



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 44 Issue 4 ■ April 2025

Story & Meeting Content for 2025 SOB Meetings:

★ *We conclude our study on the theme, "Empire and Race" —with...3GAB ★*

April 13



This **In-person** event will now be on the **2nd Sunday** of the month and a combined celebration of our **45th Anniversary**, with an abbreviated discussion of **"The Three Gables."**

Time: 1 to 5 p.m., Potluck, please!
At Haugens' Home in University Place,
see further details on Pages 3 & 4.

★ *Our 5-year Cycle in studying the Canon continues on the theme, "The American Reader" —with... ★*

May 18

The Valley of Fear
via Zoom

We will leave out the "long boring American part" in discussion!

★ *We continue our 5-year Cycle with 4 stories on the theme of, "Medicine" with ... DYIN, RESI, DEVI, & CREE ★*

June 15

The Dying Detective
In-person meeting

July 13

John H. Watson Picnic, In-person
Seahurst Park, Burien, WA

July 20

The Resident Patient
via Zoom

↪ Two events in July!!

August 17

The Devil's Foot
In-person meeting, Discussion & Quiz by Webmaster Shannon Wallace!



Easter is Sunday, April 20!



Please note that we are continuing with our pattern of rotating our meetings—with Zoom meetings occurring in odd-numbered months and In-person meetings occurring in even-numbered months—with **MOST** meetings & events occurring on the 3rd Sunday the month.

Story & Meeting Content for SOB Meetings (Sept. 2025 to Feb. 2026):

Sept. 21

The Creeping Man
via Zoom

★ *We move forward in our 5-year Cycle—with the first 2 of 4 stories on the theme, "Leisure and Entertainment"—with the first two in 2025... VEIL, SCAN ★*

October 19

The Veiled Lodger
In-person meeting

November 16

A Scandal in Bohemia
via Zoom, Quiz by Naching T. Kassa!

★ *We'll interrupt our regular study with the Annual Return to our Christmas favorite... ★*

December 21

The Blue Carbuncle
In-person meeting

★ *We wrap-up our study of the 3rd & 4th stories on the theme, "Leisure and Entertainment"—with these two in 2026...MISS, SUSS ★*

January 18, 2026

The Missing Three Quarters
via Zoom

February 15, 2026

The Sussex Vampire
In-person meeting

Programming & details of our April 13, 2025 Anniversary Tea & Story Discussion, appear on Pages 2 & 3

*Remember:
Dues are due
by March 31!!*





Join The SOB's In-Person Event

★ Sunday, April 13, 2025 ★

1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Pacific time

A Social Event celebrating our Club's 45th Anniversary!!

There will be an abbreviated discussion & quizzing on "The Three Garridebs"!

Says Program Chair SOB Sunny Even...

Wrapping up on our theme of "Empire and Race"

Last month wrapped **Rule Britannia** with a look at how the pseudo-science of racial categorization *was* (and *still is*) used to disguise what is essentially cultural self-interest. As the risks and rewards of Empire increased in the late Victorian Age, so too did entrenched attitudes of intolerance and fear that justified that self-interest. As we transition to a new topic of "**The American Reader in Victorian Times**," we continue this look at Race by diving deeper on how Arthur Conan Doyle depicted his characters. In the portrayal of Steve Dixie, "**The Adventure of the Three Gables**" provides ACD's most blatantly belligerent characterization of race to be found in the Canon.

In historical context ACD is largely viewed as an open-minded writer, of deeply held and moral convictions. He called out racial wrongs both in his stories and real life, providing us with happy endings for his (likeable) characters regardless of their origins. He put his reputation on the line defending George Edalji and Oscar Slater against racially motivated accusations, succeeding in both cases. In hind sight, this is weirdly at odds with his practice of using racial features to emphasize and even demonize the *Other*, frequently leaning into twin gothic tropes of the "cursed wanderer" and the "monstrous villain." ACD regularly took racial stereotype shortcuts in this regard, and never more so than in the character of Steve Dixie (... "Dixie" *seriously*?) ... Continued on Page 4

"I DON'T think that any of my adventures with Mr. Sherlock Holmes opened quite so abruptly, or so dramatically, as that which I associate with The Three Gables."

A Quiz on "The Three Gables" by: SOB Charlie Cook



"See here, Masser Holmes, you keep your hands out of other folks' business. Leave folks to manage their own affairs. Got that, Masser Holmes?"

1. Who burst into Holmes's rooms, threatening him?
2. Who sent Holmes a note, from what address, requesting his help?
3. Who did the writer of the note say was one of Holmes's first clients?
4. Name the boss of the man who threatened Holmes!
5. Name the housekeeper of Holmes's client, and who was she really?
6. Who and what was the previous owner of the Three Gables?
7. Whom did Holmes call "the human book of reference upon all matters of social scandal?"
8. What was the name and fate of the client's son?
9. Whom did Holmes refer to as "belle dame sans merci" of fiction?
10. What was on the note Holmes sent to that lady?
11. What was stolen from the Three Gables?
12. How much money did the "belle" give Holmes and for what purpose was it to be used?

Solution may be found on Page 6.



SOB Kris Hambrick's Sherlock on Screen: "The Three Gables"

Having written about this mystery before, I thought I'd said all I needed to say about "The Three Gables." But then I got to thinking. And I re-read the story. And then I went back and looked at the Granada episode. And it turns out, there *is* more to say, and it follows on from last month's column, if only because of Sunny's excellent thematic curation of our stories.

Because, as has been noted by many before me, the presentation of Steve Dixie in the text is bad enough that certain apologists would like to exonerate Conan Doyle from accusations of racism by attempting to argue he didn't even write it. But he did, and it *is* racist: Dixie is a hideous caricature, speaks in an exaggerated "dialect" and is treated by both Holmes and the text as little more than an animal.

So the question for this column, then, is this: Does this racist portrayal persist into the screen version(s)?

As yet, there is really only the Granada version. But it's an interesting exercise in the way you can play the exact same scene to very different effect.

In the Granada episode, we enter Baker Street in media res ^{*}, with Watson rushing in to find Steve Dixie holding Holmes up to the window. Dixie is a large man, clearly able to do some damage, which is appropriate given his background as a boxer. As described in Doyle his clothes could be considered "loud," though on screen they are fitted, coordinated, and in this viewer's eyes look pretty good. Dixie speaks, most importantly, like a man from London—which indeed the actor playing him, Steve Toussaint, is. Further, none of the language used to "Other" Dixie—about his appearance, smell, or hair—is used. Instead, Holmes seems genuinely delighted to have met him, and far from asking him pointedly NOT to sit, offers him the chair Dixie had previously knocked over. By the end of the scene, Mrs. Hudson is yapping at his heels like a terrier and Dixie is taking it.

There is an argument that this slightly comedic treatment is also an affront to the dignity of this figure. But while there is no way to know for sure what thought process went into this scene, it seems clear to me that an effort was made to give Dixie the sort of role you might expect from any *other* ruffian that comes to 221B to threaten Holmes and instead gets a drubbing from the landlady.

My point here is not the credit due the Granada team, though generally they do great work. My point is more that whatever is on the page, a few apparently "cosmetic" tweaks can turn something inexcusable into a scene that does the *exact* same thing with none of the attendant bigotry. Toussaint's performance, his accent, and the way the other actors/characters respond to him mean that the scene performs the exact same function to the plot while avoiding the needless insult. It's a fascinating aspect of adaptation, where words on a page can be realized in ways that either perpetuate negative tropes, or elevate the work beyond the text. ★

* "media res": A narrative technique where a story begins in the middle of the action, rather than at the very beginning, often leaving the audience with questions and intrigue to keep them engaged.

Help Celebrate Our Scion's 45th Year!

**The SOBs' 45th Anniversary of continuous operation...even through the pandemic (!)...is
March 31, 2025!**

**So join us Sunday, April 13 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. as we celebrate at our Anniversary Tea
at PFL David & Terri Haugen's home in University Place, WA.
Bring a friend...everyone is welcome!**

**We will announce the name of our very worthy 2024 "Footprints of a Gigantic Hound" winner,
and a couple of Gigantic Hound Citations will also be bestowed!**

- **It's a potluck, so please bring finger-food**—sweets or savories—to share ■
(and any unusual serving pieces or utensils your food might require)!

More Details on Page 4 ⇨ ⇨

Help Us Celebrate Our 45th Year!...

Continued from Page 3

- Haugens will provide the non-alcoholic beverages! ■
- **Your contribution to our Pot-Luck table(s) will be most appreciated!!** ■

There will be an **always-free raffle**.

SOB Margie Deck will give a short talk on her new anthology, *Sherlock Holmes into the Fire*, which among others, will include new Holmes stories from three SOBs: Margie, **Naching Kassa** and **Nancy Holder, BSI**.

And, we will spend some brief time in study of **“The Three Gables.”**

- **Look for cake and good food, fun, and lots of time to visit with your fellow Sherlockians!** ■
- **Turn-by-turn driving directions to Haugens’ home will be supplied in our Cover Email!** ■



*Easter is Sunday, April 20!
Our Meeting will be one (1)
week earlier on April 13!!*

Says Program Chair Sunny Even...

Wrapping up on our theme of “Empire and Race”

...who comes to 221B to intimidate Holmes. The dialogue is so awful it doesn’t bare repeating, but it did cause Holmesian writer D. Martin Dakin to propose that ACD wasn’t even the author of the story. So, historical context.

By all accounts, ACD truly did pen this story and this character, and perhaps catered to what he considered American sensibilities (publishing first in American *Liberty Magazine* to foil copyright infringement.) By all indications, ACD was attuned to the social and political nuances of his American reader.

Of note, when he wrote “The Adventure of the Five Orange Pips” in 1891, he told Watson of the Ku Klux Klan: “For some years the organization flourished in spite of the efforts of the United States government and the better classes of the community in the South. Eventually, in the year 1869, the movement rather suddenly collapsed....”. By 1926 when he published 3GAB, it had returned with a vengeance. ★



A Tardy Welcome to Our Newest Member!

Directed to us by Friend of The SOBs, Rich Krisciunas,

GINNY CROUSE OF LANCASTER, PA

attended our January 2025 Zoom Meeting
and participated in our always-free “Raffle on Zoom”!

After winning some books in our raffle, Ginny decided to join The SOBs —as she aptly felt winning books and receiving them postage-free by USPS was deserving of the donation of her dues’ payment!

The Winners among those participating in our March 2025 “Raffle on Zoom,” were SOB Members Dan Michalak (IL), Bob Glidewell (MO), Naching T. Kassa (WA) & David McCallister (FL).

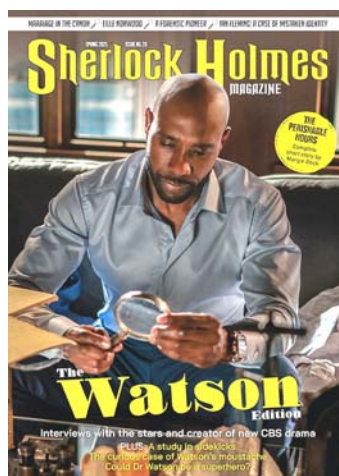
Bob and David M won one book each; Dan and Naching split the rest of the items between them!

Our next “Raffle on Zoom” drawing will be held at our May 18, 2025 Zoom Meeting, so watch your email early that week (prior to the Meeting) for PFL David’s list of the ten (10) items being offered that month!

Things to See, Buy, Do & Know!

⇒ **SOB Geoff Jeffery Highly Recommends:** The Spring 2025 issue of the *Sherlock Holmes Magazine* (Issue No. 20), noting these articles of interest...

- **“The Perishable Hours”** A complete short story by **SOB Margie Deck** inspired by the characters of Arthur Conan Doyle.
- **“Film Delves into the Dark Side of Holmes,”** Sherlock Holmes has undergone countless adaptations, but filmmaker CJ Goodwyn has set out to take the world’s greatest detective down a road less travelled. His new indie film, “*Sherlock Holmes: Mare of the Night*,” offers a psychologically intense perspective on the legendary sleuth...
- **“Legendary Duo’s New Show Gets Premiere Date,”** Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice’s musical comedy whodunit, “*Sherlock Holmes and the Twelve Days of Christmas*,” will make its world premiere at Birmingham Rep on 14 November 2025, running until 11 January 2026. In a joint statement, Rice and Lloyd Webber called the production “pure mischief...”
- **“Ten Million Watch “Watson” Pilot,”** ...official data shows the episode, which began in dramatic fashion with Holmes and Moriarty fighting to their apparent deaths at the Reichenbach Falls, was watched by 9.58 million viewers. This compares to the 13.41 million who watched the first episode of “*Elementary*”...
- **“Filming to Start this Spring on *Enola Holmes 3*,”** Work on “*Enola Holmes 3*” will be underway in mid-April and last for twelve weeks, shooting around the United Kingdom, including at Netflix’s London Shepperton Studios...Meanwhile, work continues apace on “*Young Sherlock*,” a major new TV series being made for Netflix’s big rival, Amazon Prime Video...
- **“Bonneville Stars in New Audio Series,”** *Downton Abbey* and *Paddington* star Hugh Bonneville is the narrator of a new audio series of Sherlock Holmes adventures. The new *Sherlock Holmes Short Stories* “...takes in a number of classic tales combining faithful readings of the original texts with atmospheric soundscapes. They include 🚀



“*The Speckled Band*,” “*The Red-Headed League*,” and “*The Man with the Twisted Lip*.” ...

♦ Said Bonneville, “The carefully curated tales in this series are superb examples of Conan Doyle’s craft as he draws his audience into the world of the legendary detective.”

⇒ **SOB Bill Seil (Member #1):** Caught this funny reference to our fave detective (Source: Seattle Times, 3/25/2025):



Also from Bill Seil:
Holmes & Moriarty by Gareth Rubin is now out (Simon & Schuster UK, September 26, 2024) and is

described this way, “Holmes and Moriarty are each out seeking answers to their respective cases. The book alternates between Watson and Col. Sebastian Moran descriptions. Eventually, Holmes and Moriarty need to work together...Readers’ mileage will vary depending on how faithful they prefer their Holmes and Watson tributes to be. Casual fans should have plenty of fun, but Baker Street regulars will want to look elsewhere.”

⇒ **PFL David Surfs the Web:**

- **25 Iconic TV Locations You Can Actually Visit** at [25 Iconic TV Locations You Can Actually Visit](#). Can you spy what’s wrong with the first example featuring a certain consulting detective?
- **Watson vs. Moriarty in new medical drama** at [Watson vs. Moriarty in new medical drama | Watch](#)
- **Watson Gets Promising Renewal Report as CBS Cancels 3 Shows To Address a Crowded Slate** at [Watson Gets Promising Renewal Report As CBS Cancels 3 Shows To Address A Crowded Slate](#)





The Sound
of the
Baskervilles

By appointment
of Her Majesty,
Queen Victoria

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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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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. ←

Renew Your Dues Now..

Everyone's Annual Dues—**\$25 for individuals, \$35 for families (U.S. funds only)**—is renewed during March of each year, accommodating our April 1 to March 31 fiscal year.

Mail your check—payable to "The Sound of the Baskervilles"—to our Club Treasurer at:

Ms. Melinda Michaelson
P.O. Box 7633
Tacoma, WA 98417

Or, renew using PayPal! Go to our website at:
<http://soundofthebaskervilles.com/news/join!>
No forms to complete, just a few clicks away! ☆

At The March 16 SOB Zoom Meeting...

- We welcomed some long-absent, long term **SOBs**: **Francis Bond**—the Aussie linguist on sabbatical at the U-Dub when he joined in 2016. He & son Arthur went back to Singapore the next year, then later, Francis headed to the Czech Republic. Also there was **Associate Editor, Lauren Messenger!**
- **Member Kris Hambrick** let us know that her ➡

Answers To Cook's Quiz on Page 2: "The Three Gables"

1. "A huge Negro named Steve."
2. Mary Maberly of The Three Gables, Harrow Weald.
3. Her husband.
4. Barney Stockdale.
5. Susan Paregoric; wife of Barney Stockdale.
6. A retired sea captain named Ferguson.
7. Langdale Pike.
8. Douglas; he died of pneumonia in Rome.
9. Isadora Klein.
10. "Shall it be the police then?"
11. A book written by Douglas Maberly.
12. £5000, so that Mary Maberly could take a trip around the world.



"She entered with ungainly struggle like some huge awkward chicken, torn, squawking, out of its coop."



former roommate (and SOB) Jennifer Yoakum was waving to us from New Zealand!

- **Webmaster Shannon Wallace** let us know that she would handle the Discussion & Quiz on DEVI for us in August; her alter-ego is, of course, the "Cornish Horror!" ☆