: The Trial of Sherlock Holmes", by Leah Moore (Author), John Reppion (Author), Aaron Campbell (Author)

Product Details: Hardcover, 168 pages, Dynamite Entertainment, 1st Printing (Nov. 15, 2009)

The Words in Print: "Moore and Reppion bring new life to the iconic Holmes and Watson, with a tantalizing tale and their hallmark attention to period detail. Whether you're a dedicated Sherlockian or a Holmesian newbie, grab this one!"—Leslie S. Klinger, author of the New Annotated Sherlock Holmes series. Dynamite Entertainment delivers a thrilling mystery...which presents the great detective with an all-too personal quandary and explores the nature of the man and his world with a mix of refined ambiance, carefully crafted mystery and chilling suspense.

DC sez: An original work dedicated to Doyle and—with some justification—presenting us with a complex plot cleverly-written and very well-drawn. We all love a



good "locked room mystery". What better than to find one with Holmes alone inside with the victim? His victim?

• • •

"Baker St Irregulars 1: Missing Detective (Edge Sherlock Holmes)", by Tony Lee (Author)

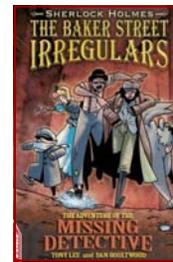
Product Details: Paperback, 48 pages, Franklin Watts (May 12, 2011)

The Words in Print: "It's beautiful art—and there's a lot of story on the page. Lots of words are always good."—Terrance Dicks.

With Sherlock Holmes missing, and the fair city of London ravaged by crime, the Baker Street Irregulars move into 221B...embark[ing] on their first case—and quickly discover that they are up against a sinister villain...Follow the adventures of the Baker Street Irregulars as they hunt for clues and crime-solve their way across London in these full-colour graphic novels. This is book 1 in a new series written "in canon" by New York Times bestselling author Tony Lee, drawn by critically-acclaimed artist Dan Boulton, and supported by one of the world's foremost authorities on Sherlock Holmes, Leslie S. Klinger.

DC sez: A beautifully-drawn series intended for young adults or children. (I found both the art and the writing very much to my taste.) The star characters seem, to me, largely new inventions or rest upon mere ciphers that only passed fleetingly through the Canon, are a delight, right down to their perfectly appalling Cockney-esque grammar. These stories are set in the period following the events at Reichenbach Falls, and look closely into the question of who (besides presumably Mrs. Hudson), did Mycroft take into his confidence regarding his brother's true whereabouts?) I freely admit enjoying this tale and will definitely follow the series, now in it's fourth issue. It has been well-received and I can recommend it as a jumping off point for those who are not experienced comic book readers.

And that gentle readers is all for this time. But a parting query for you all: Would the SOBs stand for reviews of other "Victorian" works? Even if they (*shudder*) do not contain the immortal Holmes? Please advise us. Until next time, DC



Inside this issue:

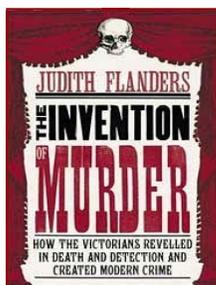
| | |
|--|---|
| <i>Irregular Views</i> | 1 |
| A new periodic column by SOB DC Smith | |
| <i>January Meeting Cancelled; February Means FINA</i> | 2 |
| <i>Invention of Murder: A Review by SOB John Longenbaugh</i> | 2 |
| <i>Things to See, Buy, Do & Know</i> | 3 |
| <i>Member News & Updates</i> | 4 |

Don't miss our enclosed "YEAR IN REVIEW". It's also posted at our website under "Breaking News"!!





T.S. McHugh's Public House is at 21 Mercer Street, Seattle, (206) 282-1910. **Come at 5:00, order dinner and catch up with other SOB's!**



SOB John Longenbaugh reviews this book in the essay at right.

Librarian's Corner

"It is a great thing to start life with a small number of really good books which are your very own."—Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

We added 4 newly purchased books to the SOB library this year! Here are brief notes on one of them; I'll have blurbs for the other three in future issues of *Twaddle*.

***The Little Book of Steam* by Clive Groome**—who is "an engineman and a real railwayman which is a compliment that had to be earned,..." (from *the Forward*). Groome started with the railways at age 15 and is now a legendary figure in British railway lore. This very nice, small book has really wonderful hand-drawn illustrations and many historical photos. The narrative covers about 200 years of the development and use of steam locomotives. Chapters read from early pioneers, standardization and technology, World War II, and steam in decline from 1954-68. I knew nothing about this topic before, but it is indeed fascinating. Check it out!

Sheila Holtgrieve,
SOB Librarian,

Librarian@soundofthebaskervilles.com

January Meeting Cancelled; February Means FINA

The January 9 Regular Monthly Meeting will not occur, due to darkness, inclement weather and nearness to our Master's Dinner!! We will again convene on February 13, 2012—social hour starts at 5:00 p.m.; business meeting, at 6:00 p.m.—when we will study "The Final Problem"!

Invention of Murder: A Review by SOB John Longenbaugh

The Invention of Murder: How the Victorians Reveled in Death and Detection and Created Modern Crime by Judith Flanders (Harper Press, 2011, 556 p.)

The Victorians are so far away from us... and so close. We like to think that we are exponentially more enlightened, more sophisticated than our stiff-collared forebears, but any good history of the 19th century reveals that they were in many ways more similar to us than we believe.

Judith Flanders' *The Invention of Murder* is a study in Victoriana that seeks to show how real-world events helped create a society that was obsessed with violent crime and the developing science of detection. It's a great thesis, one of specific interest to Sherlockians and fans of Victoriana, but while the book is undeniably packed with information and some intelligent insight, it also has a few problems of style and presentation.

Murder's central focus is on how such infamous crimes as the Murder in the Red Barn, the "Resurrection Men" Burke and Hare and the Jack the Ripper Murders captured the public's imagination not only through newspapers but through drama, ballads, poetry and such unlikely cultural artifacts as ceramics. (There's a wonderful photo of a collector's ceramic set featuring the Red Barn, along with the murderer and victim, all depicted with the charming whimsy of a Hummel collection.)

Flanders also charts how the century marked the change in public attitudes towards the police force and detectives. The London Metropolitan Police were originally viewed as corrupt informers more concerned with tamping down forces of social unrest than solving crimes, and there was more than a little truth to such a view. But as the emerging science of forensics began to come into general use and capture the public imagination through murder trials, the police began to be seen as heroes both in fiction and in reality.

Flanders is at her best in uncovering lesser-known details of history and charting how genre works like "sensation novels," works about buried secrets, developed into "detective novels," where a detective actively uncovers the mystery, instead of it coming to light

piecemeal through coincidence and the efforts of various characters. She also does a thorough job in noting the crimes that truly grabbed the popular imagination, and charting their influence across journalism, the arts and culture.

But *Murder* has its problems as well. Flanders' prose is inconsistent, and its worst veers into dusty academia, only enlivened by occasional shots of wry. What's more, the thesis of the book remains principally in the title and the introductory chapter. Most of the following chapters often feel like independent studies in Victoriana, unrelated to the larger themes that her thesis presupposes. Her chapter on "Middle Class Poisoners," for example, jumps from discussions of real world crimes, press coverage of these crimes, forensic advances and literature inspired by these cases in an occasionally confusing manner. Her overall structure feels fragmentary, with chapters divided between the occasional details of individual crimes and some social analysis of their effect. The style is more monographic than book length.

Yet while Flanders doesn't necessarily fulfill her stated thesis in full, there are plenty of delightful details that call up present-day comparisons. Missing and murdered children of upper-class families still fascinate the media in a way that equally horrible crimes among the poor and minorities never do. Violent crimes still leave odd tracks across culture—while we might not see porcelain figures produced to commemorate a famous murder, films, TV shows and plays still are churned out about everyone from Son of Sam to John Wayne Gacy. And for Sherlockians, it's fascinating to track how a variety of...literary and real-life influences set the stage for the emergence of the Great Detective.

This is a book that's best for dipping, and for supplementing other works on specific Victorian crimes, such as Kate Summerscale's *The Suspicions of Mr. Whicher*, about the Road Hill House Murder. Flanders' thesis remains fascinating. Hopefully it will be picked up to greater effect by another writer in the future.

Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

• **From Omaha SOB Carl Wirth:** I got my copy of "The House of Silk" from The Bookworm, which led to my discussion with one of the bookstore's salesladies on **how Monk, House and Detective Gordon of "Law & Order, Criminal Intent" are all the "grandsons" of Holmes**...wonderful when people listen when you can come up with something that could be considered Ineffable Twaddle!

• **From SOB Jim Nagle:** Finished "The House of Silk" over the weekend. Loved it.

• **From SOB Librarian Sheila Holtgrieve:** Check this out: www.criminalelement.com/blogs/2011/12/brains-vs-brawn-the-battle-for-guy-ritchie-sherlock-holmes. I think this is an interesting, albeit long, essay on the two current versions of Holmes and Watson—BBC's "Sherlock" and Guy Ritchie's movies. With the release of the new movie, this essay is timely. Here's just one appropriate quote: *Whatever the ultimate verdicts regarding the quality of these very different versions, I'm delighted to be around to see all of them, and nearly back to back, no less. It's proof positive that Sherlock Holmes is a crimesolver for the ages that two such very disparate and yet enjoyable portraits of him should be painted in the same year.*

• **From Peter Blau:**

⇒ The new season of BBC's "Sherlock" will start its run of three new episodes on PBS on **May 6**.

⇒ "A Study in Sherlock: Stories Inspired by the Holmes Canon", edited by Laurie King and Les Klinger (\$15, TPO, Bantam books) is now out. It's an excellent and interesting anthology.

• **From SOB Margaret Nelson:** Got a brochure that was passed out at the London Sherlock Holmes Society meeting we attended in October describing the **Doyle weekend being held in Haslemere**, England June 15 through 17, 2012. It's subtitled, "A celebration of Arthur Conan Doyle's life and work in Haslemere and Hindhead." For more, go to: www.haslemere.com/conandoyle.

• **From SOB Treasurer Al Nelson:**

⇒ While in Vancouver, BC recently, found a nice, small neighborhood bookstore called "Hager Books" on 41st West and a mystery store called "Dead Write". The former was great; the latter

was ok but is not doing well and will merge with a sci-fi store in January.

⇒ The London Times Culture Magazine reviewed on November 13 "Masters of the Post: The Authorised History of the Royal Mail" by Duncan Campbell-Smith, calling it "...a solid, brilliantly researched and sometimes drily witty account of an institution once again in the throes of dramatic reinvention." Of interest: London had five postal deliveries a day. "...So a business in the capital could receive a letter in the morning, reply to it in the afternoon and get a further response back in the evening...Nor was this Victorian efficiency a consequence of a low volume of letters. The number delivered annually rose from 564 million in 1860 to 2.3 billion by the end of that century!" For more, www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/

• **From SOB Margie Deck:** For those who need a fix before the May 6 PBS premiere of the second season, there is a website where you can **read interviews with the "Sherlock" co-creators/co-writers and actors:** Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss, and Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman. Go to: www.bbc.co.uk/media/centre/mediapacks/sherlock/

• **From SOB Stu Shiffman:** **The Nyctalope Steps In** by Jean de La Hire & Others (ed. by J-M. & R Lofficier, Black Coat Press) is a new anthology featuring France's premier pulp superhero from the 1920s and 1930s. Of the 14 stories, eight were especially written for this volume, including one of my own. Mine is a crossover between Nyctalope and Nero Wolfe and Archie Goodwin, along with Ivor Llewellyn head of *Superba-Llewellyn movie studio*.



• **From SOB Webmaster Stu Nelan:** Holmes fans from 20 countries (including China, Japan, Australia, USA, etc.) attended **The Great Sherlock Holmes Debate** online on November 10. Three teams including...from BBC's "Sherlock", Warner Brothers "Sherlock Holmes" movies, and others included leading Holmes actors, producers, directors, historians and authors. The 1 hour, 15 minute debate started with 3 wonderful detailed presentations from the teams. Go to: www.mxpublishing.com/page/debate to find links to the debate results.

• **From SOB Michael Phillips:** Target still had their **Collectible Nutcrackers** in stock in early December for only \$10. They even have one dressed as Sherlock Holmes, which makes a great gift!

From SOB Librarian Sheila Holtgrieve
Made my first posting to the Hounds of the Internet recently. The topic was: Fainting in general and fainting in the Canon. Said I:

Fainting is actually a very good physiologic protective device. When blood pressure takes a dive for whatever reason, shock, getting up too fast, etc., fainting serves to put the body on the floor, hence getting blood into the central and cerebral circulation quickly. Fainters usually come to quickly. Annie Harrison (aka Sheila Holtgrieve, R.N.)

From author/SOB Bill Mason of Green Brier, TN
(The SOBs) were discussed among us at the "Gillette to Brett III Conference" in Indiana this past weekend as an example of one of the "first rate" scions. Love the newsletter and all the discussion of what you are doing.

From our Friends at Classic Specialties: This is the official lapel pin of the Chicago scion, **Hugo's Companions**. The pin measures about 1 1/4" in length and a little over 3/4" in height. It is plated in real gold! This is a very "classy" and subtle way to show your connection with the Sherlockian Community or to make an attractive addition to your pin collection. **Item#:** J/Hugo, **Price:** US \$16.95 : www.sherlock-holmes.com/

No matter what your opinion of "Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows", we want to hear them!!
Send yours to Editor Terri at: Terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com
For a write-up of our attendance at the Seattle premiere, go to: www.soundofthebaskervilles.com



The Sound of the Baskervilles
By appointment of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria

Ineffable Twaddle

A monthly publication of
The Sound of the Baskervilles
A Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars since March 31, 1980
Serving the Greater Puget Sound Region of Western Washington

President: David Haugen, PFL, SOB, PSC
Treasurer: Allen Nelson (treasurer@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Secretary/Editor: Terri Haugen (terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Historian: Lloyd Hedberg (lloyd@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Lending Librarian: Sheila Holtgrieve (librarian@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Webmaster: Stuart Nelan (stu@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Website: www.soundofthebaskervilles.com

Direct correspondence to:

3606 Harborcrest Court N.W.
Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981 USA
Phone: 253-853-5187
Fax: 253-853-5187
Email: david@soundofthebaskervilles.com



Member News & Updates

SOBs attending the December Meeting, presided over by **PFL David Haugen**, were:

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Stephen Adkins | Pat McIntosh | Terri Haugen |
| Sheila Holtgrieve | John Nelson | D.C. Smith |
| Barbara Nelson | John Longenbaugh | Hank Deck |
| Michelle Poitevin | Lauran Stevens | Marge Nelson |
| Al Nelson | Jim Nagle | Margie Deck |
| Stu Shiffman | Caroll Clemens | Thom Walls |
| Jon Strandberg | Ann Stevens | Ed Funk |
| Joyce Funk | | |

News & Notes:

- **Caroll** and **Ann** were both back after long absences; **Joyce & Ed** were back after her very successful back surgery; and we welcomed possible new member **Jim Vavra**!!

- **PFL David** reported:

- Several SOBs were on air on December 3 to take calls for KBTC's Mystery Marathon and the PFL got interviewed twice! We donated a copy of Tracy's "The Encyclopedia Sherlockiana" to be won by one of the contributors to the fundraisers on December 2 and 9.

- The 1895 home of **John & Barbara Nelson** was overflowing with 17 SOBs on December 4. **Jody Holm** came all the way from Bellingham, and it was also nice to see **Michael Phillips & Walter Choy** after such a long absence. We had too much to eat and too much to drink, so again the event was a great success. *Many thanks once again, John & Barbara, for opening your*

Dates of Interest

- **January 7**
Our Annual Master's Dinner
1:00 p.m.
- **January 9**
Regular Monthly Meeting
—Cancelled
- **February 13**
Regular Monthly Meeting, Social = 5:00 p.m.;
Business = 6:00 at T.S. McHugh's
- **March 12**
Regular Monthly Meeting, Social = 5:00 p.m.;
Business = 6:00 at T.S. McHugh's
- **April 9**
Regular Monthly Meeting, Social = 5:00 p.m.;
Business = 6:00 at T.S. McHugh's

The Sound of the Baskervilles is a scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars, serving the greater Puget Sound Region of Western Washington, U.S.A., and has met monthly since March 31, 1980.

\$20 per year brings Members the monthly newsletter "Ineffable Twaddle", a copy of Beaten's Christmas Annual, and the incalculable benefits of association with a group of certifiable Holmes aficionados.

Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month. Location of the meetings may vary. Regularly scheduled additional events throughout the year include: "The Master's Dinner" celebrating Holmes' birthday (January), "The Annual Wreath Throw" commemorating Holmes' loss at Reichenbach Falls (May), "The Dr. John H. Watson Picnic" (July), and "The Will Crakes Memorial Jollification" (December). Other activities—book crawls, teas, plays and gaming events—are as announced.

To join, send your check for dues—\$20 for individuals, \$30 for families (U.S. funds only)—to the address shown at left.

home to us!!

- **Margie Deck's** goose game at the December Meeting on BLUE was a blast, Hank made a great assistant, and their prizes were delectable!! So was the **cookie exchange**!

- **SOB Jody Holm** writes from Bellingham that she's now gainfully employed at Hoagland Pharmacy as a respiratory/sleep disorders technician. It's an opportunity which will keep her here in Washington and give her the chance to continue to do what she was doing before in a different setting.

- **SOB Charlie Cook** informed us that granddaughter/**SOB Nadia Cook-Loshilov** of Brooklyn has been named a 2012 Young Arts National Finalist by the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts. In fact, out of nearly 5,000 applications to this year's program, she is one of only 150 who will travel to Miami, FL to participate in Young Arts Week, January 8-15, 2012. Kudos to Nadia!! (*Editor's Note: Don't miss talented Nadia's article in our 2011 Beaten's Christmas Annual!!*)

- **SOB Librarian Sheila Holtgrieve** sent this shot of grandbabies Felix and Hazel with mommy Simone at Halloween! Lucky, grandma!!



- In response to a recent e-mail, **SOB Kathleen Dunlap of Lexington, VA** said: *I'm sending hugs right back. Mom will be 91 Saturday (December 10). I miss you all very much. I may venture back your way one day. Then watch out! My time will come! Happy holidays all!*

