



# INEFFABLE TWADDLE



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

*—The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*

**Volume 42, Issue 1 • January 2023**

The 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, USA

## 2023 Brings a New Canonical Cycle!

By: Editor Terri Haugen

Did you know that the Sherlockian story we study each month is based on a very specific and pre-determined method? This is known as our "5-year cycle"—sixty stories, generally one per month...you can do the math! As you read through our current plan for the 2023 stories (see sidebar), you'll note that we're completing a 5-year cycle in June 2023 with "His Last Bow!"

Our soon-to-end *current* cycle, begun in March 2017 with "The Gloria Scott", has been based on a "chronological date of occurrence," according to noted-Sherlockian Les Klinger's chronology—with some tweaking by PFL David and Members Margie Deck and Sheila Holtgrieve.

Our prior 5-year study was based on "publication date order," using the Doubleday single volume edition of the Canon, and prior to that back to our March 1980 founding, our cycles were devised using many other different methods. During any cycle, of course, we will often pause for a meeting on another subject (e.g., a book signing or a member presentation), and we usually split our studies of the four novels into 2-meetings each, so we've never been entirely accurate with our cycles.

As reported in my December 2, 2022 email, when transmitting the December issue of *Ineffable Twaddle* to you, PFL David Haugen and Program Chair Sunny Even are looking at potential new ways for us to undertake our next 5-year cycle!!

After agreeing to take the lead on this, Sunny has thus far shared some thoughts on the direction she'd like us to take:

"I've always enjoyed the history of the (Victorian) period and want to focus more on that. I'm proposing a mix of publication date order *and* chronological date order, by pulling on the historical threads present in stories (*where workable*) but also events taking place in ACD's world.

So rather than a recap of the story, my monthly newsletter write-up would be historical and factual. Not so much Sherlockian, more... **Continued on Page 2**

## Join The SOB's Zoom Meeting

★ **Sunday, January 15, 2023** ★

**12:00 (Noon) to 12:30 p.m. Pacific time**

**Social Time!!**

**12:30 p.m. Pacific time—Structured meeting  
with discussion & quizzing on "REDC"**



### Says Program Chair Sunny,

"The Adventure of the Red Circle" is not Conan Doyle's best effort. It offers up a disjointed set of events delivering the requisite suspicious boarder, a secret murder society, coded messages, and a damsel in distress, but no sensible organization to the elements. By this point in Conan Doyle's career, the mystery not only feels formulaic, it's plainly composed of leftovers from earlier efforts.

When I'm at a loss to find redeeming features in one of the sixty, I turn to Christopher Redmond's "About Sixty" where faithful Sherlockians find gems in each and every one.

.....Hm, let's see what David Lewis has to say about REDC. [...*after perusing pages 186-188...*] I'm not sure I buy his claim for great story structure here. And the break in the middle as the "perfect place to put the commercials" (anticipating the half-hour television show format?) is hardly a recommend-



ation to me. Ah well, read it again and see what you think. Maybe I'm being too hard.

... **Continued  
on Page 2**

Continued from Page 1

...Victorian and Edwardian with an arc spanning how the British Empire was changing over 40 odd years...but always tied into the story in some way."

**Adds PFL David to Sunny's plans:** "After having gone through the Canon using the dating by William S. Baring-Gould and Les Klinger multiple times and using the publication date of the stories at least twice, I am ready to try something different. I think Sunny's idea of putting the story order in our next cycle in the context of actual events is a great one!"

**"...I cannot see that you have any particular cause for uneasiness..."**

**A Quiz by: SOB Charlie Cook**

1. Name Holmes's client!
2. Who sang the praises of Holmes inducing the client to seek his help?
3. What was Holmes's first conclusion about the client's lodger?
4. Describe the client's house and give its location!
5. What Scotland Yard detective did Holmes and Watson meet outside the client's house?



6. Name the cabman Holmes met and describe his occupation!
7. What did Holmes say to the cabman?
8. Who rented the client's room, and who actually resided there?
9. Name the dead man and how he died!
10. Who was Tito Castalotte?
11. What was Castalotte's occupation?
12. What did Holmes say when the Yard man asked him how he became involved in the case?

**Answers may be found on Page 7**

### Story & Meeting Content for 2023 SOB Meetings:

<b>January</b>	SOB Nancy Holder will lead with her presentation titled, "Spooky Sherlock: Real Creepers, Canonical and Otherwise"; PFL David will follow with discussion of The Red Circle (REDC) <b>Zoom</b>
<b>February</b>	The Blanched Soldier (BLAN)—See Lauren Messenger's summary below! <b>In-person</b>
<b>March</b>	The Mazarin Stone (MAZA) <b>Zoom</b>
<b>April</b>	The Creeping Man (CREE) <b>In-person</b>
<b>May</b>	The Lion's Mane (LION) <b>Zoom</b>
<b>June</b>	His Last Bow (LAST) <b>In-person</b>
<b>July</b>	To Be Announced, as we begin a new 5-year cycle of Canonical study! <b>Zoom</b>
<b>August</b>	IBID <b>In-person</b>
<b>September</b>	IBID <b>Zoom</b>
<b>October</b>	IBID <b>In-person</b>
<b>November</b>	IBID <b>Zoom</b>
<b>December</b>	The Blue Carbuncle <b>In-person</b>

## February Meeting: Botany and Blanched...with SOB Lauren Messenger

"Knowledge of Botany: Variable. Well up in belladonna, opium, and poisons generally. Knows nothing of practical gardening." This is what Watson notes about Holmes' knowledge of plants in "A Study in Scarlet." Please join me on February 19th for an in-depth discussion of plants and botany in the Sherlock Holmes Canon, and in the Victorian period generally. We will consider the growing popularity of houseplants in the Victorian era, the field of botany during Holmes' career, plants as agents of medicine and murder, the possible identity of the Devil's Foot Root, and many other topics!

February's meeting will be two-for-one on topics, as we will also discuss "The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier," one of the few stories penned by Holmes, rather than Watson. For a story without Watson in it, Watson certainly features in the text often enough. What can this story illuminate about the friendship between the two? What writing techniques has Sherlock Holmes picked up from his friend, and made use of in relating this story? Is Sherlock Holmes a reliable narrator? Is BLAN bland, or is it a good story? And, if it is, is it a good *mystery*? I can't wait to hear your perspectives!

## SOB Kris Hambrick's *Sherlock on Screen: The Adventure of the Red Circle*



This month, I was going to write something about how later-Canon stories can fall prey to padding, given that Wikipedia mentions Granada and a Basil Rathbone movie in their list of Red Circle adaptations. I dutifully sat down and rewatched them, starting with the 1994 Granada episode.

Okay, so they add in a whole lot of ACTION which doesn't occur in the original story: an entire character in the form of a benevolent Italian who lends aid to other immigrants and gets killed for it, a fight on a rooftop, sneaking about rather than waiting for secret messages to be passed, etc. I suppose it might be a bit dull to watch Holmes and Watson wait in a room to catch a glimpse of the mysterious lodger in the mirror, and then decamp to another room to watch a candle in the window and count letters of the alphabet, but these additions render the story *unrecognizable* save for the core conflict between Emilia, Gennaro and Gorgiano. In fact, by trying to add drama, they give us a story where Watson's presence leads directly to Formani's death and Holmes' to Gorgiano attacking Emilia. In a sense, they've traded a lack of deductive elements in the original story for what I would call outright endangerment. Which I suppose is more viscerally exciting, but for me, less satisfying.

But the real mystery, this month, is that Wikipedia lists *Pursuit to Algiers* as having taken "some characters and events from the 1911 story." If I'd seen it before, it's been decades, so I watched *Pursuit* looking for any reference to Gennaro or Emilia. They do mention the giant rat. There is a reference to the ship *Friesland*. But nowhere do I detect any hint of Red Circle in this script or its characters. It's baffling. Several websites mention this connection without illuminating, and I must conclude that these blurbs all, themselves, originate with the Wikipedia article. Which was edited in 2011 to include this tidbit. I have created a topic on the

article's "talk" page in order to further investigate, but as of this writing, the mystery remains unsolved, and I watched, I'm sorry to say, a very boring movie for nothing.

**Ed. Note:** *And the web provides no still images of the action scenes mentioned above...darn!*



## Please Note:

Membership in The SOBs renews each April 1st! Your annual dues are due and should be paid by March 31, 2023!

### *Two New Members in December...though both are rejoining!!*

#### MARK SQUIRE

We first welcome back Mark Squire, who lives in Seattle. He first joined back in March of 2016 but then we lost track of him. We're glad he found us again!

*Welcome back, Mark!!*

#### LLOYD HEDBERG

Lloyd was a 20-year vet of this Club (1997 to 2017) when we lost track of him! He was the creator of our first website back in 2001 and helped maintain it for another 9+ years. He now lives in Lacey, WA.

*Welcome back, Lloyd!!*



### **Now's a good time to think about *your* Canonical name!!**

#### **Here are our Club's rules:**

- Your Canonical Name (alter-ego) may be any person, place or thing from Sherlockiana with which you'd like to be identified! No one in the Club, however, may "be" Holmes, Watson, Moriarty or Irene Adler!
- If your desired alter-ego is held by another Member, you *may not* select that one!
- If you have chosen an alter-ego but don't know if your choice is already taken, please email Editor Terri (see Page 8) to find out in advance if your choice is already taken.



## Members Review Books!

**By: SOB Charlie Cook**

*Says Charlie: Since it was listed in the December "Twaddle" as one of the best 100 pastiches, I decided it was time I read it and could pass on my comments for an upcoming "IT" if you agree. Ed. Note: Aw heck, we always agree with good old Charlie...Cook!!*

### **Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Bulgarian Codex**

**By: Tim Symonds (MX Publishing, 2012)**

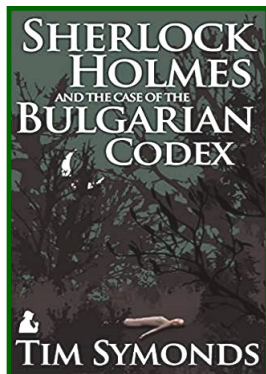
"Foxy" Ferdinand, the devious but entertaining Prince, later emperor, later Tsar of Bulgaria hires Holmes and Watson to find the stolen document of the title. Both the Prince and Mycroft are convinced that its loss could be the catalyst which could cause war throughout Europe. The boys from Baker Street join the Prince on the Orient Express and other less comfortable modes of transportation to Bulgaria, a country about which the world, at this time, knows very little.

To help protect the identities of the sleuth and the doctor, the Prince has devised a "Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson look-alike contest" in Sofia.

In addition to the missing codex, there are attempts on the lives of the trio, a missing British cavalry Captain, a murdered woman who has had her blood drained (locally believed) by vampires, and other weird occurrences in this strange, dangerous country where the Prince warns that assassins lurk everywhere.

The author provides many interesting tidbits of historical data as well as careful colorful descriptions of the geography in various settings in this extremely well written novel. A couple of maps of the journey from London to Sofia are provided. A glossary of foreign terms and Other references are also included.

By the way...Although they were included in it, did Holmes and Watson win the look-alike contest? Read and discover! ➦



**By: SOB Ginie Romnes**

### **The White Company**

**By: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**  
(ISBN 0486437639, Dover Publications, 2004)

I had occasion recently to read *The White Company* by Conan Doyle. It's a story told during the time of knights. There are three men who are the main characters. One of them has been raised by monks—his father having given him to a monastery along with a lot of money. Instructions from the father were to raise the boy until his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, then send him out into the world for one year. Because of this, the fellow has a high moral character.

The second man to be introduced got kicked out of the same monastery. While out walking in the woods, he came upon a woman who needed help crossing a stream. The man picked her up and carried her through it. One of the other monks saw him do this. It was strictly against the rules to touch a woman, so his good deed got him kicked out. This caused him to be bitter and morally conflicted.

The third man was a soldier—specifically a bowman. His morality was very questionable compared to the other two. Adultery and drunkenness were just part of his identity.

The story has these three unlikely men become friends, and they end up going to war together. It's interesting to see them each struggle with morality and religious beliefs. Their adventures are very entertaining and sometimes quite funny.

The tale is a little difficult to read at first because of the language. The story is set in the thirteen-hundreds during the Hundred Years War, so they say "ye" instead of you. I had to look up some of the nouns in order to understand what they were talking about. Doyle also puts in Latin and French phrases that he assumes the reader will be able to understand.

The story clearly involves war and the battle descriptions can be a little gory at times; thus I skipped over some of those parts.

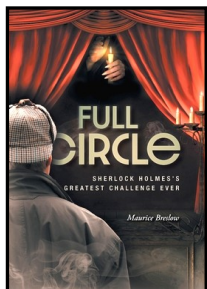
In my opinion, ...

**Continued on Page 7**



## Things to See, Buy, Do & Know...

⇒ **A promo received at our website from author Maurice Breslow:** I'm writing to introduce to The Sound of the Baskervilles my recently **PUBLISHED NOVELLA "FULL CIRCLE: SHERLOCK HOLMES'S GREATEST CHALLENGE EVER."** Based on events in the life of Arthur Conan Doyle, as well as on the Holmes Canon, it's a fanciful take on Holmes, Watson, Doyle, and the Doyle characters, which pits the great detective, as well as Watson and Irene Adler, in an existential struggle against their creator. Along the way, it touches on the relationship between a writer and his/her creation. 📖 Since its publication in August (2022), readers have called it "a gem"... "a wonderful achievement"... "a great novella." 📖 To learn more, please go to [www.mauricebreslow.ca](http://www.mauricebreslow.ca), where you'll find links to order the book online, but I'll mention that it's also available through most local booksellers. ISBN numbers are: 978-1-03-913708-0 (hardcover); 978-1-03-913707-3 (paperback); 978-1-03-913709-7 (eBook).



⇒ **SOB Judy Lyen told us this at the December Meeting:** I've come into possession of an **UNUSUAL LAMP. SOME MAY VIEW IT AS POTENTIALLY SHERLOCKIAN IN NATURE.** I haven't figured out what to do with it yet, but thought others might find it interesting!  
**Ed. Note:** *Decorating tips...anyone?*

⇒ **From Peter Blau:**

● **"ENOLA HOLMES 2"** is now streaming on Netflix. It isn't based on any of Nancy Springer's books, but there's some actual history involved. Sarah Chapman was a real person, and you can read about her in her entry at Wikipedia, and see how her story inspired Jack Thorne's screenplay for the film. There's a sting at the end, after the start of the closing credits, that suggests we might see a third film in the franchise. It scored well with Rotten Tomatoes, with ratings of 94%—reviews; and 78%—audience score.

● Feel free to wish a Happy New Year to **THE COMPLETE SHERLOCK HOLMES**. As of January 1, 2023, all of the Sherlock Holmes stories now are in the public domain in the U.S.—where copyright protection ran for 95 years from the end of the year in which they were first published.

## Our Good Friend Steve Mason, BSI Brings this Good News for 2023!



### A COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT THE 60 STORIES OF THE CANON

The Beacon Society is excited to provide this webpage to allow students, younger Sherlock Holmes fans, and even seasoned Sherlockians, to learn more about the 60 stories of Sherlock Holmes, created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

While much of the information on the page can be found on other websites, this page gives the viewer a chance to see all the information in one area by Canonical story, and all the information is located on this page as .pdf files, thus ensuring no broken links or inappropriate material adjacent to the information.

The Beacon Society is very appreciative of all the supporters of the site who have graciously given us permission to place their information on the site. <https://www.beaconsociety.com/comprehensive-stories.html> The website contains the following elements for the 60 stories of the Canon:

1. Story Summaries, by the Diogenes Club, Wikipedia, and the ACD Encyclopedia
2. Complete Story Texts
3. Story Audio Books, by Patrick Horgan
4. Story illustrations from the early magazine editions
5. Canonical quotes attributed to Holmes
6. Study guides, by Bill Dorn, BSI
7. Puzzles, by Steve Mason, BSI
8. Limericks, by Sandy Kozinn, Bill Dorn, and Karen Olson

**Continued on Page 6**

## Steve Mason, BSI Brings this Good News...

Continued from Page 5

9. Index of the characters, locations, and other items of interest
10. Story information pages from McMurdo's Camp
11. Quizzes, by Jim Webb, John Bennett Shaw, Steve Mason
12. Data, Data, Data, by Frank Mentzel
13. Inquiry into the Stories, by Alexander Braun
14. Selected Chronologies, with help from Brad Keefauver, BSI, and Vincent Wright
15. 56 Stories in 56 days, by Charlotte Anne Walters
16. Canon Queeries, by Ralph Edwards, BSI
17. 17 Steps to the Stories, by Brad Keefauver, BSI
18. Additional Thoughts, by Paul Steve Clarkson
19. Delicate Questions, by Chris Redmond, BSI
20. Questions & Comments by Sonia Fetherston, BSI
21. View Halloas, by Rosemary Michaud
22. Observation of Trifles, by Brian Keith Snell



Steve Mason, ASH, BSI  
Third Mate, The Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society /  
The DFW Sherlock Holmes Society



The Beacon Society  
Chair, Communications Committee

## Also, from Steve Mason, BSI:



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## House to Buy of the Week: the New Forest retreat of Arthur Conan Doyle

Source: [House to buy of the week: the former country retreat of Arthur Conan Doyle | House & Garden](https://houseandgarden.co.uk)  
([houseandgarden.co.uk](https://houseandgarden.co.uk)) Issue for December 7, 2022, by Kitty Grady

Submitted by SOB Program Chair Sunny Even

Welcome to our new weekly column, where we highlight one outstanding property on the market. This week, an 8-bedroom property in the heart of the New Forest once owned by the creator of Sherlock Holmes

Located in the depths of the Hampshire New Forest, amongst thousands of acres of verdant moors, the residence of Bignell Wood is somewhat hidden from general view. Fittingly then, that it is the former home of Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes – the mastermind detective famed for his exceptional powers of observation.

A gem of literary history, the Saxon seven-bedroom house is currently on the market for £2.95 million. Conan Doyle bought the property as a birthday present for his wife (Jean) after travelling to the area when researching to write *The White Company*. The nearby village of Minstead features heavily in the book, and



the author was even buried in its church, All Saints. Conan Doyle and his family used Bignell Wood as their country retreat from 1924 to 1930, and today, the house is still both grand and cosy. Features include a range of reception and living rooms with stone fireplaces, a terrace, elegant gardens and even a moat. The price tag also includes a cottage with a balcony and a further bedroom. ...

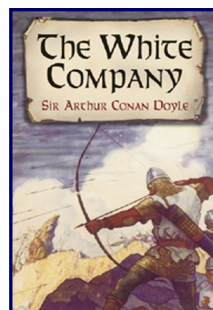
Continued on Page 7



## Members Review Books...

...The **White Company** is worth the extra effort needed to read this story. I love all the Sherlock Holmes stories but it's really too bad that this story was not more widely accepted. Doyle was truly a great author of many different types of stories. So I would encourage people to read these other kinds of stories written by him. It gives you a new respect for Doyle's ability as an author.

Continued from Page 4



## Romnes Rhyming!

*From the unofficial Hound of the Sound, James's Dog!*

### More Doggish Poems

#### #1 Definition Moriarty

Advanced physics grad'  
and Blofeld "Breaking Bad."

#### #2 Watson Definition

Colleague and pal  
Clueless Boswell.  
London long gone  
Chills and warms our bones.



#### #3 Holmes Definition

He's Einstein, Francis Bacon,  
Sage stirred but never shaken.

## The Crew Announces Six Years of Pastiches...

Continued from Page 6

If you would like to purchase a print version of a book, you can go to: <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/>. In the search box, simply enter Crew of the Barque Lone Star, and all 6 books should come up! The books are sold at cost— The Crew is not receiving any proceeds from the sales! The average cost for each of the 6 books is \$6.65, which I believe is very reasonable for a new paperback book these days! And of course, you can still download a free .pdf version of the books at our Society website at: [www.dfw-sherlock.org](http://www.dfw-sherlock.org)

Finally, a big thanks to one of our wonderful members, Liese Sherwood-Fabre, who has formatted all 6 books, designed the illustration above, and did most of the work to get the books on the B&N website.

## House to Buy of the Week...

...In the spirit of Conan Doyle, the current owner, Jane McIntyre, has styled the house with opulent fabrics and dark colours, "a nod towards Gothic drama!" she says.

Yet the future owner of Bignell Wood need not be a diehard Sherlock fan to enjoy the pleasures of life here. For horse riders, a barn and stables make the most of the property's easy access to the New Forest is itself a perk for any keen naturalists or walkers. Yachting is also possible in the nearby towns of Poole, Lymington and Hamble. Also less than a mile away is Bramshaw Golf Club.



Although hit a ball into the forest there, and those Sherlockian powers of observation may come in useful.

Continued from Page 6



*The house is being sold by  
[Spencers of the New Forest.](#)*

## Answers To Cook's Quiz on Page 2:

1. Mrs. Warren.
2. Mr. Fairdale Hobbs.
3. That the lodger was not the one who rented the room.
4. A high yellow brick edifice in Great Orme Street, northeast of the British Museum.
5. Inspector Gregson.
6. Mr. Leverton of Pinkerton's American Agency.
7. "The hero of the Long Island Cave Mystery? Sir, I am pleased to meet you."
8. Gennaro Lucca; his wife Emilia.
9. Giuseppe Gorgiano; knifed in the throat.
10. The New York employer of the man who rented the client's room.
11. He was the senior partner in a firm that was the chief importer of fruit for New York City.
12. "Education, Gregson, education."







The Sound  
of the  
Baskervilles

By appointment  
of Her Majesty,  
Queen Victoria

## Ineffable Twaddle

The 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, USA

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## 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.

\$25 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.

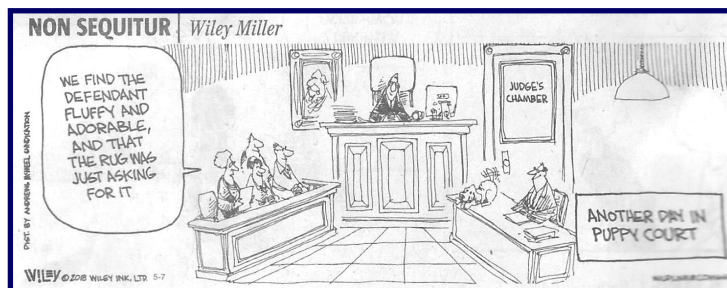
Meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month. Location of the meetings may vary. Regularly scheduled additional events throughout the year include: "The Masters' Celebration" honoring the meeting of Holmes and Watson (March), "The Annual Wreath Throw" commemorating Holmes' loss at Reichenbach 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, or to renew your membership, send your check for dues—\$25 for individuals, \$35 for families (U.S. funds only)—payable to

The Sound of the Baskervilles—to:  
SOB Treasurer • P.O. Box 7633 • Tacoma, WA 98417

## Welcome to 2023!!

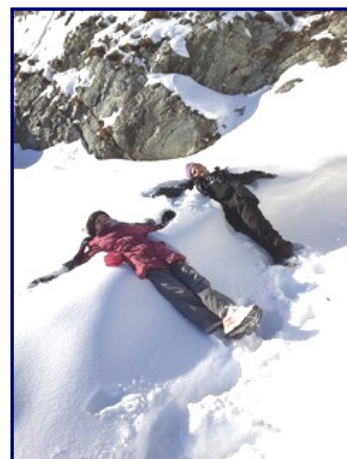
Let's ring in the New Year with some laughs, shall we??



## Some Puns from SOB Margaret Nelson

1. Why doesn't Holmes ever drink tea made in hospitals?
2. What's Holmes's favourite tree?

Answers at right ⇨



SOBs Marcia Marcy  
shared this photo  
of her sons playing  
in the snow in  
Montreux,  
Switzerland!!

1. He really hates more ER tea!  
2. It's a lemon tree!