



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 The SOB's Zoom Meeting ★ Sunday, May 21, 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 "LION"

Says Program Chair Sunny Even,

*"...had given myself up entirely
to that soothing life of Nature."*




As we near the end of our five-year journey through the Canon, one notices more changes in tone: less Watson, more exposition and, dare I say, some odd ball plots. Such a chatty fellow in "**The Adventure of the Lion's Mane**," is our Mr. Holmes! Retirement has changed him indeed.

Like in BLAN, Holmes narrates for us, but this time he includes descriptive moments with his neighbors and—gasp!—even his own feelings. And even better, the mystery is a strong one with puzzling circumstances (if one ignores the spoiler in the story's title), sympathetic characters and a scenic backdrop. I wish ACD had written more of these!

If you crave more Holmes-on-the-Downs, try out some of Laurie R. King's pastiches, beginning with "The Bee Keeper's Apprentice."

*"At this period of my life the good
Watson had passed almost beyond my
ken."*

A Quiz by: SOB Charlie Cook

1. How did Watson begin this tale?
2. Now that Holmes is retired, how often does he see Watson?
3. Where is Holmes's retirement villa? 

4. Who is the only person that Holmes could visit without an invitation?
5. What was known as "The Gables"?
6. Name the man Holmes saw die on the beach and what was his position at The Gables'?
7. What was Ian Murdoch's position at "The Gables"?
8. Who was the woman who exchanged love letters with the deceased man?
9. What odd event concerning the dead man's dog occurred one week after the man's death?
10. Name both the village policeman and the one from the Sussex Constabulary!
11. What was the title of the book by J. G. Wood?
12. What is the scientific name for the lion's mane?

Answers may be found on Page 2



SOB Kris Hambrick's *Sherlock on Screen:* The Adventure of the Lion's Main

There is not much to say about "The Lion's Mane" on film, since it has not been attempted. Perhaps this is because, like "The Blanched Soldier," Watson does not appear (though there are many radio versions of both—notably, all include Watson in the cast). Perhaps this is because, again like "The Blanched Soldier," the mystery hinges on a scientific oddity rather than an actual crime, which, while interesting, hardly moves the plot along.

But what it does introduce is Holmes in retirement, so I am going to use that as an excuse to talk about the 2015 film *Mr. Holmes*, directed by Bill Condon, based on the book by Mitch Cullin and starring Ian McKellen. Like this ... [Continued on Page 2](#)

Continued from Page 1

...month's story, *Mr. Holmes* concerns a Holmes in retirement attempting to solve a case without the aid of his friend Dr. Watson, from whom he has drifted. But it's an altogether different version of Holmes than we've seen before; a Holmes who, at age 93, is suffering from memory loss and no longer in control of his considerable faculties.



This is, of course, incredibly depressing and can be difficult to watch, especially given how many families are touched by dementia and related conditions. So, it's no wonder we'd not seen this before except in books, and it's probably not going to be anyone's ideal Holmes film.

But I think it's important that it exists and that it is part of the conversation. For good reason, we hold Holmes up as an ideal, a hero. There is no shame in not wanting those heroes tarnished, and thus no shame in avoiding this film. But its presence in the wider filmic "Canon" is an essential reminder of the fallibility of even the sharpest mind. The basic humanity of even our best champions. And even in his condition, this Holmes is still capable of saving lives, and of changing for the better. He is not what he was, but he is never useless or past caring.



It is good that Conan Doyle gave us a hale and hearty Holmes in retirement, happily keeping bees and stepping in to help defeat evil when needed. Our Holmes need never truly grow old ...or die. But I admire the sensitive and compassionate attempt made by Ian McKellen and *Mr. Holmes* to show us a sadder alter-native, not because I need Holmes to fail, but because I need to remember we are none of us immune. And none of us too old to accept help and love.

Answers To Cook's Quiz on Page 1:

1. He didn't! Holmes wrote it.
2. On an occasional weekend.
3. On the southern slope of the Sussex downs.
4. Harold Stackhurst.
5. A coaching establishment.
6. Fitzroy McPherson; science master.
7. Mathematics coach.
8. His fiancée, Maud Bellamy.
9. It was found dead in exactly the same place as its master.
10. Constable Anderson; Inspector Bardle.
11. *Out of Doors*.
12. *Cyanea capillata*.



Romnes Rhyming!

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

A Man for All Seasons!

All know Summer Holmes
With hints of Sherlock's spring,
And the Autumn man
Awaits what East winds bring,

For Winter thinker
The curtains are drawn closed.
It's three pipes for life's
Final problem proposed.



Story & Meeting Content for 2023 SOB Meetings:

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

A New Challenge for You!

SOB Nancy Holder, BSI challenges those who wish to participate with this:



When you encounter a person who expresses interest in learning more about Sherlock Holmes, what story(ies) would you suggest as good ones to read...to get them started and what their appetites for more?

In our first entry, SOB Lauran Stevens suggests these:

If you:

- enjoy dogs & sports...
- have red hair...
- like strong women...
- like classic stories...
- like seafaring...
- like children...
- are a non-vegetarian...
- like the Navy...
- are into the occult...
- are interested in medicine...

You might enjoy this:

- The Missing Three-Quarter
- The Read-Headed League
- A Scandal in Bohemia
- The Hound of the Baskervilles
- The Gloria Scott
- The Adv. of the Priory School
- The Adv. of the Blue Carbuncle
- The Adv. Of the Bruce Partington Plans
- The Adv. of the Sussex Vampire
- The Adv. of the Creeping Man

Send your list of recommended readings to Editor Terri (terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com), so that we can share it with everyone. And—if you are able please—tell us what you recommend for young readers (under 18) and for adults (18+). **Thanks!!**

‘It’s Like Stepping Back in Time’

Submitted by SOB Bill Seil, (Member #1)

Dressed in Victorian retro and techno clothing, local steampunk group the Seattle Steamrats met at the old Georgetown Steam Plant on January 14 to explore the defunct industrial machinery and take fun photos.

According to Wikipedia: “Steampunk is a subgenre of science fiction ↗



Membership renews every April 1st! Club dues are outlined on the last page of this issue.



Don’t let your membership lapse!

Renew your dues as soon as possible, or we’ll be forced to remove you from our membership rolls.

that incorporates retrofuturistic technology and aesthetics inspired by 19th century industrial steampowered machinery. Steampunk works are often set in an alternative history of the Victorian era or the American “Wild West”, where steam power remains in mainstream use, or in a fantasy world that similarly employs steam power.”

“We enjoy dressing up for what we think the Victorian era of now would’ve been,” Michelle Bartell says. “It’s like stepping back in time, visiting an old building like this,” Marilu May says.

The Georgetown Steam Plant was built by the Seattle Electric Co. on the Duwamish River in 1906-07 and is now a National Historic Landmark. It was used to provide electricity to the growing city, particularly powering the electric trolley car system, according to the Seattle City Light website. The plant’s two vertical Curtis turbines are the only ones left in the world, and they “helped establish the steam turbine as capable of producing large amounts of power more cheaply and efficiently than other generators at the time,” the website says. As hydropower began to replace steam in the 1920s, the plant last produced electricity in 1953. It was decommissioned in 1977.

Source: By KAREN DUCEY - Seattle Times staff photographer, January 22, 2023

Millie Bobby Brown Debut Novel *Nineteen Steps* Set During World War II, Inspired by Her Family's History

Submitted by SOB Maffie Rafferty

Millie Bobby Brown is once again reminding us that there is almost nothing she can't do. Award-winning actor? Check. Founder of a beauty brand? Check. Director? Check. Next on the list? Published author.

On March 24, the 19-year-old "*Stranger Things*" star announced that she has written her debut novel, titled *Nineteen Steps*. The historical fiction novel is inspired by true events and Millie's own family history during World War II, specifically her grandmother Ruth's survival of the Bethnal Green Tube Disaster in 1943. (Per BBC, the Bethnal Green Tube Disaster was the "largest single loss of civilian life" in the UK during the war.)

"Writing *Nineteen Steps* has been a really special project for me," Millie said in the announcement video she posted to Instagram. The book will be published by William Morrow, an imprint of HarperCollins. "I really hope you will find the true spirit of love and strength in *Nineteen Steps*, and I can't wait to share it with you."



MBB's novel takes place three years into World War II and follows 18-year-old Nellie Morris, who lives in London—in the Bethnal Green neighborhood—with her family. According to the novel's official description, Nellie "becomes enchanted with the idea of a broader world" after a "chance encounter with Ray, an American airman stationed nearby."

"Just when Nellie begins to embrace an exciting new life with Ray, a terrible incident occurs during an air raid one evening, and the consequences are catastrophic," reads the synopsis. "As the truth about that night is revealed, Nellie's world is torn apart. When it seems all hope is lost, Nellie finds that, against all odds, love and happiness can triumph." The "*Enola Holmes*" star's first novel is already being described as a "mesmerizing page-turner" and "an epic story of longing, loss, and secrets."



"Inspired by my Nanny Ruth, this book is very personal and close to my heart," Millie Bobby Brown said about the book in a press statement. "I grew up listening to stories about her time living through the war. I'm honored to keep her story alive."

Millie has always been a vocal advocate for strong female characters in film and TV, so it only makes sense that she'd feel the same way about female characters in literature and feel compelled to write one of her own.

"*Nineteen Steps* is a tender, inspiring story about female resilience and the human spirit," Liz Stein, the executive editor at William Morrow, also said in a statement. "Both heart-warming and heart-breaking, it's a novel that portrays the strength and courage we find in family, friendship and community. I was incredibly moved by the haunting, true tragedy at the core of the novel and enchanted by the unforgettable portrait of love in the time of war."

Nineteen Steps will hit shelves on September 12, 2023.



Millie Bobby Brown as Enola Holmes



Webpage:

[Millie Bobby Brown Debut Novel *Nineteen Steps* Set During World War II, Inspired by Her Family's History | Teen Vogue](#)

Source: By Kaitlyn McNab, March 27, 2023, Teen Vogue

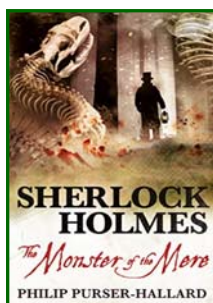


Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

⇒ **SOB Bill Seil (Member #1) notes this:**

● **THE MX BOOK OF NEW SHERLOCK HOLMES STORIES: PART XXXIV, EDITED BY DAVID MARCUM.** (MX Publishing, \$44.95, 468p, \$24.⁹⁵ pb) is described as “Mind-bending puzzles are the highlight of Marcum’s fully satisfying 34th anthology, which again demonstrates that multiple authors are capable of giving Sherlock Holmes and Watson innovative mysteries to tackle while staying in character.

● Members might enjoy this new book, due out in May 2023: **SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE MONSTER OF THE MERE BY PHILIP PURSER-HALLARD.** (Titan, U.K., \$15.95 trade paper, 320pgs, ISBN 978-1-789099-26-3) Purser-Hallard burnishes his reputation as one of the finer Conan Doyle imitators in his superb 4th Holmes outing (after 2022’s *Masters of Lies*), a clever riff on *The Hound of the Baskervilles* that sees Holmes and Watson probing rumors of a water monster in England’s Lake District. A walking tour takes Watson to the town of Wermeholt, on the shores of Lake Wermewater, the supposed home of a snakelike creature known as the Hagworm. Locals believe that when the centuries-old Hagworm appears, it heralds the death of a member of the Wermeston family, who own much of the lake’s eastern shore. Soon, Watson encounters a scientific expedition pursuing a different explanation: *that the monster is a surviving prehistoric reptile.* After someone is found dead from apparent animal wounds, Watson summons Holmes to Wermeholt and they set about determining what’s really haunting the lake. Purser-Hallard captures Conan Doyle’s style and characters perfectly, forging a plot with all the pace and atmosphere of a classic horror film. Sherlockians looking for authenticity in their pastiche will hope this author delivers many more.



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⇒ **SOB Ann Milam sent us this:** If anyone wants to learn more about Doyle's passion for seances, here's a new book. Not yet out but got 5 stars from Audio-books is...**THE LONDON SEANCE SOCIETY BY SARAH PENNER** (duration 9 hr 45 min). Wonder how such an intelligent, insightful man got snookered? Perhaps reflected his highly creative talents? Might learn more from this book—or I’ll bet Member Margaret Nelson knows—she’s so knowledgeable about so much! [The London Séance Society by Sarah Penner | Goodreads](#) ↗

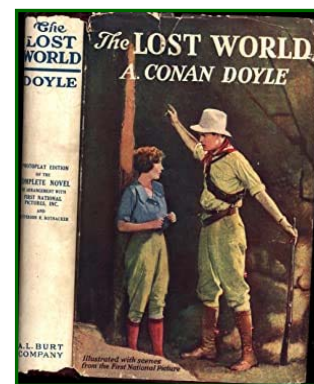


⇒ **From SOB Dan Polvere, BSI:** One hundred and one years ago—We’ve missed the centenary by a year but in April 1912 **CONAN DOYLE'S THE LOST WORLD**, chronicling the fantastic adventures of Professor Challenger and his colleagues, began its serialization in the *Strand Magazine!* But here’s the page spread...



And the 1925 book cover... ⇒

⇒ **From A Lady named Tania Henzell...received at our Website:** I was at the New York Tartan Day Parade in April 2022, showing off the **SHERLOCK HOLMES TARTAN!** My son was all dressed up as Sherlock and I was Mrs. Hudson or maybe Irene Adler!



Mrs. Henzell & her son

I now have a blog and very informative website. Why? Because I have designed the Sherlock Holmes Tartan as **I AM THE STEP, GREAT, GREAT GRANDDAUGHTER OF SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE;** his youngest daughter Jean married my great grandfather on my maternal side. As I live in Scotland, I am surrounded by tartans, and make accessories from various clan tartans, including the Sherlock Holmes Tartan!...

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

Ineffable Twaddle

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Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

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...Visit her website at: www.sherlockholmestartan.com to learn about her history and the Tartan Society, and to view photos and our Sherlock's tartan wardrobe (product line)!

⇒ **SOB James Romnes has acquired this:** What would Holmes have used—when in a strange mood—to do some indoor target shooting? A **BOX OF 100 ELEY #3 CARTRIDGES** for parlor pistols.

⇒ **From SOB Dwight Holmes comes...** Yes, **A HOLMES CAR!** See the details of how "The Holmes made it to the Big Apple and back a century ago—Canton (OH)-made car traveled from Stark County to New York City in 1918."

Webpage: <https://www.cantonrep.com/story/news/local/canton/2018/01/29/the-holmes-made-it-to/15387222007/>



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 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

Awards, Fun and Cake at SOB's April 2023 Meeting

VP Kashena Konecki was the Master of Ceremonies and **SOB Margie Deck** handled the story discussion on CREE, then it was fun and cake at the April 16 SOB Meeting—marking our Club's 43rd Anniversary and bestowing our annual Footprints of a Gigantic Hound Award.

Though unable to attend, a phone call was made and applause were given to our Hound Award Winner, **SOB Margaret Nelson**—an inveterate idea-person, an all-round helper and contributor, and a loyal Member since 1995!

Photo (right) by Kashena Konecki

Photo (below) by Stephen Adkins

