



Ineffable Twaddle

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

A 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



Volume 45 Issue 5 ■ May 2026

Story, Meeting Content & Events for 2026 SOB Gatherings:

- ★ We began the 4th year in our Canonical voyage in chronological order, on the topic of "Crime," with Sunny's selection of three (3) stories ...FIVE, DANC, and STOC. Coming next is the series' final installment... ★

May 17, 2026 The Stock Broker's Clerk
via Zoom

- ★ We move on in the 4th year of our Canonical voyage in chronological order, on the topic "Pax Britannica & Other Countries:" ★

June 21, 2026 The Final Problem, **In-person meeting with your host, VP Kashena Konecki**

July 12, 2026 28th Dr. John H. Watson Picnic
In-person meeting, Potluck, Seahurst Park, Burien, WA

July 19, 2026 The Boscombe Valley Mystery (Australia & NZ), **with our guest presenter Lauren Messenger via Zoom**

Aug. 16, 2026 The Reigate Squires (Australia & NZ), **In-person meeting**

Sept. 20, 2026 The Solitary Cyclist (South Africa) **with our guest presenter Naching Kassa, via Zoom**

Oct. 18, 2026 The Mazarin Stone: (South Africa) **In-person meeting with your host, VP Kashena Konecki**

Nov. 15, 2026 The Crooked Man (India) **via Zoom**



Program Chair SOB Sunny Even Takes a Closer Look at Crime

STOC and "White Collar Crime" in the Victorian Era

In *The Adventure of the Stockbroker's Clerk*, Holmes foils once again a plan to rob a bank – a little ho-hum in my estimation. Though highlighting the role of a stockbroker in the title, the story involves no convoluted financial scam or embezzlement scheme. It occurs to me now that Holmes pursued a wide range of criminal activity in these 64 stories, but missed an entire sub-genre of crime that was very much on the rise in the late Victorian Era: white collar crime. (Perhaps this was Mycroft's wheelhouse.)

The term "white collar crime" only came into usage in the 1940s, originated by sociologist Edwin Sutherland, to describe nonviolent, financially motivated crimes committed by "respectable" individuals abusing the authority and trust vested in their jobs. Prior to Sutherland's groundbreaking investigation into corporate fraud, crime was primarily viewed as a working-class problem. Anyone writing on criminality in Victorian England, be it fiction, newspapers or historians, focused almost exclusively on lower-class crime and criminals – the so-called "criminal underworld." The assumption that crime was largely the province of the masses served as a comforting belief, preserving trust and security in the social hierarchy of class-conscious Victorians. What we now call white collar crime was covered up when possible, and only reported in the news when the scandal and impact grew beyond the ability of the principals to keep it quiet. The financial impact of these "capitalist criminals" was orders of magnitude higher than the those of burglars and shoplifters. White collar crimes not only

Continued on Page 2

involved significantly more money, it harmed many more people, sometimes rippling outward to impact the entire economy, and contributing to commercial decline and erosion of trust.

Quantitative investigation of these crimes is difficult when the official statistics massively under-report financial losses (for the reasons above). While a 1890's study of Assize Courts of London, Birmingham and Manchester shows the middle class displaying a greater criminality in numbers and takings than the lower class, it is more a statement on where greater wealth lay than the criminality of any particular class. Instead to understand the magnitude of white-collar crimes, it's best to view how speedily England and the U.S. moved from an attitude of *laissez-faire* and *caveat emptor* that offered little protection to the investor, to a solid foundation of legislation, regulation, oversight, and prosecution that we still rely on today. It wasn't in recognition of "upper class criminality," or to manifest any kind of moral high ground – it was because a lot of people were losing a lot of money. ☆

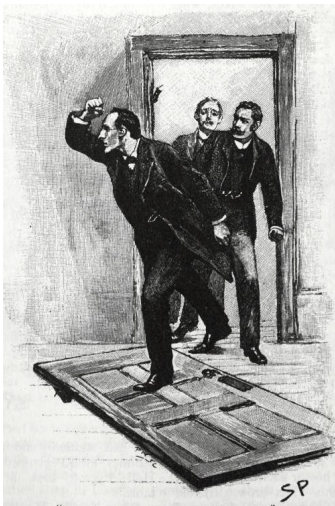


“Like all Holmes's reasoning the thing seemed simplicity itself when it was once explained.”

SOB Charlie Cook Gives us a Conundrum of a Quiz on “The Stock-broker’s Clerk”



RIP: 5/1936 —5/2025



“One hinge snapped, then the other, and down came the door with a crash. Rushing over it, we found ourselves in the inner room.”

1. From whom did Watson purchase a connection and why did the previous doctor sell?
2. Name Holmes's client and what was his class labelled?
3. What contributions did Holmes claim his client's class gave to England?
4. Name the client's company that went under, the new one that hired him and the one that lured him away!
5. Name the two brothers who offered the client a better position!
6. How much did the new employers advance the client to lure him away?
7. What names did Holmes and Watson use when pretending to seek employment with the client's new firm and where were they supposedly from?
8. What line of work did each claim to be qualified for?
9. What did one of the client's employers do after he saw the headlines in what paper?
10. What did the top headline say?
11. What was the real name of the brother Holmes didn't meet and for what was he famous?
12. Name the only two policemen in the tale!

Answers are on Page 7.





SOB Kris Hambrick's Sherlock on Screen: "THE CASE OF THE 'MISSING' SHERLOCK"

There are months, of course, where there is no adaptation to examine. Rarely this is because it was never filmed; more commonly, because it has been lost to time or the streaming gods. So I will take this opportunity to talk about something I've noticed about recent offerings, and ask if you, too, see a pattern here.

Because we've not really been lacking new Sherlock Holmes content. In the 2020s alone we've gotten two *Enola Holmes*, Netflix's *The Irregulars*, *Watson* on CBS, *Sherlock & Daughter*, and *Young Sherlock*. There's also an announced *Animated Sherlock* based on something called *The Unexpurgated Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, which, frankly, is a much cooler title and better conveys its proposed "adult" nature.

Holmes adaptations go in waves, depending on rights, interest, and box office. But it struck me in looking at all of these properties that we're in a bit of a boom. Perhaps it's because the stories and characters are largely free of copyright entanglement. Perhaps it's because we now have a cornucopia of outlets all needing content. These are both true, but I want to propose something based on *what*, exactly, we're being offered.

Enola, *The Irregulars*, and *Watson* do NOT feature Holmes as anything close to a major character. *Sherlock & Daughter* and *Young Sherlock* deal with a Holmes who, for very different reasons, is NOT the Holmes of the stories. Oddly enough, the only one of these that mentions the name "Holmes" is the one about his sister. *Young Sherlock* looks and feels like a Guy Ritchie movie but titled to remind you of *Young Sheldon*. And ALL of this activity comes, tellingly I think, in a years-long period where we're constantly being dangled rumors of the return of Robert Downey Jr and/or Benedict Cumberbatch.

So here's my two-fold theory: that we're seeing this renaissance rush in to fill the void left by that expectation, by media which is variously engineered to 1) not step on the toes of either extant property by telling the main story of Holmes and Watson and 2) recalls to mind the popularity of the name *Sherlock* (BBC), not *Holmes*. Basically, people are cashing in on the fact we're not getting those other two, but they're not willing to risk comparison with them and thus, are finding other characters, time periods, or gimmicks to find their way in.

But that's just my theory. What do you think? ☆



Sherlock throughout the Year—MAY

By: SOB Margaret Nelson

What adventures were Sherlock and Watson experiencing by month during the year?

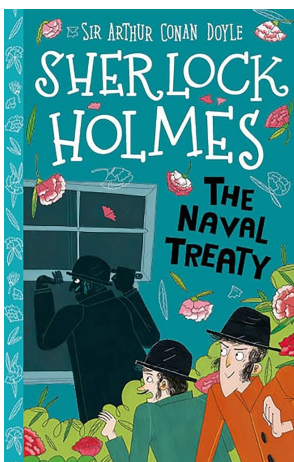
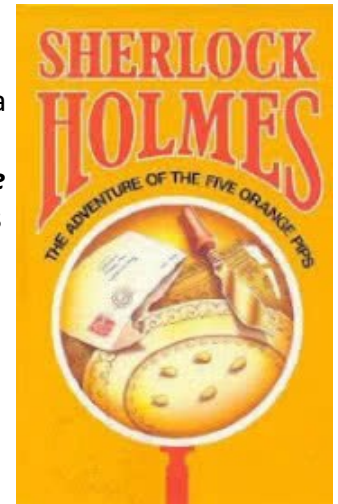
Throughout his career Sherlock Holmes was often busy in the month of May, as shown in the following quotes from Doyle's stories. Sometimes May events were part of the plot background such as in *The Sign of Four* (1890). "About six years ago - to be exact, upon the 4th of May, 1882 - an advertisement appeared in *The Times* asking for the address of Miss Mary Morstan and stating that it would be to her advantage to come forward."

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Sherlock throughout the Year—**MAY**

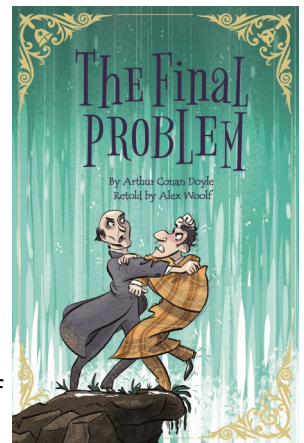
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In *The Five Orange Pips* (1891), we read “His death was seven weeks later, upon the night of the 2nd of May.” While in *The Man with the Twisted Lip* (1891) we are told that “Some years ago - to be definite, in May, 1884 - there came to Lee a gentleman, Neville St Clair by name, who appeared to have plenty of money.” Even *The Valley of Fear* (1914) has a flashback “It was a Saturday evening in May.” In *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1901), after the hound is dead, Holmes describes previous crimes of Stapleton, “The last of these, at Folkestone Court, in May, was remarkable for the cold-blooded pistoling of the page, who surprised the masked and solitary burglar.”



Other stories have current May events like *The Adventure of the Naval Treaty* (1893), “Nearly ten weeks ago—to be more accurate, on the 23rd of May—he called me into his private room and, after complimenting me upon the good work which I had done, informed me that he had a new commission of trust for me to execute.” And “The number of the cab which dropped a fare at or about the door of the Foreign Office in Charles Street, at a quarter to ten in the evening of May 23rd.”

There is also *The Adventure of the Final Problem* (1893), the story about Holmes and Moriarty’s fight at the Reichenback Falls, “As far as I know, there have been only three accounts in the public Press: that in the Journal de Genève upon May 6th, 1891, the Reuter’s dispatch in the English papers upon May 7th, and finally the recent letters to which I have alluded.” And “It was upon the 3rd of May that we reached the little village of Meiringen, where we put up at the Englischer Hof, then kept by Peter Steiler the elder.” These quotes make May the perfect time for the annual SOB wreath throw commemorating this event!



In *The Adventure of the Priory School* (1904), we learn about the missing boy, “He was last seen on the night of May 13th - that is, the night of last Monday” and in *The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place* (1927). “Thus it was that on a bright May evening Holmes and I found ourselves alone in a first-class carriage and bound for the little ‘halt-on-demand’ station of Shoscombe.”



There is one more May ‘date’ that did not occur when Holmes was actually working on the case, in *The Adventure of the Card-board Box* (1893), “No, the May Day, when last I heard.” May Day here refers to a sailing ship and not a date in the story! ☆



Things to See, Buy, Do & Know!

⇒ PFL David Notes:

- **SOB Board Member Naching Kassa** was a presenter at the **5th Annual Legion of Zoom Sitting Room Virtual Conference** on March 15, 2026. Her talk was entitled, “Comedy and the Canon: The Lighter Side of Sherlock Holmes.” For those who were not able to attend the 2026 **Legion of Zoom** conference, you can now see the presentations provided by their five speakers at: <https://www.dfw-sherlock.org/the-legion-of-zoom-scion...>

⇒ SOB Bill Seil (Member #1) sent this breaking news:

- The 2026 Edgar Award Winners have been announced by the Mystery Writers of America! This year, Leslie S. Klinger, Sherlockian and previous Edgar Award winner, announced the creation of a “Hall of Fame” of great authors in the history of the mystery genre. The existing “Grand Master” award category, meant to honor writers who made significant contributions to the genre and had high quality and consistent output over time, could only be awarded to such notables within their lifetime. This addition of the “Hall of Fame” allows influential mystery writers to be recognized posthumously. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was among the MWA’s first class of Hall of Fame honorees!



⇒ SOB Margie Deck shared exciting news that bears repeating:

- The newest edition of the *Strand Magazine*, January-March 2026, features a **Sherlockian pastiche** from SOB Margie Deck, “*The Adventure of the Irresistible Woman*”—a tale of a ruthless killer no one quite believes exists except for Sherlock Holmes. Copies are available for order at <https://strandmag.com/product-tag/lost-tennessee-williams>.

⇒ From Peter Blau’s Newsletter, “Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press”:

- The Archives of Sherlock Holmes: Volume I, written and illustrated by Ben Congdon (157 pp., \$14.99), has three of the unrecorded cases, told in traditional style. You can see some of his artwork at his web-site bcongdon.com
- Alexander Orlov has reported “The Hound of the Baskervilles” staged as a musical comedy in Russia www.muzkom22.ru/spectacles/id/151699. You can watch a bit of video at www.ok.ru/video/7356718975659 and the finale at www.vk.com/video-228360395_456314578

A Quick Note From Associate Editor Lauren Messenger

Hello there, fellow SOBs! Terri Haugen is taking a well-deserved rest, and has stepped back from her position as Editor of *Ineffable Twaddle*.



I’ll be acting as interim editor, so any errors you encounter in this publication, and the forthcoming issues of *Twaddle* are mine! I’ve had the privilege to assist Terri with *Ineffable Twaddle* in the past, and I’m glad that she was willing to call on me again!

I’m hoping those reading this will continue to reach out with outstanding articles, tidbits of news, reviews, feedback, and even pastiches. Your voices are what make this newsletter so much fun to read! If you have anything you want to share, I encourage you to please reach out to me. My email address is: laurenmessenger.museums@gmail.com.

If you are interested in the position of Editor with the Sound of the Baskervilles, I’d be happy to answer any questions about the role that I can, and to share the advice and tips that Terri has given me.

In the meantime, I’m looking forward to getting to create the upcoming issues of *Ineffable Twaddle*, and to experiment a bit with the newsletter’s format. To peel back the curtain a bit, *Twaddle* is generally created in Microsoft Publisher, which will be phased out in the near future, so I’m going to be trying a couple of other programs in its place. Please feel free to share your feedback with me when those upcoming issues drop!

Continued from Page 5 • Sad news! May 3rd's final episode of the second season of CBS' *Watson* will also be the ultimate episode for the series, as CBS has not renewed the series for a third season.



• Alexis Barquin, with the assistance of Mark Chadderton, has added the publications of the Arthur Conan Doyle Society, as well as an archive of sheet music inspired by Conan Doyle's writing, to his online Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia!

Check out the ACDS publications at www.tinyurl.com/2p8dmk9 and the sheet music at www.tinyurl.com/53taayns. There are even instructions for learning

to dance the Sherlockinette, a dance based on Sherlock Holmes' method for sizing up a client or potential suspect in a case!

• Associate Editor Lauren was quite excited to hear this bit of museum news: Erin

McBrien is the new curator of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. She has shared that her favorite story is "A Scandal in Bohemia" and she has strong opinions on how Irene Adler has been adapted. She is slowly getting to know the collections, and is open to questions via phone or e-mail! You can more about Erin here: www.lib.umn.edu/about/staff/erin-mcbrien

• Check out the Arthur Conan Doyle Society's "The Terror of Blue John Gap Project." This annotated manuscript project, a remarkable collaborative effort presided over by Margie Deck and Nancy Holder, has reached page 13. Check it out here: <https://www.acdsociety.com/bjg/13/bjg13a.html>

• Looking for more music, after you've finished dancing the Sherlockinette? The Clarksville Youth Performing Art Association's performance of



"Through the Magnifying Glass" (2005) is viewable here: www.tinyurl.com/3kr3svzc

⇒ **Dr. Holly Turner, Editor of the London Society's "District Messenger" newsletter:**

- An interesting pair of articles reflecting on how Sherlock Holmes' complete entry into the public domain in 2023 has shaped more recent adaptation's like *Young Sherlock Holmes*, and how the Conan Doyle estate did (and, in some cases, didn't) shape adaptations prior to that. One (<https://tinyurl.com/4w9z7ejv>) is by Brad Friedman, and the other (<https://tinyurl.com/3wxxdf7y>) is by Hugo Award-winning author Charlie Jane Anders.
- Is Moriarty's real crime bad math? In *Young Sherlock Holmes*, it seems so. Dan Smith solves this Final Problem for us in this article: <https://theconversation.com/the-mathematical-crimes-of-the-young-sherlock-holmes-series-278812>.
- Clarissa Aykroyd has written a very interesting article about how Sherlock Holmes may have influenced the creation of John le Carré's famous spy character, George Smiley. You can read it here: <https://spybrary.com/george-smiley-sherlock-holmes/>

⇒ **SOB Bill Seil shared something unexpected:**



- Did you know that Christopher Lloyd played Sherlock Holmes in a 1990 production of an adaptation of William Gillette's play? It was adapted and directed by Tim Fort, and Watson was played by Clark Gesner. It was apparently a family project: Christopher Lloyd's brother Sam Lloyd played Moriarty, his sister-in-law Barbara Lloyd played the role of Madge Larrabee, and his nephew Samuel Lloyd Jr. also had a role! You can see a photo from the Weston Playhouse above. ★



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of the
Baskervilles

By appointment
of Her Majesty,
Queen Victoria

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Congratulations to the Winners of the 2026 Footprints of a Gigantic Hound Award!

David and Maffie Rafferty have won the 2026 Footprint Award in recognition for their contributions to the Sound of the Baskervilles. David and Maffie have found creative new ways to engage with familiar Sherlock Holmes stories, bringing warmth, playfulness, and beautiful music into our monthly meetings!



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. Traditional events scheduled through the year may include: "The Master's Dinner" celebrating Holmes' birthday, "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—films, teas, plays and gaming events—are as announced.

To join, send your check for dues—\$25 for individuals, \$35 for families (U.S. funds only)—to the address shown at left. ←



Answers To Cook's Quiz on Page 2: "The Stock-Broker's Clerk"

1. Mr. Farquhar; he had St. Vitus' dance
2. Mr. Hall Pycroft; cockney
3. Crack volunteer regiments; fine athletes and sportsmen
4. Coxon and Woodhouse; Mawsons; Franco-Midland Hardware Company, Limited
5. Arthur and Harry Pinner
6. £100
7. Holmes: Mr. Harris of Bermondsey; Watson: Mr. Price of London
8. Holmes: an accountant; Watson: a clerk
9. He hanged himself; The *Evening Standard*
10. "Crime in the City"
11. Beddington; a forger and a cracksman
12. Sergeant Tuson and constable Pollock