



# Ineffable Twaddle

*"It is my business to know what other people don't know."  
—The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*



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

## Unexpected Gifts: Adapting the Adventure of the Cardboard Box By SOB Kris Hambrick

Today I want to talk about something close to my heart, and that is the way a change in medium can lend unexpected pleasures to a story. This isn't to say that there's anything wrong with "The Cardboard Box," but rather that the two examples we have of this story on film illustrate multiple delightful gifts adaptation can confer.



The first is the Granada episode, which, sadly, is the last filmed by Jeremy Brett before his death. Despite this, or perhaps because of the multiple health scares he'd endured, he actually looks better in this than he has in the previous several. But that's not what I want to talk about. I want to talk about how two elements of this adaptation actually enhance

the story. Firstly, while Doyle set it in August, it was filmed in winter, necessitating a seasonal change. They went with Christmas, which allows for a suspenseful and even more gruesome discovery of the severed ear when Miss Cushing opens it in front of a bunch of unsuspecting guests. Secondly, the part

## Think Outside the Box!

A Quiz on CARD

By: SOB Charlie Cook (Café Noir)

1. What author did Holmes cite concerning the ability to follow another person's thoughts?
2. Which two pictures of Watson's did Holmes notice the doctor observing?
3. When Watson stated that he was amazed by Holmes' reasoning, the detective didn't say "Elementary" but said what?
4. What did the headline say for the article Holmes asked Watson to read and in which newspaper were they published?
5. What was in the box sent to Miss Susan Croydon and from where was it sent?
6. Describe the box.
7. Name Miss Croydon's sisters, and which one was married and to whom?
8. How much did Holmes say he paid for his

Stradivarius and what was its true worth?

9. Holmes regaled Watson with anecdotes about what composer?
10. Name the steamer on which Susan's married sister's husband sailed.
11. In a letter to Holmes, Lestrade referred to what man who helped them in what case?
12. What did Holmes declare to Watson that was unthinkable?



Answers can be found on Page 5!

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### Inside this issue:

*Unexpected Gifts: 1*  
*Adapting the Adventure of the Cardboard Box by SOB Kris Hambrick*  
*A Quiz From Charlie Cook 1*

*CARD: Social Class in Victorian Times by Sunny Even*

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

*The Dinner with the Canon Winner is...! 4*

*Adapting CARD, continued 4*

*Mark Your Calendar! 5*  
*Quiz Answers Revealed 5*

*Member News & Notes 6*



### Please Note:

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If you need to make a change, please contact Editor Terri:

**Call:** (253) 460-2753  
**Email:** terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com

## The Adventure of the Cardboard Box by Sunny Even

Most people remember “The Adventure of the Cardboard Box” because of those ears. But I want to call your attention to Conan Doyle’s eloquent descriptions of the working and home lives of the sisters. In just a snapshot, he captured in one story the underlying turbulence in class and social patterns that characterized the Victorian times. Over the next three stories, we’ll delve into how working and home lives were shaped, and some of the larger trends that changed them forever in a single generation (with of course our annual departure in December to discuss “that Christmas story.”)

In Britain particularly, work performed was uniquely shaped by class and tradition. Americans, especially modern ones, tend to equate class with wealth, but that’s inadequate. Class was partly based on income, but more significantly on birth and family connections. When combined with traditional ways of life in the country, town or city, we’re confronted with an array of social strata each distinct in manners, speech, clothing, education and values. In the strictest sense, there were only two classes: aristocrats and commoners. But in actuality, society was three-tiered with many distinctions within.



The working classes did physical and often dirty work and it showed in the clothes and hands. Both men and women were most highly paid in their twenties at peak physical condition, which declined as they aged. Wages in their peak years might support a family, but caring for young children meant a corresponding drop in family income until the children were old enough to contribute. When the children set up their own households, hard labor and poor food would have weakened parents’ earning abilities, so if they lived to be old, they would probably be very poor. Skilled workers, who made up about 10% might be better off, and could forego their children’s income and send them out to apprentice. Artisans could set up their own businesses and occupied a borderline between working class and middle class. The Industrial Revolution greatly impacted this class over a short time — shifting the bulk of work from the countryside to cities and factory towns and decreasing the importance of artisans while increasing the numbers of skilled jobs. Social reforms cut back child labor in favor of childhood education and greater earning potential later, and at the expense of the family near-term. Weekly wages for most laborers ranged from 10-15 shillings, while skilled workers could earn more than a pound a week. However yearly income could vary greatly by season, location, and an individual’s health. Through his 1886 study into poverty, Charles Booth established the poverty level at about 18s to 21s per week per family. Below that level were the “very poor” to include anyone who had the misfortune to get sick.

The middle class did cleaner work that involved more mental effort than physical. In early Victorian times, the middle class made up about 15% of the population in England; by 1900 it was approximately 25%. With Britain’s population nearly doubling over that time, the middle class became the social center of gravity through a combination of sheer numbers, common values, and dynamic tensions. The middle class encompassed the entire range of incomes, from barely-scraping -by clerks on £34-£45 a year (or 15s a week, below poverty line if he had a family like Bob Crachit) to wealthy bankers and manufacturers at well over £10,000 a year, on par with the wealthier titled land-owners. At £150-£200 a year a married couple could support a maid-of-all-work and at £300 a second servant to care for children, considered the absolute minimum for a middle class household. Changing enfranchisement, education and economic opportunities all combined to drive upward mobility, ballooning the middle class and showcasing their values as society’s ideal.

The elite, or upper class, represented a tiny fraction of the population, and did not work for money, but received income from inherited land or investments. While the landed class dominated Parliament at the beginning of the era, the rising tide of democracy and erosion of the land economy decreased their actual impact over time. By the 1900s, the upper class was increasingly required to engage directly in money-making activities like the middle class to maintain their political position.

Aside from class, social traditions underwent a sea change with the move from the country to the city. With industrialization, the significant income-earning role that women played in a country economy diminished, in part because paid work was increasingly likely to take place outside the home. (Also with this change in location came an artifact from the agricultural model that paid women at about 70% of a man’s rate for the same job.) The term “women’s work” has several meanings in the context of this era. Whether the domestic ideal of middle-class Victorians, or the duties and tasks assigned as a gender role, or merely as women’s paid labor — they all were transformed during the rapidly industrializing nineteenth century. Land enclosure and large-scale farming claimed small plots and pastures vital to supporting individual families. Day labor replaced live-in help, favoring employment of men who could do the heavy farm work. Young unmarried women left home for domestic or factory work in the cities. Traditional employment opportunities for women also declined in the urban setting as the exclusion of women and children from a family business became a tangible symbol of middle-class success.

## Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

⇒ **From Lauran Stevens:** Holmes, Miss Marple & Poe Investigations by James Patterson and Brian Sitts is a set of 8 CDs from Audio Editions featuring a story about the three private investigators in the title, and the detective working to unmask their true identities.

⇒ **From Peter Blau:** “Laurence Pernet has shown how important the Archives can be, in an article (“Mourning for Holmes: More Than a Myth”) in the spring issue of The Baker Street Journal, in which she has reported finding a likely source for the often-repeated (and often-doubted) story about how (after publication of “The Final Problem”), gentlemen of the City were seen wearing black armbands in honor of the deceased detective. The spring issue is included in an annual subscription to the BSJ (\$41.95 or \$55.00 outside the U.S.) at

[www.bakerstreetirregulars.com/the-baker-street-journal](http://www.bakerstreetirregulars.com/the-baker-street-journal) or P.O. Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077-1934”

● The Crew of the Barque Lone Star: The Facts, Legend, and Lore: [https://](https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-crew-of-the-barque-lone-star-steve-mason/1143585458?ean=9798369258781)

[www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-crew-of-the-barque-lone-star-steve-mason/1143585458?](https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-crew-of-the-barque-lone-star-steve-mason/1143585458?ean=9798369258781)

[ean=9798369258781](https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-crew-of-the-barque-lone-star-steve-mason/1143585458?ean=9798369258781) edited by Liese Sherwood-Fabre, Cindy Brown and Steve Mason. The 148-page book is a splendid demonstration of what a Sherlockian society can do to preserve its history, and it’s available from Barnes & Noble for \$7.76 ; you can also download a PDF of the book without charge at the Crew’s web-site <https://www.dfw-sherlock.org/> . And there’s video history of the society at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctsUyUMHykw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctsUyUMHykw)

● The spring issue of The Magic Door (published by the friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Public Library) has Douglas Kerr’s article about Conan Doyle and actor Lewis Waller, Cliff Goldfarb’s report on variant scripts for Irwin Allen’s film “The Lost World” (with information on who was considered for major roles), and much more. You can request a copy of the newsletter from Cliff Goldfarb (Toronto Public Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto M4W 2G8, Canada) [cgoldfarb@sympatico.ca](mailto:cgoldfarb@sympatico.ca)

● The April issue of the quarterly newsletter from The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota, offers Phil Bergem’s discussion of Conan Doyle’s travels in the U.S. and Canada 100 years ago, John Bergquist’s tribute to



Michael and Mollie Hardwick 50 years ago, and much about

the exhibition of “Sherlock Holmes in 221 Objects from the Collection of Glen S. Miranker”; copies of the newsletter can be requested from Timothy Johnson, #15-G Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

● Fans of “**Star Trek: The Next Generation**” will recall the series’ two Sherlockian episodes: “Elementary, Dear Data” (1988) and “Ship in a Bottle” (1993), in which Daniel Davis played Moriarty. Now Moriarty has returned, in “The Bounty” (season three, episode six of “Star Trek: Picard”) now streaming on Paramount+. For anyone who came in late, Wikipedia offers a detailed discussion of the series;



the third season is available only on Paramount+ (you can subscribe or rent or purchase programs). Davis is delightful as

Moriarty, both 35 years ago and today, and you can watch a recent interview with him at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUSmk08u4l4>

● Wanda Dow notes that video of David Stuart Davies’ play “Sherlock Holmes: The Final Reckoning” (performed in Edinburgh in 2019 with Michael Daviot as Holmes and Mark Kydd as Watson) has been posted to YouTube; watch it at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f064ZW-TMJY>

⇒ **Says SOB Associate Editor Lauren Messenger:** I recently had a friend pass along a link to a Kickstarter campaign for a cozy mystery game called The Beekeeper’s Picnic! It is a retro point and click game in which you are invited to explore a seaside town in the 1920s and solve mysteries



### Adapting CARD (Continued From Page 1)

of Browner is played by an unknown and relatively young Ciarán Hinds, who imbues the role with such pathos it cannot really be described. Both of these factors, while not substantially altering the text, offer additional levels to the viewer.



The other version is far less 'faithful,' but is a good example of what a production team can do when they have the whole canon available

to them and can rework elements into a more cohesive whole. While the Miss Sherlock episode "Stella Maris" is not a direct adaptation, it uses the elements of the severed body parts as not only a part of the mystery of the week, but as a clue to



a larger, arcing mystery Sherlock and Wato are embroiled in. This means that a viewer not versed in the canon loses nothing, but one who is can enjoy the 'remix' effect of different elements finding their way into stories in new and unexpected ways.



In this way, both of these adaptations offer an experience that does not replace the original story, but is different enough to feel new and interesting, regardless of the audience's familiarity.

### Dinner with the Canon Winner! by Lauran Stevens

The winner of the contest to invite people in the Sherlock Holmes canon to dinner, and the menu that was served, is Margaret Nelson. She invited ten women from the stories to a fabulous four course meal, with Mrs. Hudson as the special guest of honor.

Margaret's menu included foods that were a special tribute to each of her guests.



The prize for this extraordinary dinner is a silicon ice cube tray, a very special tray because it makes four kinds of weapons for a murder—a revolver, a poison vial with a skull and a cross bones on it, a candlestick, and a dagger!

Imagine serving your guests a glass of iced tea with an ice cube revolver in it, or a glass of lemonade with a vial of poison in it!

You can read Margaret's inspired menu in the August-September 2023 issue of Ineffable Twaddle.

Congratulations, Margaret!



More...Things to See, Buy, Do & Know **Continued from Page 3**

as the (retired) Great Detective who is planning a picnic for his friend, Dr. Watson. The game will be available for Windows, Mac, and Linux, and will be released through itch.io and Steam. Check it out here: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/jabbage/the-beekeepers-picnic-a-cosy-sherlock-holmes-adventure>

⇒ Visit Scott Monty and Burt Wolder's "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" blog <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a7ycOGQqRjs> to listen to their interview with Dan



Andriacco, the new editor of the Baker Street Journal. And if you'd like to know more about Ken Ludwig's new play

"Moriarty" (which had its world premiere in Cleveland last month), you can listen to Scott and Burt interview Ken and Ashley Polasek at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Ue9pPN619M>

⇒ The Rosenbach Museum & Library in Philadelphia has announced a "Sherlock Monday" weekly series of 90-minute virtual programs covering 27 of the stories (from "A Study in Scarlet" to "The Empty House") beginning Sept. 18 and featuring senior manager of public programs Edward G. Pettit and a rotating group of co-hosts. You can watch the series live, or view the videos at the Rosenbach's YouTube channel. More information is available at [www.rosenbach.org/events/sherlock-Mondays](http://www.rosenbach.org/events/sherlock-Mondays)

### Answers to Quiz on "CARD" on Page 1

- Answers**
1. Poe.
  2. General Gordon, framed; Henry Ward Beecher, unframed.
  3. Superficial.
  4. "A Gruesome Packet"; Daily Chronicle.
  5. Coarse salt and two freshly severed ears; Belfast.
  6. A half-pound box of honeydew tobacco.
  7. Sarah and Mary; Mary to James Browner.
  8. 55 shillings; at least 500 guineas.
  9. Paganini.
  10. May Day.
  11. Albridge; the Bogus Laundry Affair.
  12. That our universe is ruled by chance.

**...Continued from Page 2**

Greater competition in traditional "women's trades" such as millinery and dressmaking required greater capital outlay and lone women found it difficult to secure financing. However other opportunities were emerging as industries changed. In 1851, only about 3 million women were engaged in paid labor (probably under-reported due to census procedures), 40% as domestic servants, 20% in textile production, 18% sewing cloth, and 8% as agricultural laborers. By 1881, the total number had increased by a third to 4 million, faster than the population was increasing, with women's employment expanding in every occupation, while adding new ones such as transport and communication.

In contrast to this economic trend, was the Victorian ideal of the "Angel in the House," a vision of female domesticity that accentuated the absolute separation of work from home life. As the middle class continued to gain power in Victorian society, qualities for success in a competitive marketplace took on cultural importance. The domestic realm thus came to be associated with those opposite qualities such as serenity, altruism, innocence and consumerism, echoes of which are still seen today in our lives. Next month we'll investigate this realm of domesticity, and how its middle-class ideal shaped all of Victorian society and ours today.

*Please join us on October 15, 2023, at Queen Anne Library, as James Romnes leads us in our discussion of CARD! See the details below for directions.*

**The Seattle Public Library on Queen Anne Hill is located at 400 West Garfield Doors to the Meeting Room, which is on the lower level, open at Noon. The meeting will start at 12:30 p.m. and end by 4 p.m. Your contribution to the snacks table will be most appreciated!**



*Getting there: From north- or southbound I-5, exit at Mercer Street and head west. Turn right on Queen Anne Avenue and head up the hill. At the 3-way stop sign at the top, turn left onto West Galer Street. At 4th Avenue, turn right. The library is one (1) block north on the northwest corner, at the cross with Garfield Street.*



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

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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 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: SOB Treasurer • P.O. Box 7633 • Tacoma, WA 98417*



## Member News & Notes

- ★ Thanks to everyone who celebrated the John H. Watson Picnic at Seahurst Park!
- ★ Congratulations to Cameron Brandon, Margie Deck, Nancy Holder, Naching Kassa and David Merrell for being the group to take first place in the 2023 John H. Watson Society's annual treasure hunt quiz with an epic score of 192 points!

**Regular Monthly Meeting, Sunday, October 15, 12:30 p.m. at Queen Anne Library, Seattle**  
*Get ready to discuss The Adventure of the Cardboard Box and Daily Life & Social Class during Victorian Times! John Romnes will be leading the discussion.*

**Regular Monthly Meeting, Sunday, November 19, 12:30 p.m. on Zoom!**

*The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax is a gothic horror tale that sheds light on the lives of women and the more spooky elements of the Victorian home...*



- ★ Thank you to everyone who has submitted book reviews, quizzes, news, articles, and entries for Lauran Stevens' clever contest! Keep them com-

ing; you bring such joy and creativity to each issue of Ineffable Twaddle!



- ★ Thank you for allowing me (Lauren Messenger) to associate edit this issue of Ineffable Twaddle! Any errors or delay in publication are my own, and I thank you for your patience.
- ★ Special thanks to James Romnes for leading our next in-person meeting to discuss the spine-chilling Adventure of the Cardboard Box! Don't let the mundane object in the name fool you, there's a lot to say about this story!