



The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota, Inc.  
c/o Tom Gottwalt  
4620 Trenton Circle N.  
Plymouth, MN 55442-3145  
(612) 281-9373  
[tomgottwalt@gmail.com](mailto:tomgottwalt@gmail.com) [www.norwegianexplorers.org](http://www.norwegianexplorers.org)

## The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota February 2025 Notice

Times noted are U.S. Central Time

### Membership Renewal

If you've not already done so, please renew your annual membership. You can renew online with PayPal or a credit card or use the attached form available on the website. Dues are **\$25 per household** but additional contributions are always welcome. The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota, Inc. is a valid Section 501(c)(3) organization. Any contributions beyond your membership dues should be deductible as charitable contributions.

### Study Group

**Saturday February 15 at 2:00 p.m.**

**Steve Schier** will lead the group in a discussion of **"The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter."** See the end of this Notice for discussion questions to ponder. We continue to gather via Zoom, primarily to accommodate participants from around the country and around the world. See the link and other information below and please forward to any interested Sherlockian friends and colleagues who may not be Norwegian Explorers.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8282233034?pwd=RGNFYW9venRacUFYVkhzNnNJV2tPQT09>

Meeting ID: 828 223 3034

Passcode: 878937

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,8282233034#,,,,,0#,,878937# US (Chicago)

+19292056099,,8282233034#,,,,,0#,,878937# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Meeting ID: 828 223 3034

Passcode: 878937

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8282233034?pwd=RGNFYW9venRacUFYVkhzNnNJV2tPQT09>

### Upcoming Dates and Stories

The group normally meets on the third Saturday of the month at 2:00 p.m. We're following the Jay Finley Christ four-letter abbreviations of the tales in alphabetic order. Thus, we will take on MAZA January 18 and MISS February 15.

*You may have read of the remarkable explorations of a Norwegian named Sigerson..."*

*"The Adventure of the Empty House"*

## Conferences, Meetings, and Gatherings:

### **Baker Street West, Sunday February 2 at 5:00 p.m.**

Join us for our traditional celebration of the Master's birthday. We'll enjoy dinner, drinks, and conversation as we hear reports from some of our more intrepid traveling members' trips to the Baker Street Irregulars' New York City extended birthday weekend. The event will take place at **Brit's Pub**, 1110 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 55403, (612) 332-3908, <https://britspub.com/>. Please plan to attend. To get a headcount estimate, please **RSVP to Melissa Aho**, at [aho@umn.edu](mailto:aho@umn.edu) (preferred) or leave a voice message at (612) 789-1812. The only cost is your own food and beverages.

### **Beverly Proud Memorial February 22 at 1:30 p.m.**

Beverly Proud, long time Norwegian Explorer and Study Group participant passed away December 28, 2024. Beverly's husband, Curt, invites you to a memorial reception on Saturday, February 22, at 1:30. He is planning a simple gathering for friends to reminisce and tell stories of life shared with Beverly. The reception will be held in the Social Hall of White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church, 328 Maple St, Mahtomedi.

### **The Midwest BSI Canonical Conclave of Scion Societies April 26 in Indianapolis, IN**

The BSI Canonical Conclave is an event made up of multiple BSI Scion Societies – a scion society meeting of scion societies – brought together under the official recognition of The Baker Street Irregulars. This event is meant to connect scion societies and their members. Attendees will also share ideas and best practices with other scions to increase their engagement and effectiveness. Any Sherlockian who is a member of a Sherlockian scion society may attend. A full schedule of activities (talks, presentations, music, scion reports, and other activities) are being planned. Additional information and registration are available at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/BSIMWConclave25>.

## Explorations

Our print publication, currently edited by Phil Bergem, is published irregularly three times a year. We are always looking for materials to publish. Any article or material you wish to contribute will be appreciated. Please let Phil know at [pgbergem@gmail.com](mailto:pgbergem@gmail.com) if you'd like to contribute an article.

## Theater

Agatha Christie's "**The Mousetrap**" premieres March 15 at the Guthrie Theatre and runs through May 18. Though non-Canonical, this iconic murder mystery should enjoy great success and I'm sure many Explorers will attend.

## Norwegian Explorers Book and Other Efforts

**Erica Fair** has been asked to co-write an essay about E.W. McDiarmid for a collection Rob Nunn is sponsoring. She has plenty of biographical information, but very little about Mac's personality. If anyone knew him well enough to share a story or a memory of him, please reach out to Erica at [elmadore@gmail.com](mailto:elmadore@gmail.com).

## Larry Millett

Larry Millett's latest book, "**Mysterious Tales of Old St. Paul: Three Cases Featuring Shadwell Rafferty**" was published October 1. Larry is author of ten mystery novels featuring Sherlock Holmes and St. Paul detective Shadwell Rafferty, including "Rafferty's Last Case: A Minnesota Mystery Featuring Sherlock Holmes," all published by the University of Minnesota Press.

But Shadwell Rafferty is back after all! Or more specifically, in these three novellas, we catch up with Rafferty in the years before he meets the famous detective, Sherlock Holmes, in a series of three mysterious affairs that all take place in the early 1890s in downtown St. Paul, Minnesota.

*You may have read of the remarkable explorations of a Norwegian named Sigerson..."*

*"The Adventure of the Empty House"*

In “Death in the News”, St. Paul citizens wake up one morning to find that the sign on downtown’s tallest building that reads PIONEER PRESS has been altered to read LIARS. Of course, suspicion immediately falls on the citizens of Minneapolis, but soon eyes turn towards prominent citizens treated unflatteringly by the paper of late and may have a bone to pick. The sign prank soon takes a back seat, however, when a far worse crime rocks the city.

In “The Birdman of Summit Avenue” it’s 1892, and cats are turning up dead in the yards of prominent St. Paulites, including James J. and Mary Hill, and suspicion swiftly falls on the wealthy avian enthusiast Ambrose Harriman, the “Birdman of Summit Avenue” who made no secret his hatred of cats and whose bird, Webster, can recite portions of the Gettysburg Address and Poe’s “The Raven.” And so, as the news of these odd affairs begins circulating in the Pioneer Press, our good friend Shad Rafferty and his partner George Washington Thomas fly to the (hoped for) rescue when Shad is summoned to a meeting by James J. Hill. But Harriman’s mysterious employee, Eli Tuttle, has his own past and the tracks to the heart of the mystery may not be so obvious after all, especially when a neighborhood boy is found tragically murdered in Harriman’s yard.

In “The Gold King”, an enigmatic and big talking stranger arrives in town, calling himself the Gold King, and who soon begins announcing that he’s arrived to search for a great treasure hidden in the city. Soon another wealthy person arrives in Arthur Hopewell, whose presence and progressive beliefs inspire many and unsettle many as well.

These interlocking stories, all steeped in the mystery and history of nineteenth-century St. Paul, show Rafferty becoming the consummate detective whose exploits have delighted readers again and again.

### **Jeff Falkingham**

Making its debut at the recent Sherlock @ 50 Conference in Minneapolis was the 2nd Edition of Jeff Falkingham’s **“Focusing the Lens on Doyle & Holmes”** essay collection. Since a 1st Edition was published in 2021, Jeff’s writings have won 3 more Sigerson Awards from the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota! Those 3 essays join 3 earlier award-winners to form the heart of this 2nd Edition. Also included are several newer entries including Jeff’s insightful observations and explorations, book and film reviews, plus his Sherlockian dinner toasts, limericks, and even a Holmes & Doyle trivia quiz. Cover by Amanda Downs Champlin, who also did the two frontispiece drawings in ‘Murder in Minnesota! Two Sherlockian Tales’ – a 2-in-1 bundling of pastiches set in Minnesota in the late 1800s. Both books are available at Amazon.com. For signed copies, contact Jeff directly via his website at [www.cccaper.com](http://www.cccaper.com).

Jeff is also a well-known Sherlock Holmes educator and, in his John H. Watson persona, has given his "Arthur Conan Doyle Primer" Book Talk to dozens of schools, libraries, historical societies and book or social clubs. An abbreviated six-minute YouTube sample clip as available for viewing at the following link: <https://youtu.be/qnPgG8R5frs>

Please send details about any books you’re authoring, editing, publishing, etc. to me and I’ll include the relevant information in the next Notice.

### **Movies and Television:**

**Sherlock & Daughter** was to air on the CW network January 1, 2025 but I’ve been unable to find it. It is also supposedly streaming on Disney+ in the U.K. If anyone knows how to watch it or where to find it, please let me know.

**“Watson,” premiered January 26 on ABC.** The series’ events take place six months after the death of the titular character’s friend and partner Sherlock Holmes at the hands of Moriarty. The show stars Morris

*You may have read of the remarkable explorations of a Norwegian named Sigerson...”*

*“The Adventure of the Empty House”*

Chestnut as Dr. John Watson, who resumes his medical career as the head of a clinic dedicated to treating rare disorders. Watson's old life isn't done with him, though - Moriarty and Watson are set to write their own chapter of a story that has fascinated audiences for more than a century. Watson is a medical show with a strong investigative spine, featuring a modern version of one of history's greatest detectives as he turns his attention from solving crimes to solving medical mysteries.

Additional movie and television activity continues to percolate in many areas, nearly too many to mention. As some of those items come into focus, I'll attempt to note specific developments as they become available.

### **Podcasts & Other**

Produced by Addison Nugent, the new Sherlock Holmes podcast, "**Sherlock Holmes Short Stories**" is now live on all podcast platforms. It's hosted by Hugh Bonneville (Downton Abbey, Paddington). Throughout the series, iconic capers like 'The Adventure of the Speckled Band,' 'The Red-Headed League,' and 'The Man with the Twisted Lip' are told across multiple installments and brought to life with immersive sound design and bespoke music from award-winning podcasters, Noiser.

### **Norwegian Explorers Wikipedia Entry**

Melissa Aho has bravely agreed to attempt to create a Norwegian Explorers Wikipedia entry, modeled on the format of the Baker Street Irregulars Wikipedia entry. With the help of Gary Thaden and Kerry McCartney, she has begun to make some progress. Stay tuned for a future link to the finished product.

### **Christmas Annuals**

For the collecting completists, extra copies of most out-of-print Annuals are available for a small fee. Contact Phil Bergem at [pgbergem@gmail.com](mailto:pgbergem@gmail.com) if you want a copy.

### **Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections – Membership Opportunity**

The University of Minnesota Libraries houses the world's largest collection of Sherlock Holmes related materials and is supported by the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections. Many Explorers are already members of this organization which, along with the University Libraries and the Norwegian Explorers, hosts our triennial conferences and other events. If you're not already a member, please consider joining to support its ongoing work of collecting, cataloging, and exhibiting the collection's materials for the public and private researchers. A basic annual membership is only \$30. You can learn more and join at the following link: <https://www.lib.umn.edu/collections/special/holmes/become-friend-holmes>.

### **Lapel Pins**

Please let Tom Gottwalt know if you wish to purchase one. **Cost is \$15** in person, \$20 if mailed.

### **Baker Street Irregulars Updates Available Free**

Get News from the Baker Street Irregulars via email! Free for all Sherlockians: Get notified by email when the Irregulars schedule an event, publish a new book, or issue of the *Baker Street Journal*, or have other news. To sign up, go to <https://bakerstreetirregulars.com/bsi-news-via-email/>.

### **Request for News & Event Information**

If you know of upcoming events, publications, or news of interest to Explorers please send it my way and I'll publish it in the next monthly Notice.

*You may have read of the remarkable explorations of a Norwegian named Sigerson..."*  
"The Adventure of the Empty House"

**Study Group Discussion Questions:**

Steve Schier will lead the group in a discussion of “The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter” via a Zoom gathering. See discussion questions below.

1. Is it possible that Overton presented the situation in a slightly more embellished light when he retold his story for Holmes? Or is it possible that Stanley Hopkins somehow found out the truth about Staunton’s whereabouts and then deliberately sent Overton to Holmes, perhaps as a form of revenge for his mentor’s sometimes harsh comments about Hopkins’ detective abilities?
2. If Holmes was convinced that there was dirty work afoot, why didn’t he go back to the official police with his theories? He mentioned that a warrant would have made it easier to obtain a copy of the telegram, and surely a police presence would have given him more leverage in his dealings Dr. Armstrong as well.
3. Would the involvement of the official police have influenced the strong-willed doctor in any way? Was Holmes right to work his own line?
4. Had Holmes made up his mind fairly early that the case was not a criminal one? If so, what was the reason for his strong suspicions against Dr. Armstrong?
5. Was there not a point at which discretion and the fear of Staunton’s disinheritance should have given way to the patient’s well-being? Why did a man in Armstrong’s position take personal charge of her care, rather than allowing the treatment to be conducted by a doctor with more time to devote to her case?
6. Why was there no other medical attendant or nurse in that out-of-the-way cottage? Was there a danger that Mrs. Staunton’s illness would be spread to the community at large through her continual contact with her husband?
7. Was Dr. Armstrong touchy about outside interference because he had mishandled the case? What do you think was Watson’s personal opinion of the conduct of his fellow physician?
8. There was apparently an air of evil about the doctor which had set off that alarm in Holmes’s sensitive nature. Do you think that Holmes’s instincts were true? Was there a criminal strain in Dr. Armstrong which might have eventually resulted in some serious transgression?
9. How would you rate the quality of the mystery in this story? How would you rate the quality of Holmes’ detective work?
10. Does this story resemble others in the Canon? If so, which ones?

*You may have read of the remarkable explorations of a Norwegian named Sigerson...*  
“The Adventure of the Empty House”