



Ineffable Twaddle

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

The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle

March 2024

A monthly publication of The Sound of the Baskervilles A Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars • Since March 31, 1980

Volume 43 Issue 3 ■



Story & Meeting Content for 2024 SOB Meetings

(to September):

We continue our 5-year Cycle on the theme, "Education and schooling" with...

March 17 The Priory School via Zoom

Our 5-year Cycle continues with 2 stories on the theme, "Changing family dynamics" (SPEC, COPP)

April 28 ** The Speckled Band In-person meeting

May 19 The Copper Beeches via Zoom, with SOB
Naching Kassa presenting

Our 5-year Cycle continues on the subject, "Rule Britannia" with...

June 16 The Sign of Four In-person meeting

We continue our 5-year Cycle with 3 stories on the theme, "The European Situation" (GLOR, SIXN, SECO)

July 21 Watson Picnic & The Gloria Scott * In-person meeting

August 18 The Six Napoleons *via Zoom

September 15 The Second Stain *
In-person meeting, with SOB
Margie Deck presenting

*Note changes above: July 21 will be an In-Person meeting; August 18, via Zoom; and September 15, In-Person.

**Our April Meeting had to move ahead one week to April 28, due to conflict at the Queen Anne Library

If you would like to present our story discussion at the July or the August meetings, please contact PFL David by March 31, 2024.



Join The SOB's Next Zoom Meeting Sunday, March 17, 2024



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

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



Says Program Chair Sunny Even

"...The Priory is, without exception, the best and most select preparatory school in England."

England's elementary education system covered a patchwork of privately funded, philanthropic, and locally subsidized schools throughout Victoria's reign, conceived in explicit class terms, and shaped by Church of England and Non-Conformist competition. When Victoria ascended the throne, only one-third of the grooms and about half the brides signed their names to their marriage licenses. Parliament begrudgingly allocated £30,000 in 1839 for elementary schooling (in comparison to the £70,000 to repair Windsor Castle stables). By the time of Victoria's death in 1901, about 95% of the brides and grooms were signing their names, and annual parliamentary expenditures on elementary schooling had risen to over £8 million, a full one-third the expenditure for the Royal Navy that year.*

There were considerable obstacles to achieve this turnaround: economic, social and religious. England had a long-standing tradition of philanthropic school funding with donors supporting schools either by setting up endowments or supporting periodic subscriptions ("voluntary" schools). However, population shifts in industrialized areas far outstripped any minutely available subsidized schooling... Continued on Page 2

* Economic cycles are a future subject, but for now know that inflation didn't really exist over this period—not in the sustained year-over-year way it has since World War II. With some exceptions, prices remained surprisingly steady throughout the industrial revolution and following period of rapid growth.



Says Program Chair Sunny Even...

Continued from Page 1

...resources, and factory work itself called for little educated labor. Furthermore, by making use of child labor, it increased the opportunity cost of school attendance. Universal schooling was viewed as an impractical luxury by working-class parents and with some hostility by politicians and others in authority. A formal education, even in minimal literacy skills, could divert those of humble origins away from their assigned station in life, and even

facilitate the spread of revolutionary ideologies. To cap it all, the Anglican Church had been losing ground to Non-Conformists and Roman Catholics for decades, especially in the lower economic strata. Attempts to reform elementary education at the national level were continually blocked by the Established Church, unwilling to relinquish control of funding, curriculum and appointments to local boards which were largely Non-Conformist.

However, attitudes gradually began to change. Census data and education surveys over decades slowly built an irrefutable case for compulsory educa-

tion and universal access. Government investigations repeatedly demonstrated many working-class children were falling through the cracks, receiving very little-to-no instruction, and that illiteracy and crime were closely associated. The Evangelical movement reinforced the growing support for literacy in the belief that the working-classes should be able to read the Bible. And society overall saw educating the poor as a necessary defense of middle-class culture in the face of growing working-class power as enfranchisement expanded over this same period.

The Education Reform Act of 1870 achieved landmark legislation that established policies to "fill the gaps." Areas inadequately served would create school boards to provision and manage schools funded through local taxes, side by side with established voluntary, denominational schools. A compromise was hammered out to resolve religious differences and protect religious minorities. Religious instruction in board schools was to be non-denominational and conducted outside hours of regular instruction, and voluntary schools could transfer to board management (and funding) through local majority votes. Aspects of this distinctive English pattern of balancing a voluntary, philanthropic presence with local government administration under centralized guidelines continues to this day.

"WE HAVE had some dramatic entrances and exits upon our small stage at Baker Street, but..."

A Quiz on PRIO by: SOB Charlie Cook

- 1. Who was it that made such a dramatic entrance to 221B?
- 2. What was the first thing the visitor did upon his arrival there?
- 3. What two (2) cases of current importance did Holmes claim would keep in London?
- 4. Name the Duke of Holdernesse's private secretary.
- 5. What was the Duke's son wearing when he disappeared?
- 6. Someone else went missing; name him and his function at the school!
- 7. In Watson's words, in what "country" was the Priory school located?
- 8. With how many different impressions of tyres was Holmes familiar?
- 9. Name the grove of trees to the North of the school!
- 10. Name the Inn and its proprietor where Holmes and Watson found horses!
- 11. What did the Duke keep in a glass case in his museum room?
- 12. What was the most interesting object Holmes had seen in the North Country?



"We had sprung to our feet, and for a few moments we stared in silent amazement at this ponderous piece of wreckage,..."





SOB Kris Hambrick's Sherlock on Screen: **Upcoming Sherlock Holmes Projects**

Since I've written about The Priory School before (see Kris's column on PRIO in the May May 2022 issue of *Ineffable Twaddle here*: May 2022 Twaddle (soundofthebaskervilles.com)), I thought perhaps I'd check in on the upcoming Holmes film and television projects we've heard announcements and rumors of. No, not Sherlock Holmes 3 or Sherlock Season 5 (the former is "still a priority" for Downey, Jr. as of last year, and the latter honestly feels like a fan hallucination to me).

But there are actual confirmed announcements and things for Sherlock-related projects. First was the announcement of the CBS medical drama Watson, starring Morris Chestnut, to begin in the 2024-25 season. It's a new take, a contemporary procedural set a year after Holmes' death, and I think it's a fascinating way to finally center Watson in a way we've been sort of building to with their increased importance in Sherlock and

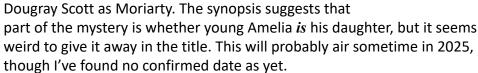


Things season 5, it may be awhile.

Scott

Elementary compared to many previous adaptations.

Then last week, we got word that TV channel "The CW" had ordered another new series, Sherlock & Daughter, starring David Thewlis and Blu Hunt, with Dougray Scott as Moriarty. The synopsis suggests that



Netflix *has* confirmed there's a third *Enola Holmes* movie in the works. but as the script was still being written in November, and Millie Bobby Brown is currently tied up with Stranger

Anything else on the above is rumor and reaction, with lots of unsolicited online comments taking exception to everything from Holmes ever having had sex to Watson being African American, but for my money, you don't have to *like* a Holmes film or show to recognize the value of constantly reinvigorating this character and his companions with new life, new fans, and new adventures. Every moment in time... Continued on Page 4

Sherlock Holmes, The Missing Years: Timbuktu

By: Vasudev Murthy, Publisher: Poisoned Pen Press, 2016

A Book Review by: SOB Charlie Cook

Ah, The Great Hiatus! Wherefore art thou, Mr. Holmes? How about Venice, the Vatican, Tangier, the mighty Sahara, Timbuktu, more deserts, Niger, Mali and Sudan to Khartoum.

Holmes and Moriarty did not go over the Falls, but each disappeared in a different direction. Holmes ostensibly is a representative of the Pope on an African quest, but really spying on the French for Mycroft.



Before Reichenbach, an Italian scholar brings Holmes one half of a parchment that purports to reveal the secret to eternal life. The detective's opinion is a rather non-Canonical: "Hogwash!" But he learns later, after a trip to Venice and the Vatican where he agrees to seek the other half for the Pope in Timbuktu, that there are those willing to kill for the secret. ...

Continued on Page 6

Morris Chestnut



SOB Kris Hambrick's Sherlock on Screen: Upcoming S.H. Projects ...

Continued from Page 3

...gets the Holmes it deserves, and every fan can keep the ones that please them.

Ed. Note 1: SOB Jim Nagle sent us this related squib from another source—"David Thewlis to Star in 'Sherlock & Daughter' Series Ordered at CW." The CW has given a series order to "Sherlock & Daughter," a scripted series starring David Thewlis. Read in Variety: https://apple.news/Aof7whG-rSYWUejZZ4S4-SQ. With Thewlis as Sherlock Holmes, the series puts the detective out of his comfort zone, mysteriously unable to investigate a sinister case without risking the lives of his closest friends. He then meets Amelia (Blu Hunt), an American who, after her mother's mysterious murder, learns that Sherlock may be her missing father.

Ed. Note 2: SOB Maffie Rafferty sent this related squib—In addition to Millie Bobby Brown being engaged to Jon Bon Jovi's son Jake and Sam Claflin being in *Daisy Jones and the Six*, I read in *People* magazine that Louis Partridge (who played the missing marquess) is dating Olivia Rodrigo! I am not all that familiar with Ms. Rodrigo's music but still I thought that was interesting. Going back to MBB, here's something that mentions both her and Henry Cavill:



If you are among the current Members who joined The SOBs <u>since</u>
April 1, 2023, please note this:

Our annual dues normally cover membership from each

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

To renew *prior to April 1, 2024*, please note:

- Your electronic payment via PayPal at the "Join" page on our website should be made by <u>March 31</u>, at this link: <u>Join – The Sound of</u> the <u>Baskervilles</u>
- If paying by check (U.S. funds only), your check should be mailed to Treasurer Melinda and postmarked by March 31 as follows: SOB Treasurer, P.O. Box 7633, Tacoma, WA 98417

Any questions about renewing? Please e-mail Treasurer Melinda, as shown on Page 8!

If you are among the members who took advantage of our 2-year *inflation-fighting offer* in March 2023, your dues are still in effect until March 31, 2025!!

If you <u>mistakenly</u> renew now, Treasurer Melinda will contact each of you and return any payment made, instead of putting the funds toward a future year. *Thank you!*

20 British Actors Who Play American Characters Flawlessly (movieweb.com). Of course, it doesn't mention Enola Holmes since that wouldn't go along with what the story is about but wouldn't that be cool if Enola and Sherlock could disguise themselves as Americans in the next sequel. And, later on I saw that Louis Partridge has also played Sid Vicious, so there's another musical connection for you.

Ed. Note 3: Editor Terri notes this—Start TV* began broadcasting *Elementary* in January 2024, and its now on their schedule two times a day at 12P | 11C & 1P | 12C; more: Start TV | "Elementary" brings a new crime-solving duo to Start TV's lineup of must-watch dramas".

* "Start TV showcases strong and resourceful female leading characters in a lineup of contemporary and proven procedural dramas. Each lead character and series embody a boldness and determination to "Start" leading the way, seeking the truth, solving the crime, and defending the innocent."

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.

Things to See, Buy, Do and Know

⇒ From SOB Ann Milam: "A Case of Identity" is available for free as an audiobook. I haven't listened yet; hope



this speaker (Emma Kate Starling) is OK. BTW, as some of us SOBs are "getting on," it's helpful to include audio versions.

Sherlock Holmes, Adventure 3: A Case of Identity - Soundbooth Theater

⇒ A bit of humour from SOB Mitch Gould: Do you know the origin of "the blues"?? Not in the musical context, but in the emotional context. Some background:

What does the "blue devils" mean?

- —A feeling of despondency or low spirits (Source: Oxford Languages).
- —A man suffering from attack by blue devils; representing depression or mental illness (Source: Newton, Richard, 1777 to 1798, English caricaturist, miniaturist and book illustrator).



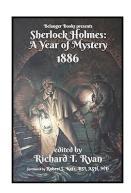
⇒ Seen in the Spring Issue Vol. 4, Num. 3 of "Sherlock's Spotlight"—The Beacon Society's "Quarterly Gazette for Young Sherlockians Eve rowhere":

- **SOB Beth Gallego's** regular column, "Entertainment Resources for Younger Sherlockians: Comics and Graphic Novels"; and
- **SOB Margie Deck's** essay, "About Arthur, the Author Glimpses into the life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes: The Medical Student Makes His Way."
- ⇒ Seen in the Autumn Issue Vol. 4, Num. 4 of "Sherlock's Spotlight"—The Beacon Society's "Quarterly Gazette for Young Sherlockians Everywhere":
 - **SOB Beth Gallego's** regular column, "Entertainment Resources for Younger Sherlockians: Comics and Graphic Novels"; and

• **SOB Margie Deck's** essay, "About Arthur, the Author Glimpses into the life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure of the Overconfident Writer."

⇒ Notes from PFL David:

- Some history about Valentine's Day—Although Valentine's Day can be traced to ancient Rome, it's the Victorians who originally put a romantic spin on the holiday. Valentine's Day became so popular that postal carriers received special meal allowances to keep themselves running during the frenzy leading up February 14th. Of the millions of cards sent, some estimate that nearly half were of the vinegar variety. "Victorian-Era 'Vinegar' Valentines Could Be Mean and Hostile," says "rather than expressing love and affection, these cards were designed to offend."
- Peter Blau let us know that "Sherlock Holmes & the Precarious Position," a play by Margaret Raether is due at the Taproot Theatre in Seattle, May 15 to June 15. Their website describes it thusly: "Corsets, crowns, and a missing royal jewel set the stage for a battle of wits in this tale of deception, suspense, and deduction. When the bookish Perkins sisters approach Sherlock Holmes with a case, they unveil a theatrical scheme of encyclopedic proportions. Four actors play multiple characters and the mystery turns deadly." They will have matinees on Saturday May 25, June 1, and June 8 at 2:00 p.m. For more: www.taproottheatre.org; (206) 781-9705.
- Sherlock Holmes: A Year of Mystery 1886 by Richard Ryan (Author), Chris Chan (Author) and 8 more (paperback, independently published, December 24, 2023; part of a 6-book series) looks interesting! ◆ Notes Amazon: "As a scientist, Sherlock Holmes would have certainly been familiar with the famous dictum attributed to Aristotle: Nature abhors a vacuum. ◆ In that same vein, fans of the Great Detective must look at 1885



and 1886 and see a somewhat similar void. Conan Doyle set no cases during those years; in fact, if you believe Doyle, Holmes and Watson remained inactive for a period of some 30 months. ♦ However, we have reached out to Sherlockians around the globe and asked them to review carefully any correspondence with Dr. Watson which may have come into their possession. As you might expect, they unearthed a plethora of stories that occurred in 1885 and 1886. In this book are 12 stories, one for each month plus one extra."



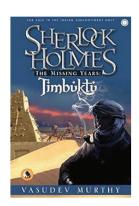
Sherlock Holmes, The Missing Years: Timbuktu...

Continued from Page 3

...The villains are members of a 500-year-old cult, The Guardians of the Letter. The parchment originated from Kublai Khan who gave it to Marco Polo who dissected it, placing half in Venice and the other in Timbuktu and eventually bequeathing it to a Moroccan, Ibn Batuta.

Holmes is not alone as Mary Watson has generously given John permission to join Holmes in Africa for what may be an adventure taking several months. Even Moriarty gets involved, contributing his usual efforts to thwart Holmes.

This tale is presented by several different narrators: Watson, Holmes, a Taureg, a Guardian, and even the author speaking directly to the reader. Much fascinating information concerning the geographical world and culture of the nomadic Tauregs is provided.



Historians would undoubtedly be impressed by this, but the Baker Street boys not only travel very far from London, they travel even further from the Canon and the story as a case for Holmes is...well, you decide if you read it. But enjoy it for a tale of adventure, and quite an exciting adventure it is, or ignore it as a case for the Master.

Talk about "I See You Everywhere"!

Submitted by SOB Margaret Nelson

Author Michael Dirda wrote a column on the 2024 Baker Street Irregular Weekend in NYC, which was published in the Book World section of the January 25, 2024, *Washington Post*. (What happens at a New York convention of Sherlock Holmes fans - The Washington Post). Al's cousin kindly sent us the full-page article complete with an original, dramatic illustration of Sherlock Holmes and the Hound of the Baskervilles designed for the cover of the BSI's dinner program.

The account describes Dirda's dinner with Otto Penzler, owner of the Mysterious Bookshop, and his attendance at the Wessex Cup wind-up horse race where he might have spoken with **SOB members Margie Deck and Nancy Holder, BSI**. They sponsored one of the horses, "Blue John" from the "Team Terror Stable," surely influenced by their work on a non-Sherlockian story by Conan Doyle, "The Terror of Blue John Gap."

Dirda visited several bookstores and other BSI social events over the weekend and chatted with some notable Sherlockians. The following is an excerpt from his article:

"The 90th anniversary dinner of the Baker Street Irregulars begins with a crowded cocktail party. Teasing banter with Rebecca Romney...; Leslie Klinger, arguably the leading Sherlockian scholar

of our time; Nancy Holder, award winning author of numerous media tie-in novels, as well as an expert on Buffy the Vampire Slayer; and Peter Blau, who oversees the Red Circle, Washington, D.C.'s own Sherlockian meeting place."

It all sounded like fun. A few years ago, **SOB Sonia Fetherston**, **BSI** attended the BSI dinner and graciously gave us an account of the events. Perhaps we can persuade Margie Deck and Nancy Holder to do the same in an article for *Ineffable Twaddle* so that we all can attend the BSI Weekend vicariously?

置HO UND

Frank Cho designed the program cover for the Baker Street Irregulars' 90th anniversary dinner this month.

Land-Lubbers Beware: A Nautical Test on Canonical Ships

By: SOB Charlie Cook

Can you land-lubbers match the tale—in the right-hand column—with which water craft listed—in the lefthand column—found itself mentioned in the Canon?

1. Alicia	1. ABBE
2. Esmeralda	2. BLAC
3. Friesland	3. CARD
4. Hotspur	4. FIVE
5. Matilda Briggs	5. GLOR
6. May Day	6. ILLU
7. Norah Creina	7. NORW
8. Orontes	8. RESI
9. Palmyra	9. SIGN
10. Rock of Gibraltar	10. STUD
11. Ruritania	11. SUSS
12. Sea Unicorn	12. THOR



Answers to this Quiz may be found on Page 8

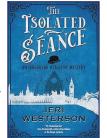
Things to See, Buy, Do and Know

Continued from Page 5

Jeri Westerson: Dear Fellow Sherlock Holmes Enthusiast: I tell you, it's a real three pipe problem connecting to such a singular set of people who are as enamored of Mr. Holmes' tales as much as I am. ▲ I'm an author of many different historical mysteries and last year I decided to

embark on my own Holmesian pastiche,

Received at our website from author



keeping it Canon as much as I can by being more, well... Sherlock adjacent. My series is called "An Irregular Detective Mystery," concentrating on one of Holmes' former Baker Street Irregulars who aged out of that group of wayward boys and began his own detecting agency. Badger made the acquaintance of a young Black man named Ben Watson (no relation to John Watson), and, thinking it was Fate that they met, Badger convinced the multitalented fellow into his scheme of detecting. • The first of the series is The Isolated Séance (Severn House; Main edition, June 6, 2023): London, 1895. Former Baker Street Irregular Tim Badger is determined to follow in the footsteps of his great mentor, Sherlock Holmes, by opening his own detecting agency with his partner, Benjamin Watson. The intrepid duo are ready to make a name for themselves...if only they had clients! Their luck changes when Holmes recommends his protégés to Thomas Brent. Brent is eager to find out who killed his master, Horace Quinn, during a séance at Quinn's house. What was Quinn desperately trying to find out from his deceased business partner, Stephen Latimer, before he was stabbed through the *\Delta*

heart? It seems that everyone in Quinn's household had a reason to want him dead.

A Few Reviews:

-BOOKLIST: "Westerson is an imaginative storyteller who brings history, humor, hubris, and humanity to this inventive

-KIRKUS: "An enjoyable Holmes pastiche whose many twists are complemented by pointed social commentary.' —LIBRARY JOURNAL: "The author of the Crispin Guest mysteries writes about Victorian street life and desperation in a pastiche relieved by humor."

⇒ SOB Mitch Gould recommends this: GoFundMe: "Baker Street West's Moving and Rebuilding Expens-

es"—Baker Street West, a non-profit organization, is a Victorian venue in Jackson, CA, dedicated to keeping the world of Sherlock Holmes alive. For the past ten years, Baker Street West has produced Dinner Mystery Theatre, Victorian Plays, Youth Theatre, Afternoon Teas, Consultations with Mr. Holmes, Dramatic Readings, private parties, and more! In addition, it provides a place for community groups to meet in a safe and unique environment. ♦ We are raising funds because the landlord of our current venue doubled our rent, and being unable to pay it, we need to move. At our new venue, we will have a dedicated theatre, a dedicated dining room, and space for many of our shoppes and, of course, for 221B Baker Street and Mr. Holmes' and Dr. Watson's bed chambers. • Please donate and be a part of a most extraordinary Sherlockian venue in the world. Ed. Note: Goal: \$50,000; fund at February 22, 2024 = \$9,636. Here's the link: https://gofund. me/cf85dcaa.





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

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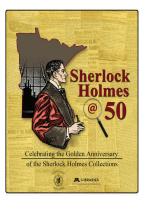
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Registration is now open for the "Sherlock Holmes @ 50" Conference—the Golden Anniversary Celebration of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of MN.

July 26-28, 2024

Featured Speakers

JoAnn Sherwood-Alberstat, Mark Alberstat, Erika Dowell,

Matthew Hall, Jeffrey Hatcher, Jim Hawkins, Les Klinger, Stephen Chahn Lee, Max Magee, Ira Matetsky, Emily Miranker, Rebecca Romney, Will Walsh, and Burt Wolder.

The Elmer L. Andersen Library at the University of Minnesota Minneapolis, MN, USA

Registration is online;

go to norwegianexplorers.org

Conference fee \$275—includes all three days, Saturday lunch and evening Banquet!

⇒ Auction, Exhibition, and Vendors **⇔**

★ Hotel link to be provided after registration is completed. ★

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.

Answers To Cook's Quiz on Page 2: "Priory School"

- 1. Thorneycroft Huxtable.
- 2. He staggered against the table and slipped down upon the floor.
- 3. The case of the Ferrers documents and the Abergavenny murder trial.
- 4. James Wilder.
- 5. His school suit of black Eton jacket and dark gray trousers.
- 6. Heidegger, the German master.
- 7. Peak.
- 8. 42.
- 9. Ragged Shaw.
- 10. Fighting Cock Inn; Reuben Hayes.
- 11. Horseshoes.
- 12. The check he received from the Duke.

Answers To Cook's Nautical Quiz on Page 7

Alicia	—THOR
Esmeralda	—SIGN
Friesland	—NORW
Hotspur	—GLOR
Matilda Briggs	—SUSS
May Day	—CARD
Norah Creina	—RESI
Orontes	—STUD
Palmyra	—VALL
Rock of Gibraltar	—ABBE
Ruritania	—ILLU
Sea Unicorn	—BLAC
Sophy Anderson	—FIVE

