



Mires, Peat and Bogs Study Resource 1

Extract from 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

A conversation between Dr Watson and the main protagonist Mr Stapleton...

[Watson]

"Is it [Dartmoor] so hard to know?"

[Stapleton]

"Very hard. You see for example, this great plain to the north here, with queer hills breaking out of it. Do you observe anything remarkable about that?"

[Watson]

"It would be a rare place for a gallop."

[Stapleton]

"You would naturally think so, and the thought has cost folk their lives before now. You notice those bright green spots scattered thickly over it?"

[Watson]

"Yes, they seem more fertile than the rest."

'Stapleton laughed.'

[Stapleton]

"That is the great Grimpen Mire," said he. "A false step yonder means death to man or beast. Only yesterday I saw one of the moor ponies wander into it. He never came out. I saw his head for quite a long time craning out of the bog-hole, but it sucked him down at last. Even in dry seasons it is a danger to cross it, but after these autumn rains it is an awful place. And yet I can find my way to the very heart of it and return alive."