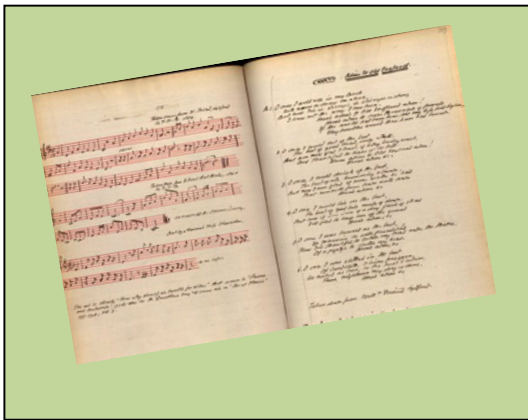


From a Portrait of Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould

Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924), hagiographer, antiquarian, novelist and eclectic scholar

Born in St. Sidwell, Exeter, Sabine Baring-Gould earned his BA and MA degrees from Cambridge. He became the curate at Horbury Bridge, West Riding of Yorkshire, then curate at Delton and later rector of East Mersea. In 1872 His father died in 1872 leaving him the 3000 acre estate of Lew Trenchard in Devon. His uncle Charles Baring-Gould had been given the living but when he died Sabine appointed himself to it. He made many changes to the 17th century house and improvements to the church. The manor house (below) that looks like a set from Masterpiece Theatre is now a hotel.

While curate at Horbury Bridge Baring-Gould met his future wife, Grace Taylor, the daughter of a mill hand. Baring-Gould's vicar arranged for her to stay with relatives for two years to learn the manners of her future husband's class. They were married in 1868 and her death 48 years later was a blow to her husband who called "half my soul." They had fifteen children, only one of which lived to adulthood.



'Adieu to old England adieu' from a portion of a songbook in the Baring-Gould manuscript archive.

Preservation of English Folk Music

Baring-Gould took a great interest in the folklore and customs of Devon and Cornwall, collecting folksongs that he eventually published. In the publication of folksongs his principal collaborator was Henry Fleetwood Sheppard. Many of these manuscripts were published in microfiche form in 1998. In 2011 the complete collection of folk song manuscripts were digitized and published online by the Devon Tradition Project as part of the 'Take Six' project undertaken by the Vaughn Williams Memorial Library.

The Dartmoor Project

In 1893 The Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould, aided by his friend Robert Burnard, organized the first scientific archaeological excavations hut-circles on Dartmoor at Grimspound. As a result The Committee of the Devonshire Association for the exploration of Dartmoor was formed. The late Bronze Age site, first settled ca. 1300 AD comprises 24 hut circles surrounded by a low wall.

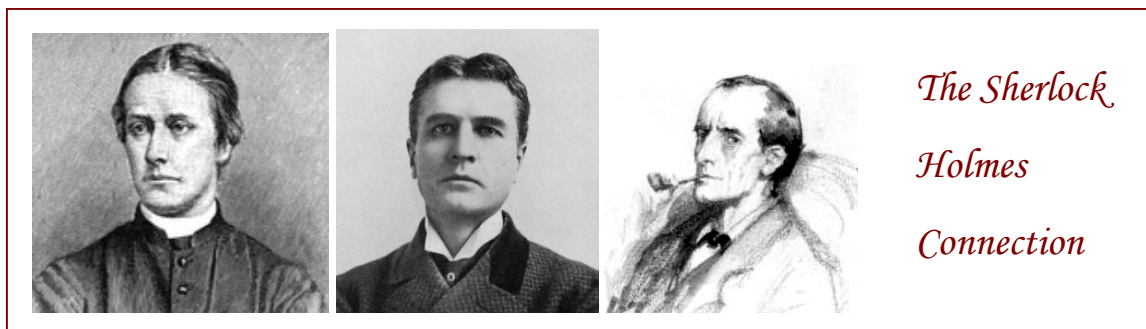


Entrance to a prehistoric building at Grimspound, Dartmoor

Published Works

The Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould's published works reflected his many interests. For example, **Religion** was represented by a sixteen volume *Lives of the Saints* (1872-1877). Several books of sermons including *Sermons on the Seven Last Words*, a *First Series of Village Preaching for a Year* and *A Second Series of Village Preaching for Year*. Traditional Anglicans enjoy his *The Church Revival: Thoughts Thereon and Reminiscences* with its many anecdotes about the troubled Tractarian years and notes about Rev. John Mason Neale. **Folklore and Curiosities:** *The Book of Were-Wolves, being an account of a terrible superstition* (1865). *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages* (1866) one of his most popular books, *Curiosities of Olden Times* (1896). *A Book of Ghosts* (1904), *Devonshire Characters and Strange Events* (1908), *Cornish Characters* (1909), *Cliff Castles and Cave Dwellings of Europe* (1911). **History:** *The Tragedy of the Caesars* in 2 volumes (1892), *The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte* (1908)

Postscript: William Stuart Baring-Gould (1913-1967) was the grandson of the Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould. He did not follow his father into the Church but was creative director of *Time* magazine's circulation and corporate education departments from 1937 until his death. He was possibly the greatest Sherlock Holmes Scholar and is best known for his fictional biography: *Sherlock Holes of Baker Street: A life of the world's first consulting detective*. He wrote a number of Sherlock related books and popularized the theory that the fictional detective Nero Wolfe was the son of Holmes and Irene Adler.



Left: Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould at 35. *Right:* William Gillette (1853-1937), the 19th century American actor famous for his portrayal of Sherlock Holmes on the stage. A curious resemblance.