



INEFFABLE TWADDLE



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

—The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle

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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

Join Us Sunday, February 19, for an In-Person Meeting!

At the Northgate Branch of the Seattle Public Library

● *We have the meeting room from 12:00 to 4:00!* ●

Getting there:

The Northgate Library is at 10548 Fifth Ave. N.E., Seattle ● Phone: (206) 386-1980 ● There is on-site parking, shared with a nearby community center, and the Link Light Rail station for "5th Ave. N.E. & Northgate Mall" is nearby.

12:00 (Noon) to 12:30 p.m. Social Time!!

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



Says Program Chair Sunny,

Sherlock Holmes takes up the pen to give us his "Adventure of the Blanched Soldier." One of only two stories written by Holmes instead of Watson—"The Lion's Mane" being the other—it has a distinct character not unlike Holmes himself. It begins in 221B as many stories do, but we "hear" so much more about Holmes' methods, his thoughts and reactions to the client, in addition to what the client has to say. The narrative continues in his voice, at times terse, at others highly descriptive—like the Great Detective himself. Interestingly, Holmes doesn't relate dry facts and evidence, but instead he concisely and sympathetically describes people and their motivations. In fact he relates a story more about great friendship and loyalty, than about mystery and clues. Perhaps he is missing his Watson, who has "at the time deserted me for a wife."

Adds SOB Associate Editor Lauren Messenger, who will host the programming portion of this Meeting:

"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." 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 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 a good story, is it also a good mystery? I can't wait to hear your perspectives!

"I find from my notebook that it was in January, 1903,"...

A Quiz by: SOB Charlie Cook

1. What two anomalies about this tale are mentioned prior to the telling of it?
2. When did this adventure begin?
3. What did Holmes consider the only selfish action taken by Watson in their entire association?
4. At the end of what major event was Holmes visited by whom seeking his help?
5. Who was the client's best friend?
6. Name the home of the client's missing friend!
7. What was the butler's name at that home?
8. What two cases occupied Holmes's time, preventing him from immediately helping the client?
9. Geographically, where did the client's friend get shot?
10. Physically, where did the client's friend get shot and with what weapon?

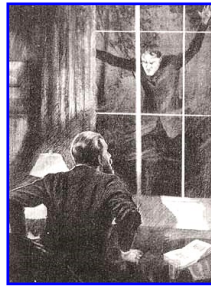
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...A Quiz by: SOB Charlie Cook

11. What one word did Holmes write on the note he handed to the missing man's father?
12. Holmes admits that Watson with his "cunning questions and ejaculations of wonder" could do what?

Answers may be found on Page 5



SOB Kris Hambrick's Sherlock on Screen: The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier

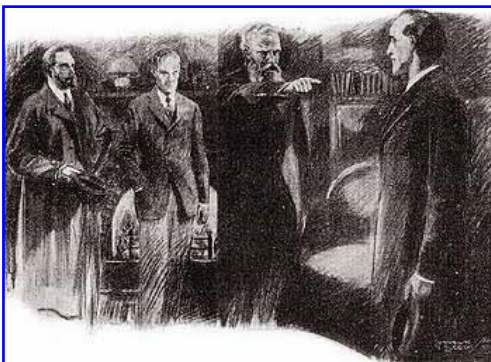


A few years ago, I wrote about the first tale we'd encountered since I started writing this column that had no recorded film/TV adaptation, "The Veiled Lodger." It, "The Lion's Mane," and this month's story, are the only ones in the entire Canon that never got filmed, and I have never devised a satisfying explanation other than this: that while a few (Eille Norwood and Jeremy Brett) got close to "completing" the Canon, there is no entity that dictated that as their goal.



Film is too expensive a medium to commit to 60 shows, with a viewership that is not going to care that an episode has been included because it is in the Canon. This may be an easier goal in a less time- and money-intensive production, such as radio or illustration. So, what is likely is that even the more "completionist" productions began with the stories they perceived as more "filmable," and perhaps given more time, Granada would have had to figure out what to do with this one.

As it is, while the story is not without pathos, it is somewhat lacking in plot, detection, and Watson. Often near the bottom of ranked lists of Conan Doyle's stories, it's one of two narrated by Holmes himself, with little of Watson's color and flair. This, of course, might have been gotten around in an adaptation, but not without a



considerable amount of rewriting, perhaps utilizing Watson's medical expertise. Perhaps, too, the subject of lepers was deemed distasteful or, more recently, not terribly PC. That said, the Clive Merrison radio episode I listened to was, I thought, relatively clever in its use of Watson's honeymoon as a B-plot and insertion of war flashbacks to flesh out the relationship between the soldier and his friend. So it is adaptable. It's merely that no one has bothered. Perhaps one day an eccentric Sherlockian will fund an attempt to film every story with the same cast and production values, but until then, we shall have to simply imagine Godfrey Emsworth's pale face at the window.

Story & Meeting Content for 2023 SOB Meetings:

February	The Blanched Soldier (BLAN)—See SOB Lauren Messenger's summary on Page 1! In-person
March	Laid-up with COVID, SOB Nancy Holder missed our January Meeting. She has agreed to attempt her talk titled, " <i>Spooky Sherlock: Real Creepers, Canonical and Otherwise</i> " at the March Meeting. PFL David will follow with discussion of The Mazarin Stone (MAZA) Zoom
April	The Creeping Man (CREE) In-person
May	The Lion's Mane (LION) Zoom
June	His Last Bow (LAST) In-person
July	To Be Announced, as we begin a new 5-year cycle of Canonical study! Zoom
August	IBID In-person
September	IBID Zoom
October	IBID In-person
November	IBID Zoom
December	The Blue Carbuncle In-person

SOB Margie Deck receives 2023 Arthur Conan Doyle Society Doylean Honors For Fiction & Poetry

The Arthur Conan Doyle Society presented its second annual Doylean Honors ceremony on January 5, 2023, at the Mysterious Bookshop in New York City. **SOB Margie Deck** received Doylean Honors in the Fiction & Poetry category for the short story, "Whitney's Reflection."

"Whitney's Reflection," a gothic horror story inspired by the Arthur Conan Doyle tale, "The Silver Mirror," was first published in December 2022 by Belanger Books as part of the *Steel True, Blade Straight 2022 Annual: The Belanger Books Journal of SHERLOCK HOLMES and SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE—Inspired Stories, Poems and Scholarship*. The award included a framed certificate and a \$250 gift card for The Mysterious Bookshop.

Ms. Deck is currently at work on a collection of gothic tales to be published later this year. "Whitney's Reflection" will be reprinted within the collection.

Full honors for the year included: Lifetime Service—Owen Dudley Edwards; Excellence in Fiction and Poetry—Margie Deck, Paul Hiscock, and David Marcum; Excellence in Performing and Visual Arts—Jessie Amaolo, David MacGregor, and Frank Cho; Excellence in Scholarly Writing—Shrabani Basu, Richard Fallon and Brian McCuskey.

The "Doings of Doyle" podcast will present a program about the Doylean Honors soon. The program will be available on YouTube and all major podcast streaming services.



Left,
with
her
daughter
Rachel...



Below, SOB Nancy Holder & authors
Andriacco, B. Belanger, Marcum,
D. Belanger, yours truly.



If you are among the current and former SOB Members who received an e-mail message on January 10, 2023 from Board Secretary Terri announcing the 2023 "dues holiday," please note this:

Our *inflation-fighting offer* is being made to those below, renewing for the 2023/2024 membership period; that is,

1. ALL currently active Members who plan to renew;
2. Any currently active Member who has already renewed their 2023/2024 dues; and,
3. Any lapsed member who was on our membership rolls during the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022 **and** wishes to rejoin.

Our annual dues remain the same, at \$25 for individual members and \$35 for families (2+). Our annual dues normally cover membership from each April 1 to the following March 31, so that all members renew every year during March.

For this 2023 inflation-fighting offer, however, if you renew prior to April 1, 2023 you will be rewarded with **two (2) years membership**—meaning your membership will run from April 1, 2023 through March 31, 2025.

Renewing (or rejoining) prior to April 1, 2023, **means:**

- Your electronic payment via PayPal at the "Join" page on our website must be made by March 31. Here's the link: [Join – The Sound of the Baskervilles](#)
- If paying by check (U.S. funds only), your check must be postmarked by March 31 and mailed to Treasurer Melinda at: **SOB Treasurer, P.O. Box 7633, Tacoma, WA 98417**

Any questions about this one-time deal? ...e-mail Treasurer Melinda or Terri, as shown on Page 8! **And, thank you!**

Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

⇒ **SOB Lauran Stevens sent these adverts along:**

All these are now available from AUDIOEDITIONS.COM of Ashland, OR, 1-800-231-4261, are offered in CD and MP3 formats, and are discounted about 30% for each:

● ***Rafferty's Last Case*** by Larry Millett, read by Steve Hendrickson. "Detective Rafferty is murdered. Did he find his own killer? While on a U.S. speaking tour Holmes rushes to investigate." ZEGar4(u), 9 CDs, \$27.27; ZMgar4 (u), 1 MP3, \$20.77.

● ***Sherlock Holmes and the Twelve Thefts of Christmas*** by Tim Major, read by Tom Woosnam. "Holmes' discovery of a mysterious musical score initiates a devious Christmas challenge." ZEGpio (u), 8 CDs, \$27.27; ZMgpiopio (u), 1 MP3, \$20.77.

● ***Sherlock Holmes and Mr. Hyde*** by Christian Klaver, read by Tom Woosnam. "London in 1903, as Holmes takes on the case of a new client—Dr. Jekyll—to help exonerate his friend Mr. Hyde, he faces a killer who moves unseen." ZEGpip (u) 9 CDs, \$27.27; ZMgpiopip (u), 1 MP3, \$20.77.

● ***Sherlock Holmes and the Labyrinth of Death*** by James Lovegrove, read by Dennis Kelinman. "Holmes and Watson discover that a missing woman has infiltrated a cult, believing they murdered her friend." ZEG5e1 (u) 8 CDs, \$27.27; ZMg5e1 (u), 1 MP3, \$20.77.

● ***Sherlock Holmes: The Devil's Dust*** by James Lovegrove. "It is 1884, and when a fellow landlady finds her lodger poisoned, Mrs. Hudson turns to Holmes to clear her friend." ZEG5e0 (u) 8 CDs, \$27.27; ZMg5e0 (u), 1 MP3, \$20.77.

● ***The Case of the Missing Marquess*** by Nancy Springer, read by Katherine Kellgren. "What a 14th-birthday surprise for Enola Holmes! Her elderly mom is nowhere to be found. Not even her estranged brothers Mycroft and Sherlock can find any useful clues; but the precocious teen can." ZECrgw (u) 4 CDs, \$16.50.

⇒ **SOB Maffie Rafferty let us know this:** Hey SOBs, look who's the 28th one in this list of **"THESE ARE THE 41 OF THE HIGHEST-PAID ACTORS OF ALL TIME"** (essay by Mehera Bonner, January 23). "All celebrities are rich. Unless they accidentally spent all their money—a rare, but relatable, occurrence in the world of A-listers. For the most part, though, even B-list and C-list celebrities get paid more than the rest of us can possibly imagine, and there are a few lucky people who *truly* have it made. Specifically, 41 of the highest-paid people in Hollywood. You know—the type of actor who Netflix..." **Continued on Page 5**

The Fortescue Scholarship Exam: 2023 Annual Re-Certification

From Steve Mason, BSI, Chair
Communications Committee
The Beacon Society



The Fortescue Scholarship Honours Program was designed by the late Robert W. Hahn, BSI, with assistance from Susan Diamond, BSI, ASH, for the edification and delight of those Sherlockians who have a scholarly interest in the Canon. Hahn got the pro-gram's name from "The Adventure of the Three Students," which involves the theft of the answer for the scholarship competition.

For several years now, the Program has been administered by The Beacon Society on behalf of the Watsonian Society. Over 120 Sherlockians have completed all three of the Exams and have received their Doctorate in Sherlockiana.

Many have expressed a desire to have additional Exams to continue to hone their Sherlockian skills. In 2020, we issued a Re-Certification exam (strictly optional) for those who would like to continue the scholarship and a review of the Canon and other things Sherlockian. In 2021 and 2022, we issued the 2nd and 3rd Re-Certification exams for those we had not scared off in 2020.

The Beacon Society is excited to announce the availability of the 2023 Annual Re-Certification Exam for those who have completed the first 3 exams.

The questions are not-overly difficult (a few may be a little hard), and continue the primary purpose of the Program, which is to encourage increased familiarity with the 60 stories and the Sherlockian world.

As always, there is no charge to participate in the program, and it is strictly optional or voluntary.

To receive the Re-Certification Exam, please send me an email (mason.steve8080@gmail.com) requesting the Exam.

Once you complete the fillable Exam, you can return to us for grading. Those who successfully complete the Exam will receive a certificate.

You can use whatever resources you have (a copy of the Canon, the internet, etc.) to help in completing the Exam. You may also request each of the Exams from our Fortescue Scholarship Exam web-page, on The Beacon Society Website at: <http://>

Continued on Page 5

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

Continued from Page 4

...and Apple TV are willing to pay tens of millions just for starring in *one* movie.” Follow this link for the whole essay: <https://www.esquire.com/entertainment/g42625931/highest-paid-actors/>

⇒ Thanks to PFL David for these items:

● **SINCE WE WE’LL MEET IN-PERSON ON FEBRUARY 19, HERE’S AN ALTERNATIVE FOR OUR OUT-OF-TOWNERS:** The Legion of Zoom will hold its second annual virtual conference exploring “The Sitting Zoom at 221b Baker Street” at 2:00 p.m. (East), 11:00 a.m. (Pacific) on Feb. 19, 2023. More information and a registration button, can be found at [The Legion of Zoom Scion Society - The Crew of the Barque Lone Star \(dfw-sherlock.org\)](http://The Legion of Zoom Scion Society - The Crew of the Barque Lone Star (dfw-sherlock.org)). You do not have to be a current member of the Legion of Zoom to attend this conference.

● **SHERLOCK BOSS STEVEN MOFFAT ISSUES PUBLIC PLEA TO BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH AND MARTIN FREEMAN: 'PLEASE COME BACK' FOR SEASON 5:** “*Hey, Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman—the ball is officially in your court.*” During a (recent) appearance on BBC’s “Today” show, *Sherlock* creator Steven Moffat confirmed that he is game to mount a 5th season of the international smash (broadcast stateside on PBS). In fact, he said he would “start writing tomorrow” if—you knew there’d be an *if*—Cumberbatch and Freeman agreed to reprise their respective roles as Sherlock and Watson. ♦ “They’re on to bigger and better things,” Moffat acknowledged of the Marvel staples, before adding, tongue-in-cheek: “Martin and Benedict—please come back?” ♦ In November 2021, Cumberbatch told *Esquire* he is taking a “never-say-never” approach to a possible *Sherlock* Season 5. “*I really like that character,*” he continued. “*It’s just, the circumstances need to be right and I think maybe it’s too soon now to see it have another life. I think, wonderful as it is, it’s had its moment for now. But that’s not to say it wouldn’t have another iteration in the future.*” ♦ Freeman recently said on “The Jonathan Ross Show” that while he is “*a fan of things being finite,*” he is also “*a sucker for a good idea and a good script...If something comes up that persuades us all—it would have to be us all—then my door would always be open.*”

● **APOLOGY FROM THE DISTRICT MESSENGER:** “*...for the long gap between issues. On 15th December our hot water system decided to explode. ... Apart from the domestic chaos, our entire computer system was destroyed, and it has taken some time to get back up and running again.*” Says PFL David: *We are so sorry for your loss, Roger Johnson & Jean Upton!*

Romnes Rhyming!

*From the unofficial Hound of the Sound,
James’s dog Moselle!*

More Doggish Poems

'The Mathematics of Reichenbach'

So the end of the Swiss affair
32 feet per second square!

'A Case of Mistaken Identity'

So we begin
A Harlequin
of would be bride and groom,
Of liar's art
and father's heart
as cold as Saxon tomb.



Fortescue Scholarship Exam:

Continued from Page 4

...www.beacon.society.com/fortescue-scholarship-exams.html

PLEASE NOTE:

- This Program is based on the honors system, just like the original Fortescue Scholarship Program in the Canon.
- Please do not share this exam with anyone else. And please do your own work.
- You must complete the exams in order; and you cannot request the recertification exam until you have completed the first 3 exams.

If you have any questions, please send Steve an email. Good luck and have fun!!

Answers To Cook’s Quiz on Page 1:

1. Holmes will be narrating it and Watson has no record of it in his notes.
2. January 1903.
3. Deserting him for a wife.
4. The Boer War; James M. Dodd.
5. Godfrey Emsworth.
6. Tuxbury Old Hall.
7. Ralph.
8. The Abbey School case and a commission from the Sultan of Turkey.
9. Buffelsspruit, outside of Pretoria.
10. Through his shoulder; an elephant gun.
11. Leprosy.
12. Elevate his (Holmes’s) simple art into prodigy.





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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Much Fun at the December Meeting!!

Our Hosts SOBs Margie Deck and Nancy Holder, BSI—i.e., "221B Radio"—presented to The Sound of the Baskervilles the world premiere of Margie's play *'Tis The Season*, on December 18. In only one scene, the PFL Players (Margie, Nancy, Lauren Messenger and PFL David) endeavored to explain the origins of our perennial holiday season favorite, *"The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle."* Yep, we temporarily suspended our belief in Watson's writings while the true (ish) history of that goose was revealed to us. As promised, the play was presented with little rehearsal and the utmost silliness.

The Car Pool Chorus (Lauren, Shannon Wallace and Kashena Konecki) was on next singing, "A Holmes Christmas," featuring original lyrics from Paul Thomas Miller of *The Shingle of Southsea Holmesian Society* in Portsmouth, England.

PFL David provided announcements and additional discussion of BLUE. The Burien Library was most hospitable, the snacks were abundant, and the exchange of cookies was a great success!



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...is a scion society of the Baker Street
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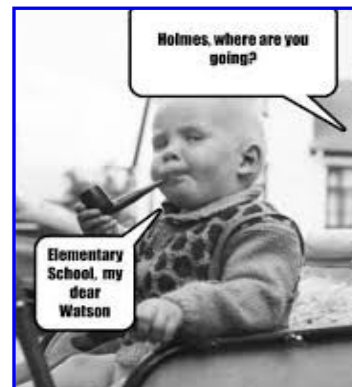
\$25 per year brings Members the
monthly newsletter "Ineffable Twaddle",
a copy of Beaten's Christmas Annual, and
the incalculable benefits of association
with a group of certifiable Holmes
aficionados.

Meetings are held the 3rd 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



Above, SOBs James Romnes
and daughter Emily at the
Sherlock Holmes
Pub in London
back in 2020!



At left (source
unknown),
Holmes heads
To School!