



Ineffable Twaddle

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

The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle

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



Volume 43 Issue 7 ■ July 2024

Story & Meeting Content for 2024 SOB Meetings

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 + a presentation by SOB Tim Kline
- September 15 **The Second Stain**
In-person meeting, with SOB Margie Deck presenting

We move forward in our New 5-year Cycle—on the theme, "The State of Royalty and Aristocracy" (ILLU & BERY)

- October 20 **The Illustrious Client**
via Zoom
- November 17 **The Beryl Coronet**
via Zoom

We interrupt our Canonical study—returning as we do each year—to our visit to BLUE

- December 15 **The Blue Carbuncle**
In-person meeting

You're Invited to The SOB's Next In-Person Event — Watson Picnic & GLOR — Sunday, July 21, 2024!

★ TIME: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. ★

LOCATION: Seahurst Park, Burien, WA

Mark your calendar now for our combined Meeting & Picnic on **Sunday, July 21**. The story we'll cover is "**The Gloria Scott**" and the Picnic will be our (nearly) annual celebration of all things Watson—the **27th "Dr. John H. Watson Picnic"** at Seahurst Park in Burien, WA.

Your contribution of food, sweets and beverages to this potluck event will be most appreciated!

Seahurst Park in Burien, WA is a gorgeous site, nestled in a residential area, right on the Sound! And, it is very centrally located: Burien is west of I-5 from Exit 154, which puts it midway between Seattle and Tacoma, making it handy for those on the Eastside too and not that far from Oregon or British Columbia!!



We'll be at our regular site—the **south shelter**—with three long tables, a BBQ grill, and a beach just steps away.

Come early as parking can be at a premium later in the day!!

Says Program Chair Sunny Even

***Rule, Britannia! Britannia, rule the waves!
Britons never, never, never will be slaves!***

The Adventure of the Gloria Scott touches (very briefly) on a favorite topic of mine, British naval history. From the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 to the heroic Battle of Trafalgar, Britannia ruled the waves. When Napoleon was finally exiled to the island of St. Helena in 1817 (to be guarded by, yes, the Royal Navy), England had been at war near continuously for 22 years, with every country that possessed any kind of modern navy. She emerged victorious each time, with the exception of the American War of 1812 (a negotiated peace), which to be fair, was a part of the larger conflict with the French empire. Sadly, the Canon provides few opportunities to dive into these deep and turbulent historical waters, so I'm taking the brief reference to the Crimean War and running with it. By Victoria's reign, the Royal Navy enjoyed an unparalleled popularity with... **Continued on Page 2**



Says Program Chair Sunny Even...

Continued from Page 1

...the British public, for several justifiable reasons. For centuries Britain had relied on its navy more than any other major nation to defend against invasion, and to protect its trade and empire, whereas her army was comparatively small and employed on an as-needed basis. As a result, the army was never a major factor in political interests the way it was in Spain, France, Russia, and later Germany. Correspondingly, Parliament, perhaps having a long memory of Cromwell's Major-generals, understood that a navy, unlike an army, cannot be used to control the populace, and generally favored the navy over the army in most political matters.



Furthermore, a navy needs a great deal of money, not just in the short term but over many years to build ships and maintain a core of professional officers and seamen. This sustained support can only happen with the consent of the people, initially the wealthy class, but over time the whole of society as England was democratized. No place in Britain is more than 80 miles from the sea, and culturally it's closer than that. Nautical concerns permeated society, literature, language and, I would argue, an Englishman's very sense of security. Britain's liberty had always depended on its ability to isolate from totalitarian rulers of Europe. The sea influenced Victorian dress, such as the sailor's suit popularized for children, and well-known phrases still in use today. "By and large" meaning "on the whole," or "in general" refers to a ship sailing both close-hauled and wind abaft the beam, encompassing all the points of sail. When one is so close to an opponent that the advantage shifts with the smallest changes to sail or rigging, one's situation is said to be "nip and tuck."

Last month I introduced "informal imperialism" to refer to the intertwined policies to support commercial interests and missionary objectives abroad through diplomatic and military means. Sea power was the engine that made it work. Britain, as a maritime power which lived by international trade, depended on European peace and stability to preserve her primary markets, and gunboat diplomacy to safe-guard the sea-lanes and interests (and persons) of British subjects abroad. The world was full of areas of chronic instability, places where authorities were hostile to British business, or whose officials were obstructive or corrupt (by British standards). Anti-piracy and anti-slavery operations were considered to serve both the cause of advancing civilization and protection of commerce in the Far East, and the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. On the multiple occasions diplomacy devolved to coercion, shore bombardments helped to "impress" local leaders and (in the words of Prime Minister Palmerston) show locals "where their duty lay." Though the nineteenth century was a time of comparative peace, these flare-ups kept the Royal Navy fully employed around the globe. With too many and varied actions to describe here, I'll refer you to Commander Sir Lambton Loraine's Wikipedia page where you can read about his service aboard the ironclad *Niobe* which exemplifies Britain's "unofficial empire" in action.

There are however limits to sea power. In contrast to the projection of power by gunboat diplomacy to protect commerce, the Crimean War (1854-56) was a full-on imperial war. Anglo-Russian relations were severely strained throughout this period, in effect a cold war, which became a hot one in 1854 (and nearly again in 1877 and 1885). British fears escalated over a combination of Russia's apparent imperial designs in the Caspian and Central Asia, and extreme Russo-phobia through all British classes and shades of political opinion which viewed Czarist Russia as the antithesis of Britain. In this case no territory was at stake; the war was undertaken solely to guarantee British naval supremacy in the Mediterranean and, indirectly, to forestall any threat to India should Russia become more dominant in the Middle East. It was a crushing defeat for Russia. Her armies were beaten four times and Sevastopol was abandoned. Even though the status quo was preserved in Britain's favor, the diplomatic maneuvering, intrigue and subversion that marked this cold war across the Roof of World continued on as "*The Great Game*."

More on that when we get to GOLD and NAVA, but for now we'll stay focused on Europe. Russia's defeat in the Crimea destabilized the balance of European powers that had held since 1815, with the Italian and German nationalist as major beneficiaries. We'll continue to explore this shifting European dynamic in our next four stories—SIXN, SECO, ILLU and BERY—that ultimately led to "*the whole of Europe is an armed camp*." ★

“I have some papers here,’ said my friend Sherlock Holmes as we sat one winter’s night on either side of the fire, ‘which I really think, Watson, that it would be worth your while to glance over.’...”

A Quiz on GLOR by: SOB Charlie Cook

1. What is the surname of the Justice of the Peace and his son, Holmes’s friend, in Holmes’ tale?
2. What was the Justice of the Peace’s problem?
3. Watson asked Holmes why he should study this case. Holmes’s answer was what?
4. Holmes had few athletic tastes except for what?
5. Holmes observed several things about his friend’s father. How many can you name?
6. Name the man who visited the father after 30 years, his profession and what he wanted.
7. Where were the papers that the father left for his son hidden?
8. Who left the father a coded message?
9. What was the key that enabled Holmes to decipher the coded message?
10. Name the date Gloria Scott left Falmouth and the date on which She sank.
11. What was the father’s real name?
12. Name the brig that picked up the survivors of Gloria Scott.



“...we had turned away in despair, when we heard a cry for help and saw at some distance a piece of wreckage with a man lying stretched across it.”



SOB Kris Hambrick’s Sherlock on Screen: The Gloria Scott



Coming into this story, I was actually surprised to find that there were (at my count) four film and television episodes making use of “The Gloria Scott.” The silent Eille Norwood series, Ronald Howard’s 1950s show, “*Sherlock Holmes in the 22nd Century*,” and references to it in the BBC “*Sherlock*” show from the 2000s. But when you look closer—well, as close as you can given the Norwood series is largely lost—the narrative issues with this story become clear. Because none of them can be considered a true retelling of this story, as Doyle had Watson had Holmes had Trevor Senior tell it.

The Howard version uses several of the clues—the tattoo and a boat called the Gloria North (for some reason) and the cover up of a violent crime—to tell a completely different story about a man seeking revenge for the racist murder of a bunch of Trinidadian natives. Holmes brings the man to justice, but as an audience member, one kinda sympathizes with the murderer.

The cartoon episode (from the 1990s) is, as usual, a science fiction update of the original story, with a prison *spaceship* and Hudson coming back into Trevor’s life at an inconvenient time. It actually improves the cipher a bit by embedding “third” and “fourth” into the various messages to give an actual clue as to which words to pay attention to, making it both ever so slightly more difficult to parse and more logical. But it, too, ventures pretty far from the original structure. The BBC is even further than either, simply using a few clues and Victor Trevor’s name.

And I think that makes complete sense, because the original structure is Holmes telling Watson a story, a lot of which is...Holmes telling Watson about a story he read aloud told in writing by Victor’s father. Who would want to film *that*? Naturally, you *can* film the mutiny and the boat stuff, but thus far no one has really made an effort to try to turn this flashback with a maritime veneer into a proper Holmes adventure. So, they’ve taken the bits they liked, and worked them into a story they wanted to tell anyway.



Rest in Peace, Dear Ginie!

On Monday, June 10, Emily Romnes notified us that her Mom Virginia “Ginie” had passed away quietly at home on Saturday, June 8, 2024.

Ginie’s memorial will be held on Saturday, August 17 at 2 p.m. It will be held at Parkland Lutheran Church, and will be followed by a reception at the Church.

For those who wish to send cards to James, son Bryan & daughter Emily Romnes-Zhu can write to:

The Romnes Family
18226 S.E. 164th Street
Renton, WA 98058

Address for Church:

Parkland Lutheran Church, 120 123rd Street South Tacoma, WA 98444
([Parkland Lutheran Church & School – Church and School](#))



James sent us these words to describe his life with Ginie:

“My ancestors were country squires” said Mr. Sherlock Holmes, and the same could apply to my dear, departed wife. She was the daughter of an Eastern Washington orchardist and was happiest with a garden trowel in her hand. In our 34 years together, she not only cultivated roses but two marvelous children, Bryan and Emily, whom she homeschooled.

Also like Mr. Holmes she could 'get in the dumps at times' and she struggled valiantly against melancholy. Other foes she took on and soundly defeated, such as governmental bureaucracies that obstructed building our country home and a cancer diagnosis in 2015.

....But melancholy was her Moriarty and she used all her resources to battle it. Reminiscent of what Dr. Watson said after Reichenbach, “I shall ever regard as the best and the wisest woman I have ever known.”

The Romnes Clan—James, Ginie, Bryan & Emily—joined The SOBs in April 2005 and hold Membership #s 55, 56, 57 & 58. Ginie thrived at their homestead, loving her family, her church, her foster parents, her many fellow home-schooling pals, Sherlock Holmes and Victorian/Edwardian clothing, their dogs and her chickens!! In fact, Ginie worked at helping her fellow homeschool-parents to find resources they needed for teaching their kids, like curriculums, special needs resources, testing, and laws about homeschooling.

Ginie graduated from Bellevue College in 1988 with an Associate of Science (A.S.) degree in x-ray technology and worked in Valley Medical Center’s Radiology Department—where she met James! In recent years, Ginie worked in clothing at her local Fred Meyer store, and at a couple of different animal supply stores, including PETCO, as a customer service advisor. She just loved to help people!

Many of us were lucky enough to be able to watch Bryan and Emily grow into stellar adults. In his youth, Bryan worked as a Lifeguard for the Renton School District, he then pursued an education in information technology, having worked as a field repair agent for the Geek Squad and a mobile device tech for Amazon, and is now an IT & cyber security professional. As early as high school, Emily thought she would become a chef and, in fact, pursued studies in becoming an expert with Irish cuisine. Throughout her culinary studies she worked in several restaurants in the greater Seattle-area. Em is now married, mom to a 1-year-old little boy, working in nursing and pursuing an R.N. degree.

Ginie Romnes was a friend to many SOBs in her nearly 20 years as a member, showing her strength when she survived 5+ years of active cancer treatment, her empathy to fellow members who underwent cancer treatment themselves, her ingenuity and creativity in hosting, cooking and wreath-creation (when she & James chaired our Wreath Throw festivities each May), and her interest in and kindness to all of us.

★ We hope you will enjoy the array of photos of Ginie & her family that begins on Page 7 ★

The Game's Afoot: A Look at Sherlockian Games

By: SOB Tim Kline, Deck-Mate

"Sherlock Solitaire: A Game by Peter Scholtz" (Wise Wizard Games) is a brand-new, exciting card game that can be played by 1 or 2 players.

This is not a traditional set of cards. It has investigation, threat, wound, and detective cards that have you collect sets of which contain amazing artwork. Characters grace the investigation cards, while shattered glass and a house grace the threat cards.



The game is played similar to a game of solitaire but with a mystery case element that you must keep from gaining a severe wound in order to win the game.

A collection of 4 complete sets wins the game. It comes with a setup of 2 case scenarios that affect the game play. These are the "Valley of Fear" and the "Final Problem." Each has a Standard, Hard and Expert level to play and win/lose the game.

The choices for detectives are Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson; let the best detective win! The game is available on Amazon.com and other stores around the internet.



Sherlock Holmes and The Mystery of the Sachertorte

by Gerhard Tötschinger

Translated from the German by Dr. Richard R. Rutter

Battered Silicon Dispatch Box, 2005

ISBN-10:3548225039 · ISBN-13:978-3548225036)

By: SOB Charlie Cook aka Café Noir



Ach du lieber! Someone in Vienna has stolen the dessert cookbook containing the secret recipe of the famous Sachertorte! Frau Anna Sacher is livid. Dr. Felix Rappaport, the attorney in charge of the book's safety needs the help of the world's best detective. But it's 1913 and Holmes is dedicated to his bees and Watson is writing books. However, the Prime Minister suspects Vienna to be a hotbed of international espionage and convinces Holmes to go. More than the theft, it follows that blackmail, political intrigue and murder sneak into the investigation.

The name Sherlock Holmes in the title could be replaced by Dr. John B (sic) not H. Watson as he is really the main character. Holmes is busy behind the scenes but by putting Watson in danger does retrieve the missing recipe book. Then convinced that any other problems are not his concern, he returns to his bees.

But the book is only half finished and so a year later Watson, at Irene Vogel's request for help (a lovely woman...some things never change), returns to Vienna and is eventually joined by the beekeeper. Once again Watson is at center stage (or is it page) and while helping the damsel, remains subject to Holmes's demands as the somewhat un-retired sleuth investigates those other problems "off-page."

The credentials of both author and translator are impressive but there are several places in the text where the English seems more like German and just plain awkward. Additionally, the author's knowledge of the Canon appears somewhat limited, even inaccurate. In the first part the tale is fairly interesting and there is some good character development, but the second part is less enjoyable being rather disappointing and may not appeal to us true Holmes enthusiasts.

The book was a gift to me years ago and I forgot I had it. Maybe memory lapses by the aged aren't always that negative!



Things to See, Buy, Do and Know

⇒ Time Sensitive Activities:

- **Texas SOB Tim Kline** let us know that the **National Puzzlers' League** is holding its 184th convention in Dallas this year from July 11 to July 14, with a pre-con picnic on July 10. **Location:** The Adolphus Hotel, located in downtown Dallas at 1321 Commerce Street. **Con fees** were a “low” \$299 per person—providing for 6 meals, including the Wednesday (indoor) pre-con picnic, Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and Sunday breakfast. Alas, the \$299 rate was only good until June 20; after that, the con fee is now **\$349**.

Ed. Note: We understand that **SOBs Maffie & Dave Rafferty** and **Beth Gallego** are already members of the NPL (and she will be attending); perhaps **Tim** will join too and provide us with a report! For more, go to: [BigDCon \(puzzlers.org\)](http://BigDCon(puzzlers.org))

- The **77th Annual Pacific Northwest Scottish Highland Games and Clan Gathering** will occur this year on July 26, 27 & 28 at the Enumclaw Expo Center (45224 – 284th Avenue SE, Enumclaw, WA). Entry Fees appear to run from \$10 to \$35. For more, go to: [The Games – Seattle Scottish Highland Games Association \(sshga.org\)](http://TheGames-SeattleScottishHighlandGamesAssociation(sshga.org))

⇒ PFL David notes this item: ★

- The stage play “Miss Holmes” by Christopher M. Walsh (directed by Jane Ryan) will be presented by Latitude Theatre Company, from August 2 - 25, 2024 at the Seattle Center Armory-1st Floor, 305 Harrison St, Seattle, 98109 ♠ **The plot:** “Sherlock Holmes is hot on the trail of a murderer, but there are many obstacles in HER way: her brother Mycroft’s interference, corrupt cops, and a society that doesn’t understand that a woman’s proper place is investigation! Teaming up with her new friend, Dr. Dorothy Watson, Sherlock chases her quarry through the back alleys of London, the halls of Bedlam, and the unexpected confines of the Royal Free Hospital. The game is afoot! It’s her move!”

Ed. Note: Club Librarian **Chris “Bear” Berwald** and columnist (& actor) **Kris Hambrick** are working in tandem with **Treasurer Melinda** to choose a date during their run—*probably in the last half of August—for the Club to book a group outing to one of the performances!* Kris provides us with this “group ticket menu”: Group of 8-13 = \$28 each, 14-20 = \$25.50 each. **Please stay tuned for news of the proposed date for our group event!** ↗

⇒ PFL David notes these articles on the Web:

- When we think of London during the times of Sherlock Holmes, we immediately think of its poor health conditions. The yellow fog mentioned in Starrett's poem “221B” was something you *had* to breathe when in London, not something you wanted to breathe. **The Thames was a cesspool** you floated on, not a convenient source of water. It appears that the Thames has once again become something to look at, or float on, but nothing else. Thanks to **Bill Seil** for this item! For more: [‘Poo in the Water’: How Financial Engineering Sullied Britain’s Most Famous River - WSJ](#)

- Just when you thought it was safe to stream! **Is Holmes & Watson (2018)** available to watch via streaming? We mean the American mystery comedy-drama written and directed by Ethan Cohen! **Yes, Holmes & Watson** is available to watch via streaming on Starz. For more: <https://www.msn.com/en-us/tv/news/holmes-watson-2018-streaming-watch-stream-online-via-starz/ar-BB1opQQI?ocid=msedgntp&pc=U531&cvid=16fal741ea941b1991b8900cac71da8&ei=82>

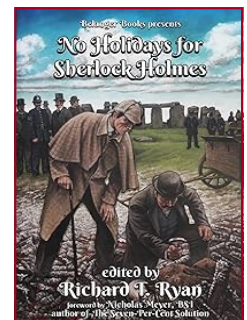


- Have you ever pondered this: **Who’s better, Holmes or Batman?** For an answer, try this: [Who’s a Better Detective, Sherlock Holmes or Batman? \(msn.com\)](#).

- Oh, the horror of it! **Guy Ritchie’s New Sherlock Project Has A Massive Watson Problem To Solve!** Check this out...if you dare! <https://www.msn.com/en-us/tv/news/guy-ritchies-new-sherlock-project-has-a-massive-watson-problem-to-solve/ar-BB1oGpA6?ocid=msedgntp&pc=U531&cvid=51ae14a6b1fe4e099483068fd8b59270&ei=15>

- And, a point of contradiction? **Sherlock Holmes 3 Is About To Blow Your Mind!** Dare you check this out? [SHERLOCK HOLMES 3 Is About To Blow Your Mind \(youtube.com\)](#)

- A new anthology out: **No Holidays for Sherlock Holmes**, (PB, \$24.95) by Richard T Ryan, David Marcum & 8 more authors—“featuring Sherlock Holmes stories that connect to holidays throughout the year.”



Rest in Peace, Dear Ginie!

Continued from Page 4



Left: Ginie & son Bryan at Sept. 2012 Meeting



Left: with James and Thom W. at 2006 Wreath Throw

Right: daughter Emily at 2014 Watson Picnic



Left: Romnes Clan entertains us at 2012 Master's Dinner

Right: with son Bryan at 2011 Master's Dinner



Below: with Treasurer Melinda at 2nd Int'l Summit 2016



Left: with Carrol C. at 2012 Wreath Throw



Left: with Marc M. at 2018 Wreath Throw



Above, with Emily at Dec. 2011 premiere of "Game of Shadows"



Left, at 2016 Wreath Throw



Above: with James at 2016 Master's Dinner

Continued on Page 8



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

President: David Haugen, PFL (david@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Vice President: Kashena Konecki (VP@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Treasurer: Melinda Michaelson (sobtreasurer1980@gmail.com)
Secretary/Editor: Terri Haugen (terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Associate Editor: Lauren Messenger (laurenmessenger.museums@gmail.com)
Board Member Emeritus: Al Nelson (boardem@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Program Manager: Sondra "Sunny" Even (sondraeven43@gmail.com)
Webmaster: Shannon Wallace (webmaster@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Librarian: Chris "Bear" Berwald (SOB-Library@cberwald.com)
Sunshine Chair: Pat McIntosh (magnoliamci@centurylink.net)

Direct correspondence to:
 6710 – 51st Street Court West
 University Place, WA 98467-2287
 Phone: 253-460-2753
 Fax: 253-460-2753
 Email: david@soundofthebaskervilles.com

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.

Rest in Peace, Dear Ginie!

Continued from Page 7

Right: Playing the ring toss at 2012 Watson Picnic



Above, at 2015 Master's Dinner



Above: with Larry M. at 2022 Watson Picnic



Above: after James's grand presentation at our October 2023 Meeting

Answers To Cook's Quiz on Page 2: "The Gloria Scott"

1. Trevor
2. He was struck dead reading a message.
3. Because it was the first case in which Holmes was engaged.
4. Fencing and boxing.
5. He feared a personal attack; he had melted lead in his walking stick; he boxed in his youth; he had done a lot of digging; he'd been to New Zealand and Japan; he was intimately associated with someone with the initials "J.A."
6. Hudson; a sailor; a place to rest.
7. In the back drawer of a Japanese cabinet.
8. Mr. Beddoes.
9. Pick every third word.
10. 8 October 1855, and 6 November 1855.
11. James Armitage.
12. Hotspur.

A lovely Lady and a dear and loyal Friend... Farewell, Ginie!

