



# 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 32, Issue 5  
May, 2013

## Reichenbach Remembered at Our Annual Wreath Throw!



Don't miss our Annual Wreath Throw on **Saturday, May 4** in Tumwater. We'll convene promptly at **11:30 a.m.** in the park on the Deschutes River (below the Falls Terrace

Restaurant and the old Olympia Brewery, on the east side of I-5, Exit 103) in Tumwater.

SOBs James Romnes and Al Nelson will act as hosts for the day! There'll be a short stroll to the falls, toasting of our honour roll, a return walk to Falls Terrace, and a guest violinist.

As in years past, we anticipate excellent spring weather! And, the annual rhododendron display!

Lunch will follow the Wreath Throw at Falls Terrace Restaurant at approximately **1:00 p.m.**

### • Directions to The Annual Wreath Throw •

**If northbound on I-5, take Exit 103; follow Deschutes Way SW (straight) north to the Falls Terrace Restaurant (on your right).**

**If southbound on I-5, take Exit 103 (2nd Avenue); stay straight to go onto 2nd Avenue SW, turn left onto Custer Way SE (takes you back over I-5), right onto Boston St SE, left onto Deschutes Way SW. The entrance to the park is on the south side of the Restaurant.** 🍷

## The Adventure of the Deadliest Weapon: Part 3

### An Original Pastiche by

SOB James Romnes aka Constable John Rance

We continue where we left off last month (see *Ineffable Twaddle*, Vol. 32, Issue 4, April 2013, Page 1), with Holmes and Watson speculating about whether the victim's death was suicide or murder:

"Holmes, my mind reels! If it is not assassination by Venucci, nor murder by the Contessa, nor death by his own hand, what remains?"



?...But wait, we have unexpected visitors."

Our longsuffering landlady entered, followed by one of the most remarkable individuals ever to grace 221B.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Holmes," said an embarrassed Mrs. Hudson, "I tried to have her send up her card first."

"Justice! I demand English justice!" The impassioned speaker was hatless, barefoot,

and bursting with all the wild vitality of a puma.

"Thank you, Mrs. Hudson," said Holmes, "Doctor, may I present the widow of Count Sylvius."

The Contessa's response was extraordinary: she fell to her knees, raised her dainty hands heavenward, and cried, "Mr. Sherlock Holmes, my Patrona, I beg as a lowly peasant begs, spare my dear Paolo! He has confessed only to save me!"

Her frock was the finest Parisian but her manner and beauty were southern Italianate. Her black eyes burned with desperation.

Holmes put out his hand to raise her up but she shook her raven black ringlets.

"No, Mr. Holmes, please, first swear you will show me there is justice in your England. I care for nothing else."

Holmes once more extended his long pale hand and said firmly, "Honestly recount for us the story of Count Sylvius's death and you will find both justice and mercy in England."

After Holmes' masterful words, she docilely took the wicker chair and began.

"Forgive my ways... **Continued on Page 2**

### Inside this issue:

*Reichenbach Remembered at our Annual Wreath Throw!* 1

*The Adventure of the Deadliest Weapon: Part 3* 1

*It's "The Mostly Conan Doyle Pence Quiz"!!!* 2

*Librarian's Corner* 2

*Things to See, Buy, Do & Know* 3

*Who is the Model for Dr. Watson? It's Elementary Stuff* 3

**Contributed by SOB Treasurer Al Nelson**

REMEMBER THOSE WHO SERVED



ALL GAVE SOME, SOME GAVE ALL



T.S. McHugh's Public House is at 21 Mercer Street, Seattle, (206) 282-1910. **Come early, order a meal, and catch up with the other SOBs!**

### From SOB Elliott Black, Lincolnwood, IL

What glorious kismet to open the December issue of *"BBC History Magazine"* (vol. 13, no. 12) and see the article entitled "Jujitsu suffragettes"—women who gave as good as they got. To suffragettes—frequently engaged in hand-to-hand combat with police and other indignant males (*Some contemporary gents might thrive with these instruments in carnal pursuits...I'm just sayin'*)—these weapons were required armor: dog-whips for keeping rowdies at bay; Indian clubs; leather flails; "toffee hammers" for window-smashing; and the hairpin.

Hairpins may not strike us as being particularly menacing weapons today, but back in the Edwardian era—when women's hats were huge and the pins themselves could be up to 16 inches long—they were potentially lethal. Newspapers were certainly alive to their dangers, filling their pages with stories of hatpin suicides, accidents, and murders. In *The Adventure of the Abbey Grange* (1904), Sir Eustace Brackenstall stabbed his wife with her own hatpin. Had she been jujitsu-trained, she could have leveled the playing field.

Jujitsu was all the rage once Japan opened its doors to the west in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and became allied with Britain. Britain adapted to Japan's exotic customs and thus Gilbert & Sullivan created *the Mikado* and suffragettes enthusiastically practiced its martial arts, practicing jujitsu. Sherlock Holmes, too, became a proficient (though of "bartitsu", famously misspelled as "baritsu" in *Adventure of the Empty House* [1903]), where Holmes acknowledges that this talent helped propel Moriarty over/into the Reichenbach.



## It's "The Mostly Conan Doyle Pence Quiz"!!!

The May 19, 2013 Regular Monthly Meeting of The Sound of the Baskervilles will begin at **4:00 p.m.** at T.S. McHugh's Public House. **The social hour starts at 3:00!**

**SOB Luran Stevens** will try to stump us once again with another fabulous quiz!! This time she titles it, "The Mostly Conan Doyle Pence Quiz"!!! You may deduce correctly that it will be mostly about Conan Doyle, with bits of Holmes and London sprinkled in.

She hopes to have small prizes—straight from London—for every right answer. In addition, there will be two great prizes for the overall winners: a) "221B Baker Street: The Master Detective Game" and 2) two paperbacks—"Sherlock Holmes: Fact or Fiction" by T.S. Blakeney published by Otto Penzler and "The Royal Flush (Solo Mystery Sherlock Holmes)" by Milt Creighton. So study up!!

## 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

### The Lloyd Hedberg Collection (Stephen Adkins, caretaker)

SOB Lloyd Hedberg recently gave SOB Stephen Adkins a collection of over 70 books and monographs of Sherlockian scholarship. The collection is now catalogued and managed for safe-keeping and preservation. The catalog and items in the collection are available to SOB Members by request to Stephen.

Here is a sample of this fabulous and very generous gift:

- **Baker Street and Beyond.** A group of essays by Lord Donegall, a founder of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London.
- **Baker Street By-Ways** by James E. Holroyd, another founder of the London Society.
- **Essays in Satire** by Ronald A. Knox—contains Knox's essay "Studies in the Literature of Sherlock Holmes," which some say started Sherlockian scholarship.
- **My Dear Holmes** by Gavin Brend, a biography of Holmes by a well-known English scholar.
- **Sherlock Holmes and Scotland Yard: A Love-Hate Relationship** by John Pforr and Phillip Weller.
- **The Standard Doyle Company: Christopher Morley on Sherlock Holmes**, ed. Steve Rothman, essays by the founder of the Baker Street Irregulars.
- **Watsoniana** by Elliot Kimball, essays on John H. Watson.

### Special Sets:

- David L. Hammer books
- **The Sherlock Holmes Natural History Series** by Donald G. Jewell
- and "A Canonical Dog's Life" and "Horses of a Different Color", just two of several monographs.

Stephen's e-mail contact info is on the SOB Membership list.

*Sheila Holtgrieve, SOB Librarian, sheilaholtgrieve@gmail.com*

## The Adventure of the Deadliest Weapon

Continued from Page 1

...but I was not born in this gray, wet land of yours. My home was Sicily where the sky is always blue fire. And I would have stayed there except for this brute who impressed my father with title and money. I was told he was a great man and it was a great honor that he marry me. But he wasn't a great man, he was a great monster.

"Sicilians are passionate and fierce in our love. But the Count was a cold and

cruel spider. There were always whisperings I heard. Whisperings of his robberies, of his outrages, of his murders. Even here in your country."

Holmes interjected, "Would this include Ricoletti of the club foot?"

"Dio Caro! You know of that? His abominable wife shocked Paolo."

"Paolo Venucci, your cousin?" asked Holmes.

**Stay tuned for next month's installment!!**

## Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

● **Received from both SOBs Margie Deck & Amber Ackerson:** PBS's "How Sherlock Changed the World" is a 2-hour special—slated to premiere this fall—that will "reveal for the first time the astonishing impact that Holmes has had on the development of real criminal investigation and forensic techniques." Through the use of compelling archival material and reconstruction, the program tells the true stories of the scientists, detectives and even criminals who were inspired or influenced by the legend of Holmes. The program explores real crimes that were solved thanks to a piece of equipment Holmes used, a technique he popularized or invented, or even his method of reasoning. The special will also assess the history of Holmes' techniques from the 1880s to the present, showing how the scientific techniques he introduced to the world have evolved into the stunning CSI-style forensic labs of Scotland Yard and the FBI. "Sherlock Holmes is the grandfather of forensic science," states top forensic scientist Dr. Henry Lee. "Today when I go to a crime scene I

use his logic, his method of deduction. That's how we do it today, solving cases based on Sherlock Holmes' logic." "How Sherlock Changed the World" will demonstrate how the legacy of Holmes, as the first crime profiler, was not solely a reservoir of brilliant stories and wonderfully drawn characters, but that it has saved lives and led to the capture of some of the worst criminals in modern history.

● **From District Messenger Editor Roger Johnson:** ⇒ "Dead Man's Land" by Robert Ryan was released in January (Simon & Schuster UK; no U.S. publisher yet, but available on Amazon Kindle for \$9.99), in which Dr. Watson proves his worth as a detective on the Western Front. The noted crime writer Mark Billingham calls it a "hugely powerful depiction of wartime horror, a cunning murder mystery and a brilliant..." **Continued on Page 4** ⇒ ⇒



## Who is the Model for Dr. Watson? It's Elementary Stuff



Excerpted from *The London Times*, Dec. 23, 2012—subtitled "Little is known about literature's greatest sidekick. In writing a novel about Sherlock Holmes' 'biographer', Robert Ryan solved the mystery of his sidekick"

We need to ask this question because the novels and stories tell us little. We aren't sure what the initial of his middle name stands for; it was Dorothy Sayers who championed "Hamish". We aren't certain how his first (or second?) wife Mary Morstan died, or how many times he has been married. His first name is hardly mentioned—and, in "The Man with the Twisted Lip", watch out for his wife calling him "James".

Try to grasp the screen versions of Watson as firmly as Holmes and he runs through your fingers like sand. Is he the faithful but farcical Nigel Bruce? The athletic Jude Law? The cuddly Martin Freeman? Watson, of course, can even switch sex and become Joan (Lucy Liu in "Elementary"). All this matters to me because, for my latest novel, I wanted to move Watson centre stage, out of Holmes's lengthy shadow. And give him a murder to solve.

Watson is, of course, Holmes' biographer. All but four of the adventures are narrated by him; two are by Holmes himself and two are in the third person. Therefore, most of what

we know about him comes from his own writings.

In those times when Watson kept a wife and a practice (and during The Great Hiatus, 1891-1894, when Holmes was presumed dead), he did not live with Holmes, who nevertheless at times came calling when adventure beckoned. A possible third marriage is alluded to in "The Blanched Soldier", set in 1903, the last year of Holmes's active work as a consulting detective. From then on, until reunited with Holmes in 1914 for "His Last Bow", Watson was presumably working as a GP on Queen Anne Street and their contacts were restricted to "the occasional weekend" visit (mentioned in "The Lion's Mane") and letters or telegrams from Watson asking permission to reveal the details of a distant case to a public eager for more of Sherlock Holmes.

So who was Conan Doyle's inspiration for Dr. John H Watson? If Holmes is Joseph Bell, Watson is the man who served as his assistant for a short while, and who witnessed first-hand the man's capacity for observation and deduction from the flimsiest... **Continued on Page 4**

### More from Omaha SOB Carl Wirth's Graphic Novel Collection

Beginning in 1986 Renegade Press began the series "Cases of Sherlock Holmes"—a lot more small print of the stories to go with its illustrations.



Also in 1986 to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Detective Comics*, it ran on its cover Batman and Sherlock Holmes looking over a casebook, while inside was "The Adventure of the Red Leech".

Leaping ahead 10 years, *Caliber Comics* issued Sherlock Holmes



Reader. It served up both comic book (or more like graphic novel) adventures and did highlights from the Sherlockian world. And who could forget Data as Sherlock Holmes

found in "Star Trek: The Next Generation Embrace The Wolf", and most recently Boom Kids gave us "Muppet Sherlock Holmes" and DC gave us Holmes and the Scooby Doo gang solving "The Strange Case of Dorian Wormwood". Ah, so many comics...so much Holmes!!



### Are Your Dues Paid Up?

The SOBs is nothing without its valuable Members! And, we hope you are getting value from your Membership—through our meetings, our newsletter, our Christmas magazine, our website and our other Club events. But, due to the high cost of our monthly mailings, if your dues are not renewed by June 2013, we'll have no recourse but to drop you from our mailing list! Don't let that happen to you!





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 (nelsonah46@yahoo.com)  
**Secretary/Editor:** Terri Haugen (terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com)  
**Historian:** Lloyd Hedberg (lloyd@soundofthebaskervilles.com)  
**Lending Librarian:** Sheila Holtgrieve (sheilaholtgrieve@gmail.com)  
**Webmaster:** Stuart Nelan (stu@soundofthebaskervilles.com)  
**Website:** www.soundofthebaskervilles.com

Direct correspondence to:  
6710 – 51st Street Court West  
University Place, WA 98467

Phone: 253-460-2753  
Fax: 253-460-2753

Email: david@soundofthebaskervilles.com

*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 3rd Sunday 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.*



## Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

Continued from Page 3

...re-invention of Dr. John Watson, which sees Sherlock Holmes' sidekick finally take centre stage in what I hope will be the start of a long-running series. Conan Doyle would most definitely approve!"

⇒ "A Chronology of the Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, May 22, 1859, to July 7, 1930" by Brian W. Pugh is available from MX Publishing (\$22.95). As Randall Stock notes in his foreword, a chronology is not a biography, but this book is more valuable than most of the published lives of Conan Doyle. The new edition adds about fifty pages, seven of them containing a chronological summary of the journal recently published as "Dangerous Work: Diary of an Arctic Adventure". Here are lists of ACD's various homes, his sporting career, the burial places of the DoYLES, statues and plaques, and more—including some fascinating photographs. But the essence of the book is in the orderly calendar of Sir Arthur's life, in which innumerable ambiguities and uncertainties are authoritatively resolved. Brian Pugh has created that rare thing, a genuinely essential work of reference.

● **From SOB Elliott Black, Lincolnwood, IL:** The New York Times gave some fanfare to the release of "The Seven-Per-Cent Solution" on DVD and Blu-ray in January, saying "We're lousy with Sherlock Holmeses right now: the Robert Downey Jr. version on the big screen, the competing television interpretations of Benedict Cumberbatch ("Sherlock") and Jonny Lee Miller ("Elementary") and all the Holmes-inspired geniuses in current and recent TV shows like "The Mentalist", "Psych", "House" and "Monk." So "The Seven-Per-Cent Solution"...enters a crowded market...But its Sherlock deserves special consideration because he's the father of all those modern Holmeses. Besides being a clever comic mystery with an absurdly talented cast, this 1976 film...established the template for all the twitchy, paranoid, vulnerable, strung-out Holmeses to come."

## Who is the Model for Dr. Watson?

Continued from Page 3

...of clues. Look at Sidney Paget's drawing, then at photographs of a younger Arthur Conan Doyle. Think of Watson's character traits, his kindness, compassion, dependability, thoughtfulness, solid, workaday thoroughness—all the hallmarks of a good general practitioner. And Conan Doyle was a GP (in Plymouth and Southsea) before he took up writing full time.

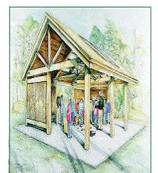
Watson played rugby; Conan Doyle was a useful goalkeeper and batsman. And he was married twice. Conan Doyle once claimed "unaffectedness" as one of his prime virtues. Who is more unaffected than Watson, hiding his own light under a bushel while Holmes soaks up the glory?

Yes, Watson is Conan Doyle, with the distance between real author and fictional biographer reduced to a wafer-thin gap. And the great detective's marvelous companion can have no better epitaph than the one etched on his creator's own tombstone: "Steel True, Blade Straight." That's Dr. Watson.



**Picnic Chair Paul Williams says:**

**July 20** is the date for our **Annual Dr. Watson Picnic** at Seahurst Park in Burien!!  
The fun starts at **9:00 a.m.**, and we have the shelter until **2:00 p.m.!!**



**Dates of Interest**

- **SATURDAY, May 4**  
Annual Wreath Throw = **11:30 a.m.** in Tumwater; lunch follows at **1:00**, Falls Terrace Restaurant
- **SUNDAY, May 19**  
Regular Monthly Meeting, Social = **3:00 p.m.**;  
Business = **4:00** at T.S. McHugh's
- **SUNDAY, June 16**  
Regular Monthly Meeting, Social = **3:00 p.m.**;  
Business = **4:00** at T.S. McHugh's