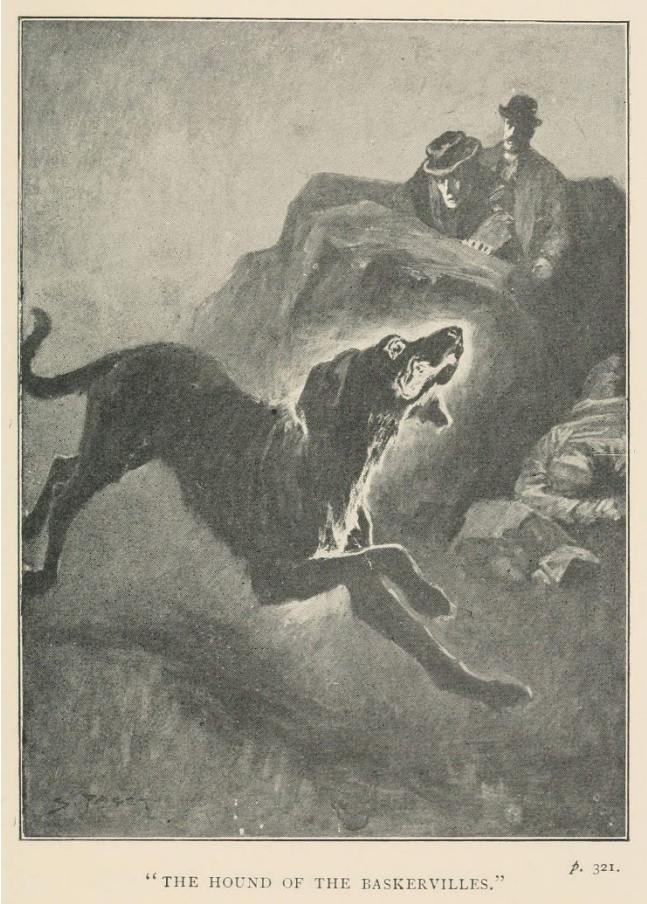
SHERLOCK'S SPOTLIGHT

A Quarterly Gazette for Young Sherlockians Everywhere



Spring 2026

The Hound of the Baskervilles"

Your original artwork could be on the cover of our next issue…

See page 2 for more details!

Welcome to

SHERLOCK'S SPOTLIGHT

Volume 7, Number 2

Spring 2026: *The Hound of the Baskervilles*

Published four times a year by The Beacon Society, a society providing educators with resources to bring the magic of Sherlock Holmes to life.

Editor: Steve Mason
Associate Editor: Carla Coupe

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- You must have your parent's or guardian's permission to submit the artwork.
- The artwork must be Sherlock Holmes based.

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SHERLOCK'S SPOTLIGHT

Volume 7, Number 2

Spring 2026: *The Hound of the Baskervilles*

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Highlights from the Head-Light

Welcome to another issue of *Sherlock's Spotlight*! And this one is a great one, because it's all about the most famous of all Sherlock Holmes's cases, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*!

Our maze will lead Holmes to the terrorizing hound, the Story Profile will give you all of the details of the popular mystery, Liese Sherwood-Fabre looks into the mind of a collector like Jack Stapleton, and Rich Krisciunas's article will give you all kinds of great tidbits about the story.

This issue is sure to show you why everyone loves *The Hound of the Baskervilles*!

Beth Gallego has two great book recommendations for you and Steve Mason has a fun Brain-Teaser and Mini-Mystery to keep you thinking.

You can always count on *Sherlock's Spotlight* to fill its pages with fun and thoughtful material to keep young mystery fans entertained.

So, enjoy another top notch issue. The game's afoot!

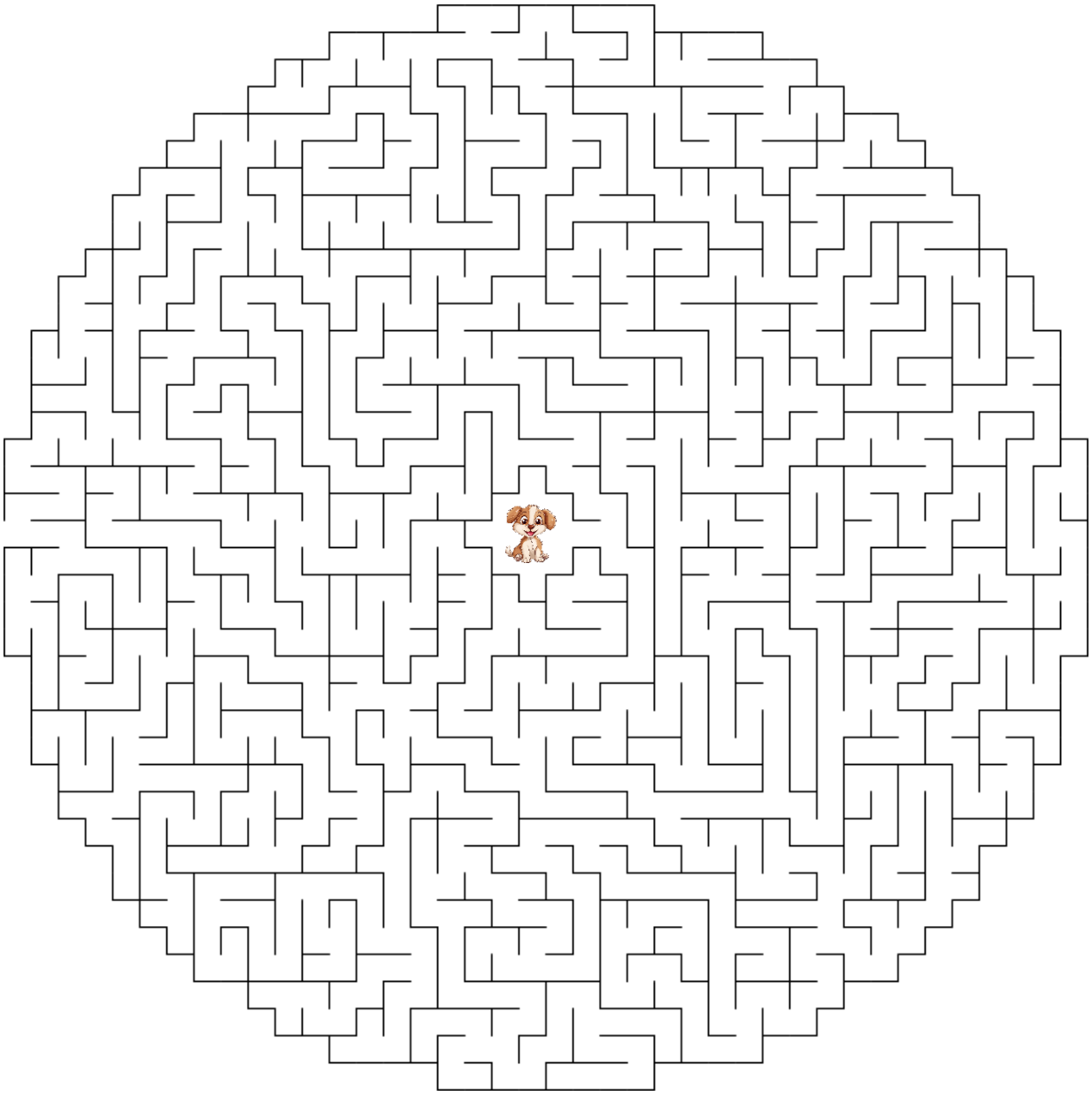
Rob Nunn

Head-Light, The Beacon Society

That's-A-Maze-ing

In *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Holmes and Watson must find the hound terrorizing the region. Please help Sherlock Holmes find the missing dog.

Find the answer on page 18



Story Profile:
The Hound of the Baskervilles

First published in

- *The Strand Magazine, August 1901 – April 1902*

When the story takes place

- October 1889

Primary Cast of Characters

- **SIR HUGO BASKERVILLE**, baronet who was a blackguard and set the curse of the hound on his descendants.
- **DR. JAMES MORTIMER**, friend and medical attendant to the late Sir Charles Baskerville.
- **SIR CHARLES BASKERVILLE**, became fabulously wealthy in South African gold fields and returned to England. He was restoring Baskerville Hall to its former grandeur at the time of his death.
- **SIR HENRY BASKERVILLE**, nephew of Charles' by his younger brother who became baronet upon Charles' death. He was a Canadian farmer before his inheritance.
- **ELIZA & JOHN BARRYMORE**, man and wife team who were Sir Charles's only servants. The Barrymores had been in the service of the Baskervilles for 4 generations.
- **MR. FRANKLAND**, resident of Lafter Hall, who spends his time filing frivolous lawsuits.
- **LAURA LYONS**, Frankland's daughter.
- **JACK STAPLETON** aka VANDELEUR aka RODGER BASKERVILLE, JR., a naturalist.
- **BERYL STAPLETON**, beautiful wife of Jack, posing as his sister.
- **RODGER BASKERVILLE**, **SR.**, younger brother of Sir Charles. The black sheep of the family, he was the spitting image of Sir Hugo, ("a throwback"), as was his son, Stapleton.
- **CARTWRIGHT**, an employee of Wilson whom Holmes hired temporarily to bring him food and messages while he is hiding on the moor.
- **SELDEN**, the Notting Hill murderer.

Summary

Holmes is consulted by Dr. Mortimer because of some unusual circumstances surrounding the death of Sir Charles Baskerville.

Sir Charles made a large fortune in the South African gold fields and returned to England where he took over the family manor on the edge of Dartmoor. He was preoccupied by a legend popular in his family that because of the indiscretions and cruelties of Sir Hugo, a curse had been placed on the family and any of them who lived in the manor would be killed by a fiendish hound.

Mortimer reads Holmes an account of the legend. Mortimer says that Sir Charles obviously died of a heart attack -- he had had a weak heart for some time -- but feels he was frightened to death and the prints of a gigantic hound were found near his body.

Charles's heir, Henry, son of his next younger brother (unnamed) has been found on a farm in Canada and is due to arrive in London to claim his inheritance. A second brother of Sir Charles, Rodger, supposedly died childless, but actually had a son (also named Rodger). Rodger, Jr. was an atavistic throwback to Sir Hugo himself. He had become a naturalist, specializing in entomology, the study of insects. He moved to an estate near Baskerville Hall under the assumed name of Stapleton. He purchased a huge dog, half mastiff

and half bloodhound, which he kept on an island in Dartmoor, surrounded by a treacherous mire (Grimpen mire). He used the dog to frighten Charles to death and was training it to kill in order to murder Henry after which he planned to make his true identity known and become heir to the fortune.

Holmes solves the case from afar. He tells all concerned that he is in London when actually he is living on the moor in order to better observe Stapleton.

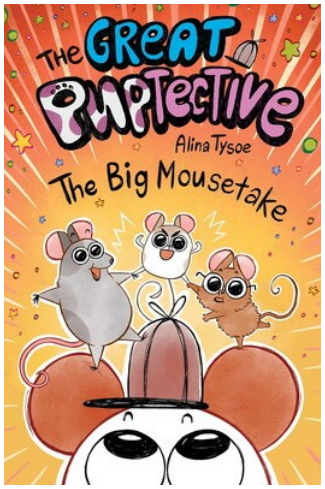
In a dramatic conclusion, the hound is loosed upon Sir Henry and Holmes, Watson and Lestrade kill it at the last moment. Stapleton attempts to reach his island in the mire but loses his path in fog, falls in the mire and drowns.

After the affair is over, Holmes discusses the case with Beryl on two occasions, but we are not told any more about what became of her.

Sir Henry's nerves are shattered by the hound's attack and after recovering from an episode of brain fever, he and Dr. Mortimer travel around the world to restore his constitution.

There are several interesting subplots. (1) Selden is Eliza Barrymore's younger brother; Eliza's maiden name was Selden. He has escaped from prison and she is befriending him and hiding him out on the moor. Henry gives Barrymore some of his American clothes and Barrymore in turn gives them to Selden. Stapleton turns the hound loose and the hound, picking up Henry's scent from his old clothes, kills Selden. (2) Stapleton is supposedly unmarried and woos Laura, getting her to write a note to Charles asking him to meet her at the moor gate. When Charles goes to meet her, Stapleton looses the hound to frighten him to death. (3) Henry falls in love with Beryl, thinking that she is available. She wants nothing to do with her husband's murderous schemes but because of severe ill treatment is forced to remain silent.

Entertainment Resources for Younger Sherlockians: Comics, Books, & Graphic Novels



The Great Puptective: The Big Mousetake

Written and Illustrated by Alina Tysoe

Published by Simon & Schuster

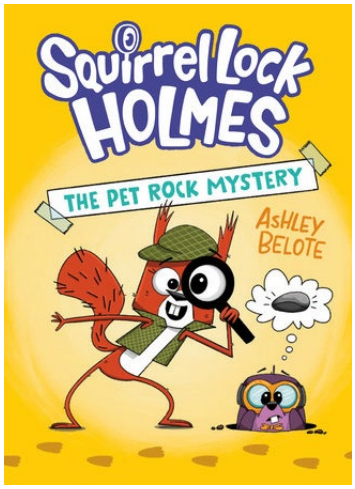
Recommended for: ages 6-9 (grades 1-4)

Poppy and Truffles are back for another adventure. Poppy is surprised to see their human, Sasha, decorating the house with balloons, setting out colorful hats, and baking delicious-looking cupcakes. Could she be preparing for a secret mission? Maybe involving a circus? On the moon? Poppy is one excited puppy!

Orange tabby Truffles has the answer: Sasha is having a birthday party. Poppy is still excited, but Truffles dreads people coming over and bothering him. He just wants a normal, quiet day.

Down the street, someone else is interested in this party. Three someone's, in fact: a trio of mice named Gorgonzola, Colby, and Feta. They are determined to sneak over and steal the cake for themselves. Will they succeed with their complicated heist plans, or will they be foiled by Poppy… or, worse, caught by Truffles?

Bonus materials include information about new characters in the series, a cake coloring page, and tips on drawing mice. This is a fun new story in a great series for young readers.



Squirrel Lock Holmes: The Pet Rock Mystery

Written and Illustrated by Ashley Belote

Published by RH Graphic (Penguin Random House)

Recommended for: ages 6-9 (grades 1-4)

In the first installment of a brand new comic series for early chapter book readers, rabbit Reggie needs help finding his missing pet rock, Dwayne. Squirrel Lock Holmes and her loyal assistant mole, Watson, are ready to take on the case.

Follow this funny team as they investigate the crime scene and identify and interview suspects. But watch out for false leads along the way!

Bonus materials include a guide to solving a mystery, tips on drawing Squirrel Lock Holmes and Watson, a seek-and-find challenge, and a map with clues about the next mystery in the series. Keep an eye out for *Mystery at the Corn-y Maze* this September.

Beth Gallego, ASH, BSI

BRAIN-TEASER: Twins?

While sharing tea with Holmes and Mrs. Hudson, she suddenly exclaimed, “It was my niece Cheryl’s birthday yesterday, and I forgot to get her a present. It’s her twin sister Martha’s birthday tomorrow. I should get both of them a present at the store down the street.”

After she left, Watson turned to Holmes and asked, “Do you think our dear landlady is slipping? How can twin sisters have birthdays two days apart?”

Holmes responded, “Mrs. Hudson is fine. It’s an easy problem to solve.”

What is the solution?

The answer is on page 19

THE FINE ART OF COLLECTING

A number of collectors and collections appeared in the Canon. Jack Stapleton from *The Hound of the Baskervilles* had his butterflies; Colonel Barclay had a weapons collection in "The Adventure of the Crooked Man"; and Baron Adelbert Gruner knew all about Chinese pottery in "The Adventure of the Illustrious Client." Holmes and Watson had their own collections as well.

Holmes kept scrapbooks where he cataloged items, such as biographical information about many people, and Watson kept notes and objects from their cases in an old tin box.

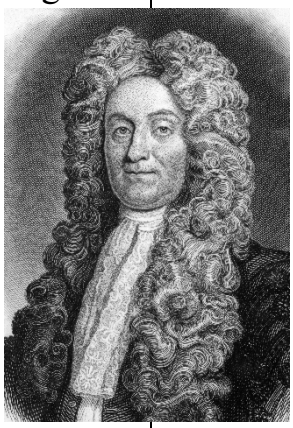
Interest in collecting varied, but why people collected things often involved the pleasure of doing so. Finding a new piece gave the owner pride when others admired it.

For others, the thrill of the chase and reaching a goal brought great satisfaction. Antiques and other older objects also gave people a sense of history.

The nobility in the 1700s and 1800s developed a strong passion for collecting. They traveled far and wide to find different objects. Depending on their interests, they collected art, books, or animal specimens.

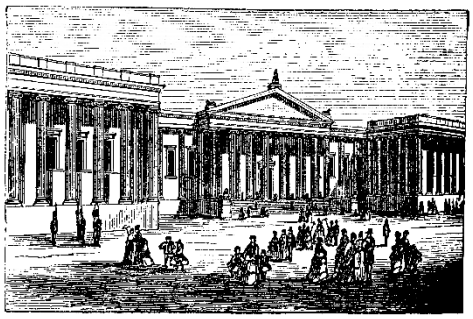
To store these items, they created special rooms to display their finds in "cabinets of curiosities." These rooms kept the collections safe, allowed private viewing, and showed the owner's wealth.

A good example from the Canon was Nathan Garrideb's collection. He kept his collection in a room that Watson described as being "like a small museum." Garrideb wanted to be like Hans Sloane.



Sloane, an eighteenth-century physician, began collecting while serving as the doctor for the governor of Jamaica. After gathering more than 800 plants, he wrote about the plants and animals of the British Caribbean colonies.

Sloane continued to collect items from travelers after he returned to Britain. In 1753, he willed his collection to the Crown, with the condition that it be placed in a public museum. Parliament responded by creating the British Museum, using Hans Sloane's collection as its base.



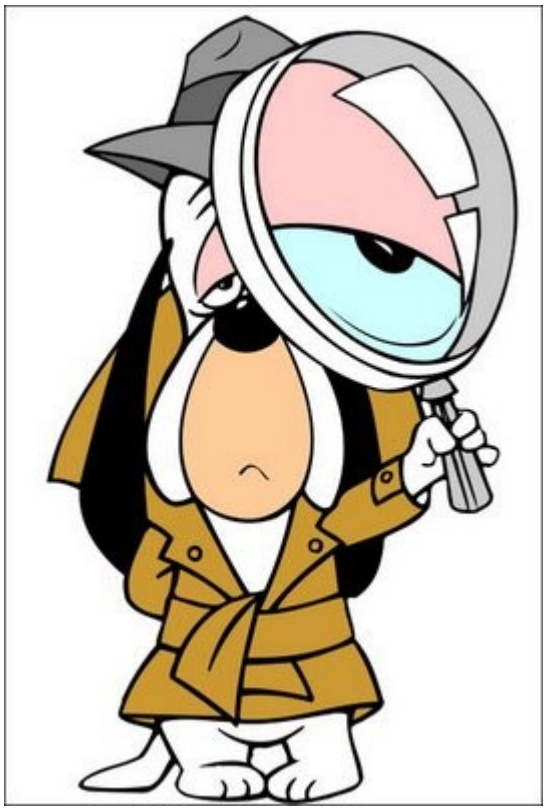
Over the next 260 years, other collectors and the museum itself continued to add items. The British Museum now holds more than 8 million objects, covering 2 million years of human history.

The oldest object is the Olduvai stone chopping tool from Tanzania, dated between 1.8 and 2 million years ago. The public can visit and view these objects for free.

Compared to many collectors, Holmes did not just gather things. He used them. His scrapbooks, case notes, and carefully kept items served as tools for understanding. They provided clues that helped him bring order to confusing situations. As a collector, his objects gave insight into his method of deduction.

Olduvai chopping tool courtesy of: © The Trustees of the British Museum. Shared under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) license

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD, BSI



THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

After Sherlock Holmes disappeared at Reichenbach Falls in 1893, the next work published about the consulting detective appeared in the *Strand Magazine* in August 1901. It was based on a story that took place before his apparent death. In 1999, readers of the *Baker Street Journal*, a quarterly publication for those who enjoyed the Sherlock Holmes stories, participated in a poll to pick the best adventure written by Arthur Conan Doyle and gave *The Hound of the Baskervilles* a perfect rating of 100. The only other story in the Canon to receive a perfect 100 rating was "The Speckled Band".

The *Hound* is a remarkable story. You have a family curse, the mysterious, dark, foggy moor where ponies sink in quicksand, with the legend of a mythical Hound from Hell. There's a mysterious death, a suspicious butler, an escaped convict, threats and warnings, a devious butterfly hunter and attractive women. At over 59,000 words, *Hound* is the longest story in the Canon.

The story begins as Mr. Mortimer comes to seek the assistance of Sherlock Holmes because Holmes is "the *second highest expert* in Europe" behind the "scientific mind … of Monsieur Bertillon." Alphonse Bertillon, was a real French police officer who was recognized across Europe for his work with photography.

He was known for inventing the mug shot in 1888 which includes both the arrested subject's profile and side-on views with standardized lighting that is still used by police today. In homicide cases, Bertillon felt that photographing the crime scene and the body would help document and solve the crime. His genius, similar to Holmes, was to recognize seemingly insignificant details such as the position of the body and objects in the room that could all be vital in solving crimes.

When Mortimer arrived at Baker Street, Holmes addressed him as "Dr. James Mortimer"--but Mortimer corrected him, "Mister, sir, Mister--a humble M.R.C.S." What was a "M.R.C.S.?" It stands for a "Member of the Royal College of Surgeons."

The MRCS had its origins in the Middle Ages, when "barber-surgeons," who did not have any formal qualifications, cared for soldiers during and after battle and had tasks ranging from cutting hair to pulling teeth and amputating limbs.

The class of doctors that commanded the most prestige in the1800s was physicians. They were not concerned with a patient's external injuries, nor did they perform surgeries or set bones. Their work was mainly confined to checking the pulse and urine of their patients. They were called physicians because they only administered drugs or "physic," which we now call "medicine."

In 1856, of the 10,000 persons listed in the *Medical Directory* with some sort of medical qualification, only four per cent had a medical degree from an English university like Dr. John H. Watson, who obtained his Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of London. In the medical hierarchy, the class of surgeons did not command as much respect from society as physicians did. The work of "surgeons" was to cut open the chest, deal with fractures, amputate a limb and every medical procedure that physicians were not trained to perform. Consequently, while physicians were addressed as "Doctor", surgeons were often referred to as "Mister."

The Hound of the Baskervilles was first published in the *Strand Magazine* in serial form in nine monthly installments from August 1901 through April 1902.

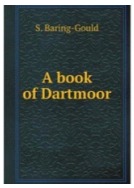
The second chapter ended with Mr. Mortimer describing how he found the body of Sir Charles Baskerville. There was something sinister. Sir Charles's face was distorted by an expression of horror and not far from the corpse, Mortimer observed clearly visible footprints. This leads to one of the most memorable lines in the Canon:

Holmes: “Footprints?”
Mortimer: “Footprints.”
Holmes: “A man’s or a woman’s?”
As the second chapter ends, Mortimer whispers:
“Mr. Holmes, they were *the footprints of a gigantic hound*!”

Can you imagine reading the story for the first time in the *Strand Magazine* in 1901 and then having to wait for a whole month to read the next chapter?

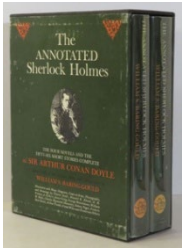
The idea for the Hound from Hell story came from Conan Doyle’s friend and golfing companion, Bernard Fletcher Robinson, a journalist, who worked for the *Daily Express*. Robinson told Doyle of the folklore legends of the Moor, while he chaperoned Conan Doyle on a golf trip to Dartmoor in Devonshire, which included tales of pixies, a headless horseman, a sinister large black dog associated with Death and the supernatural tale of a man who had murdered his wife who became the inspiration for Sir Hugo**.** Coincidentally, Robinson had a coachman whose name was Harry M. *Baskerville*.

Grimpen Mire is not a real place, but is probably based on Fox Tor Mires. In 1900, a minister wrote a story about an incident on Fox Tor: “A young man was making his way home across the moor when he spotted a splendid top-hat laying in a feather bed. Obviously some ‘gent’ had dropped it whilst trying to cross the mire. As the lad delicately approached and kicked the hat, he saw a head under the hat and a voice called out: "What be you a-doin' to my 'at?" The young man immediately tried to pull the man out of the bog but he could not budge him. The gentleman smiled and explained that if the lad would wait a moment he would make it easier and try to take his feet out of the stirrups of his horse that he was sitting on.



Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould

That story appeared in a collection of stories in a book titled, *A Book of Dartmoor,* written by an Anglican priest from Devon, the Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould. You may recognize his name as the grandfather of William Stuart Baring-Gould who would, later, write a fictional biography of the great detective—*Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street* and *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes*.



One of the unresolved questions in the story is, “What happened to Jack Stapleton? In his blog, “An Observance of Trifles,” the blogger Snell wrote: “I'm not sure why Holmes assumes that Stapleton perished. He describes Stapleton as “an overplanner. Certainly such a fiendishly clever villain as Stapleton would have no trouble setting up (his manservant) Anthony to die in his place, while he took some other escape route, and established yet another identity.” What do you think? Is it possible that Stapleton escaped from the Moor?

Nigel Bruce and Basil Rathbone

Any discussion of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* cannot be complete without some mention of the many movies and TV adaptations of the story. *Hound* is the *most* filmed of the Sherlock Holmes stories, with over 20 versions, including one in Russian. The first Holmes movie involving the *Hound* was made in 1939 and starred Basil Rathbone as Sherlock Holmes and Nigel Bruce as Dr. Watson. The pair appeared in a dozen Sherlock Holmes movies between 1942 and 1945. You can watch the 1939 movie *Hound of the Baskervilles* on YouTube here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZybqUiJucf8

Rich Krisciunas, BSI, ASH

Sherlock Holmes Mini-Mystery

There's a pattern to the columns of letters below. Can you discover what the pattern is and name a character from *The Hound of the Baskervilles*?

				P			
				O	S		X
			Y	N	R		W
Q		V	X	M	Q		V
P	R	U	W	L	P		U
O	Q	T	V	K	O	G	T
N	P	S	U	J	N	F	S

The answer is on page 19

Steve Mason

The Junior Sherlockian Society

Unlocking a young person's understanding and appreciation of Sherlock Holmes

JUNIOR SHERLOCKIAN SOCIETY
OBSERVE REASON

The game is afoot!

The Beacon Society invites youth to complete Junior Sherlockian Training – an in-depth study of Sherlock Holmes's character traits, observational skills, capacity for critical thought, and inductive and deductive reasoning.

During the online training, Junior Sherlockians-in-Training complete tasks to ***explore***, ***experience***, and ***extend*** their understanding and appreciation of the great detective.

Upon completion of the tasks and submission of "training evidence", a certificate of completion is granted.

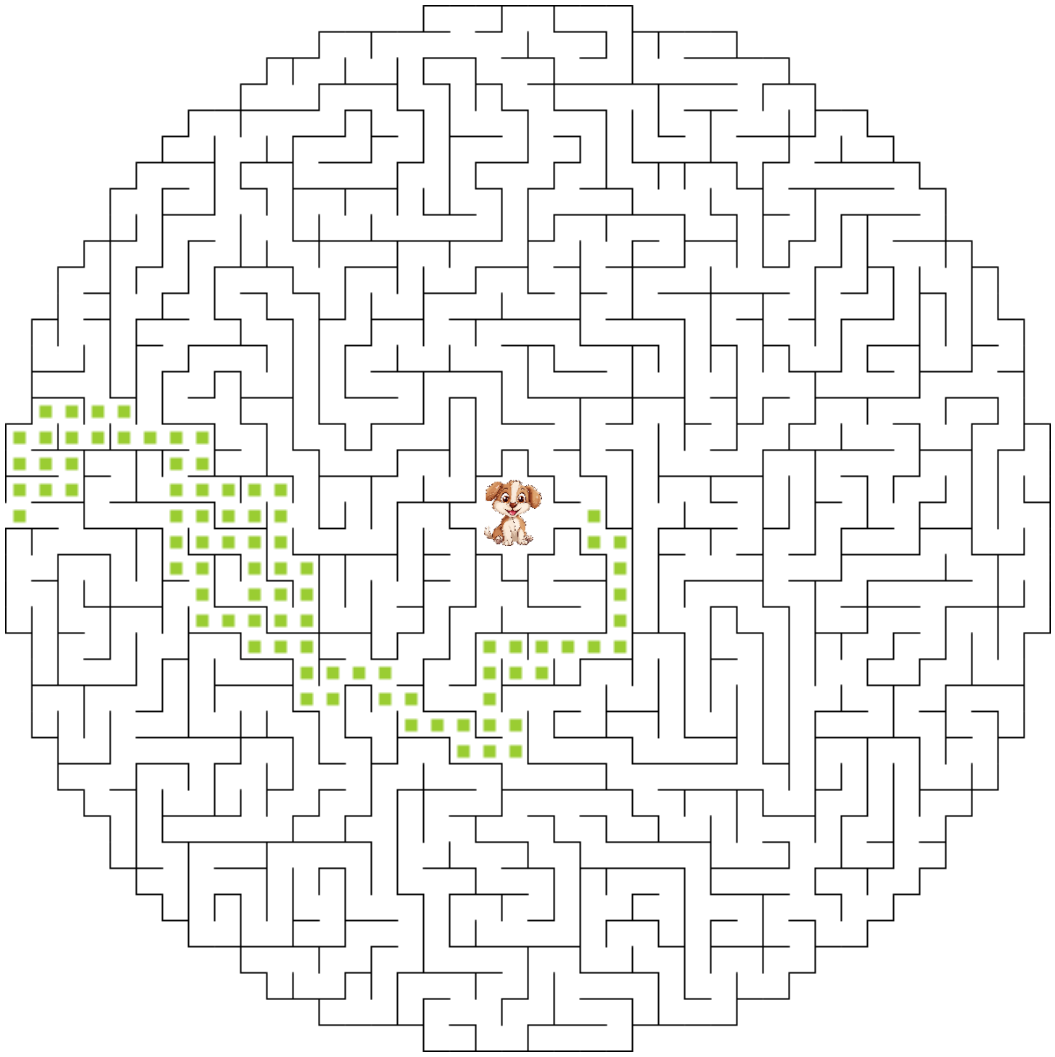
2	2	1	B
Explore Complete TWO TASKS to be introduced to the great detective.	**Experience** Read or listen to TWO stories written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.	**Extend** Complete ONE TASK to extend your understanding and appreciation.	**'B' RECOGNIZED** Submit your 2-2-1-b training evidence.

Begin your Sherlockian training
At https://www.beaconsociety.com/junior-sherlockian-society.html

THE BEACON SOCIETY

Puzzle Answers

THAT'S-A-MAZE-ING



Brain-Teaser

The day when Mrs. Hudson remembered the birthdays was February 29th. One twin was born just before midnight on February 28th, and the second twin was born just after midnight. They were born on a non-leap year, so during leap years, their birthdays would be two days apart.

Mini-Mystery

				P			
				O	S		X
			Y	N	R		W
Q		V	X	M	Q		V
P	R	U	W	L	P		U
O	Q	T	V	K	O	G	T
N	P	S	U	J	N	F	S
M	O	R	T	I	M	E	R