

Spring 2025

173

RIPPEROLOGIST

The Journal of Jack the Ripper, East End and Victorian Studies

The Dishonest Lodger: Joseph Isaacs and the Whitechapel Murders.

by Jonathan Tye

Clinical Detachment, Dead Houses
and Cadavers
by Michael Hawley

The Woman Without a Heart
by Paul Williams

All Roads Lead From Mitre Square
by Steven Blomer

A Timeline of the Murder of Polly Nichols
by Chris Maybank

“Jack the Ripper DNA Breakthrough”:
Questions and Answers
by Chris Phillips

Plus Book Reviews, News, and much more...

Editor's Letter

Jonathan Menges

Feature Articles

The Dishonest Lodger: Joseph Isaacs
and the Whitechapel Murders

Jonathan Tye

All Roads Lead from Mitre Square

Steven Blomer

A Timeline of the Murder of Polly Nichols

Chris Maybank

Clinical Detachment, Dead Houses and Cadavers

Michael L Hawley

"Jack the Ripper DNA Breakthrough":

Chris Phillips

Questions & Answers

The Woman Without a Heart

Paul Williams

Regulars

Unjam the Anagram

Suzanne Huntington

I Beg to Report

Jonathan Menges

Five Questions with a Ripperologist

Suzanne Huntington

Introducing the Suspects

Suzanne Huntington

The Ripperologist Leechmere Cross Word

Suzanne Huntington

Press Trawl

Jonathan Tye

Victorian Domesticity

Amanda Lloyd

The Last Word

Christopher-Michael DiGrazia

Feature Illustrations by Dr Ben Anthony

Weird Coincidences

Suzanne Huntington

Six Questions with Authors

Madeleine Keane

Story of a Murder - Hallie Rubenhold - Review

Mark Ripper

Book Reviews

Paul Begg

Fiction Reviews

Madeleine Keane

Off the Shelf

Madeleine Keane

On the Screen

Jonathan Menges

Quotes to Cogitate On

Suzanne Huntington

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Back issues of Ripperologist 62-172 are available in a pdf format at:

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Editor's Letter

Dear Readers,

Welcome to Ripperologist Magazine #173. Inside you'll find yet another packed issue, with features appearing from first-time contributors, like Chris Maybank to research articles from grizzled veterans, like Mike Hawley, Jonathan Tye, and Steve Blomer. And book reviews. Paul Begg performed the inhuman feat of reviewing nearly thirty books for this issue, and after you sample the variety of recent publications, you should agree that Paul deserves a gold medal. Chris Phillips makes a welcome return to the pages of the Rip with a factual Q&A on the 'Eddowes Shawl' controversy, which has taken a legal turn as he explains in his piece and that I also address in this issue's 'I Beg to Report'. We also see Mark Ripper reviewing Hallie Rubenhold's latest book on the Crippen case (a book which I personally found to be near excellent), and I suffer through a few documentaries in my reviews for 'On the Screen'. Amanda Lloyd continues her journey into 'Victorian Domesticity', Madeleine Keane provides us with more fiction reviews and author interviews, and Suzanne Huntington introduces us to the 'Jill the Ripper' suspect theory as well as her usual puzzles and games. You'll find illustrations from the talented Dr Ben Anthony scattered throughout it all.

Most excitedly, this issue sees the return of Christopher-Michael Digrazia's column 'The Last Word'. Chris was a reoccurring columnist for Ripperologist Magazine, former editor of Ripper Notes, and co-author of the book *News From Whitechapel*. Chris is a seasoned Ripperologist and we couldn't be happier to see him return to this publication.

A great improvement you'll find in this issue is that the Contents page is now hyperlinked to the article or section. No more scrolling, you can now jump immediately to the desired piece and start reading-just by tapping your tablet.

We appreciate and value all of the submissions we received for this issue. Please keep them coming. We will be making announcements before the Autumn issue to shore up our submission guidelines, especially when it concerns research citations on previously unpublished 'discoveries'. Our goal here is three-fold: to ensure ease of access for our readers to the

documents cited by the articles, to double-check the records for absolute accuracy which serves to guarantee that the pages of Ripperologist are a permanent, reliable and lasting resource for future generations of researchers, and to avoid all of us getting egg on our faces if a discovery, presented as 'fact', turns out to be anything but. As always, we encourage and welcome your feedback, so please reach out to us with something to say. Enjoy!

Jonathan Menges

Editor-in-Chief

Submissions:

We welcome your contributions. To submit an article please contact **Ripperologist@casebook.org** in the first instance where we can discuss your idea further. Your subject must be relevant to the topics covered here and be roughly 3,000 to 6,000 words in length. Assistance will be given by our editors and staff writers.

The Dishonest Lodger: Joseph Isaacs and the Whitechapel Murders

Jonathan Tye

Dover, Kent – Sunday, 24th July 1887

At around 9:30 in the evening, a gatekeeper named Edward Cullen was on duty at the main entrance to Admiralty Pier, England's main port of entry and exit to and from France and the near continent. Presenting himself to Cullen at the gate stood a man of short stature, around five feet three inches and a half tall, of a dark complexion, thick black 'woolly hair' and dark eyes. Claiming that he was taking the early morning boat to



Admiralty Pier

Calais, he requested entry to the pier. When Cullen naturally asked to see the man's ticket, he changed tack and demanded entry as a London Police officer, "*I am a police officer from Scotland Yard, and I am trying to apprehend a young man for robbery.*" He further went on to explain that he was investigating the 'Meux' jewel robbery. The conversation with Cullen, who steadfastly refused the strange man entry, aroused the attention of a real officer of the Metropolitan Police, William Foy, who had been deployed to Dover due to a recent spate of robberies effecting the traffic from Folkestone and Dover. Foy followed the luckless man,

whose name was Joseph Isaacs, to the platform of the southeastern railway station where he confronted him, explaining that he was an officer of the police and requesting to see Isaacs warrant card. Of course, Isaacs was unable to produce any such card, only one that gave the address of Mrs Goldberg, 5 Montague Street, Bell Lane, Spitalfields, whom he claimed was his mother. He further stated that he was a well-known traveller, having done so for 18 years, but as Foy pointed out he was clearly not a police officer, causing Isaacs to retort, "*Well what of it. If you are satisfied with who I am take me to the station, that's all you have to do.*"

Joseph Isaacs was duly arrested and detained by a local officer who had joined Foy named Fox. Isaacs was to be remanded to appear before the local magistrate. The man Cullen, Foy, and Fox had encountered was certainly a curious and strange one. He sported a thick imitation gold watch chain on the end of which was no watch, and wore a fake or sham medal, which along with his clearly Jewish appearance, is important to remember as our story progresses. The press, of which the *Dover and County Chronicle* seems to have been most accurate in its reporting, presented the story as one of light amusement rather than of a serious nature, their headlines of "*Sham Detective*" or "*An Amusing Case*" mostly covering the fact he was a Jew living in London and playing close attention to his stereotypical Jewish profile.

Following inquires it became apparent that whilst he certainly wasn't a police officer, the address he had provided in Spitalfields was also false. The *Acton Gazette* of the 30th July 1887 was to conclude that, "*It is supposed that he belongs to the light-fingered fraternity, a number of whom have been infesting the continental boats from Dover and Folkestone for some time.*" In other words, a pickpocket, something also perhaps to remember as we progress. When he appeared before the Magistrates, F S Peirce and W J Adcock, they also attributed no particular seriousness to the matter and, after a short deliberation, it was stated, "*This time he (Isaacs) would be allowed to leave the court, and he cautioned him to be careful in the future how he conducted himself.*" After thanking the court Isaacs was released.

The arrested man, a Jew named Joseph Issacs, is the subject of this article. Many of you will immediately know who this strange creature is and his connection to the Whitechapel murders. For the benefit of those that do not, for a few short weeks in the aftermath of the horrific murder of Mary Kelly, Joseph Issacs was sought and arrested as Scotland Yard's most wanted man, the mysterious killer known to history as Jack the Ripper. This article will explore the importance of the pursuit and arrest of Isaacs in the weeks before the beginning of 1889 and its implications it has for a real understanding of the investigation at the time. Isaacs story both represents in many ways the thoroughness of the contemporary investigation and at the same time its shortcomings. It illustrates how difficult it was for the police to investigate the murders, whilst dealing with a new phenomenon; a frenzied, politicised, enthusiastic press combined with an eager mass readership and a section of the populace keen to insert themselves into the story either for fame or financial gain. The story is also important in understanding the impact and interpretation of a supposed key witness in the murder of Mary Kelly, the man known as George Hutchinson. Joseph Isaacs is arguably the embodiment of the colourful description provided by Hutchinson, yet today many students of the case read Hutchinson's description of the foreign looking man seen with Kelly as a gentleman or man of means. Joseph Isaacs was an East End rogue, a thief, fraudster, and conman. This, perhaps, is the police's actual interpretation of that description and where the investigation was directed.

The story of Joseph Isaacs also illustrates the dangers of eyewitness accounts and the incorrect recall of some; individuals like Cornelius Oakes and the lodging house deputy Mary Cousins (or Cusins) amongst them, and how so much valuable police time was ultimately wasted. The story of Joseph Isaacs also may just provide a hint at where the direction of the investigation was focused immediately post Kelly, and the fact that Isaacs starts at this time to be referred to as a 'Polish Jew' which may be of interest to those who support the candidacy of the Polish Jew 'Kosminski' as the killer. A question to pose is whether Isaacs was part of a 'Polish Jew killer' creation myth, or if this is a reflection on the police and who they had profiled as the perpetrator. The story of Joseph Isaacs, as we shall see, also demonstrates another important factor in our understanding of the murders of 1888 and the world of Whitechapel, Spitalfields and St George in the East; that there was a world beyond this environment, and many criminals, individuals such as Edward Buckley, operated beyond its boundaries without constraint. Joseph Isaacs was a criminal very much of a similar ilk to Edward Buckley, but not violent. He operated far and wide. His story demonstrates one of the inadvertent historical consequences of the Whitechapel murders: the uncovering of wonderful, fascinating insights into the lives of a class of people hitherto commonly ignored: the poor, the transient, and the criminal. Joseph Isaacs is one such story, so let us therefore return to his travels before examining his part in 1888 and his life thereafter at the end of which in a reckoning we will seek, perhaps in vain, his true identity.

Barnsley, Yorkshire - Friday 16th September 1887

More specifically Dodworth, a small village within the Metropolitan Borough of Barnsley in South Yorkshire. It was here that on that Friday a vigilant police constable named Bentley, who was on duty at Kingstone Place, 'captured' Isaacs. He had been seen with a valuable clarinet calling at houses there begging the use of a newspaper in which to wrap it. This had aroused the constable's suspicion and Isaacs was traced either to a public house in Dodworth, according to the *Manchester Evening News* of Monday 26th September 1887, or Dodworth Railway Station according to the *Barnsley Chronicle* of the 1st October 1887. When Constable Bentley approached, he was seen to wrap up the clarinet and put it under his coat claiming in typical fashion, "*Alright it's mine.*" He also claimed to have purchased it in Paris, having recently arrived from Doncaster. Isaacs claimed he got his living by playing the instrument and training horses. It is here that the story and the press coverage take, not for the first time, or the last with Isaacs, a rather comic turn. Arrested and taken to Barnsley's Westgate Police Station Isaacs was asked by Superintendent Kane to play a tune, according to *The Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* of 19th September 1887, "*this was too much for the Jew, who tried in vain to sound a single note.*" It's important to note here Isaacs association with musical instruments is a matter of significance in later events. The ensuing investigation into the clarinet uncovered it had been stolen by Isaacs at the shop of Mr Job or Joseph Walker, musical instrument dealer of Sheffield Road, Barnsley. Arthur Walker had been tending his father's shop where there were a number of clarinets displayed in the window. Whilst he was distracted and attending to a matter to the rear of the shop, Isaacs had

entered and taken the instrument which Arthur only noted was missing later in the afternoon when PC Bentley returned it. Its value as new was £3/10. Isaacs appeared at the West Riding Court before F H Taylor and C Harvey, who were less forgiving than their southern counterparts in Dover and Isaacs received three months to be served in HMP Wakefield.

A reader may initially question, bearing in mind the commonality of the name, whether this Joseph Isaacs is the same man as the sham detective of Dover a few months before. Such doubts can be immediately dismissed by information provided in one of the reports of the case by the *Barnsley Chronicle* of the 24th September, “*The prisoner recently was dealt with at Dover for representing himself as a member of the metropolitan police.*”

His West Yorkshire prison record enables us to add to his profile and provides some unique physical aspects that allows us to trace him in later crimes. As well as stating his age as 29 and being a Jew from London, it mentions three pin sized red moles on his left breast, a birthmark that is recorded in the majority of his prison history.

Bishopsgate - Easter Monday 1888

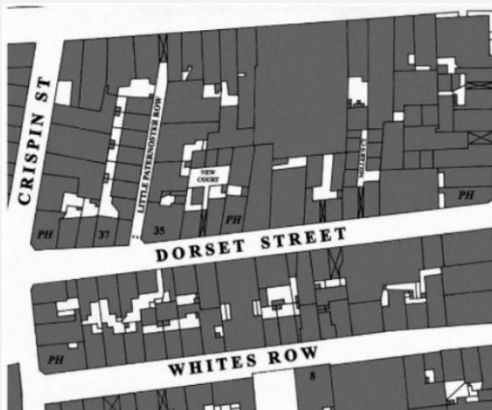
The Bank Holiday frivolities were drawing to a close. Eastenders - Jew, Catholic, Irish, Polish, German, and British, were making their way back home from whatever excursion had taken their fancy. Many were worse for drink. Some were flushed with pickpocketing gains, others were penniless, and some went home to fetch plates to find a dinner in the chandler shops in Spitalfields and its surrounds. In Bishopsgate Railway Station eight ‘well dressed’ men entered the ladies waiting room creating a disturbance and placing chairs on the tables. Amongst them was one Joseph Isaacs, a 28-year-old of Windsor Terrace, City Road and a John Hadler of Hanbury Street. According to the *Globe* of the 3rd April they “*described themselves as cigar makers.*” A porter named Smith called a halt to the disturbance and ejected them. He then turned away to return to his duties, as he did so, Isaacs ran up and struck him a violent blow to the mouth and as he fell to the floor, another of the group took a kick at him. Meanwhile, the foreman porter, Alfred Feathers, intervened to assist poor Smith, but Hadler struck out at him, tearing his coat before turning on a further porter named Kent Woods. Eventually Constables 38 H and 18 HR were able to take Isaacs and Hadler into custody. Up before the magistrate the following morning, and not so many hours after the horrors had been inflicted upon an unfortunate named Emma Smith not a million miles away, stood Isaacs and Hadler. They were, according to the *London Evening Standard* of Tuesday, 3rd April, “*the principal actors*” in the affair, but Isaacs, “*expressed sorrow for what had occurred.*” He explained that the group had been out for the bank holiday and had a little too much to drink. Nonetheless, they were fined by the magistrate Mr Hannay 40/- or were to serve a month’s hard labour.

Is this our Joseph Isaacs? It is a difficult question, and one that has been discussed previously on JTRForums.com. A City Road-based cigar maker named Joseph Isaacs has been partially traced on ancestry.com, a man who eventually marries and on the face of it, respectably settles down, records for our Isaacs usually say of no fixed abode or is a false address. On the weight of evidence, it might be that this young man is not our man. Yet, there is some aspects of the bank holiday Joseph that are intriguing. Firstly, he is roughly of the right age, and secondly, he is described as a cigar maker, which in the period from the Kelly murder onwards our Joseph is most commonly described. Yet there is more, in a later reckoning of Joseph Isaacs criminal career in 1913 amongst his many offences just two were listed for assault, it would appear that despite his criminal behaviour he was not a particularly violent individual. The incident at Bishopsgate might well account for one of them, There is another a much earlier incident dating from 1881 which we will discuss in relation to a later crime, as it may provide a perfect insight into who Isaacs really was. The final, more subtle clue that may link the Joseph Isaacs of bank holiday 1888 with the suspect of the Kelly murder is in the press reporting of the incident itself and what we know from writers like Tom Wescott regarding bank holidays in the East End. The press referral to the men as being well dressed and even the claim by Isaacs and Hadler to be cigar makers was not uncommon amongst a certain set of East End criminals -- the pickpocket. And we know, and as we shall see further, that our Joseph Isaacs was certainly of the light-fingered class.

Spitalfields - November 1888

So let us now move on to Joseph Isaacs involvement and association with the Ripper murders and, more specifically, the one he was sought for, the murder of Mary Jane Kelly, on Friday, 9th November 1888. In the immediate aftermath of the discovery of Mary Kelly, Miller's Court was a hive of police activity. It would appear that not only the participating investigating officers swarmed to Dorset Street, but extra police constables too. These had been in the area in anticipation of possible socialist agitation at the Lord Mayor's Parade.

That fear also illustrates that one cannot separate the Whitechapel murders from the wider political context of the area in the period. Despite the delay in entering Kelly's room, it is evident that the immediate investigation under the direction of detective inspector Frederick Abberline was comprehensive and thorough in its execution. It is in the unfortunate consequences of many of its results that demonstrate some of its shortcomings and that is largely tempered by one key factor: witness reliability. According to the *St James's Gazette* of Monday, 12th November 1888, the police were very busy in the two days following the discovery. That is to say, Saturday and Sunday the 10th and 11th, a number of men were arrested and released including one in the early hours in Dorset Street itself. The police also carried out inquiries in the local lodging houses and on the Sunday a complete census of Dorset Street with, "*especial reference to the persons within it on Thursday night.*" It was a remarkable undertaking considering there was said to be no fewer than 1,200 men staying in its lodging houses alone and the transient nature of the lodging house population. It is possible, therefore, during the lodging house inquiries that weekend that a certain Mary Cousins or Cusins, deputy of a lodging house in Little Paternoster Row (in Dorset Street) discussed the absence of her rather strange lodger.



Little Paternoster Row

She is later reported, according to the *Globe* of the 7th December, a month after the murder, to have said that the lodger was a single customer who lodged with her for three or four nights before the murder and disappeared leaving behind a violin bow. She remembered that "*on the night of the murder she heard the prisoner walking about his room.*"

This is where the issue becomes mindboggling. Did the police note this information, record it and bank it pending further inquiries, or was there something about the Jew she described (Joseph Isaacs) that immediately resonated? We have to bear in mind that press reports of the Jewish Lodger and his arrest do not begin until nearly 4 weeks after the murder of Kelly. However, it would appear that "*a lookout was kept for the prisoner*" and/or Cousins requested to report his return. should he do so, for the violin bow he had evidently left behind. If the account of this Jewish lodger did immediately resonate amongst the investigating authorities and they were, despite the enormity of the resource-stretched investigation, prepared to leave a lookout, does it suggest that by this time, they were decided upon or had reason to believe the killer was a Jew -- and a Polish one at that? On the 1st December the *South Wales Echo* reported an arrest of a man for the Whitechapel murders who was later discharged: "*A man was arrested last night in the Crystal Tavern, Mile End Road, on suspicion of being the Whitechapel murderer.*" The man apparently met a woman in the area who, in fear, refused to go with him. The same man then met a photographer and asked him to take photos, perhaps in the vein of the later serial killer John Christie. Significantly, however, despite giving the false name Mr Stewart of 305, Mile End Road, the press reported the man as such: "*he appears to be a Polish Jew.*"

Then there is the issue of the witness who did not come forward until after the Kelly inquest was opened and closed, George Hutchinson. If the detailed account provided by Hutchinson of the foreign or Jewish man he claimed to have seen with Kelly was cross referenced with statements made that weekend, did Cousins' account give them a Eureka moment? Referring back to those aspects reported in his previous misdemeanours, it is certainly the author's opinion that Isaacs matched Hutchinson's description enough to believe that it might just be possible that he had seen Isaacs with Kelly on a previous occasion, maybe even the night before. Had

he been genuinely mistaken about his last sighting of Kelly? That is, of course, if George Hutchinson was a genuine and honest witness. The press coverage, which occurred at least four weeks after the murder, certainly saw the similarities. *The Globe*, on 7th December, described a man “*whose appearance certainly answered to the published description of a man with astrakhan trimming on his coat.*” One could start to theorise in excitement that the small black bag or parcel in his possession was a violin case at the time when Hutchinson claimed to have seen the man with Kelly.

Then there is another issue: If Mary Cousins was spoken to after Monday, perhaps in the week or weeks after the murder, was she then aware of the press published version of the Hutchinson description? Then when the knock on the door came, perhaps it was it she and not the police who had that Eureka moment: ‘That sounds just like my strange Jewish lodger.’

It is *Lloyds Weekly* on Tuesday 9th December that further develops the Isaacs story. By this date he is for the first time referred to not only as a Jew but a Polish one: “*The man said to be a Polish Jew, and his conduct at the lodging house so strange that the deputy Mary Cusins, and other lodgers, thought it important to specifically mention him during the house to house.*” Then the story starts to grow. One of the female lodgers said to be known as Catherine is said to have made serious, if unknown allegations against Isaacs, and then with a fantastic link back to his Barnsley escapade, “*but the people in the kitchen used to remark upon his extraordinary expressions, and also his singular conduct in having so many musical instruments none of which he could play.*”

Isaacs sudden absence was noted as suspicious and the story further developed by a man named Cornelius Oakes who, “*always considered the conduct of the man as strange.*” He discussed further Isaacs apparent fascination if not fetish for musical instruments, “*he had a banjo, violin, a guitar, a mandolin, and musical box, though he could not play any of them.*” Then perhaps as embellishment, “*he heard him threaten violence to every woman above 17.*” He also stated that Isaacs would frequently change his dress and sometimes would wear a hard felt hat and other times a double peak cap. If Cornelius Oakes is to be believed then the mysterious Whitechapel murderer, Jack the Ripper himself, had been found! Indeed Oakes is likely the Cornelius Oakes of Adelina Grove who died of heat stroke in 1906, He did have a close connection with the lodging house of Cousins or Cusins and was not a press invention and even claims to have assisted the police in searching for Isaacs.

However, the evolving story of Joseph Isaacs identification, capture, and arrest reported is written after the events of the Whitechapel murders. The press filling in the void between the murder of Kelly and his initial appearance at Worship Street in anticipation of a scoop that the killer had finally been found. It would appear that sometime on the 5th December the absent and no doubt oblivious Isaacs had returned to Little Paternoster Row where he asked for the return of his violin bow. Isaacs had then proceeded with the item to what appears to be a pawn or repair shop of a man named Julius Levenson, blissfully unaware that he was being watched or was a person wanted. In what happened next it is unclear as to whether the press have converged two shops or two places in order to report the story.

We are told that whilst in the shop of Levenson, Isaacs had requested the violin bow to be repaired and, whilst discussing the matter, had bolted taking with him a gold watch belonging to another customer. Confusingly, the said watch was said to have been latterly found (the following day) in a pawnshop. The confusion arises out of the claim by the press or by Mary Cousins that she had followed, rather bravely for a man suspected of such horrific murders, Isaacs after he had collected his bow. However, the press indicates the said establishment was in Drury Lane, which on a modern map is just short of an hours walk from what was Dorset Street. One wonders then if Cousins followed Isaacs to a Spitalfields pawnshop, one not too far from Dorset Street itself and one already intimately connected to the Ripper murders and situated next door to the Ten Bells public house. Regardless, Cousins was able to identify Isaacs to a police constable and he was detained.

The matter of his arrest is further confused by the possibility that another unnamed suspect was arrested and discharged, ‘near’ rather than ‘in’ Drury Lane on the 4th December. This suspect notably answered to the description provided by Hutchinson. Prior to their own latest update on Isaacs, it is reported in the *Lloyds*

Weekly News of 9th December that this man had the “*appearance of a foreigner carrying a small black bag in the vicinity of Drury lane asked the way to the Strand and was arrested and discharged at Bow.*”

However, and wherever it actually took place, Isaacs was arrested on the 6th December initially for the stealing of the watch but more importantly in relation to the Kelly murder. According to a detective record of H Division, “*there are some matters alleged against the prisoner which it was desired to inquire into.*” Before the magistrate at Worship Street on Friday, 7th December, Isaacs was said to be of no fixed abode and described himself as a cigar maker, his identity confirmed as the mysterious missing lodger by Cousins. It is from this point onwards that Isaacs is reported as a ‘Polish Jew’, the headline of the *Northern Daily Mail* of Saturday, 8th December, “*The Whitechapel Crimes, The Arrest of a Polish Jew*” and again from the *Lloyds Weekly* of the 9th December, “*The man is said to be a polish Jew.*” Yet one must add another note of caution: Isaacs was certainly a Jew and the difficulties of his identification we will cover. But this leads one to wonder if his description from this point as a Polish Jew another confusion of the other arrest near Drury Lane on the 4th, note the *Reynold’s Newspaper* of Sunday the 9th, “*The East End Murders -- Polish Jew arrested near Drury Lane.*” The confusion, whether one arrest or two, whether at Drury Lane or elsewhere, and the evolution of Isaacs from Jew to specifically a Polish Jew, is illustrative that even just after an event – days, not even weeks later -- a myth can start to take shape. It is as important for those of us who may advocate the candidacy of the Polish Jew, ‘Kosminski’ as the perpetrator of the Whitechapel murders to those of us who do not.

Two arrests or one, if it was the former, have helped to establish in name, at least, the identity of the foreign-looking individual arrested and released. Regardless, the arrest of Isaacs seems to have been taken seriously by the investigating police. The *Reynold’s Newspaper*, again of the 9th December, introduces Abberline into the affair. After a telegram was sent to Leman Street Police Station Abberline proceeded to Bow Street where he brought away the prisoner in a cab, “*which was strongly escorted,*” a little too much, perhaps, for a lowly shoplifter and pickpocket. The report, whilst stating that he had been detained for stealing a watch, elaborated that the police believed that he “*corresponds to the description of the supposed Whitechapel murderer*” and that there were “*other circumstances*” which made him to use the modern term, a person of interest.

Yet it is also clear the man driven under heavy escort with Abberline for his date at Worship Street on Friday was already known to the police of H Division, “*He is well known to the local force of police and detectives, although he is stated to have been absent from the neighbourhood lately.*” Known, no doubt for his previous antics, the fact that he was considered a viable suspect perhaps illustrates the desperation of the investigation in the weeks following the harrowing and brutal murder of Kelly. Joseph Issacs was detained for at least a week whilst, according to the *Gloucester Citizen*, of the 15th December, “*it was said by the police that they wished the fullest inquiry as to the prisoners movements on the night of November the 8th.*” In reality, it was all over by the 14th December when, after being charged, Isaacs, perhaps craving the security of a prison cell rather than a baying Whitechapel mob, pleaded guilty to the stealing of the watch and was sentenced with no other charges to three months hard labour. By Christmas Eve the story was old news, the press (*Lloyds Weekly* 23rd December 1888) reporting that “*the police are still without a clue to the perpetrators of the recent crimes*” and in relation to Joseph Isaacs, “*there is no grounds for suspicion against the Polish Jew, Joseph Issacs.*”

By the beginning of the new year the focus of the press regarding the Whitechapel murders had moved to murder of Johnny Gill that occurred in Bradford, and Isaacs was just an afternote. *The People* of 6th January 1889: “*As the suspicions against the Polish Jew, Joseph Isaacs, now in custody for a felony, are cleared up, the police allege they now have no clue to the Whitechapel assassin.*” Cleared up, indeed; the fact of the matter is that Isaacs should never, upon arrest and confirmation of identity, have been looked at beyond the stealing of the gold watch in the Levenson shop. The fact is, he could not have murdered Kelly even if he wanted to, for as the *Lloyds Weekly* of the 23rd December 1888 explains, “*it is ascertained that at the time of the murder he was undergoing a term of imprisonment for stealing a coat.*” Valuable police time wasted, one witness proven to be entirely inaccurate in her recall (Mary Cousins) and another witness who may well have irreparably damaged an investigation already stretched thin, George Hutchinson.

What of Joseph Isaacs's part in this? Did he not cooperate with the police and come clean over the watch and explain why he could not have possibly murdered Mary Kelly, or did he fail to cooperate, enjoying the temporary notoriety and attention, ultimately knowing he would be redeemed? Or as a Jew and a known criminal, was he ignored and not believed. In the modern age, a call, a text, or an email would be able to clear up the matter with speed. The time it took to clear Isaacs in December 1888 illustrates starkly the restrictions of the age. So let us return to our travels with our itinerant Mr Isaacs and establish exactly why he could not have been the man who entered Miller's Court, at some time on Friday, 9th November 1888.

Barnet – Wednesday, 7th November 1888

As in the incident in Dover, the best coverage of the story can be found in the local press, in this case the *Barnet Press* of the 10th and 17th of November. On the night of the 7th, Joseph Isaacs, "*a travelling musician, and apparently an Israelite*" called at the Green Dragon Inn on the High Street, Barnet, and requested a bed for the night. The story was headlined rather appropriately, 'A Dishonest Lodger'. Early the next morning, Isaacs came down to the landlord, John Bennett, and asked if he could clean his boots but according to Bennett, he "*only done this for the purpose of seeing who was about.*" Isaacs then returned to his room, and shortly



The Green Dragon Inn, Barnet

after he left, heading in the direction of New Road. The suspicious landlord went up to Isaacs room and noted that at the top of the stairs two of his son's coats (valued at 30 shillings) were missing. He decided to pursue Isaacs in the direction he had headed. After around a mile, the running Bennett caught sight of Isaacs who, upon realisation he was being pursued, took one of the coats off, threw it into the road and started to run. Bennett was able to whistle to a local shopkeeper, a Mr Fraser, who intervened and grabbed hold of the fleeing Isaacs. Rather comically when Bennett caught up with the pair, Isaacs denied taking the second coat

despite wearing it at the time.

Isaacs was taken into custody and charged, the hearing to be held on the Monday, the same day as the Kelly inquest, meaning that during the night/morning of the murder, Isaacs was safely behind bars. Whoever Mary Cousins heard pacing about in one of her rooms, it wasn't the "*stern Pharaoh*" (*Barnet Press*, 10th December 1888), Joseph Isaacs. On the Monday, despite claiming he had taken the coats in error and intending their return, Isaacs was sentenced to 21 days hard labour. He would not be free until the end of November, thus explaining his absence from Spitalfields until the 4th December.

It is interesting to note that the press coverage, although displaying the contemporary antisemitic tone in its reporting, does not record Isaacs as a Polish Jew, nor is there any comment passed upon his way of speaking, i.e. a foreign accent. For all intents and purposes Isaacs was a typical cockney Eastender albeit a dishonest one, save for the fact that his outward appearance may have betrayed his Jewishness. Herein we can make another important point in regard to the make-up of the East End during and just after the murders. There were varied and different Jewish communities, from those long established in the East End, who were almost indistinguishable from the local gentile population, certainly in language, to the ever-increasing non-English speaking new arrivals from Poland, Russia and eastern Europe. It is the authors contention that this Joseph, like the later killer of PC Ernest Thompson, Barnet Abrahams, was of the former established community, and this too may be a true indicator of his own back story. It is the author's opinion that an individual from the more established Jewish community of the east is a far more likely candidate for the murders than a recent arrival.

In their horrific execution and barbarity, the individual story of each Whitechapel victim, whether five - or less or more - came to a close in their final moments and murder. For those that knew and loved them, for witnesses mentioned in the press and interviewed in the investigation, for those briefly suspected and released by the police life continued beyond 1888. Just as life continued for John Kelly without Catherine Eddowes and Joseph Barnet without Mary Kelly, so it continued for Joseph Isaacs. Isaacs life after 1888 was to remain as colourful and eventful as the years leading up to his collision with one of history's most enduring mysteries.

Blakeney, Gloucestershire - 23rd December 1892

Blakeney is a small village situated on the western side of the River Severn, lying close to the Forest of Dean. How Joseph Isaacs ended up here just prior to Christmas 1892 is anyone's guess. On the 23rd December, Isaacs entered the shop of Samuel Burrows, the village butcher, and requested from his wife a shoulder of mutton. With incredible guile and confidence, he said that it was for the parish curate and that he would be back shortly thereafter to pay for it as he did not have any change. Putting the shoulder of mutton, valued at over five shillings, on his own shoulder Isaacs promptly headed for the local train station. On his way, Isaacs came across another butcher who was heading back to the village with his cart and negotiated the sale of the mutton for 2/6. With a tidy profit for little effort and a train due at any moment Isaacs must have felt very satisfied with his excursion to the picturesque Gloucestershire village. That is, until he was confronted by the disgruntled butcher himself, Samuel Burrows, who no doubt after scolding his wife's gullibility had soon realised exactly where Isaacs would be heading. Demanding the return of the mutton, Isaacs confessed that he had already sold it but was going to pay and according to the local paper, *The Citizen* of the 7th January, "*I shall pay when I have change. I tried to get change at 20 shops in Blakeney.*" Isaacs, not for the first time, was not believed and when Police Constable Wilks arrived, he was promptly arrested. Subsequently, he was placed in the dock at the next Gloucester Sessions and was charged with intent to defraud. He was prosecuted by a Mr F F Gould. Isaacs, who was unable to afford counsel, defended himself and pleaded not guilty.



Blakeney, Gloucestershire

It is in the local paper, *The Citizen* (21st February) that we get further detail: "*Joseph Isaacs, a well-dressed, middle aged man, described as an agent for a cigar making company*". That link again perhaps to that Joseph Isaacs of Bishopsgate Station and an address not too far away, "*3 Cock and Hoop yard*" in Houndsditch, Aldgate. Before the magistrate Isaacs conducted his rather confused defence, "*prisoner throughout the hearing behaved in a remarkable manner. He insisted that because he was a Jew the witness was lying against him.*" Then a more bizarre statement that may say more for Isaacs state of mind than his ability with foreign languages, "*They might be clever, but to be cleverer than him (Isaacs) they must speak more than six languages.*" All this was to no avail. Isaacs, whom the court reported was the same man who "*in 1888 was convicted of a felony at Worship-street police court*" and was sentenced to three months hard labour. Isaacs was to serve his time firstly in the Littledean house of correction, before being transferred to Wormwood Scrubs. He's recorded as a Jew from London when he was released on the 19th May 1893.

St Albans, Hertfordshire - 6th January 1894

It is difficult to determine if, between periods of incarceration and his various petty crimes, Isaacs returned to Spitalfields and Whitechapel with money and goods to support a family. His record demonstrates that he travelled widely but always was identified as, and indeed identified himself as, a man from the East End. Moreover, a lot of the type of crime in which he engaged demonstrated that he was fully formed in the more notorious districts of that area. Perhaps he believed the more salubrious and sleepy areas in which he operated outside London were easier targets, but Joseph Isaacs was hardly a successful criminal. Whilst in St Albans, he was indicted for passing off counterfeit money, "*landladies of public houses being the principal victims*" (*The Recorder* 6th January 1894). On this occasion, recorded as living in Albert Street, Commercial Road he was to receive six months hard labour.

The Habitual Criminals Register of 1893 indicated that continual prison life was certainly starting to take its toll on his physical appearance. It shows that along with his signature three small birth moles on his chest, he also acquired a scar over his left eyebrow, one on his right groin and burn tissue on his right lower leg. By October 1896 he was back in Spitalfields, in possibly the very street in which allegedly George Hutchinson

had seen the tragic Mary Kelly with a man who was Joseph Isaacs doppelganger. Isaacs took advantage of a busy David Jacobs at his umbrella stall, snatching one before walking off. According to the *Daily Telegraph* of the 28th October when Jacobs stopped Isaacs, “*the latter threatened to punch him on the nose, bullied and abused him, and said the umbrella was his own.*” In the report, titled “*An Impudent Thief,*” we may get a further clue to the reason behind some of Isaacs travels as he is said to be, “*an attendant at race meetings.*”

The 1880s saw the beginnings of East End criminals and gangs infiltrating the lucrative horse racing industry, firstly for the pickpocketing of cash rich punters and eventually the whole sale corruption of racetrack betting and the fixing of races. It was to eventually become the monopoly of Jewish gangs by the following century. This report and information may also be of possible importance when trying to establish Isaacs true identity. A connection to gambling may link this Isaacs with the Joseph Isaacs who was arrested and taken to Leman Street along with 41 others in a raid on a gambling den known as the ‘Tower Hamlets Club’ based at 65 High Street, Whitechapel in August 1889. The raid was led by Superintendent Arnold himself. Interestingly, this Isaacs gave his address as 15 Park Street, City Road possibly making him the same Isaacs as the cigar maker arrested in the Bishopsgate incident of Easter 1888. At Worship Street, Isaacs conducted himself with typical but ultimately pointless gusto. Turning on David Jacobs, Isaacs is reported to have said, “*You are a liar and a thief yourself. Your word is not to be taken. Stand down.*” Noting his previous and geographically widespread convictions, the magistrate sentenced him to nine months.

The criminal records for Isaacs record him as next being imprisoned for three months in November 1897, at the Gravesend petty sessions for stealing a vice. I have been unable to find any trace of this story in the press. As we enter the 20th century, Isaacs returned to his wider travels. In the spring of 1900 we find him at the heart of a crime that, although executed many miles distant from the East End of London, bears all the hallmarks of a crime carried out there. It resembles one more specifically regularly occurring in St George in the East, a crime that was the ruin of many a sailor who had taken to the shore with their pay around the Ratcliff Highway.

Joseph Isaacs, 57, Labourer
3 Mos., Worship Street Police Ct., 4th Dec., 1888 (stealing watch).
3 Mos., Gloucester Assize, 18th Feb., 1893 (fraud).
6 Mos., St. Albans Sess., 2nd Jan., 1894 (uttering counterfeit coin).
6 Mos. and 3 Mos. (consecutive), Worship Street Police Ct., 26th Oct., 1896 (stealing mackintosh, &c., and umbrella).
3 Mos., Gravesend Petty Sess., 1st Nov., 1897 (stealing vice), as Joseph Goldberg.
9 Mos., Southampton Sess., 5th Apr., 1900 (stealing money), as Joseph Green.
12 Mos., North London Sess., 21st May, 1901 (stealing trunk, &c.).
1 Mo., Brighton Police Ct., 23rd Sept., 1902 (stealing umbrella).
2 Years, Central Criminal Ct., 12th Dec., 1904 (stealing barrows), as Joseph Green.
3 Mos., Hastings Police Ct., 7th May, 1907 (stealing hand cart).
And 2 Summary Convictions for assault, &c.

Joseph Isaacs criminal record detailed in 1909

Southampton, Hampshire - February 1900

On the 17th February, a small article appeared in the *Southampton Observer and Hampshire News* recording the remanding of a Joseph Green, cigar maker, of Whitechapel, who was charged with stealing £10 from a ship steward named George Boulton. The *Hampshire Advertiser* of the same day ran the headline “*A Queer Case*” and stated that Green was to be sent to Winchester Jail and bail set at £100. It is not until April that the story of this “*Queer Case*” emerges in detail in the local press. It would appear that Joseph Green, along with a local woman named Margaret Macey, had been in the company of the ship steward in the Grapes Public House. Boulton had just been paid off from his ship with a handsome purse of £13. Macey, who was reported to be aged 49, would not have been out of place with the many unfortunates who sought sailors back in St George in the East. She had a long criminal record for drunkenness, child neglect, and assault stretching back to at least 1887. How she had entered into a criminal partnership with Green is difficult to know.

Whilst in the public house they began to take charge of the naïve Boulton’s money, buying drinks for the three of them before leaving and hailing a cab. The cab driver, Frank Oliver, had noted that Boulton appeared dazed and confused but nevertheless took the strange party of three at Boulton’s expense to White’s Cocoa Rooms in St Mary’s Street, a rough dockland district where Macey herself had once been a landlady. There, again from Boulton’s purse of money, Green ordered himself and Macey, “*Steak, vegetables, tea, bottles of stout,*” and more. Green then escorted the very drunk and drowsy Boulton to another public house where he was propped up at the bar and encouraged to produce a sovereign to engage two beds for two nights, Green snatching the change given over by barmaid Amy Best.

The unfortunate Boulton’s ordeal was not to end there, He was next taken to the shop of Edwin Jones and Co and whilst appearing asleep at the shop’s counter, Green took more money from his pocket and purchased goods for himself and Margaret Macey, who passed herself off as Boulton’s mother. They arrived back at the

public house, The Queen, Simnel Street, carrying parcels and clothes to the value of £4/2/11, Macey even had the audacity to ask the landlord to look after them for her along with a sovereign. The following day the bewildered and more clear-headed Boulton reported what had happened and Green and Macey were promptly arrested by a Constable Maton.

Of course, Joseph Green was merely an alias for Joseph Isaacs, confirmed as reported in the words of Chief Constable Berry in the *Southampton Observer and Hampshire News* of Saturday 7th April 1900, “*prisoners name was Joseph Goldberg alias Isaacs*” and that, “*he had been convicted of various charges of larceny in an around.*” Isaacs considered the “*ringleader of the offence*” was to receive a further nine-month term of imprisonment to add to his growing tally of served time. Macey was sentenced to three months hard labour. During the trial, the Judge had heavily criticised Edwin Jones and Co for allowing the sale of the clothes and other items whilst Boulton was clearly incapable of understanding what was happening. Interestingly, as part of his own defence, Isaacs claimed he had a wife and seven children to support back in Whitechapel. This could be another clue perhaps to his identity, or rather a sham claim for sympathy.

His destination upon his eventual release was another iconic street connected to at least two of the Whitechapel murders, Osborn Street (number 33). The nature of this crime shares strong parallels to the robberies of sailors that occurred regularly in St George in the East recorded in the press during the years leading up to the horrors of 1888. Wells Street, Ship Alley, Wellclose Square and the surrounds were infested with such gangs, men and women, although in that period mainly of Irish descent. However, there is a Joseph Isaacs, who, according to the *East London Observer* of October 1881, was arrested for assault and “*Riotous Proceedings*” along with Joseph Barnard after threatening James Challis, the landlord of the Royal Standard public house in Wells Street, very near the sailor’s home. This Joseph Issacs was a ‘runner’, part of the gangs who enticed the sailors on shore leave and took them to certain public houses, where they were encouraged to drink in order that they could later be robbed in a dark alley, introduced to a female who would pick their pockets, or would be rendered incapacitated only be taken to certain stores and have all their money spent. Did our Joseph Isaacs cut his teeth back in St George in the East in 1881? Joseph Isaacs criminal record had just two assaults. The incident in 1881 along with the Bishopsgate incident would count for both of them. It would also place Isaacs firmly in the established Jewish community of the East End. Are we at last getting closer to who he really was?

Brighton, East Sussex - 23rd September 1902

Joseph Isaacs clearly had an affection for the south coast. It would also appear that, notwithstanding his earlier recorded obsession with musical instruments, he also had an affection for umbrellas, as is indicated involving a gentlemen, a certain Arthur L Green. The story is related in the *Brighton Gazette* of Thursday, 25th September under the headline. “*Tale of an Umbrella: Police Officers Smartness.*” The police officer in question, Sub Inspector Bridle, had observed Isaacs on the seafront trying to conceal something under his coat. When he stopped him and asked what it was, Isaacs replied, “*Something that I bought*” and showed him an umbrella and a walking stick. Not convinced of his honesty, Bridle had Isaacs arrested, despite his protestations that he had purchased the stick and umbrella in a local bazaar. They had, in fact, been stolen a little earlier from the hall of 100 Kings Road, a grand establishment, in one of Brighton’s fashionable seafront roads. Another term of imprisonment was to follow, just one month’s hard labour on this occasion.

Violins, mandolins, umbrellas, and, it would appear, barrows were also a common target of Isaacs. He had been convicted prior to his trip to Brighton for stealing one at the North London Sessions. In December 1904, using the alias Joseph Green, he had stolen the barrow of Edward Howard and Joseph Jones. A much longer prison sentence was given on this occasion, two years to be served at Wormwood Scrubs. According to his record, his destination upon release was to be 135 Sidney Street, but the East End could never hold Isaacs for long.



Brighton seafront

Hastings, East Sussex - 24th April 1907

In Hastings, the last perhaps detailed and recorded misdemeanour of our wandering Mr Isaacs. We get to hear for one last time his sometimes-eccentric recorded words. Perhaps they provide a little more insight into the man he was or had become after so many unsuccessful crimes and so much prison time. He had hired a hand truck valued at £2 from Henry Sickles, a coach builder of Courthouse Street claiming that he had some things he needed to carry to the station, he, along with the truck, then disappeared. He was later detained and arrested back in Whitechapel, minus the truck that he claimed had in turn been stolen from him whilst he was asleep in a field in Colchester.

Upon arrest, according to the *Hastings and St Leonards Observer* of Saturday, 11th May and referring to the truck he said, *"he supposed borrowing and stealing were the same thing."* Referring to his previous recent convictions the chief constable of the Hastings police also is said to have commented, *"Stealing barrows was apparently the prisoner's special line."* The report also noted his previous crimes stretching back to 1888 and unflatteringly described the man arrested, *"Joseph Isaacs, whose hooked nose and woolly hair state his nationality as plainly as his name."* Later in the dock, one cannot help but feel some sympathy for the hapless man as in a series of statements he makes his defence, some of his words are even perhaps wise, *"It is a well-known fact, sir, that a criminal is always black [of heart]. He won't be brightened by magistrates or judges."* In short, Isaacs was trapped in a cycle of repeat offending likely out of necessity. He went on, *"The criminals don't go and do this sort of thing for choice or pleasure."* And *"If you knock at a rich man's door he does not know what it is to be hungry, but the poor man does."* Finally, his attempt perhaps to at least reduce his forthcoming sentence, *"You know, sir, I am not as black [of heart] as I am painted. I've been married since 1881, and I've got a family of thirteen which wants some bringing up."* Unmoved, the magistrate sentenced him to three months hard labour.

So, there we have it the story of a man who for a few short weeks in December 1888 was London's, and perhaps the world's, most wanted. Was there to be any epiphany for Isaacs? Did old age and his alleged brood of children reform him? Sadly no; on the 8th April 1913 Isaacs, recorded as being fifty-seven-years-old, was sent to Wormwood Scrubs for an 18-month term of hard labour for the stealing of yet another barrow, this time from a man named Max Wooler.

The matter of the true back story of Isaacs and his real traceable heritage has been previously discussed on JTRforums.com. The results have been largely inconclusive. The author has tried, in vain, to use what little we have from his words and the addresses he provides to trace him. He claims to have had up to thirteen children, that he could speak several languages, and had even in the 1880's already travelled widely. Did this mean he was indeed a Polish migrant Jew, multilingual perhaps in Yiddish, German, Polish or Russian, along with English as many were? Yet despite his outwardly Jewish appearance, Isaacs use of English or any accent were never commented upon and indeed, as early as 1887, he comes across as every bit the Englishman in speech, if not a cockney one. This, along with the consistent referral of him as a cigar maker lends itself very much, despite the disagreement of other researchers to that City Road cigar maker and perhaps gambling man who was charged for assaulting a railway porter at Bishopsgate in April 1888.

This may well match too with the Joseph Isaacs (cigar maker) born in Whitechapel in 1858 recorded as living with his father, David Isaacs at 144 Wentworth Street in the 1881 census. Yet there remain other candidates. Perhaps we will never be able to successfully extract who he really was but ultimately, in Isaacs contributing part to the history of the Whitechapel murders, it may not be important. What is important here is what Isaacs represents in terms of the direction of travel of the investigation in the aftermath of the Kelly murder. It also demonstrates the impact of the witness George Hutchinson, who was the source of Isaacs and other men of Jewish appearance's detention as a result. Whether you doubt him or otherwise, many hours of police time were wasted in the wake of his elaborate description, a mixture of a caricature of a Jewish sweater and elements of previous press descriptions from dubious witnesses. The recall of Mary Cousins regarding Isaacs time in her lodging house illustrates fantastically the weakness of such witness statements. George Hutchinson's true part in the Whitechapel Murders is a debate reserved for another time, but what is certain

is it results in the timeline of the Kelly murder being permanently altered and a key witness who, until the inquest had been the last individual to see Kelly with a man, being overlooked.

It is best expressed in this article found in the *Huntly Express* of 17th November 1888, “Many persons competent to form a reliable opinion upon the matter still believe that Mrs Cox accurately described a man who was in the company of the deceased at midnight, and therefore they question the wisdom of the police in relying exclusively on Hutchinson’s information.”. Indeed, there are several press accounts of men behaving suspiciously and brought to the attention of the police who were dismissed because they did not match the description Hutchinson had provided. The innocent Joseph Isaacs is the ultimate representation of that description. Furthermore, Isaacs is important for another reason, perhaps more contentious as it touches upon a deeper debate -- that of the Polish Jew, the later named suspect, Kosminski.

Can we decipher in the events involving the arrest of several Jews post the publication of Hutchinson’s description, elements of what later became the firm view of Anderson and Swanson? It is possible that the press reports of Isaacs arrest at least are a combination of two different arrests that led to him suddenly being described as a ‘Polish Jew.’ All is illustrative of how a melting pot of a mass of information can merge into history, whether accurate or not. It is interesting too that throughout the month following Kelly’s murder, often alongside the latest update of the Whitechapel investigation, the press were running a story of horrific mutilations carried out by some Orthodox Polish Jews on a gentile that occurred on the continent. Headlines such as “*Religious Fanaticism Among the Polish Jew. Terrible Mutilations*” (*South Wales Echo* 22nd November 1888) is one of several examples. The idea of the Whitechapel monster being a Polish Jew therefore was not difficult to imagine. To the press and public at the time, it seemed the most likely solution.

As already stated, ultimately the story of Joseph Isaacs and his small part in the history of the Whitechapel murders enables us to capture a snapshot of the life, if not in its entirety, of a man who would otherwise be unknown and disregarded in history. His life expresses so many important elements of the history of the East End of London, its crime, its people, its poverty, and its characters.

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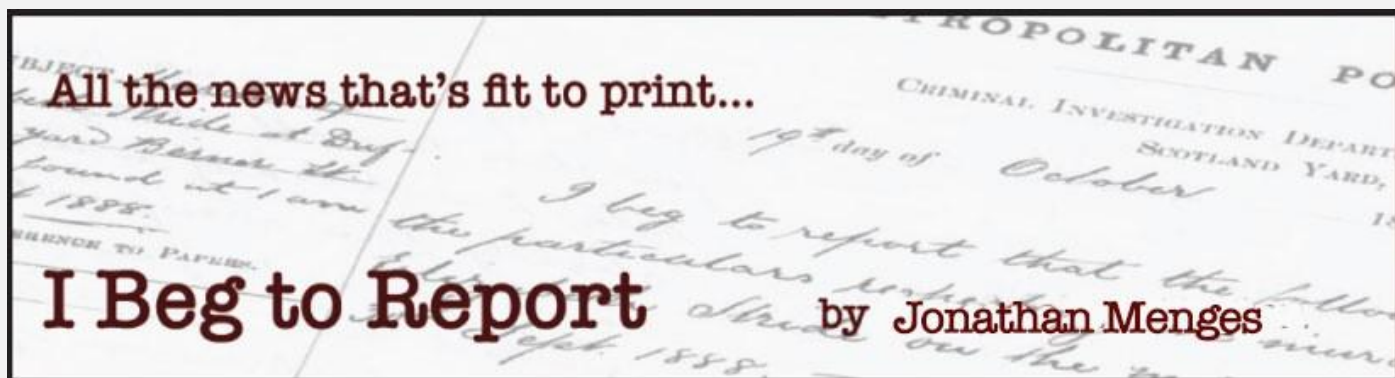
Jonathan Tye is a researcher and writer who graduated in History from the University of Kent. His book on Edward Buckley and the Ripper murders will be published in November 2025.

UNJAM THE ANAGRAM

Bored Snorers Train

Clue: The subject of the up-and-coming book by John Malcolm.

Answer at the end of this edition



Love Affair Between the Media and Russell Edwards Continues - Experts Baffled.

Rather than acknowledging past discretions and choosing to part ways, the press went on a love frenzy, repeating again the over decade-old claim that “businessman” Russell Edwards matched DNA found on a shawl to Ripper suspect Aaron Kosminski. This time Edwards, with the support of Karen Miller, a descendant of Catherine Eddowes, is seeking a “legal acknowledgment” that Kozminski was Jack the Ripper. Apparently this would entail having another inquest opened into the case in which a coroner would examine the “new evidence” and supposedly be permitted to assign blame. Very rarely do any of these news articles mention that the test results have been publicly disputed by DNA experts, and even rarer still is any mention made of Edwards’ tract record in making false claims, such as his bogus stunt announcing to have found the remains of Moors murders victim Keith Bennett. Any updates to this farcical charade are usually to be found on JtRForums.com, as Ripperologists and researchers continue to be the only ones interested in getting at the truth.

FIVE QUESTIONS WITH A RIPPEROLOGIST

For this edition we’ve invited our very own *Amanda Lloyd* to answer our five standardised questions. As regular readers will know, the answers can only contain a maximum of two words, so here’s Mandy’s responses for you to cogitate over:

1. How many people did ‘Jack the Ripper’ kill? *Possibly six*
 2. Who is your preferred suspect? *Local nobody*
 3. Who has influenced you the most in this subject? *Paul Begg*
 4. Will the case ever be solved? *No*
 5. How would you describe the current state of Ripperology? *Fractured*
-
-

All Roads Lead from Mitre Square

Steven Blomer

This article is based on, and adapted from, a chapter from my upcoming book, *A Death in Mitre Square*, Catherine Eddowes: An Analysis of Murder due to be published in 2026.

The question of which route the killer of Catherine Eddowes took from Mitre Square is one that is often debated and to which there is no consensus. In this article we will attempt to look at the various possibilities.

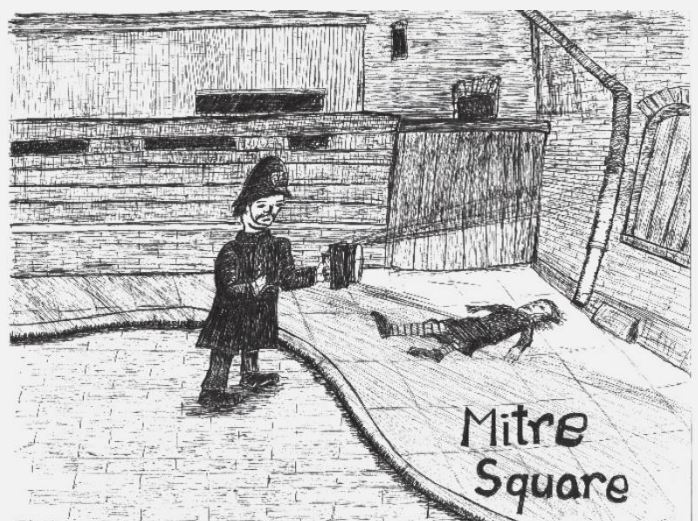
We will assume that after the murder, the killer went to Goulston Street, where part of the apron worn by Catherine Eddowes was deposited and where graffiti was possibly written by the killer, although that particular debate is outside the scope of this particular article. Later we will also look at the suggestion made by author Trevor Marriott that the killer did not go to Goulston Street after the murder and what this might mean for possible routes from the square.

The first person to look at possible routes was Frederick William Foster, surveyor and son of Detective Superintendent Alfred Lawrence Foster¹. Frederick made plans of the square and possible routes to Goulston Street, as well as sketches of Catherine Eddowes' body and her wounds².

In a wider context, a look at possible escape routes appeared in the *Ripperologist*³ in December 2006 and January 2007. Entitled *City Beat, Parts 1 & 2*⁴ by Gavin Bromley, these were very in-depth and primarily looked at the beats of City Police Constables Watkins and Harvey. I have to say they are some of the best articles to ever grace the magazine and over the years I have found them extremely useful, referring to them in my work *Inside Buck's Row*, first published in 2019⁵.

Much of the detail in these articles is beyond our scope but they are included, discussed and analysed in the upcoming *A Death in Mitre Square*⁶. It is fair to say that while I accept and agree with the broad conclusions of Mr Bromley, I do differ very slightly in my interpretation of the actual walking speeds employed by the two officers, but these are minor differences.

Let's begin by looking briefly at the location of Mitre Square, its layout, and the exits and entrances. Mitre Square lies within the boundary of the City of London, and now as then it falls under the jurisdiction



¹ https://wiki.casebook.org/mitre_square.html, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitre_Square

² *Coroner's inquest (L)*, 1888, No.135, *Catherine Eddowes Inquest, 1888* (London Metropolitan Archives)

³ *Ripperologist.co.uk*

⁴ *Issues 74 and 75*

⁵ *Inside Buck's Row*, published 2019, volume 1 of the *Whitechapel Murders Project*

⁶ *A Death in Mitre Square*, Due for publication 2026, volume 2 of the *Whitechapel Murders Project*.

of the City of London Police⁷ rather than the Metropolitan Police. The square stands just behind Aldgate and is bounded by Duke Street to the east and Mitre Street to the west. To the north lies present day Creechurch Lane and Place, formally King Street and St James's Place. The site itself occupies the former cloister of Holy Trinity Priory. The square itself has seen many changes over the years and now bears very little resemblance to how it looked in late September 1888.

The following OS map shows the position of Mitre Square in relation to Aldgate and Goulston Street. Its position is shown in Fig. 1⁸.



Figure 1

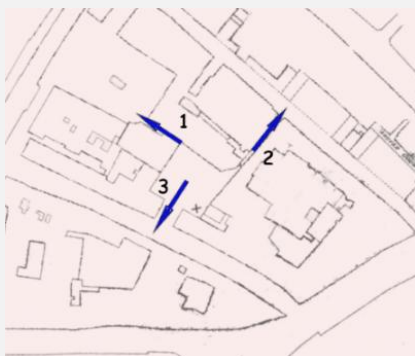


Figure 2

Next we need to look at the square itself. In Fig. 2, we see it had three entrances and thus three possible exits. These have been marked as 1, 2, and 3.

We start with the exit labelled 1, north into St James's Place, which was also known as the Orange Market. It should be noted that in this area there was a watchman named Blenkinsop on duty, and a fire station, meaning that any attempt at escaping via this route may well have been noticed. Indeed, Blenkinsop is reported as saying people did pass, but that he took little notice⁹.

There was the exit back onto Duke Street, (labelled 2 in the map,) named Church Passage at the time, now called St James's Passage, which was reasonably busy. At just after 1.30am, Lawende, Levy and Harris had seen a couple at this entrance¹⁰ and of course PC Harvey had walked this very exit himself only a few minutes before the body was discovered¹¹. Both exits are by very narrow passageways.

The third and final exit route is via Mitre Street (labelled 3 on the map). This was the entrance used by PC Watkins on that night¹². He entered Mitre Street from the Aldgate and walked north before turning into Mitre Square.

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_of_London_Police

⁸ 1:1056 scale series of maps-1895 reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

⁹ *Star* 1st October 1888.

¹⁰ Ref. Coroner's inquest (L), 1888, No. 135, Catherine Eddowes inquest, 1888 (Corporation of London Record Office)

¹¹ *Ibid*

¹² *Ibid*

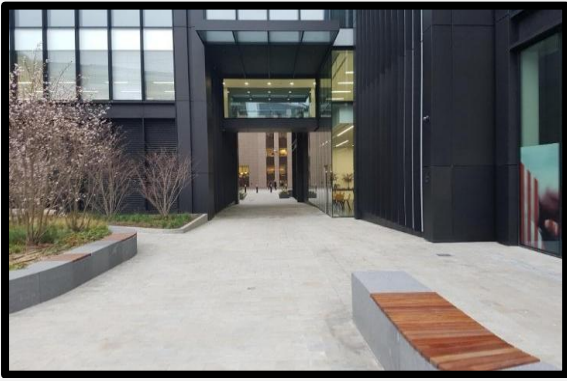


Figure 3

We should also note that some have suggested the killer had access to one of the buildings surrounding the square and either waited there or exited that building via a different exit. Such would bring the killer out onto either Duke Street, King Street or St James's Place, or Mitre Street or Aldgate. These are covered by the possible routes discussed below.

We will now look at a selection of possible escape routes from each of the three available exits shown above. For this we will be using the hand drawn sketch maps, which may not be completely to scale, but are very close. I will limit myself to four possible routes from each of the marked entrances/exits,

the book *Death in Mitre Square* will look at many more possibilities.

Route 1

Route 1 on the Fig. 2 map was, in 1888, a very narrow passage, today it has a much wider opening as shown in Fig. 3. Then it was called St James's Passage. It would later become known as Mitre Passage, changing its name at the same time as Church Passage inherited its old moniker and became, somewhat confusingly, St James's Passage. It led to St James's Place. As mentioned above, there was a fire station situated there. In addition, watchman James Blenkinsop was on duty in this area. George Morris was apparently stationed at the door to the Kearley and Tonge Warehouse, which was partially open just before the body of Catherine Eddowes was discovered by PC 881 Edward Watkins. These points need to be taken into account when considering this as a possible exit from the Square.

The first possible route involves going via Little Duke Street and Stoney Lane. On reaching Middlesex Street we could either go north via Wentworth Street to reach Goulston Street or south via New Goulston Street (Fig. 4).



Figure 4



Figure 5

This route, of which uses Little Duke Street on exiting St James's Place, has been one that's often been suggested over the years, yet there are questions over this. Stoney Lane may very well not have been available from Houndsditch. The Goad Map of 1887 shows no access to Stoney Lane. There were roadworks and extensions to the road being built. As we shall see later in the article, Foster does not mention Stoney Lane. If this was because he had personally examined it or if he was using an old map is unclear¹³. If it was not accessible from Houndsditch, a similar route is still possible via Gravel Lane, Back Gravel Lane, then turning into the open section of Stoney Lane, Middlesex Street and New Goulston Street (Fig. 5).



Figure 6



Figure 7

The next possible route from exit 1, turns left from St James's Place, into Bevis Marks before using Goring Street and Cutler Street, Harrow Alley, Middlesex Street and Wentworth Street, before arriving at Goulston Street. (Fig. 6).

The final option we will look at for this exit is a variation on the previous route. Instead of turning into Harrow Alley, the killer continued on along Artizans Street, before turning into Stoney Lane (Fig. 7).

¹³ Ripperologist 75

Route 2

The second possible exit route is via what at the time was Church Lane, now St James's Passage. It was the entrance to this passage that Joseph Lawende, Joseph Hyam Levy, and Harry Harris passed on the opposite side of Duke Street after leaving the Imperial Club at approximately 1.30 am and where they saw a couple talking.



Figure 8

This passageway was also part of the beat of PC 964 James Harvey, he would walk to the junction with the square, before returning to Duke Street, he reported seeing nothing and his involvement and positioning is covered in great detail in the Bromley article¹⁴. Fig. 8 is the current view from the square back towards Duke Street.

There is little possibility that Blenkinsop or anyone on duty at the fire station could see the passage, however we encounter the same issue with the door to the warehouse being partially open. It would also mean the killer could possibly be seen by anyone using Duke Street. As we know, the three men from the Imperial Club had used it very recently as had PC Harvey, it appears to have been a reasonably active street.

The first possible exit route using exit 2, was suggested by Frederick Foster back in 1888¹⁵. This involves turning right from Church Passage, then right again along Aldgate and Aldgate High Street before turning into Goulston Street. (Fig. 9).

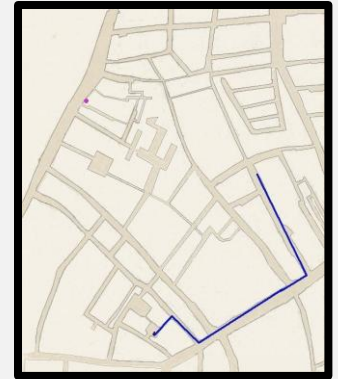


Figure 9

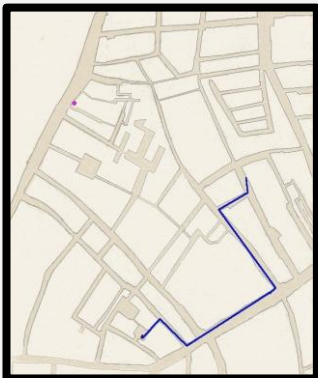


Figure 10

We now have a variation on the route suggested by Foster, instead of turning into Goulston Street, the killer uses Middlesex Street, the junction preceding Goulston Street if coming from Duke Street. Like many of these routes under discussion, New Goulston Street is used to accessing Goulston Street itself (Fig. 10).

The next route to be considered (Fig. 11) is much the same as that shown in Fig. 5, the difference being that exit 2 is used rather than exit 1.



Figure 11



Figure 12

The final sub-route for Route 2 (Fig. 12) is like the previous one is again a variation on a route already looked at, but with a different exit from the Square, this uses Goring, Cutler, and Stoney Lane as in Fig. 7.

Route 3

We now come to our third possible exit point from the square, This was via the junction between the square and Mitre Street. Today this exit is the most altered. Of all three exits, it is unrecognisable. All the buildings that existed in that part of the square are long gone. The area is now very open and there's really no indication of how it was in 1888. Fig. 13¹⁶ looks directly at Mitre Street; the murder site would be roughly in line with this view. The original exit into Mitre Street would have been to the right.



Figure 13

¹⁴ *Ripperologist* 74 and 75

¹⁵ Ref. *Coroner's inquest (L)*, 1888, No. 135, *Catherine Eddowes inquest*, 1888 (Corporation of London Record Office)

¹⁶ Courtesy of Chris Maybank

This exit wasn't within the line of sight of the people in St James's Place and the Kearly and Tonge warehouse. There are, however, potential issues with this escape route as with the other two. In this case, we are told there were workmen in the bottom half of Mitre Street who saw no one. Of course, this was also part of PC Watkins' beat. However, it is possible that the workmen were not actually in the street itself. On this night, Watkins was approaching the square from the junctions of Aldgate and Leadenhall Street. These issues are discussed in part two of Gavin Bromley's work¹⁷ and will be addressed in depth in *A Death in Mitre Square*¹⁸.

The following photos show the view from the approximate position of the old exit from the square. Fig. 14¹⁹ looking towards the junction of Aldgate and Leadenhall street. Fig. 15²⁰ is looking up to what in 1888 was King Street, now Creechchurch Lane.

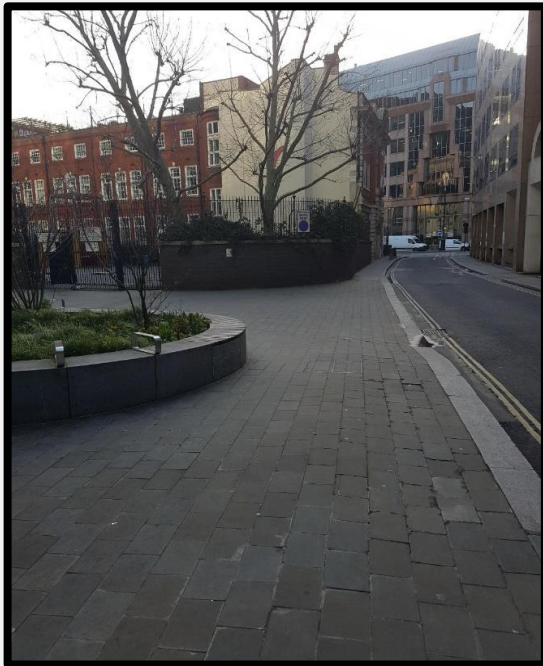


Figure 14

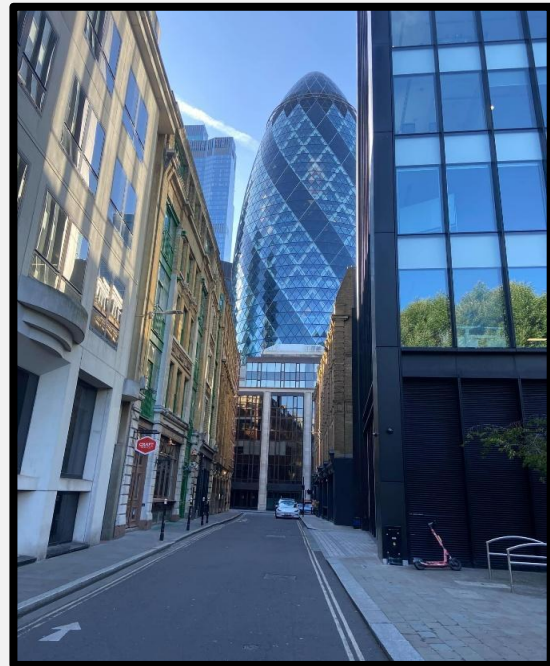


Figure 15

The first possible route looked at here (Fig. 16) turns right into Mitre Street, then right again into King Street as was, before heading across St James's Place and then following the route suggested in Fig. 4. Of course the route from Fig. 5 is also possible.



Figure 16

We now look at a route that turns left towards Aldgate but then turns right up Houndsditch before using the same route via Stoney Lane or Gravel Lane, and accesses Goulston Street by either New Goulston Street or Wentworth Street (Fig. 17).



Figure 17

The next route (Fig. 18) is one suggest by Gavin Bromley in part two of his article "*City Beat*²¹". This route goes out of the square turning right, but instead of using King Street / St James's Place / Little Duke Street, it turns into Bury Street, crosses Bevis Marks and follows the route suggested in Fig. 6. Bromley also added the variation shown in Fig. 7²². The same route was also suggested by M P Priestley in 2016²³.



Figure 18

¹⁷Ripperologist 75

¹⁸ *A Death in Mitre Square*, Due for publication 2026, volume 2 of the Whitechapel Murders Project.

¹⁹ Courtesy of Chris Maybank

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Ripperologist 75, January 2007

²² Ripperologist 75, 2007

²³ *One Autumn in Whitechapel*, M.P Priestley, 2006, page 218



Figure 19

We now move to a variation on the above route, one I am not aware of having been suggested before. It is of course highly speculative, but it's something I stumbled onto in January of 2020, on a visit to Whitechapel. I was taking photos of various possible escape routes from Mitre Square, at the time I had actually forgotten about Gavin Bromley's suggestion, and just by chance ended up in Bury Street. It was whilst walking there towards Bevis Marks that I noticed what appeared to be an entrance to a passageway other right-hand side (Fig. 19). A check of period maps showed this had existed in 1888, and led from Bury Court to St Mary Axe. This leads into Houndsditch. One could therefore use the routes from Cutler Street as suggested by Fig. 18 or proceed



Figure 21

further towards either Stoney or Gravel Lanes.

The suggestion that the killer may have gone this far north is open to question. I shall address this issue in the conclusion of the article.

The possible route via Bury Street, Bury Court, St Mary Axe, Houndsditch, Cutler Street, Harrow Street and Wentworth Street

is detailed in Fig. 20 and via Stoney or Gravel Lanes in Fig. 21.

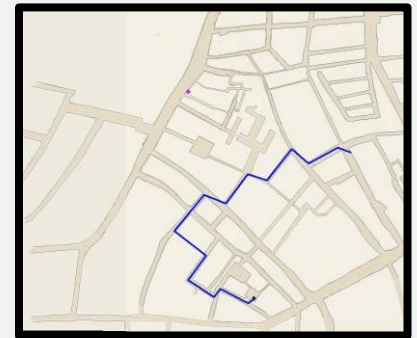


Figure 20

Alternative Routes

We must look at other alternatives. Often it is suggested that due to PC Long not finding the apron until 2.50 am²⁴, it is possible the killer had a bolt hole. It is equally possible that Long simply missed seeing the apron at 2.20 am, and that it was in fact there at that time. Bolt holes are often suggested for specific suspects, here we will briefly look at two.

The first suspect is Jacob Levy. His brother lived at 214 Wentworth Buildings, in a block to the rear of the building in Goulston Street, and a bolt hole here seems a reasonable suggestion here.

The second suspect is Charles Lechmere. As we can see from Fig. 22 it is from time to time suggested that after killing Eddowes in Mitre Square (A), he could have gone into the Pickford's depot (B) and then deposited the apron in Goulston Street (C) a slight detour from a direct route back to his home.

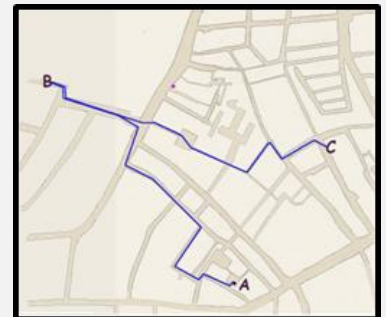


Figure 22

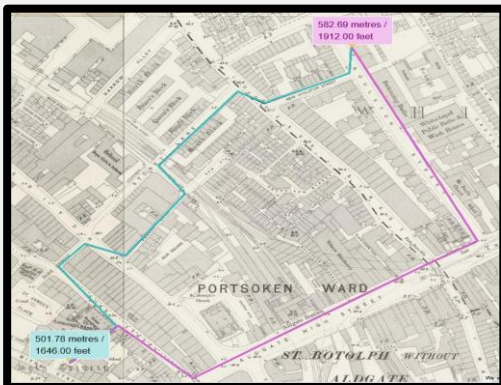


Figure 23

A Look at the distances suggested by Foster and Bromley

In his report in 1888, city surveyor Frederick William Foster presented two possible routes from Mitre Square to Goulston Street, one via Aldgate High Street, the route covered by Figs 9 and 11 respectively. In his articles in the *Ripperologist*, Gavin Bromley checked and found some discrepancies in the distances quoted by Foster.

I have rechecked the figures, using the measurement tool on the National Library of Scotland website and the OS map from the 1890s²⁵, and as is the way with these matters I disagree with both

²⁴ Ref. Coroner's inquest (L), 1888, No. 135, Catherine Eddowes inquest, 1888 (Corporation of London Record Office)

²⁵ <https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/#zoom=16.9&lat=51.51531&lon=-0.07636&layers=188&b=ESRIWorld&o=100...1>

Foster and Bromley with regards to these distances. The differences with Bromley are less than with Foster. I am unable to say why these differences exist. Fig. 23²⁶ shows the measurements from the National Library of Scotland site. The differing figures are shown in Table 1.

	Via Gravel Lane <i>Feet</i>	Via Gravel Lane <i>Yards</i>	Via Aldgate <i>Feet</i>	Via Aldgate <i>Yards</i>
Foster	1550	516.66	1600	533.33
Bromley	1822	607.33	1944	648
Blomer	1646	588.66	1912	637.33

Table 1

We can also now return to the issue of whether Stoney Lane was accessible from Houndsditch in September 1888. Despite extensive searches I have been unable to reach a definitive conclusion as to which is the nearest map time wise. GOAD shows no access and buildings still exist where Stoney Lane is located ²⁷.

We do, however, have the words of Foster himself:

*“There are 2 routes to Goulstone Street one from Church Passage through Duke Street crossing Houndsditch through Gravel Lane, Stoney Lane crossing Petticoat Lane and through to Goulstone Street.”*²⁸

Researchers have questioned if Foster had checked it personally or just relied on an old map. Of course we cannot know, but I lean towards the belief that he actually checked.

Conclusions

The first point to make is that unlike Mr Bromley’s articles, which are still outstanding in my view, this article is not concerned with the timings, the details of the police positions, or debates over the apron involved, it is much more a look at the possibilities. The issues on timings and the placement of Watkins and Harvey are looked at in great detail in the upcoming book on the Mitre Square murder. But having now looked at the possible escape routes, can we draw any conclusions? The most obvious conclusion is that there are many possible routes from Mitre Square to Goulston Street, not just the one or two that are often suggested. We then have to look at which route seems the most probable, and this will of course depend on everyone’s own personal interpretation. Some people will argue that the killer would leave by the quickest exit and use that route to Goulston Street. The less time he is with the apron, organs, and very probably with bloodied hands and lower arms at least, the less chance he has of being caught. While this may well seem logical at first glance, it may not be so after we take a longer look.

The quickest way to Goulston Street from the square would be to leave by Church Passage (exit 2), follow that to St James’s Passage (exit 1), and proceed via Stoney or Gravel Lanes, but these routes have certain drawbacks. There are people in St James’s Place. Would the killer be aware of this? We cannot be certain. Those who believe the killer planned in great detail will of course say yes, but I, like many, do not consider that the killer really planned at all. However, I do consider that the killer was a local person, and most probably was aware of the area and the fire station in St James’s Place, if not the presence of Blenkinsop. And as mentioned earlier, using that exit involved going back towards the open door of Kearley and Tonge.

Church Passage itself also has issues. There would be people using Duke Street. If it was the killer seen by Lawende et al, which seems very possible, the killer would know the road could be busy and again he would have the issue of the open warehouse door.

One might ask about routes that head towards Aldgate initially, but this also has issues. When Morris left the square looking for assistance he headed towards Aldgate, as he knew it will be busy. Bromley in his article

²⁶ 1:1056 scale series of maps-1895. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

²⁷ Goad Insurance Plan of City of London Vol. III: sheet 71, 1887. Chas E Goad Limited

²⁸ Ref. Coroner’s inquest (L), 1888, No. 135, Catherine Eddowes inquest, 1888 (Corporation of London Record Office)

makes a good point on this: *“For the same reason that Morris headed towards Aldgate, the killer would want to head away from that direction”.*

This then leads us to exit 3, via Mitre Street. In relationship to the murder itself, this is the closest exit. If he were to exit via King Street / St James’s Place, or Heneage Lane, this would still bring him out relatively close to the murder scene. It would possibly increase his chances of being seen or stopped by the police officers who would inevitably arrive once the alarm was sounded. To head slightly further away and enter Bevis Marks via Bury Street would be a better move and more in keeping with self-preservation. On reaching Bevis Marks, crossing to exit via Goring Street and Cutler Street again kept him away from the immediate area, which was likely to be searched. Again I will quote Mr Bromley who sums this up very well:

“His main objective during his escape was to make sure he got as far away as quickly as possible, even though this took him away from the route he ultimately needed to go. Also, he may not necessarily have known exactly where he was. He just took whatever street served the immediate purpose of getting as far away as possible as quickly as possible, relying on the fact that there were few cul-de-sacs in the maze of streets in the area, and even then there were probably alleys to help him out. Once he was a reasonable distance away, he could then have taken stock of where he was and the best way to head. Possibly that moment was as he reached Harrow Alley.”

It is interesting that both Bromley and Priestley suggest the same exit and escape route, a route that is not the most often suggested. The route I suggest is merely an extension of this. By heading even farther north to St Mary Axe, before heading towards Goulston Street, he decreased the chance that he would be stopped by a policeman or associated with the murder by observers, as he was walking towards, not away, from the crime at this point. Of course if seen before he headed south, the same issues would apply as with the other exits.

We now have the issue of why did he go to Goulston Street, and what was his ultimate destination? The first of those two questions is really difficult to answer, Maybe it’s that the location was simply a convenient location to drop the apron and possibly write the Goulston Street Graffito, if the killer actually was responsible for that, and there is really no clear consensus on it. It could however be that the location had a particular meaning or importance to the killer. Such might fit suspect Jacob Levy, a place of significance, and a possible bolt hole.

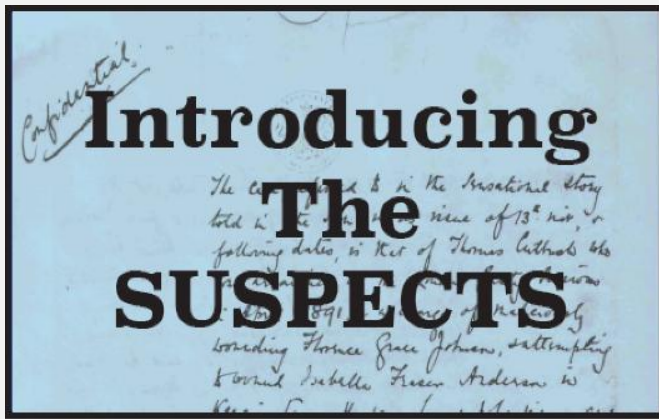
The idea of the killer using a bolt hole to explain away the delay in Long finding the Apron, is sometimes mentioned, of course Long may have just not seen it at first. For instance, let’s examine the example quoted earlier of a bolt hole at Pickford’s. In that case, the apron would be on the dropped on the way back to the suspect’s home in Doveton Street. The reason why it would be dropped in Goulston rather than disposed of at Pickford’s is of course a completely different story.

We must mention the theory espoused by Trevor Marriott, that the killer did not go from Goulston Street to Mitre Square at all. Marriott believes that Eddowes dropped the apron earlier, before she met the killer. If this was of course true, then we can ignore all of this article; however, that theory is not generally considered to be realistic.

Moving onto the ultimate destination of the killer, some attempt to suggest a possible route from Mitre Square to add to the argument for or against a particular suspect. Using Stoney or Gravel Lanes suggests the killer was heading east, using Aldgate suggests the killer was heading north.

The route that I suggest could be interpreted to imply the killer was heading south; however, that is more complicated than it first appears. If for instance he used Harrow Alley, then the probability is he would enter Goulston Street from Wentworth Street and indeed probably be heading south. However, if he used the Stoney Lane variation on that proposed route, then he could still enter by Wentworth Street, but could also enter by New Goulston Street. From there he would be heading either north or further east. It’s another of those games we often play, and there are no answers. Hopefully, this article will allow people to look at the possible exits from Mitre Square more fully than is often the case.

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Introducing the Suspects

‘Jill’ the Ripper

In this edition, we’re going to look at the possibility of a female Jack, an idea as old as the investigation itself, but which has, for various reasons, never really been taken all that seriously by the Ripperology community.

Statistically, it’s far more likely for a *known* serial killer to be male. The Radford University / Florida Gulf Coast University’s *Serial Killer Database* indicates that 37.5% of serial killers were female in 1900, but by 2016 this figure had dropped to 7%¹. This however, doesn’t mean women have become less murderous during this period, or that men have become more prolific, it’s more to do with the data sources available and the abilities of the various police forces to associate unsolved murders. Equally, the available data is based on provable cases worldwide and therefore, by default, any unknown serial killer or any which go unreported fail to make the list.

It’s a highly nuanced subject and a fascinating deep dive should you feel inclined, but in broad stroke terms but we can, safely, infer that serial killers are overwhelmingly male. This doesn’t mean we should automatically dismiss the notion that Jack was female however, as we know from the likes of Carol Bundy, Karla Homolka and Rose West that women can and *do* murder other women, but these women committed murder with a male partner and were arguably led by them, making the possibility that they would become serial killers without the influence of their companion-in-crime far less likely. Indeed, statistics would indicate that most female serial killers kill for financial gain and mostly by poison.



Constance Kent

Let’s take Constance Kent as our first example of a female Ripper suspect (pictured left)². For those of you who are unaware, Constance Kent, in all likelihood, murdered her four-year-old half-brother Francis Saville-Kent in 1860, stabbing him repeatedly in the chest and slitting his throat. She then dumped his body in a cesspit. Constance was aged sixteen at the time and it’s been suggested her motive was resentment and jealousy, as her father, who had remarried following the death of her mother, doted on his new wife (Constance’s former nursemaid) and his new son. Constance would eventually serve twenty years in gaol for the crime before being released in 1885.

In 2006 E J Wagner published *The Science of Sherlock Holmes*, in which she put forward the suggestion that Constance may have been the Ripper. This, she claims, was because Constance’s weapon of choice was a knife and her methodology was throat cutting. And that’s about it. If she’d taken the time to make even the most rudimentary checks on Constance’s life following her release from prison, she would have realised that Constance had emigrated to Tasmania in 1886 to live with her brother (and possible co-murderer of Francis), the noted biologist William Saville-Kent³. Yes, she could have taken a steamer back to London, with its journey time of two-to-three months, then committed the murders, and then returned to Tasmania (again another two-to-three month journey) but why on earth would she? There really is no motive and whilst this column *should* remain neutral on the suspect front, it’s difficult not to mock Wagner and what is, quite frankly, a God-awful suspect suggestion.

¹ <https://maamodt.asp.radford.edu/serial%20killer%20information%20center/serial%20killer%20statistics.pdf>

² Public Domain

³ As discussed in Kater Summerscale’s excellent book on the subject, ‘The Suspicions of Mr Whicher’

A marginally more robust suspect comes in the guise of Mary Pearcey, the murderer of Phoebe and Phoebe Haslope Hogg in 1890. Mary had been involved with Phoebe's husband, Frank Samuel Hogg, both before and during his marriage to Phoebe, and as a result Mary bludgeoned Phoebe to death and slit her throat on the 24th October 1890. She then suffocated eighteen-month-old Phoebe Haslope (known as Tiggy) and abandoned her body in her pram. Mary was found guilty and executed on the 22nd December 1890.



Mary Pearcey

Mary's first known appearance in the Ripper investigation came shortly after her death. Inspector Thomas Bannister had found several brass wedding rings in a cupboard in her kitchen, and he, along with other colleagues unnamed, considered the possibility that the rings had been taken from the Whitechapel victims. It was a huge leap in deduction, and when the suggestion appeared in the Press it was roundly mocked.

It wasn't until William Stewart published his 1939 book *Jack the Ripper: A New Theory* that Mary reappeared as a suspect. Stewart's main argument consisted of:

"[Pearcey's murders are] similar in two respects – the victim's throat had been almost completely severed and the body was discovered in the street – but it also suggests that the Ripper may have murdered her victims in some house, afterwards conveying their bodies by means of a perambulator to the spots where they were found.

Such an action could have taken place in the Ripper cases of Nicholls, Chapman and Eddows [sic], but Kelly was undoubtedly killed on the spot where her body was discovered.

Jack the Ripper has been credited with the murder of no fewer than seven women, but Mr. Stewart maintains four was the actual number of his victims.

*It is possible that Mrs. Pearcey may have been Jack the Ripper, in which case the victims would have been murdered in a room owned by her. If Mrs. Pearcey was Jack the Ripper, the mystery which surrounds the silence with which the victims were killed is explained, as is also the fact that the bodies were discovered at places where a wayfarer was likely to arrive at any moment...Mr. Stewart continues that there is abundant evidence to support the theory that the Ripper was a midwife, and he gives two points to confirm such a belief – the knowledge which was displayed in the performance of the mutilations, and the fact that these mutilations could have been performed only by a hand unpractised in surgery, but at the same time possessing a knowledgeable and manipulative dexterity which the calling for a midwife calls for."*⁴

The theory falls flat when we learn that Mary Pearcey had never been a midwife and the Whitechapel victims were killed in situ, and not, as Stewart suggests, carted to their deposition sites with the assistance of a blood-soaked perambulator. It would seem to me that the authors of both the Constance Kent and Mary Pearcey theories began their 'investigations' on the basis of Kent and Pearcey being provable murderers, and then, in that age-old trap we see so many fall into, they selected their (scant) evidence to fit with their theory.

What is interesting about Stewart's theory however is the mention of midwifery, but before we discuss this, let's take a look at one other female suspect, Mary Elizabeth Ann Hughes, the wife of Sir John Williams. Mary, who was known to her family as Lizzie, was first suggested as a suspect, along with her husband, in the 2005 book *Uncle Jack* by Tony Williams and Humphrey Price. Although Sir John Williams takes pride of place as the main offender, with his role as Royal Obstetrician merging with that of a Whitechapel abortionist (yes, really), Williams and Price do discuss the possibility that Lizzie may also have been the perpetrator, with her inability to conceive stated as her main motive.

⁴ Nottingham Evening Post, 9th March 1939



Lizzie Williams

This concept was expanded in 2012 when John Morris published *Jack the Ripper: The Hand of a Woman*. He claimed that Lizzie (pictured left⁵) became unhinged because of her infertility and took revenge on women who *could* have children, and that she was tipped over the edge of sanity by her husband's infidelities. Both Williams and Morris's books were widely panned on publication, with Paul Begg referring to *Uncle Jack* as "awful" and *The Hand of a Woman* as making his jaw slacken with its "basic errors and questionable details"⁶

You can see then that the list is pretty woeful, so it's best if we don't scrape the barrel any further and mention the German-accented *wide-as-she-is-tall* semi-invalided agoraphobe Queen Victoria, who has been mentioned in certain fringe quarters.

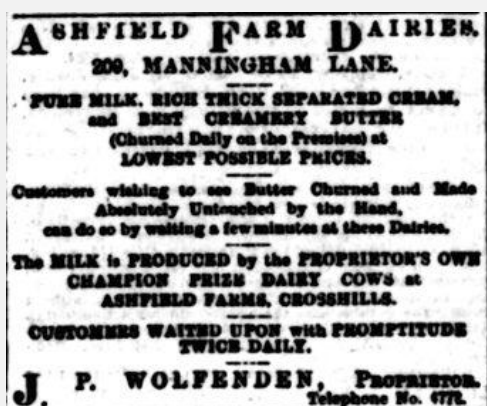
The reality is, many of the 'facts' listed within these books and articles are classic examples of when you repeat an error often enough it becomes de facto truth – as anyone who's ever used Donald McCormick as a source will know to their cost. McCormick's assertion in his 1959 book *The Identity of Jack the Ripper* has Abberline discuss the possibility of a female Ripper with Dr Thomas Dutton, the author of the fabled *Chronicles of Crime*, but we have no attestable evidence to back this assertion up. Indeed, the idea seems to have originated from Caroline Maxwell's testimony, where she claimed to have seen Mary Jane Kelly the morning after she was supposedly dead. This, in turn, developed into a suggestion that the Ripper was female (or, in a variant, a male dressed as a female) as this was there only means of escaping Miller's Court once the deed had been done. The theory then postulates Mary had died following a botched abortion and the midwife covered this up by mutilating her. It's convoluted and tenuous, with many permutations, depending on who you read and when it was written. It's known colloquially as the 'midwife theory'.

The nearest we get to a logical thought process is with Dr Lawson Tait, the highly influential surgeon, who was known to enjoy courting controversy. He put forward the idea that Jack was female in September 1889, in an interview with the *Pall Mall Gazette*, arguing that despite a year of investigations and of tens of thousands of police hours spent looking at *men*, shouldn't the authorities consider the possibility that Jack the Ripper was a woman? It's a fair point, however implausible in reality, but ultimately, the likelihood of there being a Jill rather than a Jack the Ripper remains highly doubtful.

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Sources:

Jtrforums.com, Casebook.org, Wikipedia.org, Ripperologist magazine



Advert for Ashfield Farm Dairies, Manningham Lane, Bradford from 1896. The main suspect in the murder of Johnny Gill, William Barrett, worked for the company at the time of the murder.

⁵ Casebook.org

⁶ Ripperologist Volume 125

A Timeline of the Murder of Polly Nichols

Chris Maybank

Recent threads on several social media pages and articles have lent themselves strongly towards ‘solving’ the somewhat disputed timeframe for the Mary Ann ‘Polly’ Nichols’s murder, and in the process, perhaps lending itself towards a key subject and certainly a person of interest. With no CCTV, phone mast technology, or established method for tracking witnesses and their movements, it is very difficult to make bold statements about timeframes and timelines. Can anything be done to help alleviate the issue and offer a solution, albeit, based on indifferent witness statements and timings? Well, in fairness, it is a tough ask, I totally concur.

As mentioned, one of the most enduring mysteries surrounding the case, is the lack of a clear, established and discernible timeframe on most of the murder dates. I believe this key element has led to some very unconventional and fanciful theories over the years, after all, “*nature abhors a vacuum*”, as they say. During the Yorkshire Ripper enquiry during the late 1970s, in England, the enquiry team simply ‘forgot’ what they *did* know. They became side-tracked and lost focus, the emphasis of the enquiry switched, and attention was taken with, what seemed on the face of it, extremely trivial matters. An example was the major car-tyre investigation, code-named the ‘Tracking Enquiry’, which commenced for the team on 6th February 1977.

Irene Richardson had been murdered in Roundhay Park, Leeds, and “*tyre tracks from a vehicle could be seen between the body and the pavilion on a muddy patch of ground clear of the trees*”¹. The Yorkshire force spent some considerable months tracing the owners of different models of car, Hillmans, Corsairs, Cortinas and alike. Initially, some one hundred models of car were identified, but through some clever and painstaking detective work, the Yorkshire enquiry whittled it down to just 51 makes of car. It produced just 53,000 registered owners, and they commenced a campaign to trace every single car, and owner². Essentially, trace the owner and you would locate the murderer, it was that basic in principle. Indeed, the police force were working through the cars and owners when Sutcliffe attacked Maureen Long in July 1977. Long fortunately survived the attack and they focused on her, moving manpower away from what was seen as laborious tasks, offering no result. As it transpired, Sutcliffe’s Corsair car was one of the 20,000 left to be seen. Had they continued with what was a slow, but methodical enquiry, they would have arrived directly at the Yorkshire Ripper’s door, probably preventing murders from 1978 onwards.

Easy with hindsight, but can we take this cautionary note into more distant murder cases?

I would wish to argue, that perhaps in some way, we can do the same with this 1888 enquiry. One does enjoy a good adaptation of a theory, and one needs to look no further than Leon Goldstein, who was a man seen by witness, Fanny Mortimer, in Berner Street and may ultimately be the reason why we now associate ‘Jack the Ripper’ with the shiny ‘Gladstone’ bag. Mortimer stated she saw a man hurrying through Berner Street, shortly before the Stride murder. Walter Dew, later to retire as a Detective Inspector after chasing Crippen across the Atlantic, was said to have embellished this fact even further in his memoirs, so that now the man passed *through* Dutfield’s Yard, with the Gladstone bag³. Of course, the next day, young Goldstein handed himself into Leman Police Station and stated that he was simply returning home, after dropping his

¹ *Wicked Beyond Belief*, Bilton, 2003

² *The tracking enquiry – Yorkshire Ripper*, Crime Hub

³ *The Jack the Ripper A-Z*, Begg, Fido and Skinner, 1991

girlfriend, and the Gladstone bag contained nothing more sinister than empty cigarette cases, collected earlier from a coffee shop located in Spectacle Alley.

The issue here, and in all honesty throughout the narrative of 1888, is simply forgetting what we *do know* and somehow morphing that into subjects that, on the surface, appear far more glamorous and meaningful. Take the wider Goldstein situation for a moment and face an altered scenario where Goldstein *didn't* present himself diligently at Leman Police Station the next morning. The question would surely remain over the years, would one simply now accept the Gladstone bag as a “definitely ascertained” fact? The answer is a likely and arguably resounding – yes!

So, I wish to look again at the narrative for the Mary Ann Nichols's murder and set some parameters. Firstly, and sadly, this is only an opinion, *pure conjecture*, no more; I have no way of being able to cement evidence and it is open to huge challenge and conjecture. I totally accept this, and welcome and challenge constructive criticism. But I want to try and deal with as many known ‘facts’, taken from the ‘CCTV’ of the day, the witness testimony and press reports, albeit piecing together a timeline from what scant detail and fact we do know - is indeed a huge challenge.

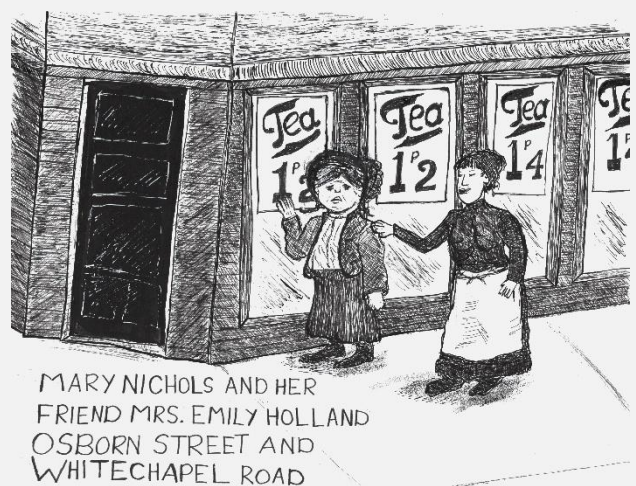
One must also accept the fact that we don't even have a ‘ground-zero’, an actual start-time, based on a solid principle that in fact, different witnesses, and principal participants that early morning, only established their personal working timings and testimony from various unsynchronised clocks. A fascinating and little-known fact, but John Flamsteed had only devised the formula for Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) throughout the island of Great Britain under the Statutes (Definition of Time) Act, in 1880, and this was only adopted forward from that date⁴. Nevertheless, watch ownership in 1888 was extremely rare.

“The wearing of watches on the wrist in leather holders, called ‘wristlets’ at the time, soon spread to the civilian population, or the female portion at least -it would be many years before civilian men were persuaded to wear wristwatches. In 1887, The Horological Journal reported that horse-riding ladies adopted the idea”⁵.

Other recent detailed articles have covered the study of church clock faces, and indeed even how it is quite possible for differing clock faces on the same tower, to easily present separate times. All of this doesn't bode too well for a detailed timeline, but despite this, we need to move forward and attempt to establish a starting point.

The obvious one is surely Ellen (or Emily) Holland. She provides a clear narrative, and it is worth quoting:

“Ellen was on her way home after going to see the fire that had broken out at Shadwell Dry Dock that morning. Polly had come down Osborn Street and alone. She was very drunk. The two friends talked to each other at the corner for 7 or 8 minutes. As they did so the clock at St. Mary's across the road, struck 02.30. Mrs Holland tried hard to persuade Polly to come home with her, but she was determined to earn her ‘doss’ money. “I have had my Doss money three times today’, she boasted, ‘and I have spent it... it won't be long before I'll be back.” They parted. And that was the last time Mrs Holland saw Polly alive, a small, lonely figure, staggering eastwards along the Whitechapel Road”⁶.



MARY NICHOLS AND HER FRIEND MRS. EMILY HOLLAND OSBORN STREET AND WHITECHAPEL ROAD

So, we establish our first port of call, a confirmed witness who saw Polly. Sadly, until we encounter the much-maligned Charles Lechmere (Cross), we have *around* 1 hour 10 minutes spare, a huge amount of time

⁴ Wikipedia.org.uk

⁵ The Horological Journal, July 2020

⁶ The Complete Jack the Ripper, Sugden, 1994

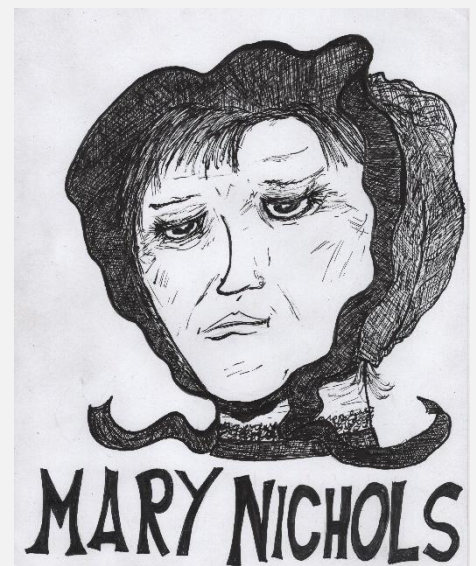
in the grand scheme of things, but it is perhaps feasible to identify some of the vacant time and create a speculative timeframe.

We next should look at Nichols' motive for walking effectively eastwards away from what might be considered the more central location of the Whitechapel Road, and the intersection of the Commercial Road. One would assume that she would head in that direction, firstly for sheer possibility of guaranteed male clientele numbers, and secondly as she has got to walk back again to reach her Thrawl Street lodgings, Simple economics of human existence tells us this. For many years, I always held the view that Polly was walking towards that location, drunk, in effect, not really having a clue where she was going, or even worse, believing she was travelling westwards towards the centre of the East End for trade. But I strongly suspect now that Nichols knew that Buck's Row, Winthrop Street and its surrounds were a solid bet for punters and prostitution⁷. Again, one returns to the earlier narrative of this article and assessing the details *we do know*, and what we can confirm.

For the next part of the proposed story, we can argue that Henry Tomkins will take the lead and perhaps gives us a major clue in his testimony. Tomkins was one of three men who worked as horse slaughterers, and he lived at 12, Coventry Street, under the employ of Mr Barber within Winthrop Street. He testified that no one passed except the policeman and when asked a specific question by the coroner, "*Are there any women there?*", he oddly replied, "*Oh, I know nothing about them, I don't like 'em..*"⁸ What a statement that is! He has inadvertently referred to women plying their trade around the area, and I suspect very likely the yard itself. I would urge a deeper, more methodical look at Mr Barber, particularly with the theft from the premises from mid-September 1888. On the 30th September 1888, the *Lloyds Weekly* newspaper ran a story about a criminal charge bought by owner Albert Barber of Barber's Slaughter Yard, against one of his own employees for the theft of a diamond ring, valued at around £30, current value £2,500. It appears a strange story and, perhaps, there is more to it than at first glance. However, armed now with that Tomkins testimony information, we now perhaps have a clearer motive and reason for Polly heading towards Winthrop Street, where the location is specifically mentioned on the 19th of September 1888 police report, as an area known for prostitution⁹.

It was late, Polly was desperate for money and heading for a guaranteed location for trade, with a newly acquired bonnet, she was so proud of – so must obtain lodging money very quickly. There can really be no other solution in my humble opinion.

We have now a possible motive and a reason for Polly attending that site. We can also use part of the testimony of our next witness, to describe the scene, but from a slightly different perspective. Police Constable John Phail (sic Thain) 96J, via the jury, deposed that, "*shortly before he was called by Constable Neil, he saw one or two men going to work in the direction of Whitechapel Road.*"¹⁰. One of the frequently held misconceptions about the Whitechapel Road and the surrounding areas is that they were quiet, without anyone around at that time of morning. Even at that late hour, there were many persons about, usually occupied by walking to or from their work locations. It is also a misconception to claim that refrigeration wasn't possible in 1888, but it was rare. Not until 1914, when engineer Nathaniel B Wales of Detroit, Michigan, introduced an idea for a practical electrical refrigeration unit¹¹, did it alter the way meat had been prepared in London. It is perfectly feasible, with the added attraction of pubs opening early to meet the market and slaughterman trade, that many people were on the streets and ironically, the period around 1888 mirrors much more the present-day, with 24-hour shift working patterns being the norm, especially for horse slaughterers with no means of direct refrigeration.



⁷ MEPO 3/140,ff.242-56 A 19th September police report that states and names these areas

⁸ East London Observer, Saturday, 8th September 1888

⁹ MEPO 3/140,ff.242-56 A 19th September police report that mentions these areas

¹⁰ The Times, 3rd September 1888

¹¹ Wikipedia.org

This often-overlooked fact about the levels of nightly traffic, especially on the main Whitechapel Road - forces our would-be killer to establish a clear area, a “killing-zone” would need to be identified and created, for want of a better phrase. The busy thoroughfare of the Whitechapel Road, even at 03:00 in the morning, would mean that an area away from prying eyes would be key and immediately sought to achieve success. *That is a fundamental point in the process of understanding the murders.* Our killer, whoever he was, even if not local, would understand the need to seek a location away from the main roadways and thoroughfares, particularly if the murder act was in relation to post-mortem stimulation and excitement. Clearly, and sadly, our murderer sought gratification from post-mortem injuries and were probably now classed as a sexual act, with modern-day psychologists even stating that the knife may have been some form of extension of the male penis, for our killer. Almost raping with a knife, not something wholly understood in 1888, and even today not fully researched. The other murder locations *might* also help provide an answer to the actual murder site of Buck’s Row. A quick perusal of the other murder locations is listed below, but the salient details are that our killer always favoured a stable yard, backyard, or even a building. The emphasis and key common denominator for me are always the enclosed nature of the actual murder site and the opportunity to attack and mutilate *with some degree of privacy.*

- **Tabram** – George Yard Buildings (enclosed stairwell)
- **Chapman** - Hanbury Street. Enclosed backyard (with a side court escape route further down Hanbury Street)
- **Stride** – Berner Street, Dutfield’s Yard (enclosed). Batty’s Gardens side escape route further down Berner Street
- **Eddowes** – Mitre Square (enclosed square). St. James Place was a likely escape route, but several options
- **Victim known as Kelly** – Miller’s Court – enclosed room

The thought of a wide-open street, blitz-style, undertaking an immediate, instantaneous attack, is also not true. Let me quantify. The actual, final attack, was a blitz-style assault, targeting strangulation as the final deadly method to subdue and overpower the women, sure. However, as we know in the cases of Chapman, Stride, Eddowes, and the “*woman known as Kelly*,” one has clear witness testimony in each case, describing a male speaking with the women in each case, very shortly before their murders. Indeed, in the murder of Chapman, we have an actual dialogue witness statement. Witness Mrs Long deposed, “*Witness could hear them talking loudly, and she overheard him say to deceased, “Will you?” She replied “Yes”. They still stood there as witness passed, and she went on to her work without looking back*¹²”.

So, to recap, we now have Polly heading for a definite location, for a definite purpose. We also now know that our killer, having *very possibly*, but we can’t confirm, murdered Tabram in an enclosed stairwell a few weeks before, was looking for another suitable location, around a known prostitute location of Winthrop Street. This timeline is moving towards a conclusion, but I wish to introduce another key witness, that might assist with the actual location and eventually *why* Brown’s Stable Yard was perhaps selected.

Patrick Mulshaw, a night watchman, lived at 3 Rupert Street, Whitechapel. He deposed, on the night of the occurrence he was at the back of the Working Lads’ Institute in Winthorpe-street (sic). He went on duty at about a quarter to 5 in the afternoon and remained until about five minutes to 6 the next morning, when he was relieved. He was watching some sewage works. He dozed at times during the night but was not asleep between 3 and 4 o’clock, or at least, he claimed he was not asleep at the inquest. He did not see any one about during that period, and did not hear any cries for assistance, or any other noise. The *Echo*, from 17th September 1888 is worth quoting:

“Alfred (sic) Mulshaw, a night watchman in the employ of the Whitechapel District Board, said that on the night of Aug. 30th, he was on duty in Winthorpe [sic] street. Witness admitted that he “dozed” once or twice.

¹² *The Times*, 20th September 1888

The Coroner, “I suppose your watching is not up to much, is it?” - “The pay is not up to much, Sir. Thirteen hours on duty for 3s, and find your own coke, is rather hard”¹³.

That statement caused a remarkable ripple of laughter within the assembled inquest crowd.

The slaughterhouse was *approximately* 40-50 yards¹⁴ away from where he was located. Although I will concede other reports suggest 70 yards. Another man then passed by, and said, “*Watchman, old man, I believe somebody is murdered down the street. Witness then went to Buck’s Row and saw the body of deceased lying on the ground. Three or four policemen and five or six working men were there.*”¹⁵”



Durward Street, 2025. This was once Essex Wharf

Firstly, to clear up one long-held belief that the man that spoke with Mulshaw was the murderer. Well, the obvious inference to draw from this is that at least several unnamed witnesses were already aware, prior to Mulshaw. He said so, read again that last sentence of his testimony. He states that several men (five or six) were in attendance. However, that man has inadvertently confirmed Mulshaw’s story about being there. If we take the murder as occurring as loosely as around 03.30 – 03.45 – we can surmise that the time of the contact was around 04.20 onwards, which is perfect and proves Mulshaw’s story rather neatly. This is important, as one needs to just confirm Mulshaw’s story and his presence at that location, just as he testified. I do even wonder if the stranger was only one of the men from the slaughterhouse.

You see, I don’t think Mulshaw saw the Ripper or Polly. *But they saw him.*

This testimony concludes our journey through the relevant testimony and press reports. We can perhaps begin to piece together the events of that evening, using a practical chronological timeline, based a great deal on conjecture, sure, but with some testimony behind the thinking and of course a motive for why both the Ripper and Polly may have been in the area and ultimately chose Brown’s Stable Yard.

It’s worth adding that these timings are approximate and offer another view, but have no formal substance, but stand as a *possibility of how the murder was undertaken*, based on known testimony.

Timeline

- 02.30 - As per Holland testimony we can fix ‘Polly’. During their seven or eight-minute conversation, elderly Mrs Holland states that she hears the clock of St Mary’s opposite strike 02.30.
- 02.35 – ‘Polly’ begins her walk eastwards towards her eventual murder site, heading there, as we know, to seek a client in an area she fully expects will produce instant results. She is drunk. One report suggests she is using the shutters of the shop at the junction of Osborn Street to lean against, whilst conversing with Holland. I do wonder if that might have been an act to avoid walking back with Holland. Either way, a drunk person would take, potentially, some time to reach the eventual murder location. The distance from Osborn Street to Wood’s Buildings is about half a mile. Of course, the obvious deduction is that most average people walk around 3 miles an hour, so that means half a mile, would only take 10 mins. Well of course, that is based on a fully sober person. But Polly is short of money and wants a quick encounter to return to her lodging. This is conjecture but even allowing for her “*well in drink*”, I would have felt that no more than a 20-minute walk, allowing for her to occasionally stop and draw breath. It’s worth adding that Swanson’s report of 19th October 1888, states that “*enquiry was then made at common lodging houses, & the statements of persons taken, but no person was able to say that they had seen her alive more*



Wood’s Buildings in 2025

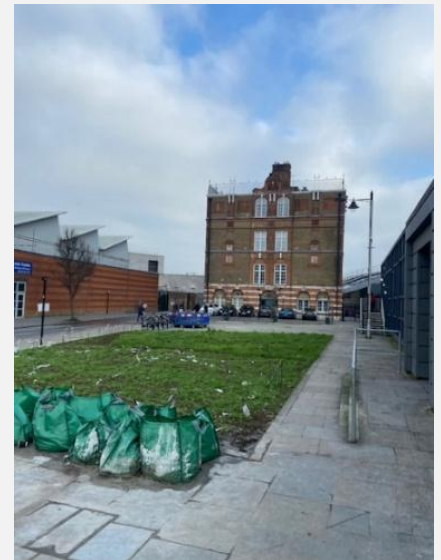
¹³ *The Echo*, 17th September 1888

¹⁴ *Evening Standard*, 18th September 1888

¹⁵ *The Times*, 18th September 1888

recently¹⁶.” With that further report submitted by “*Mr Eyes and Ears of the Case*” - none other than Donald Swanson, we are certain as we can be, that Polly moved directly towards that Wood’s Buildings location for the purposes of prostitution and didn’t encounter anyone else. That makes the 02.50 -03.00 arrival timeframe a realistic one.

- 02.55 –03.05 - She arrives in the vicinity of Wood’s Buildings. Although not totally familiar with the location, Polly is aware clients will often mill about the location, essentially using the dark Wood’s Buildings passageway for immediate access to the area around Winthrop Street, where they can engage in sexual acts.
- 03.05 - Frustrated due to the lack of clients - Polly moves momentarily away from the area, slightly further east, but returns heading westbound again, just 2 minutes later - around 03.07.
- 03.07 – 03.10 – Now Polly is in luck, she is approached by what appears to be a local man, dressed somewhat like a sailor, she thinks, sporting a peaked-cap and the classic “*Salt and Pepper*” trousers and a rather natty waistcoat. Polly is beginning to regain some of her bearings and is losing her fully drunk status, although she is still a little unsteady on her feet and tired. The temperature is 14.7 degrees and during the afternoon and earlier part of the evening it had been raining, with showers occurring¹⁷. Indeed, it had done little else that summer. The freshness of that night air had also helped Polly, she had sobered up fractionally. Either way, he appears to have money, and his normality arises absolutely no concerns for Polly.
- 03.10 – 03.15 – Polly is handed a handkerchief, by way of an introduction and a token of his esteem and to symbolise ‘I’m no threat’. The Ripper will repeat the trick numerous times during the autumn, including an attempted attack towards the end of October 1888, which was never reported and if known, would complete the gap for the ‘missing’ weekend, where no attack seemingly took place and was reported to the police¹⁸. There is some closer contact, he puts his arm around her to steady her and although no price is ever actually agreed, a decision is taken to use Wood’s Buildings to access the familiar location of Winthrop Street for a quick liaison. For clarity, a prostitute would never ever lay down on the floor, it was filthy, thus any potential sexual act was normally undertaken with the woman facing a wall, with hands and arms out, in a somewhat prone position. Sadly, all too easy for a man to attack the throat from behind with force and commit initial strangulation, before subduing and laying the victim on the ground.
- 03.15 – But they have a problem. As they exit Wood’s Buildings, they both spot a watchman some 40 yards away. (See earlier note about exact distances). When the Ripper walked through around 02.45 to check out the possible ‘killing zone’, the man appeared to be asleep and thus not considered an obstacle. Just as per his testimony, Mulshaw is now fully awake, and the Ripper deems it just too unsafe. Our murderer is cool, cunning, and deadly, but most important of all, *has absolutely no wish to be caught*. He’s too clever and won’t risk it.
- 03.16 – 03.20 – Back through Wood’s Buildings, and a rethink. The plan was to murder a woman somewhere in vicinity of the 1876 Board School, on the edge of Winthrop Street, but the watchman has thwarted that plan.
- 03.20 – 03.25 – A discussion outside the 1871-built Grave Maurice public house, just two doors down from the entrance to Wood’s Buildings, on the Whitechapel Road, then ensues. They use the outside of the pub to try and assume an air of respectability and it buys our killer some time to rethink his plans. Polly is still desperate for the money and suggests another way around, to avoid the watchman, this time they can travel slightly west and enter Buck’s Row via Court Street. This is key as it will offer them some direct protection from that watchman. Polly now suggests a new location, she thinks that the top of Buck’s



The 1876 board school – taken from in front of Court Street

¹⁶ Report from Donald Swanson dated 19th October 1888

¹⁷ Casebook.org 2024

¹⁸ This is the author’s personal thoughts about October 1888 and cannot be verified

Row – where there is a stable door, is frequently left unlocked. Failing that, they could try the Board School entrance itself. But she knows that Buck's Row at that end narrows, and it is opposite a quiet, innocuous warehouse called Essex Wharf, which is always dark. There are cottages there, but if they keep within that far end, away from the light in the shadows, they won't be seen by the cottages either.

- 03.25 - They arrive at the top of Court Street, thankfully the policeman that routinely patrols the area is nowhere to be seen. The Ripper is aware roughly of the beat for Buck's Row and now knows that the policeman won't be back for some time, perhaps as long as another 15 minutes, dependant on his walking speed for the beat. The policeman has also unwittingly done our killer another favour. He has confirmed he isn't walking his beat 'left-handed' tonight, as the Ripper saw him earlier in that morning. It is a trick that will serve our murderer well and is repeated in Mitre Square.
- 03.30 – 03.35 – Polly and the Ripper try the door to Brown's stable yard, it is locked.
- 03.30 - 03.35 –The actual attack and murder of Nichols.
- Approximately 03.40 – The Ripper departs the scene and moves swiftly via Wood's Buildings, away instantly from the scene. He loves those quick side-street exits.
- 03.41 – 03.45 onwards. A man is heard approaching the prone body of Polly from the Brady Street direction. The rest is history.

Or perhaps not quite yet. Because, until now, I have left out the other key witness. Enter Mrs Harriet Lilley, who lived in one of the cottages that lined the south side of Buck's Row. Recall the opening statement in my article. *"Forgetting what you do know..."* Here we have potentially a witness who can time the murder attack. Worth quoting:



The murder scene, pictured here in 2024

"A statement that may throw some light on a point hitherto surrounded with uncertainty – the time the crime was committed in Buck's Row, or the body deposited there – was made on Thursday afternoon by Mrs. Harriett Lilley, who lives two doors from the spot where the deceased was discovered. [Mrs. Lilley said] "I slept in the front room of the house and could hear everything that occurred in the street. On that Thursday night I was very restless. Well, I heard something I mentioned to my husband in the morning. It was a painful moan – two or three faint gasps – and then it passed away. It was quite dark at the time, but a luggage train went by as I heard the sounds. There was, too, a sound as of whispers underneath the window. I distinctly heard voices but cannot say what was said – it was too faint. I then woke my husband, and said to him, "I don't know what possesses me, but I cannot sleep tonight".

Mrs Lilly added that, as soon as she heard of the murder, she came to the conclusion that the voices she heard were in some way connected to it. The cries were very different from those of an ordinary street brawl.

It has been ascertained that on the morning of the date of the murder, a goods train passed on the East London Railway at about half-past three – the 3.7 out of New Cross – which was probably the time when Mary Ann Nichols was either killed or placed in Buck's Row.¹⁹

At first glance, this appears nonsense, but the East London Railway Company was formed in 1869 and on the 25th September 1865, took full ownership of the superb Brunel-built Thames Tunnel for £800,000, a huge sum of money²⁰. Two further key events occurred on 1st April 1880, where a new spur to New Cross opened and then on 3rd March 1884, where a new spur opened south of Whitechapel, named St Mary's curve. This closed in 2009, when the point work was removed, but was certainly available in 1888. Again, one can't draw direct conclusions from the newspaper report, but it is interesting that the report directly mentions New Cross

¹⁹ *The People*, Sunday, 19th September 1888

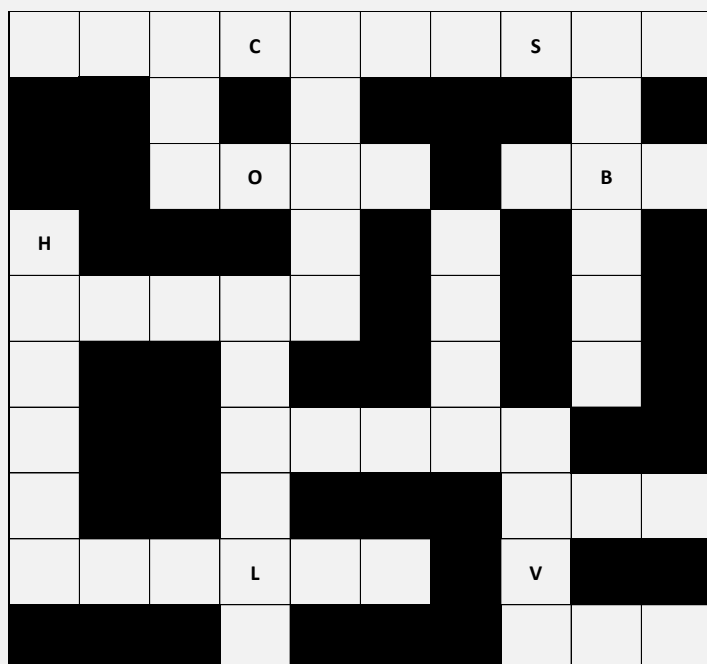
²⁰ Wikipedia.org

and NOT Bricklayers Arms. New Cross Station, like Bricklayers Arms, is on the South Eastern Railway region, and would have held a goods area - but the key is that the New Cross Station Yard had direct access from the South Eastern main line, whereas, to travel north, the freight train steam loco from Bricklayers Arms would be required to R/R (run round) its train, probably at New Cross Station or further south at Hither Green - before heading north for the Thames Tunnel. This would have considerably added to the schedule and timings for our train that early morning. Bricklayers Arms Goods Yard opened in 1844, closing to passengers in 1852, then finally closed to freight coal use in 1981. For the record, New Cross Yard was located where the current London Underground service commences and thus had immediate access to East London Line metals. A small, fitted freight train, with steam locomotive, would undoubtedly take around 20 – 25 mins to work that route. Train times vary and of course we don't know if it left on time, *but if it did*, surely that lends huge credence to Lilley's story.

In conclusion, nothing in the article will ever be able to confirm exact timings or what occurred on that spot over a century ago. The purpose of the article was to make one think, "*please don't forget what you do know.*"

Sometimes the obvious answer, is THE answer.

THE RIPPEROLOGIST-LECHMERE CROSS WORD



Clues:

- Suspect/witness George, or author Philip (10)
- Number of bells at the pub (3)
- Henry Tomkins was a slaughterman of which animal? (5)
- The road that becomes Brick Lane (6)
- ____ Driscoll, witness in the murder of Ann Charlotte Darby in 1893 (4)
- Initials of the organisation who wrote a profile of the Ripper in 1988 (3)
- Surname of the Tumblety researcher and author Michael (6)
- Princess ____ a pub which shared its name with a disaster on the Thames (5)
- Surname of the author who believes Robert Mann was Jack the Ripper (4)
- Alley where Alice Mackenzie was found (6)
- Was it a ____? No, it's a table runner! (5)
- Surname of suspect put forward by Tracy and Neil I'Anson (4)
- The only organ on Mary Jane Kelly's body to remain untouched (3)
- ____ Jack, slang name for the disease which Tumblety was accused of spreading in the USA (6)
- Type of tree only seen in the churchyards of Whitechapel (3)

Answers at the end of this edition



A look over two decades of press reports concerning two East End streets of the same name, White's Row. One to the west, in Spitalfields, was the birthplace long before of the infamous Jack Shepherd. It stood opposite Fashion Street and the Queens Head on Commercial Street and had a reputation perhaps equal to that of Dorset and Flower and Dean Street, the centre of which was the notorious number 8 White's Row. This lodging house had a connection to at least two Whitechapel murder victims and some mysterious deaths at the turn of the century. The street is still so named though much altered since the majority of its destruction by the Luftwaffe and modernisation. To the east, in Whitechapel, was located the other, once running off Baker's Row and Buck's Row but absorbed into the longer Durward Street in 1892. This White's Row was the haunt of at least one gang in 1888, after whom they were named and also connected to the mysterious death of an unfortunate named Ellen Allen.

Tower Hamlets Independent and East End Local Advertiser - Saturday, 6th March 1880

OVERCROWDING - with reference to the late case of overcrowding in two rooms at 77 Great Garden Street Mile End New Town by a foreigner, the sanitary inspector reported that on visiting some houses in Whites-row Spitalfields, he found 39 persons in a small room. The usual order was made.

Eastern Post - Saturday, 26th November 1881

EAST END ITEMS - Shortly before ten o'clock on Monday morning a fire, caused by lucifer matches, took place at no.8, White's Row Spitalfields, occupied by Messrs. S and A. Solomons cigar merchants, and owned by Messrs. Abbot and Co., No 314 Burdett Road, Limehouse. Though very great exertions were put forth to subdue the flames, the back room on the second floor and its contents were severely damaged by fire and water. The building is insured in the North British and Mercantile office.

Hackney and Kingsland Gazette - Friday, 10th September 1886

DRINK, DISEASE AND DEATH. - Mr. George Collier held an inquest at the Weavers Arms, Bakers row, on the body of Ellen Maria Allen, 36.

The mother of the deceased stated that on the 5th ult she saw her in the Whitechapel infirmary, and she had been very ill. The witness saw her several times up to Wednesday last, but she never complained of being ill-used. She was of very intemperate habits. Alice Ellison, the deputy of a common lodging house at White's row, said that the deceased had lodged with her for 18 months. A short time ago, when under the influence of drink, she complained of a man knocking her about. On the 10th ult. the deceased went into the infirmary. Laura Stoney, nurse at the Whitechapel infirmary, said when the deceased was admitted on the 10th ult. she was in a very destitute condition. She complained to the witness of having been ill used. Mr. D.W. Whitfield, assistant medical officer at the infirmary, said when the deceased was admitted she was suffering from difficulty in breathing and complained to him of having been knocked about. She died on Sunday last from disease of the lungs which might have been brought on by violence, accelerated by drink. The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence.

Magnet (London) - Monday, 30th April 1888

A TRADE IN HOT WATER - Mary Thompson, 53, was brought up for being drunk and disorderly in Spitalfields - she accused a constable of ill treating her in White's-row, and mentioned that she had been in the 'hot water place' - Mr Hanny: What does she mean by the hot water place? - The constable explained that it was a place where a man kept hot water always ready, and sold it by the quarter a half penny. - The woman was fined 20s or ten days.

Woolwich Gazette - Friday, 10th August 1888

ASSAULT ON A WIFE - George Jordan, 48, gun fitter, of 8 Whites-row, Spitalfields, was charged with assaulting his wife, by striking her with his fist, at Lower Woolwich road - Prisoner bound over to be of good behaviour, and ordered to find one surety besides, or in default to go to prison for one month.

Reynold's Newspaper - Sunday 14th October 1888

WORSHIP STREET. Another phase of life in common lodging houses- Three children named Albert Bentley, 11, Florence Bentley, 5 and William Shepherd, 8 were charged by Mr. Stevenson, an officer of the Reformatory and Refuge union, Charing Cross, with being found living in the company of prostitutes in a common lodging house, 8 Whites-row, Spitalfields. The rescue officer deposed to going to the place mentioned about mid-day on Saturday and finding the children in the kitchen of the house among a number of men and women, some of the latter were undoubtedly prostitutes, as he had seen many of them at all hours of the night about the street-corners of Spitalfields and Whitechapel. The house was registered to accommodate one hundred and two persons, in fifty-one double beds.

The People - Sunday, 18th November 1888

THE WHITES-ROW GANG - At the worship street police court a costermonger, named George Birmingham, has been committed for trial on a charge of being concerned with others in feloniously cutting and wounding a labourer named Hall. - The prosecutor was passing along Bethnal Green at midnight on the 27th ult, and stopped to see the cause of a disturbance. He was 'clouted' on the head, and on getting out of the crowd was followed knocked down and kicked, and rendered insensible. He was also stabbed, and a knife was picked up on the spot. The prisoner was said to belong to what is known as the 'White's Row Gang'.

Weekly Dispatch (London) - Sunday, 8th March 1891

Excitement Killed the Whitechapel Witness. - An inquest was held on Monday on Charles Guiver, a night watchman at 8 Whites-row, Spitalfields, who was a prominent witness in the Whitechapel murder case. Mary Ann Higgins, who had been living with Guiver, said that ever since he had viewed the body of Frances Coles he had complained of his head. After giving his evidence, he was so excited that he was unable to do his work. For the last few days, he slept much. She left him in bed whilst she got his tea ready. On returning she found him apparently in a fit. He had fallen out of bed upon the floor. She called for the landlady and bathed his head with ice; but he died the same night. Sarah Fleming, the deputy of 8 Whites-row, said that she had noticed a difference in Guiver since he was called to give evidence at the inquest. Dr. Dukes, of Brick Lane, deposed that he had made a post-mortem examination, and found a clot of blood pressing on the brain. All the other organs were healthy. The cause of death was very likely the bursting of a blood-vessel in the brain, very likely due to excitement. The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence.

East London Observer - Tuesday, 5th March 1901

LIFE IN SPITALFIELDS - At Worship Street on Friday, Ada Wheeler, 24, described as a laundress of Whites-row, Spitalfields, was charged with feloniously cutting and wounding Bridget Hodges by stabbing her in the face and back with a knife in Commercial Street on Wednesday night. It was stated that the injured

woman was in a very serious state and in the hospital. The evidence given went to show that the affair occurred at the door of a public house in Commercial Street, where both women had been drinking, and where it was said the quarrel began. There have been previous trouble between the women, and Ada Wheeler, it was said renewed an old quarrel. The prisoner was remanded.

Echo (London) - Friday, 22nd March 1901

A SPITALFIELDS TRAGEDY - At Stepney the East London coroner inquired into the death of a woman unknown, aged about 38 years, who was found dead, under suspicious circumstances at a house in White's-row, Spitalfields. Deceased and a man, took a room about ten o'clock on Tuesday night. Nothing was heard during the night, and the man left between six and seven o'clock. As the deceased did not appear, the watchman went to the room, and was surprised to find her dead. Margaret Davis, the deputy of the lodging house, gave evidence. Both the man and the woman were sober. There were 51 beds in the place. Daniel Sullivan the watchman said that if there had been any quarrelling or struggling, he would have heard it. Other evidence showed that the woman's clothing had all been stolen but were found afterwards by the police. The Doctor said that he found a small wound behind the left ear. The Jury returned a verdict of accidental death from suffocation.

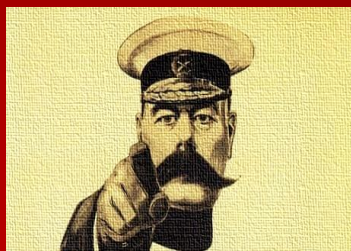
Echo (London) - Thursday, 30th May 1901

ANOTHER MYSTERY. Another death under mysterious circumstances in the same unpleasant locality is being inquired into by the police. A woman whose habits of life were somewhat similar to those of Mary Anne Austin was found dead in bed in a cubicle of a common lodging house in Whites-row which is next to Dorset-street and frequented by people of similar class. Local officers of C.I.D. are investigating the affair. The death may be due to natural causes, but the police are naturally suspicious in all these cases.

St James Gazette - Saturday, 1st June 1901

ANOTHER SPITALFIELDS SENSATION - A SARCASTIC CORONER. Mr. Wynne E Baxter, the East London coroner, held an inquest last night at the Stepney Borough Coroners Court concerning the death of a woman supposed to be Minnie Newman, 36 years of age, who was found dead in a bed at a common lodging house, No 8, Whites-row, Spitalfields, on Thursday last. The discovery following so closely on the crime in Dorset-street caused considerable excitement, and rumours quickly spread that another murder had been committed. It is also a singular coincidence that only about eight weeks ago a woman was found dead in the same lodging house under suspicious circumstances.

**SUGGESTIONS? COMMENTS? QUESTIONS?
COMPLAINTS?**



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Clinical Detachment, Dead Houses, and Cadavers The Great American Doctor and Anatomical Knowledge – Part 3

Michael L. Hawley

Part one of this article examined the first two years of young Francis Tumblety's quack doctor business beginning in May 1856; selecting as his territory Canada West, officially the Province of Upper Canada. He became independently wealthy by scamming patients out of their money, first startling them with life-altering diagnoses, such as cancer or consumption (tuberculosis), then prescribe miraculous, cure-all herbal medicines at exorbitant prices. By December 1856 Tumblety made his way to Toronto, advertising that he was going to "make Toronto, C.W., his home for the future." And why not? It made him rich beyond imagine. An article in the *Brooklyn Eagle*, May 5, 1865, stated that in 1859 the Proprietors of Buffalo's Merchant Exchange contacted the Bank of Toronto, who revealed Tumblety had \$60,000 in his account, which is equivalent to 1.6 million dollars of today's value. Members of Upper Canada's medical licensing board soon realized that this American quack doctor, who was flooding the newspapers with ads, was not just selling patents medicines, but was acting as a physician by diagnosing ailments then prescribing medicine. Tumblety was practicing medicine without the required license, so in April/May 1857 they took him to court and won. Tumblety was fined and barred from practicing in Upper Canada. Further, he was threatened with a six-month prison sentence if he was caught practicing medicine. To the ire of the medical establishment who wanted this quack doctor out of Canada West, the courts allowed Tumblety to maintain his Toronto office but only as a druggist selling his patent medicine. Tumblety could no longer use his diagnosing/prescribing scheme and he soon left, but he kept the Toronto office open. Part two of this article discussed his experiences when he ran his business in Montreal, Canada East, beginning in August 1857. He also needed a medical license in Canada East, or Lower Canada, but he merely had to prove to the Lower Canada Licensing Board that he was a man of good character. It is likely not a coincidence that Tumblety found himself in court for charges challenging his character, such as assisting a young lady in an abortion. Tumblety stated at the outset in his Montreal and Quebec City advertisements that he was headquartered in Toronto, Canada West, and would be returning, and in the summer of 1858, he did just that.

In the November 2, 1858, of the *Toronto Globe* Tumblety announced in an advertisement that he has "returned to Toronto after an absence of 16 months." This time around he had a new business plan, knowing full well that running a mere drugstore had minimal earning potential. He now called his office spaces a Medical Institute, as in a place of educating and training medical doctors but still caring for and treating patients. In the *Toronto Globe*, June 24, 1858, Tumblety states:

"...by calling without delay to see the well-known and justly celebrated Herb Doctor, F. TUMBLETY, Principal of the "Medical Institute," ...Below we give a few of the many thousands of cases of Chronic Diseases, cured at the MEDICAL INSTITUTE, No. 111 King street east, Toronto, under the management of its successful principal, Dr. F. Tumblety..."

Notice how Tumblety is attempting to avoid potential six months imprisonment for operating as a physician without a license but still cashing in on the lucrative diagnosing/prescribing scheme. He, himself, is the principal, or manager, of the Medical Institute, and not the practicing physician diagnosing patients. Note the phrase, "under the management of." Just a few years later in 1864 when Tumblety operated out of St. Louis, Missouri, he did indeed partner up with another so-called doctor with the last name Blackburn; listing his establishment in the 1864 St. Louis city directory as, "J. Blackburn & Co."

There is evidence that his Toronto Medical Institute was indeed a place of learning and training for medical doctors. Records of a Dr. Charles Jones make it clear that he not only was a student of Tumblety's but was a student of his in Toronto in the mid- to late- 1860s at a "Medical Institute." In the Biographical Sketches section of the History of Wyndot County, Ohio (Chicago: Leggett, Conaway & Co., 1884, p. 709),

*"[Charles P. Jones] was educated in the public schools of Cleveland, abandoning his studies at eighteen. He subsequently engaged in a mercantile establishment as a salesman, attending school at intervals, and began the study of medicine at Toronto, Canada, in 1856, under the instruction of Dr. F. Tumblety, remaining with him nearly four years. In 1857, he entered the **Toronto Medical Institute**, graduating in 1859. In 1860, he began the practice of his profession at Chicago, Ill., where he remained one year, when, on account of failing health, he was compelled to suspend his practice for about one year. He subsequently resumed his practice of his profession, and in 1865 located at Nevada, where he had since engaged. He has a good practice, and has accumulated considerable property as a result of his labors...Dr. Jones is a member of the Northwestern Medical Association; Medical Examiner of the Knights of Honor, of which order he is also a member; member of the Lutheran Church, and a Republican in politics."*¹ [Author emphasis added]

Jones had a very respectable career, as evidenced by the local community adding him to the biographical sketches. He even acted as a coroner. The phrase, "under the instruction of Dr. F. Tumblety," corroborates Tumblety claiming to have been the principal.

For to practicing in Chicago just months after graduating from the Medical Institute is highly suggestive that he did indeed receive education and practical training in Toronto. The four major subjects taught in 19th century medical schools were physic, or medicine (either herbal, homeopathic, or allopathic medicine), human anatomy, surgery, and midwifery. Further, for Tumblety to profess to the watchful eyes of Upper Canada's medical establishment that his medical institute was credible, his students must have been trained in these subject areas. It was mandatory in Canada to perform actual dissections on cadavers in medical schools. Note what Canadian physician and surgery professor Dr. E.D. Worthington stated while he was complaining about working on illegally acquired cadavers, "By 'law' [the student] was bound to dissect, by 'law' he could be punished for dissecting. Strange inconsistency!"²

Tumblety would have had anatomical representations for teaching and we know he did. Part two discussed in the June 19, 1857, edition of the *Toronto Mirror*:

"Dr. Tumblety has recently purchased a splendid set of physiological engravings and representations, which can be seen at his rooms, opposite the St. Lawrence Hall. They consist of no less than ten set of fine plates, superbly mounted o rollers, and exhibiting the nerves, muscles, bones, and aorta, so clearly and beautifully as to convince the beholder, in truth and in very deed, that "we are fearfully and wonderfully made." They have been imported at considerable expense from Rochester, in which city the Doctor practiced his peculiar department of medicine with success for several years."

Practical training in anatomy and surgery meant nothing less than training with human organs and cadavers. Tumblety being the manager/owner, it would have been his responsibility to the medical equipment, anatomical organs, and cadavers necessary for anatomy and surgery classes. There is evidence that Tumblety owned a large collection of anatomical organs around this very time. Just after Tumblety was arrested in London on suspicion of the Whitechapel murders in November 1888, an investigative *New York World* reporter was seeking out stories about Tumblety and his run-ins with the law and found an attorney named Charles Dunham at his home in New Jersey. Dunham recalled meeting Tumblety in Washington DC in the summer of 1861 just after the First Battle of Bull Run. He was a colonel and attended Tumblety's medical lecture given to his military officer guests, which was illustrated with an extensive collection of human organs. Dunham was quoted:

"Then he invited us into his office where he illustrated his lecture, so to speak. One side of this room was entirely occupied with cases, outwardly resembling wardrobes. When the doors were opened quite a

¹ Biographical Sketches section of the History of Wyndot County, Ohio, Chicago: Leggett, Conaway & Co., 1884, p. 709

² Belyea, S., *A Century of Snatching – Grave Robbing in Kingston, Ontario*, Ontario Historical Society, Volume 108, Number 1, Spring 2006, <<https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/onhistory/2016-v108-n1-onhistory03908/1050610ar.pdf>>.

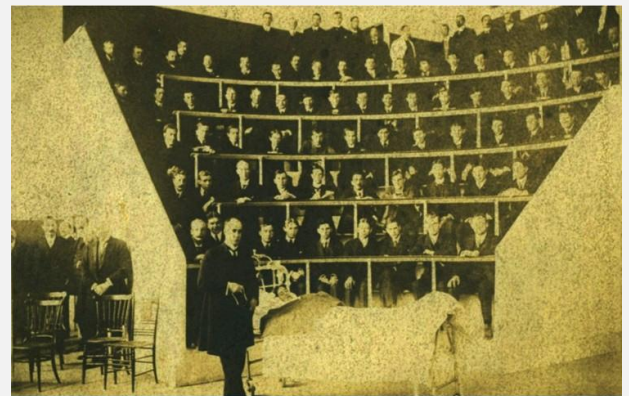
museum was revealed--tiers of shelves with glass jars and cases, some round and others square, filled with all sorts of anatomical specimens. The 'doctor' placed on a table a dozen or more jars containing, as he said, the matrices of every class of women. Nearly a half of one of these cases was occupied exclusively with these specimens."³

One reason for scepticism amongst Ripperologists about Charles Dunham's account was not necessarily that Tumblety possessed a few human organs for illustrating a medical lecture -a common practice amongst lecturing surgeons- but that the collection was reported to be so large. It now makes sense as to why Tumblety would have had such an extensive collection in 1861. He likely had to fill his Medical Institute he founded in 1858 with a wide variety of specimens. It should not be a surprise that there is evidence that Tumblety was both attempting to acquire organs around this time. It was reported that Tumblety attempted to steal the organs of a previous patient of his who died:

*"During the inquest [In a New Brunswick city in 1860], and before the Doctor [Francis Tumblety] fled, those present at the hearing were horrified at the nearly successful attempt to abstract the heart and liver of the dead man from the receptacle in which they lay."*⁴ [Author emphasis added]

Collecting human organs means having access to cadavers, and Tumblety was in the right place at the right time. Medical schools in both Canada East and Canada West in the mid-19th century had a constant concern about having a ready supply of cadavers for dissection in the next semester's anatomy and surgery courses. Cadavers were critical to ensure their medical students were highly skilled physicians immediately upon graduation.

There were legal methods of acquiring cadavers for dissection; put into law in 1843 as the Canadian Anatomy Act through the Legislative Assembly of the Province of



Anatomy clinic run by Dr. William Osler at the Royal Victoria Hospital
Courtesy of McGill University Archives



McGill medical students, 1884
Courtesy of McGill University Archives

Canada. Championed by the Medical Board of Lower Canada in Montreal, they made it legal to use unclaimed remains for anatomy. The problem was demand from the ever-increasing student enrollment in medical schools and new priorities involving surgery dramatically outpaced supply.⁵

This put anatomy and surgery professors at universities and medical schools in an untenable situation. In the minds of the medical community, it was far more important for society to have highly skilled surgeons than to not, so the reliable practice of grave robbing was secretly endorsed. Most affected by not

having enough cadavers to practice on were the students, so they took it upon themselves to indulge in the nightly practice of bodysnatching at local cemeteries.

Case in point; an article in *The Kingston Whig-Standard*, February 4, 1858, titled "Grave Robbery at St. Thomas," reported on the remains of recently deceased St. Thomas, Canada West resident, Mrs. Patten, having been discovered missing on January 15, 1858. "Her mangled remains were discovered by her afflicted relatives in a room, the Master of which is a shoemaker, named Sparling." The jury at the coroner's inquest concluded:



Bodysnatchers
Courtesy of hauntedmontreal.com

³ *New York World*. December 1, 1888.

⁴ *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, January 5, 1889.

⁵ Belyea, S., *op. cit.*

“...the grave had been robbed by Sparling or others, for surgical purposes, but it did not show so far, that Dr. Caughel was cognizant, when he received the remains, how they had been obtained... We learn that the remains of the lady had been used for the purpose of anatomical demonstration by Dr. Caughel and his pupils, though the Doctor professes entire ignorance of the crime by which the body was provided for dissection.”



Bodysnatchers
Courtesy of hauntedmontreal.com

The article goes on to report upon a similar outrage ten miles to the north in the English Cemetery in London, Canada West; the same city of Tumblety's very first office in Canada West in May 1856.

According to the *Weekly Chicago Times*, January 14, 1858, the niece of a “sheriff of Upper Canada” committed suicide in London, Canada West, and was soon buried:

“...[A] day or two later, her corpse was found lying on the surface of the soil in the church yard. Some body-snatchers had probably attempted their nefarious designs, but had fled through fear of interruption...”

The article continues about yet another grave robbery from St. Thomas Cemetery “for medical purposes” that was discovered a few days before the theft of Mrs. Patten's interred remains. The grave of Mrs. Mary Paddon was found empty. Reprinted in the *Semi-Weekly Spectator*, March 14, 1858, was a *The London Free Press* article titled *Violation of the Graves*. It began:

“We learned that a gang of body catchers, or “resurrectionists,” have for some time past been carrying on their disgusting operations at the Potter's Field, wherein the deceased poor of this city are interred. A considerable number of graves have of late been despoiled by the miscreants, who carry on their infernal trade with the utmost boldness...”

The above cases of grave robbing in Canada West in the late 1850s make it clear that there was a lucrative black market financed by either their professors or the medical school even though there were legal avenues for medical schools to acquire cadavers. In Canada East, anatomy professors even sweetened the pot by offering large sums of money for cadavers, and then never ask questions about where the body came from.

By the 1880's McGill University professors were offering \$30 to \$50 dollars.⁶ Many medical students, especially the poorer French-Canadian students, paid for their education by bodysnatching. Griffith Evans was a young medical student at McGill University graduating in 1864 and commented upon the prevalence of students robbing graves and the wealthier English students robbing graves just for the excitement:



Dead house of the Montreal General Hospital
Courtesy of hauntedmontreal.com

“Our English students do it not for economy but for mischievous fun, dare-devilry, they make themselves intoxicated with alcoholics to excite the daring before going to the grave, then they do the work carelessly and in haste and consequently a large proportion of them have been traced.”

The best season to steal cadavers from cemeteries was in the winter, since bodies were temporarily stored in dead houses until the ground was warm enough to dig.

They would pay the night watchman under that table, discard the clothes and jewelry (in order to not be charged with theft if caught), then snatch the bodies away in the night. Once they arrived at the medical building at McGill University



Dead house at Aurora, Ontario
Courtesy of Canada's Historic Places

⁶ Dysert, A. *Resurrecting the History of Body-Snatching at McGill, De re medica – News from the Osler Library of the History of Medicine*, <<https://blogs.library.mcgill.ca/osler-library/history-of-bodysnatching/>>.

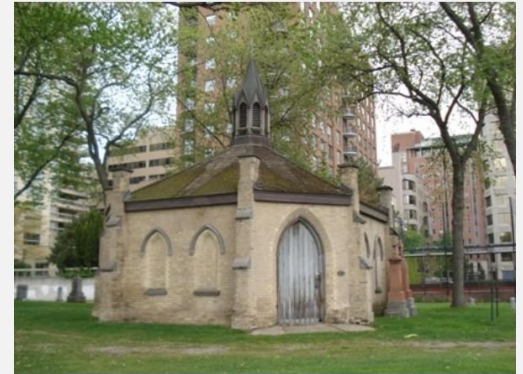


Janitor James "King" Cook
Courtesy of McGill University Archives

According to historian Matthew Rankin, author of *Anatomically Incorrect: Bodysnatching in the 19th Century*:

*"They [medical students] were taught to intellectually divorce the body from all of its religious, cultural, and even personal meanings, and see the body as simply the anonymous object of their work. This objectivity, or "clinical detachment," as it was termed, was essential for the practice of surgery."*⁸

Francis J. Shepherd, an 1873 McGill University graduate recalled students grave robbing at the cemeteries of Mount Royal and would



Dead house at St. Michael's Cemetery, Toronto
Courtesy of spadeandthegrave.com

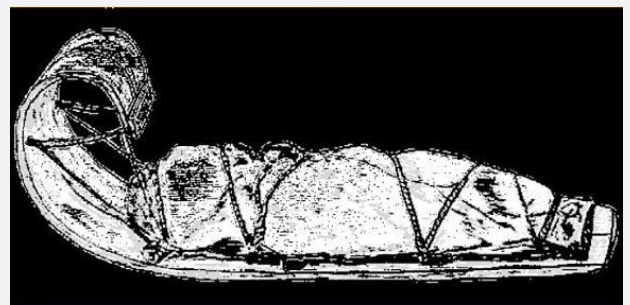
wrap the cadavers in blankets and *"toboggan them down the slopes of Côte des Neiges Road."*⁹ They certainly emotionally disengaged themselves from the act of stealing the corpses of human beings.



Graduating Class in Medicine, c.1905. McGill Archives.
Courtesy of McGill University Archives

If Jack the Ripper had a medical background and practiced the "objectivity of clinical detachment" in his past, this is an intriguing possibility. A number of the suspects had some level of medical training, such as Thomas Neill Cream, Michael Ostrog, Francis Thompson, George Chapman, and even Francis Tumblety, thus, may have emotionally disengaged as they dissected and even collected organs. Curiously, Thomas Neill Cream attended McGill University for medical training having been taught clinical detachment by the faculty. If Jack the

Ripper did indeed practice emotionally disengaging, he may not have merely had a blood lust to literally bath in organs and tissue while eviscerating his victims. He may just have been practicing what he believed was the art of surgery on a cadaver as he collected organs.



Medical students would snatch bodies from Mount Royal Cemetery and toboggan them down Co'te des Neiges Road.
Courtesy of hauntedmontreal.com

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ Rankin, M., *Anatomically Incorrect: Bodysnatching in the 19th Century*, *Canada's History*, <<https://www.canadahistory.ca/explore/science-technology/anatomically-incorrect-bodysnatching-in-the-19th-c>>.

⁹ Dysert, A., *op. cit.*

VICTORIAN DOMESTICITY

A Column on Daily Life

By Amanda Lloyd



For this edition I thought I'd explore the history of ice cream, a very popular dessert or treat in England during the reign of Queen Victoria.

The Victorian Fad For Ice Cream

The earliest evidence of anything remotely like ice cream as we know it, seems to go back as far as AD 900 in China. Buffalo and cow's milk would be heated and fermented to create a yoghurt which was thickened with flour and flavouring and then stirred in a pot over ice until it was really cold and ready to be served.

The method of freezing food using ice and salt was not documented until the 13th century, although earlier descriptions using a similar technique have been discovered in India. It wasn't until the 16th century that the concept of making flavoured ices and sorbets reached Europe, primarily in Italy, France and Spain, with the game-changing Italian introduction of sweetened milk arriving a century later.

At about the same time ice cream arrived in Britain but only royalty and the very wealthy were fortunate enough to sample these new delights. This was largely down to the expensive and laborious nature of its creation with pewter pots being placed over ice, which was then constantly hand stirred until small amounts became frozen.



Victorian ice cream making machine

Despite the effort that went into its making, ice cream quickly became so popular that ice houses sprang up across the country in the grounds of wealthy country estates. Ice was retrieved from rivers and lakes in the winter to use all year round.

With the 19th century came the invention of the ice cream maker, which was ostensibly a large wooden bucket filled with ice and salt. The centre contained a metal box with paddles where the ingredients were turned with an attached handle. This simplified the whole process and suddenly ice cream was being made everywhere. The mass importation of ice from Norway, the United States and Canada allowed vendors to sell ice cream all over the country and it was particularly successful in London where Italian immigrants took to the streets to sell their wares.

The ice cream trade was booming, but unfortunately so were cases of food poisoning, cholera and tuberculosis which were associated with it. The authorities became concerned and discovered much of the street ice cream was made in very unsanitary conditions, often in the homes of the sellers. The 'penny lick' seemed to be the main culprit in the spread of disease. Ice cream would be served in a glass bowl to be licked out by the customer who would return it once finished so another customer could use it. If you were lucky it would be rinsed in filthy water first. With new legislation, food regulations and the invention of wafers and cones, the use of the 'penny lick' thankfully died out and cases of food poisoning and disease dropped dramatically.

POISONING BY ICE-CREAM.
A case of poisoning by ice-cream is believed to have occurred at Bradford. On Sunday night a number of boys and girls had ice-cream at a shop. On Monday about fifteen of them were taken ill, and one boy, Joseph Rose, aged sixteen years, died on Tuesday morning. Two others are in a very serious condition.

The introduction of electric refrigeration in the 20th century meant there was less need for imported ice and ice cream became more popular than ever, which it continues to be today.

We cannot discuss the history of ice cream without mentioning our own 'Queen of Ices', Agnes Bertha Marshall. Born in 1855 in Walthamstow, Essex, she became one of Britain's first 'celebrity' cooks, with her books becoming best sellers. She really came into her own when she invented and patented the first ice cream maker which was small and practical enough for making ice cream in a domestic kitchen. An astute and successful businesswoman, she was savvy enough to realise the potential of her invention, and she patented ice cream moulds and various kitchen implements that interlinked with her ice cream recipe books and her own cookery school, which was aimed at employers to send their chefs and cooks there.



Victorian 'penny lick' glass

Sadly, at the height of her success, she died just a month before her 50th birthday in 1905. Today her name is almost entirely forgotten. It is her recipes I am using to make two of the most popular flavours of the time, cucumber and vanilla custard. Both ice creams were delicious and I was particularly surprised at how pleasantly refreshing the cucumber one was. The Victorians were very innovative and some of their odd concoctions, such as asparagus and avocado really wouldn't appeal today, but take my word for it, the cucumber one tasted really good.

Cucumber Ice Cream

- 1 large cucumber
- 8 oz castor sugar, halved
- Half a pint of water
- Green food colouring
- One and a half tbsps ginger brandy (optional)
- 2 tbsps lemon juice
- 1 pint of double cream



Peel the cucumber, then slice it lengthwise and scoop out the seeds. Chop it into small pieces, then put it into a small saucepan with the water and half of the sugar. Cook it over a medium heat for a good 15 to 20 minutes, or until it's very soft. Mash the cucumber until it's as smooth as you can get it, then add the ginger brandy and green food colouring. Stir in the lemon juice, then pour the mixture through a fine sieve. Mix the cream and the remaining half of the sugar together. Stir this into the cucumber mixture. Freeze in an ice cream maker to serve straight away or put the ice-cream into an airtight mould or tub and pop into the freezer to harden.

Vanilla Custard Ice Cream

- $\frac{3}{4}$ pint double cream
- 7 oz sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ pint milk
- 2 large egg yolks
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla extract



Put all the ingredients in a saucepan and cook on low, stirring all the time until the cream yellows and thickens into a thin custard. Allow to cool before transferring it into an ice making machine or into an airtight mould or tub and pop it into the freezer.

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"Jack the Ripper DNA Breakthrough" – Questions and Answers

Chris Phillips

Russell Edwards and his claim to have identified Jack the Ripper through DNA have been back in the news again. For those too young to remember the first time this story was in the news 11 years ago, or even the second time 6 years ago, here's a handy guide to everything you need to know - and probably far more than you want to know - about the "Eddowes Shawl" and what has been wrung out of it. It may be a good idea to cut out and keep it, ready for next time.

1. What is the "Eddowes Shawl"?

The "Eddowes Shawl" is an item made of silk and printed with a pattern of flowers. It is usually described as a shawl, and I'll call it a shawl here, though it has been suggested it may be something else, such as a table covering.

It previously belonged to the family of a former Metropolitan Police officer named Amos Simpson, who died in 1917, and according to a family tradition it had come from the scene of the murder of Catherine Eddowes, the fourth of the five "canonical" victims of Jack the Ripper, who was killed in Mitre Square on 30 September 1888. Simpson's great-great-nephew, David Melville Hayes, put it up for auction in 2007. Although it failed to reach its reserve price, it was later sold privately to a businessman named Russell Edwards.

In 2014 Edwards claimed that DNA recovered from the shawl had been matched to samples obtained from relations of both Catherine Eddowes and the Ripper suspect Aaron Kozminski. The DNA analysis had been done by Dr Jari Louhelainen of Liverpool John Moores University.

2. What is the family tradition about the shawl?

The family tradition was originally recorded in 1988 - a hundred years after the Ripper murders - when an inscription was written describing two framed pieces of the shawl as "taken from Catherine Eddowes shawl at the time of the discovery of her body by Constable Amos Simpson in 1888 ..." In the 1990s David Melville Hayes and his mother Elsie were interviewed about the story. Although Elsie remembered only that it was something to do with the Ripper and Eddowes, David said that Simpson, while on "some kind of special duty", had been the first to find the body in Mitre Square, and had picked up the shawl that night and kept it.

3. Did Amos Simpson really discover the body of Catherine Eddowes?

That's an easy question. No, Amos Simpson didn't discover the body. It was discovered by PC Edward Watkins of the City of London Police.

4. So did Simpson come along later?

Actually, there's no evidence that he was there at all, and it's difficult to see how he could have been. Mitre Square is in the City of London, which had - and still has - its own police force, separate from the Metropolitan Police. The evidence given at Catherine Eddowes's inquest recorded the movements and activities of ten police officers in Mitre Square that night, but no member of the Metropolitan Police was mentioned.

Russell Edwards claimed that Amos Simpson was based in Islington at the time of the murders, and later moved to Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire. But that wasn't true. In 1888 Simpson was already living and working at Cheshunt, where he had been stationed since 1881. Cheshunt was then under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Police, as part of N Division, but it is more than 14 miles from Mitre Square and even today it lies outside Greater London. It is true that some officers from other divisions were transferred for special duties in Whitechapel during the period of the Ripper murders, but transfers for special duties and plain clothes work were listed in the published *Police Orders*, and a search of these found no such listings for N Division at the time of Catherine Eddowes's murder.

5. But couldn't the shawl still have come from the murder scene?

Again, it's very difficult to see how. The events following the discovery of the body in Mitre Square were described in detail at the inquest. After PC Watkins discovered the body at 1.44am, he stayed with the body while a night watchman went to get help. The night watchman found two constables, PCs Harvey and Holland, who immediately went to the scene, and then Holland left the square to find a doctor. Around 2am, in quick succession, Dr Sequeira, three detective officers and Inspector Collard arrived. The police surgeon, Dr Brown, arrived at about 2.18am and examined the body then, together with Dr Sequeira, he remained with it until the ambulance arrived to take it to the mortuary. Inspector Collard went to the mortuary, accompanied by Detective Constable Halse. There, the clothes were carefully removed from the body in the presence of Collard, Halse and the doctors.

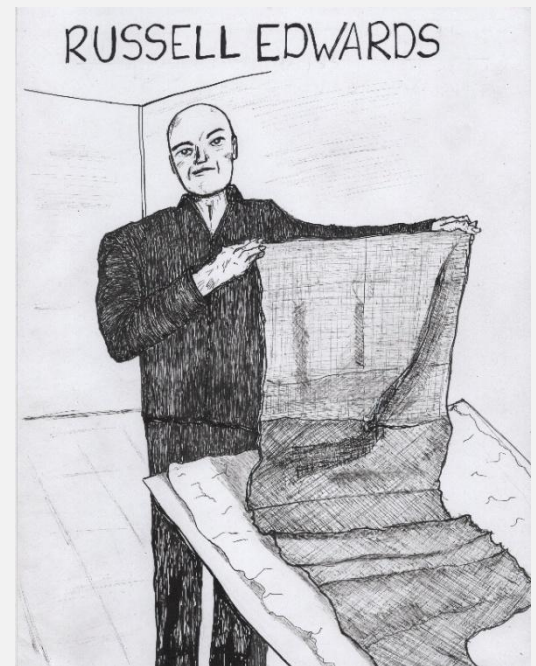
So the body was never left unattended from the time PC Watkins sent the night watchman for help until the clothing was removed at the mortuary. After that, a detailed list of Catherine Eddowes's clothing and other possessions was made, and has been preserved among the inquest papers. It includes a description of each item, with bloodstains noted. There is no mention of any item resembling the "Eddowes Shawl".

6. If the shawl didn't come from the murder scene, why has it got blood and semen stains on it?

The shawl has often been described in press reports as "bloodstained", or even "blood-soaked". But Edwards and Louhelainen weren't able to find any scientific evidence that there was blood on it. Louhelainen looked at the fluorescence of the stains and thought their colour and patterns resembled bloodstains. But he wasn't able to confirm this by testing. Apparently he tried two different presumptive tests for blood - tests that would have indicated the possible presence of blood but would have required confirmation - but the results were negative.

The situation is similar for the supposed semen stains. Louhelainen thought their green fluorescence was consistent with semen, but acknowledged that there were other substances that also produced green fluorescence. When details of the work were later published in a scientific paper, it was stated that a standard test for semen - an acid phosphatase test - was performed, but that the result was negative.

Louhelainen's collaborator, David Miller of Leeds University, did manage to extract cells from samples taken from the suspected semen stains. Louhelainen later described these as looking identical with "semen associated cells". But that is misleading. In fact they were squamous epithelial cells, which are found in many places in the body. As Miller wrote to Edwards, cells like the ones he extracted are found in "other bodily fluids including saliva, sweat etc (basically any fluid that washes over or bathes an epithelial surface)". Miller added that squamous cells are typically a minor component of semen, and if there had been sperm there he would have expected to see them. So if anything, the nature of the cells found by Miller argues against the presence of semen, not for it.



Whether there is blood and semen on the shawl is an important question, because the strategy used by Louhelainen depends on the assumption that any material recovered from the supposed "bloodstains" will have come from the victim, and any material from the supposed "semen stains" will have come from the murderer.

7. But they did find an incredibly rare match with Catherine Eddowes's DNA, didn't they?

They did claim to have matched an extremely rare feature of Catherine Eddowes's mitochondrial DNA.

8. What is mitochondrial DNA?

It's a form of DNA that is passed from the mother to her children. It mutates only very slowly, so it is identical in people who are fairly closely related in the maternal line. For that reason it can be used only to identify maternal families, not individuals. Mitochondrial DNA is much simpler than the DNA found in the nuclei of cells. It is a large circular molecule made up of just over 16,500 "base pairs". Each base pair contains molecules of four types - adenine, cytosine, guanine, thymine, which are indicated by the initials A, C, G and T. So the whole mitochondrial DNA sequence can be represented by a string of these four letters, about 16,500 characters long.

Because mitochondrial DNA mutates so slowly, a lot of the sequence is common to the whole population, so in order to characterise it, it's necessary only to consider the differences. This is done by comparing the sequence being characterised with a standard reference sequence, which was simply a sequence obtained from a woman of European descent during the 1970s. The differences, or variants, arise because of mutations that happened in the past. If there has been a recent mutation in the ancestry of the sequence being characterised, the variant will tend to be rare, but if it happened a long time ago more people will probably share it, so the variant will tend to be more common. However, mutations also happened in the ancestry of the reference sequence. If one of those mutations was recent, probably only a small proportion of the population of people will share it. In that case most sequences will show a variant from the reference sequence at that point.

9. So they found a match to that sequence of about 16,500 letters?

No. Because they were looking for old DNA, which wouldn't be in good condition, Louhelainen didn't try to determine the whole sequence. Instead, he used an established technique developed for poor-quality DNA, and tried to obtain only a few short segments of the sequence, with lengths of about 100-200, chosen to be in the part of the molecule where mutations are most frequent. Louhelainen used a special technique to extract material from the "bloodstains", which was intended to exclude surface contamination, and he succeeded in obtaining sequences for six out of the seven short segments he tried.

According to the account in the book, the sequence in one of these six segments matched that of a descendant of Catherine Eddowes in the female line, and didn't match the sequences of Edwards or Louhelainen himself, which were also compared in case of contamination. It then seems to be stated that the sequences in two of the other segments did match either Edwards's or Louhelainen's DNA, and were therefore considered to be the result of contamination. But in the scientific paper published five years later, these segments were stated to have been obtained elsewhere on the shawl, and not by using the special extraction method. In any case, nothing was said about whether or not any of the five other segments matched Catherine Eddowes's sequence. But for the segment that was said to match, there was a clinching detail: it contained a variant called 314.1C, not present in either Edwards's or Louhelainen's DNA, and extremely rare in the population as a whole. Louhelainen estimated that it was present in only one person in 290,000.

10. That sounds pretty convincing.

Yes, that number did sound convincing, until about a week after the book was published, when a Ripper researcher noticed a reference to 314.1C as an "error of nomenclature". What that meant was that Louhelainen

KATE EDDOWES



had got the description of the sequence variant wrong. It should have been described as 315.1C. Apparently when he searched the database to find out how common the variant was, all he found was one example in which someone else had made the same mistake, which made it look extremely rare. But in fact this is one of those cases in which there had been a recent mutation in the ancestry of the reference sequence. The 315.1C variant was estimated to be present in 99% of people with European ancestry, and is therefore useless for identification purposes.

That didn't entirely explain the figure Louhelainen had come up with, because when he searched the database it would have contained only about 29,000 sequences. So finding a single match would have given a frequency of 1 in 29,000, not the 1 in 290,000 he had claimed. Apparently he had also made an arithmetical error which reduced the frequency by a further factor of ten. All this was confirmed by DNA experts, including Sir Alec Jeffreys, the pioneer of genetic fingerprinting.

11. Oh. So did they admit they'd got it wrong?

Yes and no. I haven't seen any admission by Louhelainen that he made an error, but the references to 314.1C and the rarity of the sequence were quietly dropped from the text of the paperback edition of Edwards's book, which was published the following year.

12. I see. But didn't they find a match with Aaron Kozminski's DNA too?

Not really. Louhelainen had extracted samples from the "semen stains" using the same "vacuuming" technique as for the "bloodstains", but for some reason he decided not to obtain the DNA from the samples in the same way. Instead he tried to obtain it from the cells that David Miller had isolated previously, which had been mounted on microscope slides for examination. Eventually, from just one of these cells, he obtained "a segment" of the mitochondrial DNA sequence, which was compared with the sequence obtained from a relation of Aaron Kozminski in the maternal line. Edwards presented the result as a triumph, but it was described only a "near-perfect" match. In one place he said there was an anomaly, in another "there were two anomalies and further testing would be needed". But if any more was done by the time the book was written, it wasn't mentioned.

Even if there had been a perfect match, in the absence of any statistics it would be impossible to assess its significance, particularly if only a single short segment had been sequenced.

13. What happened after the book was published?

There was a tremendous amount of press coverage, much of it positive - until the error in the DNA analysis was discovered. The reactions of other scientists were more critical. Apart from the specific error, another focus of criticism was that the DNA analysis had never been published in a scientific journal, which would have involved the work being assessed by experts in a "peer review" process. Edwards suggested to Louhelainen that to answer this criticism he should write up the work for publication, but instead Louhelainen proposed that they should exhume the body of Aaron Kozminski.

14. Sorry to interrupt, but if the analysis was based on mitochondrial DNA, and they already had Aaron's sequence from a relation, what would have been the point of exhuming his body?

That's a good question, and when telling the story in the updated edition of his book Edwards didn't explain quite what they had in mind. Edwards had already tried once before, unsuccessfully, to get permission to exhume Aaron's body (before he realised that mitochondrial DNA from a relation could be used for comparison). Now his second attempt met with repeated refusals from the United Synagogue, which owns the cemetery where Aaron is buried. To try to get around this refusal, he approached the coroner to ask her to give permission for an exhumation. But the coroner suggested instead that he should apply for a new inquest on Catherine Eddowes to be held. Edwards sought legal advice, and was told that in order to get permission for a new inquest, Louhelainen would need to have his work peer-reviewed and published. Things were back to square one.

It took another two years before Louhelainen gave Edwards the "green light" by indicating he would complete the paper and submit it to the *Journal of Forensic Sciences*. The first version was submitted in

November 2018 and a revised version, submitted on 26 December, was accepted for publication. The paper appeared online in March 2019 and in print in 2020.

15. So what did the scientific paper say?

As far as the mitochondrial DNA results go, the details of the sequences weren't published. Instead, the comparison between the sequences was presented schematically as a grid of boxes, some coloured and some white. The sequences were "victim maternal", "victim from evidence", "suspect maternal", "suspect from evidence", "owner" and "laboratory operator". The boxes were described as "blocks", so presumably they represented sections of the sequences rather than individual variants. When a box was coloured that meant that the block contained variants (differences from the standard reference sequence). The authors said that only six out of the eight short segments they tried to sequence were successful, so presumably other parts of the sequence were excluded.

Even the journal's reviewers weren't given the sequence information, only the diagram with the coloured boxes. Unfortunately that meant there was no way they could check that what the authors had done was correct.

16. Did the authors say why they presented the results like that?

They said it was partly to make it accessible to non-scientists who might be interested, and partly because they couldn't publish "detailed nucleotide-level DNA information of living individuals" because of the Data Protection Act.

17. But I thought they had already published information about a feature of Catherine Eddowes's DNA, that they thought at the time was extremely rare?

Yes. In the original edition of his book, Edwards published an account of the work, written by Louhelainen, which identified the "314.1C" variant, which he wrongly believed to have a frequency of only 1 in 290,000. Not only that, but in 2016 Louhelainen gave a public lecture in Finland at which he displayed parts of the both the "Victim" and "Suspect" sequences.

Anyway, as far as the coloured boxes go, a match was shown between the "victim" sequence from the shawl and the sequence from Catherine Eddowes's descendant. But the diagram showed two differences between the "suspect" sequence from the shawl and the sequence from the relation of Aaron Kozminski.

18. But I thought the DNA match had been described as "100%"?

Russell Edwards has certainly been quoted in the press as claiming a "100 per cent DNA match" with Aaron Kozminski. And the published paper says several times that the sequences matched. But the coloured boxes in Figure 7 show two "blocks" that didn't match. The authors commented that these two blocks "could not be determined with high confidence". It's not spelled out explicitly, but obviously the claim that the sequences match depends on these two blocks being excluded.

Now if someone, with no knowledge of the target sequence they were trying to match, had decided to exclude poor-quality experimental data using some appropriate measure of quality, that would be one thing. But there's no indication that anything like that was done. After all, the points of disagreement are there in Figure 7, which is the only presentation of the sequences in the paper. And it's clearly unacceptable in scientific terms to make a comparison between the sequences first, and then to find a reason to exclude the points where they disagree.

Ironically, in the conclusion section, for no reason that I can see, the authors quote a set of DNA analysis guidelines, which state *"if samples have two or more nucleotide position differences, they can be excluded as coming from the same source or maternal lineage, except when heteroplasmy is encountered"*. On this basis, the conclusion of the comparison should be that the DNA recovered from the shawl did not come from Aaron Kozminski.

19. Did they provide any statistics for the rarity of the DNA sequences this time?

The statistics were added when Louhelainen revised the paper, presumably in response to a request from the journal's reviewers. This and the letter to the editor were done in the course of a single day, 26 December

2018, immediately before the revised version was submitted. The statistics are estimates of the fraction of the population whose DNA would match the sequence information obtained from the shawl.

For the "suspect" sequence, the fraction was estimated as 1.9%. That means that even if the sequences had matched, that would have happened by chance for 1 in 53 of the population. But as that sequences didn't match, the figure is meaningless.

For the "victim" sequence, the fraction was estimated as 0.13%. That seems more significant, but the problem is that, given the lack of sequence information, it was impossible for the reviewers or anyone else to check these calculations. Given that when calculating the frequency five years earlier Louhelainen had made a serious error when describing the DNA sequence - and apparently an arithmetical error as well - it's obviously desirable that the correctness of the DNA analysis should be independently checked. And that is particularly true given the severe problems with the claim that the shawl came from the murder scene in the first place.

20. So how was the scientific paper received?

As with Edwards's book, it was received well by the tabloid press but was severely criticised by other scientists. Turi King, who had led the project to sequence the genome of King Richard III, asked *"How did this ever get past review!?"* and the geneticist Adam Rutherford wrote *"this is terrible science, and terrible history. It doesn't warrant discussion in the popular press, let alone in an academic journal."* The *Journal of Forensic Sciences* itself published two critical commentaries, by the criminologist Kim Rossmo and by Felice L. Bedford, whose interests include the genetics of psychology. Others also contacted the journal with concerns about the work.

As a result of these criticisms, the publisher (Wiley Periodicals) initiated an investigation. Both the publisher and the editor of the journal asked the authors for the raw data that the mitochondrial DNA analysis was based on but were told that "the data were no longer available, due to instrument data failure and other complications". For some reason it took until 2024 for the publisher to decide that without the data it would be impossible to resolve the concerns. So the journal published an *"Expression of Concern"*. What this means, according to the guidelines on the publisher's website, is that there are "serious concerns" about the paper, that the investigation into them was inconclusive, but that "there remain strong indicators that the concerns are valid".

21. How did the authors react to that?

According to the journal, the authors agreed to the publication of the Expression of Concern.

22. And what has Russell Edwards been up to since the paper was published?

Well, once he had the peer-reviewed publication that the lawyers had told him he needed, he pushed ahead with his campaign to get a new inquest on Catherine Eddowes. The first request was sent to the Attorney General on 24 June 2019 and was refused on 7 January 2020. Another request was sent in in December 2021 and was refused on 12 July 2021.

In 2022, Edwards again made headlines, this time with dramatic claims about another notorious English murder case. In the early 1960s Ian Brady and Myra Hindley had murdered five children and young people and buried the bodies of the first four on Saddleworth Moor near Manchester. One of the bodies - that of 12-year-old Keith Bennett - had never been found. But on 30 September 2022, the *Daily Mail* announced that Russell Edwards had been digging on the moor and had discovered *"a skull"*, or more precisely *"what experts believe to be a child's upper jaw with a full set of teeth"*. It was claimed that *"Three independent experts have now identified remains at the site as being human."* One of them had been shown a photograph taken by Edwards and had identified an object in it as part of a human skull. Also involved as a member of Edwards "team of experts" was Jari Louhelainen, who announced on Twitter: *"Another major case solved by us (pending the police DNA) analysis"* and posted a picture of himself at the microscope *"Checking here if we had bunch of hair from Keith Bennett"*.

But after spending about a week excavating the site that Edwards had indicated, the police issued a statement saying that they had found *"no evidence to indicate the presence of human remains"*. Regarding the

photograph that was supposed to have shown a human jawbone, the indications were that object shown "*would be considerably smaller than a juvenile jaw and it cannot be ruled out that it is plant-based*". For his part, Edwards issued a statement saying that he was still convinced he had found the grave, and that he was "*commissioning further scientific analysis of his evidence*". But as far as I know, he hasn't pursued it any further.

Instead, in 2024 he produced a new edition of his book on Jack the Ripper, this time subtitled *The Definitive Reveal*. Its appearance was preceded by a burst of publicity in the tabloid press, and it was published in the USA on 1 October 2024.

23. What was in the revised edition of his book, then?

Essentially it's the original book plus three new chapters. Most of the new text just tells the story of Edwards's Ripper-related activities since 2014. But there is a short chapter of miscellaneous additions.

One of them concerns the fact that Aaron's elder brother, Isaac Abrahams, was a Freemason. According to Russell Edwards, he had been sent family photographs showing Isaac wearing masonic costume. As a result, Edwards revived an old conspiracy theory from the 1970s. According to the theory, the Ripper's activities were inspired by masonic beliefs, and he was protected from detection by highly placed officials who were Freemasons themselves. The fact that Isaac (like some of Aaron's other relations) was a Freemason had been known for some time by Ripper researchers. But it's very difficult to take seriously the idea that senior Freemasons would have conspired to protect the murderer because he was Isaac's brother. Isaac was only an ordinary member of the organisation. He had joined only four years before the murders, and didn't remain a member for long, because in 1892 he was excluded for non-payment of his dues.

In the publicity for the new edition of his book, the masonic conspiracy theory was one of Edwards's selling points. The other was a computer-generated image, supposedly showing "the face of Aaron Kosminski himself". Edwards wrote that it was based on family photographs of "his brothers, sister, and family descendants". But actually it seems to be a composite of the two male faces in a photograph that had been supplied to the *Daily Mail* by Russell Edwards in 2015. Initially, the *Mail* described the man in a top hat in this photograph as Aaron's brother Isaac, but later the article was edited to indicate "*descendants say*" it was Isaac. In fact we know for sure that it's not Isaac, because the family has photographs that are known to show him, and they bear no resemblance to the man in the top hat.

24. And isn't he also asking for a new inquest on Catherine Eddowes?

Yes, he's now making a third attempt to get a new inquest, accompanied by another newspaper publicity campaign. Though it's not clear what has changed - apart from the identity of the Attorney General - since the last two requests were refused. His application is being backed by Karen Miller, the descendant of Catherine Eddowes who provided him with a DNA sample. She's quoted as saying "*Having the real person legally named in a court which can consider all the evidence would be a form of justice for the victims. We have got the proof, now we need this inquest to legally name the killer.*"

25. But how can they present the scientific evidence in court, if they've lost the data?

That's another good question.

26. I think the only other question - based on what you've told me - is why are so many journalists still taking these claims seriously?

Hmm. Maybe we should save some of these good questions for another time.

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The Woman Without a Heart

Paul Williams

Five months before the end of a war which killed millions, the *New York Times* reported the death of the worst woman in the world¹. Twelve years had passed since the last of Lizzie Halliday's four known murders and twenty-two since she became the first woman sentenced to the electric chair. Awaiting trial for murdering two women and her husband in 1893 Lizzie was in the custody of Sheriff Harrison Beecher. After she attempted to strangle his wife, Beecher told the press that Lizzie was in all probability connected with the famous Whitechapel murders². He claimed that she frequently spoke about them and was in Europe at the time, although she denied any involvement. When he asked her directly about the murders, she said a man did them.

These comments and rumours that Lizzie had committed other homicides increased the contemporary media and public interest but Lizzie, possibly the first female serial killer in the United States, is now largely forgotten. Just two months before her arrest, another Lizzie stood trial, accused of killing her father and stepmother in Fall River, Massachusetts, four hundred kilometres from the Halliday farm. Lizzie Borden appears in several books and television programs. There is one book about Lizzie Halliday, written by a local historian³. This acknowledges that most sources spell her name incorrectly. Paul Halleday was the name of her last husband, and, for accuracy, this article uses that from now on. Websites and encyclopaedia's that mention Lizzie Halleday rely on second hand information, traced back to newspapers reports from the time.

The most significant are two interviews with Nellie Bly when Lizzie was awaiting trial and articles from the *New York World* said to verify information given in the interviews.

Nellie Bly (pictured left⁴), real name Elizabeth Cochrane, was a pioneer of investigative journalism and one of the most successful women in a male-dominated profession. In 1887 she feigned mental illness to enter an asylum. Once inside she wrote a piece exposing neglect and establishing her credentials⁵. In 1893 she returned to journalism after a three-year break spent writing fiction and setting a record for travelling around the world in seventy-two days. Six years after faking insanity she interviewed a woman accused of feigning madness who revealed a history of marrying older men. Bly would later marry a man forty years her senior.



Nellie Bly

Lizzie awaited trial for the murder of Sarah Jane MacQuillan, after Sarah's body, that of her mother, Margaret, and Lizzie's husband Paul, were discovered by searchers at the Burlington farm in Sullivan County owned by Paul. Lizzie married Paul on 26 March 1891. Six weeks later Lizzie stole horses and, judged insane, went to an asylum. On release she returned to Paul. She arrived at the MacQuillan family home in Newburg, using a false name to offer Sarah employment as a domestic. Margaret went instead. Sarah then received a message saying her mother had broken her leg, and she too went to Burlington. All three victims were shot, tied, and buried.

¹ *New York Times*, 29 June 1918, p. 20

² *Middletown Daily Times*, 4 December 1893, *Casebook*, Press Reports, accessed 03 July 2014

³ Owen, Kevin, *Killing Time in the Catskills: The Twisted Tale of the Catskill Ripper*, Elizabeth (Lizzie) McNally Halliday, Kindle, 2019

⁴ Library of Congress c. 1890, www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2010631213

⁵ Bly, Nellie, *Ten Days in a Mad-house*, Norman L Munro, 1887

During her imprisonment Lizzie talked gibberish, refused to eat, set fire to her bed, attempted suicide four times and made her attack on the Sheriff's wife who had been looking after her. The only person that she spoke to about the crimes was a young man called Phillip Kinney. She told him that two men did the murders and alleged that Thomas MacQuillan, husband of Margaret, was present. There were unanswered questions about the murders. Lizzie lured the two female victims to the house, stayed there with the bodies and attempted to hide items belonging to them. People doubted that she was capable of shooting three people and burying the bodies without assistance. Nothing about her past was known. Nellie Bly, on behalf of the *New York World*, sought answers in the small county jail at Monticello.

Sheriff Beecher embraced Bly's celebrity status. Lizzie was less impressed, not cooperating initially other than to say that Thomas McQuillan drugged her⁶. There was no evidence that he had ever been to Burlington. At the inquest he said he did not know Lizzie. The *World* examined the relationship between the two families, noting they were once neighbours in Antrim. Thomas then told the reporter he knew John McNally in Ireland. In Newburgh, he realised that McNally lived a mile away and spent a night with him talking about old times. There was a fourteen-year-old daughter present which he presumed to be Lizzie.

Lizzie, whom people assumed to be a recent immigrant, now said she came to America with her parents, five sisters and two brothers. She gave her name as Lizzie Margaret MacAnally. From the two articles by Bly, the investigation by the *World* journalists and a modern examination of records we can piece together something of her history.

Lizzie, known as Maggie within her family was born Eliza Margaret McNally in Antrim, which was part of Ireland under British rule. There was no requirement to register births there before 1864. Without a confirmed record this could have been anytime between 1859 and 1865. Lizzie had five sisters and two brothers. They moved to the United States at separate intervals. Lizzie arrived around 1872, first living in Newburgh then in West Hebron in Greenwich, Washington County. She had a sister Jane, who married Patrick Dewey and lived in Troy. The *World* published a letter from Lizzie to Jane sent after her arrest. It was redirected to a new address and Jane was dead before it arrived.

Lizzie gave Bly a list of all her possessions left at the farm, including animals that she knew the value of, and asked for them back. She stated that a fire was done for the insurance, claiming that her husband forced her. She blamed her husband, McQuillan, and a third man, Charlie Canfield, for the murders. She contradicted herself several times.

Bly began her first article by referring to Lizzie as the triple murderess, although she had not yet been convicted. She also referred to Lizzie as the most avaricious woman she had ever met. Bly said that she thought Lizzie committed the murder unaided and asked if she repented. Lizzie replied, "God will send you back to me."

A month later Lizzie asked for Bly to come back and told a different story. It took her a whole day. Bly's second interview was published in the *New York World* on 5 November 1893, titled "A Woman without a Heart."⁷ It began by comparing Lizzie to Lucretia Borgia, a sixteenth century Italian noblewoman who married three times and was rumoured to have poisoned people.

Details of earlier crimes by Lizzie began to emerge. In her childhood Lizzie stole a wedding ring from Mrs George Foster and was known to Justice E W Mandell for trying to get warrants against people who owed her money. Whilst the newspaper reports in 1893 are the only known evidence, there was a Justice Mandell in Washington County in the 1880s and there is no reason to doubt that he spoke to the *World* reporter.

Reduced to taking in laundry and washing it in her lodgings, mostly for single men, it was perhaps not surprising that Lizzie showed an interest in some of those men. She claimed to have married at the age of fourteen or sixteen to Ketspool Brown, a British army deserter whose real name was Charles Hopkins. Some witnesses claimed to have seen the certificate and Lizzie named the officiating cleric as Elder Mason from the Baptist church and the place as Greenwich. There are no records of this or of the birth of their child, Charlie,

⁶ Bly, Nellie, "Mrs Halliday", *New York World*, 22 October 1893, reprinted in *Nellie Bly's World, Her Complete Reporting, 1893*, Kindle, 2024

⁷ Bly, Nellie, "A Woman Without a Heart", *New York World*, 5 November 1893, reprinted in *Nellie Bly's World, Her Complete Reporting, 1893*, Kindle, 2024

around 1880. As late as 1915, authorities recorded Lizzie's name as Lizzie Brown as well as Eliza Margaret McNally⁸. We can speculate that the marriage was common-law.

Lizzie said that Hopkins died in 1881 of typhoid fever and was buried in Arlington near Troy. She suggested that people suspected her of his murder and alleged that he was also a killer. Hopkins knew a Mrs. Campbell who was housekeeper for a farmer called Matthew Dugan in Greenwich. Campbell stole \$200 from Dugan and gave it to Hopkins. She then received some medicine from Hopkins and died after taking it. The death was listed as a suicide. Lizzie said she received \$100 after Hopkin's death. Lizzie's sister told the *World* that she attended the funeral. Reporters spoke to people who had known Hopkins and confirmed that there were no suspicions attached to his death.

Lizzie said that she lived for three years with Hopkins, which roughly tallies with an 1879 marriage and 1881 death. She remarried to Artemus Brewer. The marriage on 8 January 1885 is listed in the New York Marriage Index as Maggie Hopkins (McNally) and Artsman Brower⁹. Brewer was around 44 but has been described as an elderly war veteran. Lizzie said he smoked opium and called him an old man. The *World's* reporters alleged that she mocked his disability and treated him cruelly. He died on 4 August 1885. Lizzie said it was due to dropsy and a doctor attended him. One of his friends, George Smith, held him on his deathbed. Lizzie claimed to have married Smith next. There is no known record.

Lizzie noted that Smith's sister said his first name was Peter and that the courtship only lasted a few weeks. She said Squire Tiff of Greenwich performed the ceremony. On 24 July that year Lizzie assaulted a woman in a dispute over a feather bed. George paid her fine. Justice Mandell verified this. The *World* reporter found George, referring to him as a simple man. He reported afterwards that Lizzie put arsenic in his tea, nearly killing him. She also threw a flatiron at him and attacked him with a pair of shears.

Lizzie claimed to have remarried to Hiram Parkinson who was a widower with three daughters and a stonemason. Discovering that Parkinson was already married to a woman called Aida Gunn, she threw him out. Part of this story is verified. Ada D Gunn married Hiram F Parkerson in Greenwich on 29 September 1884¹⁰. Hiram was born in 1825. He had three daughters from his first marriage. He died on 24 November 1903, without leaving a will. Ada Marris, who appears to be his daughter, was granted the power of executor¹¹. Ada (or Adah) Gunn was a widow in the 1880 census. She was living with Hiram, a mason, at the time of the 1890 census. In the 1892 census she retains the name Gunn, which may indicate that she had separated from Hiram. The timing fits well with Lizzie's story, although there is no record of her marriage to Hiram. The *World* reporter who met him claimed that the marriage to Smith came after Brewer and that Lizzie left Smith to run off with Parkinson for a second time.

Lizzie worked for a few days at a hotel then stayed with her mother and eldest brother John in Sandgate. Kicked out by John she supposedly married in Sandgate to Charles Pleystill, a painter from Bellows Falls. She said he was good looking and treated her well. He then told her that he beat his first wife to death. There is no record of the marriage or of Pleystill's existence. The *World* Reporter found nothing about him either, nothing that they only lived together for two weeks.

In Lizzie's version she went to her mother's after Pleystill chased her then ran away to Jane McClure in North Hoosick, near Troy, a schoolmate of hers from Ireland. There was a woman of that name listed in that locality in the 1900 census. She was born Ireland, c. 1856. The following census gives her birth as c. 1860 and states that she arrived in the United States in 1883. We cannot prove that there was a connection with Lizzie, and it appears that she married prior to her arrival.

Lizzie next appeared at a salon in Philadelphia, run by one of Thomas MacQuillan's sons, John. Initially mistaken for John's sister she was recognised as having dated his brother, Nathaniel, when she was fifteen. John's wife distrusted her and sent her and her son packing. They rented a cottage in Kensington Avenue. On 14 March 1888, during one of the worst blizzards to hit the East Coast, a fire broke out in her house. Suspecting

⁸ New York State Archives; Albany, New York; State Population Census Schedules, 1915; Election District: 04; Assembly District: 01; City: Fishkill; County: Dutchess; Page: 20

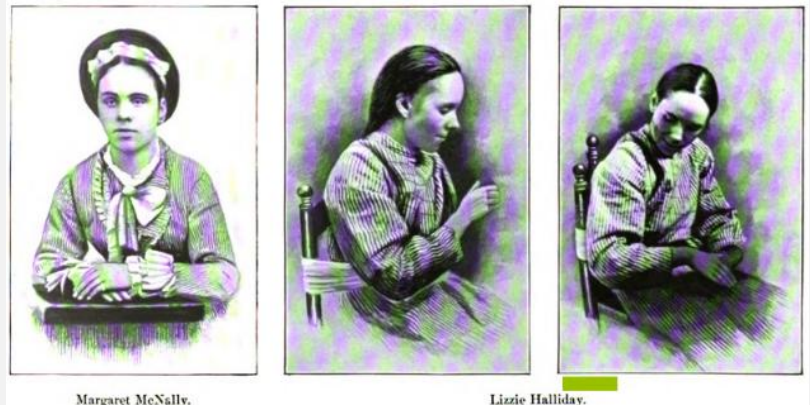
⁹ New York State Department of Health; Albany, NY, USA; New York State Marriage Index, Certificate 427

¹⁰ Ancestry.com. New York State, Marriage Index, 1881-1967 [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2017. Cert 9020.

¹¹ Letters of Administration of Estates, 1787-1916; New York. Surrogate's Court (Washington County); Probate Place: Washington, New York

arson as the house had recently been insured detectives traced Lizzie and her son, who would have been seven or eight years old, to a New Jersey hospital. They had walked through the blizzard and required treatment. Charlie was given to the Society to Protect Children from Cruelty. Lizzie never saw her son again.

She received a two-year jail sentence for arson under the name Margaret Hopkins. She arrived at the Eastern State Penitentiary on 4 May. Prison records state she was 25 years old, born Ireland and a weaver by trade. Her parents were still living. She was an illiterate widow with one child¹². It was her second conviction. She was in jail at the time of the Whitechapel murders so could not have been Jack the Ripper. On 17 July 1890, prison physicians judged her insane and sent her to an asylum, the Blockley Alms-house in Western Philadelphia. That judgment later helped save her life as it showed evidence of insanity before the murders.



Lizzie Halliday

Lizzie Halliday.

In 1891 she was in Newburgh, seeking work at an employment office run by Mrs. Smith. There she overheard Paul Halladay asking about a live-in-domestic worker on his farmstead. She left with him the same day. Paul was a widower in poor health, fitting the profile of some of her previous husbands. Most of his income came from making and delivering charcoal. He was sixty-seven years old. Originally from Antrim like Lizzie, he needed someone to do the domestic work on his farm, while he struggled with the manual labour. None of his previous workers had stayed, due to the tough conditions. Halladay's sons disliked Lizzie, but he refused to heed their advice to get rid of her.

One of the sons Johnny, regarded as an imbecile, died in a fire when Halladay was away on 2 May 1891. Another barn burnt down three weeks later. Several horses died. Halladay and Lizzie travelled to Newburgh to buy new horses. Halladay told Mrs. Smith that Lizzie started the fires for the insurance and killed John. Lizzie complained that Halladay wanted to steal her money to pay for new horses. She then left with the money. She rented some horses, with false information, and hired a local man as driver. They traded the horses with the help of some gypsies. The police arrested Lizzie.

Paul Halladay arrived at the police station and demanded his money back. The police refused. Halladay then told them to charge Lizzie with arson and the murder of Johnny, saying she confessed to him that she cut Johnny's throat with a knife. Halladay previously said that Lizzie was sick on the day of the fire and Johnny carried her to safety then returned to the building to try and save possessions. Lizzie later claimed that the fire was an insurance scam organised by Halladay. The Newburgh magistrate refused to charge Lizzie with the additional offences, since they were not committed in his area.

Brought into court Lizzie began kicking, screaming, and spitting. The judge ordered a psychiatric evaluation. Halladay insisted she was shamming. One doctor declared her insane, another disagreed. Further examinations followed over several months with Lizzie being moved between jails and asylums. The superintendent of the Middletown asylum said she was insane and noted that she threatened to kill her husband. Convicted Lizzie was found to be insane.

She went to the mental asylum at Auburn in February 1892 then, when it closed in August, to the new Matteawan State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. She was unclean, refused food and was violent. She had delusions that animas were all around her. Dr. Allison, the superintendent, felt that she had not recovered from an illness, and this had caused her mental decline. His diagnosis included Tokophobia, a pathological fear of pregnancy, and "puerperal Mania" now known as postpartum depression.

¹² Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; Convict Reception Registers; Series: 15.56

Lizzie returned to Halladey. This might indicate that there was some truth in rumours of him being abusive to her or that he remained in desperate need of someone to do the domestic tasks. It was a fatal decision. Lizzie told Bly that there was a gang of robbers and murderers in the area, who burnt the barn and killed Johnny to cover up other murders. They had parties in town and girls in disreputable houses stole things for them. The gang then drugged and killed the girls. Lizzie said more people than the MacQuillan's were killed on the same night, describing those victims as peddlers buried in lead mines, and said the gang also targeted women and sailors. She described witnessing murders, including that of a peddler from Newburg and one of the MacQuillan women. Bly was convinced that she was an active participant.

The *World* reporter mentioned the death of a peddler, Samuel Hutch, who was found dead in a lead mine. He had passed through Walker Valley where the Halleday farm was located one or two days before the murder. The *World*, and later Owen, speculated that Lizzie was involved. After Bly's article the press alleged that the police arrested a gypsy, Levi Rogers, for Hutch's murder and discovered that he had sent a package to a woman, believed to be Lizzie. The package contained Hutch's jewellery. Levi confessed to horse stealing and was sent to jail for seven years¹³. Prison records confirm that Levi was sentenced on 8 June 1890 and released on 27 June 1895¹⁴. The inquest into the murder of Samuel Hutch closed on 28 May 1890 with no clues to his murderer¹⁵. No mention was made at the time of any articles posted to Lizzie who was then in an asylum for the Philadelphia arson. It is unlikely that she and Levi ever met, as her release overlapped both his imprisonment and Hutch's murder.

We can only make sense of her comments about peddlers being murdered in lead mines by speculating that she had heard rumours in the locality about Hutch's death, and involved herself in them, just as she hinted, she was involved in the death of her first husband. She denied any responsibility in the MacQuillan's deaths and claimed that three of her husbands, Hopkins, Pleystill, and Halleday, were murderers. Bly thought that Lizzie was shamming insanity and did not believe all her stories. Given the contradictions it is hard to disagree with Bly. The question is whether the stories were deliberately exaggerated, invented or stem from the mind of a mentally ill person.

The jury at her murder trial concluded that Lizzie was sane, despite conflicting opinions from the medical profession. On 27 June 1894 she became the first woman sentenced to die in the electric chair, introduced in 1890 as a more humane method of executions than hanging. It had been used to execute seven men in New York. On the way back to her cell Lizzie bit Sheriff Beecher's hand, managing to pierce his gloves and cause an infection¹⁶.

A controversial decision was made by Governor Flowers to replace the death penalty with life imprisonment in the Auburn State Prison for women¹⁷. Dr Talcott, Medical Superintendent of the Middletown State Hospital and Dr Allison who had the same position at Matteawan stated that she was insane when in their care prior to the murders and the commissioners appointed by the Governor endorsed this view. Flowers decided it was much safer, in his words, to commute the sentence to life imprisonment¹⁸. He could not have foreseen that Lizzie would kill again.

Lizzie went back to the Matteawan asylum. She stayed there for the rest of her life. In 1895 Lizzie was placed in solitary confinement as she and another murderess, Jane Shannon, attempted to strangle an attendant, Catherine Ward¹⁹. This did not last long as she attended a minstrel performance, ran to recognise the firemen who assisted with a fire there on 24 January 1896²⁰. Amer Ben Ali, convicted of the Jack-the-Ripper-style murder of Carrie Brown was also at the show.

In 1901 Lizzie applied for a veteran widow's pension for Halladey. There was no legal reason to refuse, although the funds were useless to Lizzie. This shows an obsession with money, traced back to Lizzie's claims

¹³ *The Providence News*, 20 November 1893, p. 3

¹⁴ *New York State Archives; Albany, NY, USA; Discharges of Convicts by Commutation of Sentences, 1883-1942; Volume: Volume 11*

¹⁵ *New York Sun*, 30 May 1890, p. 7

¹⁶ *Jersey City News*, 24 August 1894, p. 4

¹⁷ *New York State Archives; Albany, NY, USA; Executive Clemency and Pardon Application Ledgers and Correspondence, 1849-1903; Series Number: B0049: Executive Orders, 1884-1929; Volume: Volume 19*

¹⁸ *Public Papers of Roswell P Flower, Governor, 1894, Albany, 1895, p. 660-61*

¹⁹ *Evening Bulletin Maysville*, 2 September 1895, p.1

²⁰ *San Antonio Daily Light*, 10 March 1896, p. 8

to Justice Mandell. Nellie Bly offered Lizzie \$200 for the truth which she attempted to grab. Lizzie wanted money but she also wanted respect.

Four years later, a new attendant at the asylum, Nellie Wicks, began treating Lizzie with kindness. After less than a year, Nellie became engaged and decided to move away and specialise in nursing. On her last day, 27 September 1906, Lizzie followed her into the bathroom, locked the door and stabbed her two hundred times with a pair of scissors. Nellie Wicks was still alive when staff broke the door down fifteen minutes later. She survived for a further twenty minutes.

At the inquest the coroner asked Lizzie why she committed this murder. She said, “She tried to leave me.” Wicks was the first known female law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty in the United States. The institution placed Lizzie in extended solitary confinement. Six years passed before she was allowed outside, and then only for an hour of exercise each day. In 1915 she tried to strangle herself, the last of her suicide attempts.

She died on 28 June 1918 after an eight-month battle against Bright’s disease and was buried in the Matteawan State Hospital Cemetery. Only numbers, not names, appear on the headstones. The death record lists her as Eliza Margaret Halliday, born 1859.

Lizzie could not have been Jack the Ripper. Apart from her being in the same institution as Amer Ben Ali there are other slight connections between her case and the Whitechapel murders. The press stated that Thomas McQuillan had performed with Richard Mansfield in 1889, following Mansfield’s return from London where he played Jekyll and Hyde in 1888²¹. In the same year that Nellie Bly met Lizzie she ran articles on police corruption in New York, contributing to scrutiny on Inspector Thomas Byrnes who arrested and, some believed, framed Ali. Between her interviews with Lizzie, Bly visited the site of the Great Exhibition in Chicago. Serial killer H H Holmes, another alleged Ripper suspect, was active in Chicago at the time.

When we peel away all the rumours and misinformation, we are left with a very disturbed woman who killed at least four others. We only know the reason in one case. Lizzie feared losing Nellie Wicks. Perhaps the frequent marriages, legal or otherwise, constant travelling and failure to connect with her family, indicate a search for stability. There are hints of abuse from her husbands, balanced by accusations that she abused the older men who she married. Her mental condition deteriorated after her child was taken by the state.

It remains debatable if she met the standard definition of insanity as being unable to distinguish between fantasy and reality. It is hard to accept that Sarah and Margaret were random victims, given the family history. The medical professions who knew her before the trial felt that she was mad. The police and Nellie Bly, who spoke to her afterwards, felt that she was not.

Most of our information about Lizzie comes from two interviews, given to a reporter who actively disliked her. She hinted at secrets such as other murders which, if verified, might justify her description as the worst woman in the world. Perhaps she was influenced by violent men. Perhaps some of them, or the stories they told, were figments of her imagination just as her link with Jack the Ripper was imagined by Sheriff Beecher.

Paul Williams is an author of three non-fiction books, including ‘A Definitive Guide to the Jack the Ripper Suspects’. This is his twelfth article for Ripperologist, and his first for seven years.



The Kirkgate Wesleyan Chapel, Bradford, in 1887. It was here that Johnny Gill attended Sunday School prior to his murder.

²¹ *Evening World New York*, 25 June 1894, p 5

Christopher-Michael DiGrazia

The Last Word



Well, now. It's been a long time since I've been in the lists, so you'll forgive me if I stumble around a bit. But won't you have a cup of tea and sit with me a while?

The question before us today is, "*Should there be a plaque or other form of memorial dedicated to the victims erected in Whitechapel?*" It's not an easy question to answer at the best of times, but in this era of #MeToo and *The Five*, it's one that's fraught with danger.

What I mean is that, outside of the field of "Ripperology" – not a term I've particularly cared for, but a good umbrella for this discussion – people can be very uncomfortable about Jack the Ripper. Become too voluble on the subject – despite the fact that podcasts and TV shows dedicated to true crime consistently outdraw almost any other subject in audience ratings – a detailed knowledge of the Autumn of Terror is very often seen as, if not mentally unhealthy, then morbid and a bit frightening.

A personal anecdote here: many years ago, I was a wannabe contestant for the American version of *The Weakest Link* and mentioned my interest in the Ripper, for which I was immediately upbraided by another contestant, who demanded I be removed, as she simply could not "be comfortable" in the same room with me.

And there, I think, we may have put our finger on part of the reason a memorial is so problematic. Why them? And why such a nervous response from my erstwhile contestant?

I decided to take a quick internet tour of "memorials to murder victims." My search turned up a few plaques to individuals (surprisingly, the town of Medford, Massachusetts, has one dedicated to hometown girl Elizabeth "The Black Dahlia" Short), but in the main, my search turned up memorials to victims of terror attacks, of school shootings or – and here is the interesting point – known killers. Memorials to victims of an *unknown* killer are, if not non-existent, statistically insignificant. There are, for example, no plaques for those murdered by Austin's "Servant Girl Annihilator" or the six slaughtered by New Orleans' mysterious Axeman. So why Jack the Ripper?

The name is one reason, of course, for as Robert Graysmith observed, his crimson moniker ranks only with Son of Sam and Zodiac in evocative horror, but also, to a large degree, because of what Stephen Knight called "*the foggy gaslight of Whitechapel.*" The era of the Ripper continues to be romanticized, even though we know better. We still expect Sherlock Holmes and Flashman, Gilbert and Sullivan and the Marlborough House set. "Victorian" conjures up a world of elegance, prosperity and, above all, *style*, as opposed to our own time of casual clothes, cookie-cutter pop idols and identical Hondas, Fords, and Mini Coopers. We think of the past as *Downton Abbey* and not *Ripper Street*.

I also suspect – and let me say for the record that this is only my impression and not meant as a slap at anyone other than myself – it's because there is a desire for knowledge of the Ripper to be taken seriously, not as a macabre hobby or grotesque monomania (and here I'm thinking of poor John Morrison and his obsession with Mary Kelly, "the prima donna of Spitalfields"). Hence books on the Whitechapel Murders carrying subtitles of "Complete History" or "The Facts" or even the *Rip's* "Journal of Jack the Ripper, East End and Victorian Studies." But because the field tends to be dominated by men, the cynical, the suspicious or the perpetually-offended will always be looking for the *real* interest, which could only be – right first time! – an erotic obsession with the death of women combined with a secret admiration for the instrument of their destruction.

You get a taste of that in *The Five*, when Hallie Rubenhold declares "*they have never seemed real or of any consequence to us before*" (the "us" being *you*, of course, misogynist), or when Judith Walkowitz, in *City of RIPPEROLOGIST* 173

Dreadful Delight, opines that "*The Whitechapel murders have continued to provide a common vocabulary of male violence against women, a vocabulary [intensifying] fears of male violence and [convincing] women that they are helpless victims.*" Interest in the Ripper, we are told, if not always so obliquely, is because his violence is a stimulant for the man who, at base, hates and fears women, especially those "in control" of their own bodies, their own sexuality.

(Which, as a sideline, leaves me wondering what the attitude is towards *women* who find interest in the Great Victorian Mystery. I suspect that "traitors to their sex" or "collaborators with the patriarchy" is the least offensive categorization).

It's not to say that murder victims or murder sites aren't recognized. After all, I did mention the Black Dahlia plaque up above. And people still stay at the Lizzie Borden bed and breakfast in Fall River and gather at the bottom of Cielo Drive in Beverly Hills to remember the horrific death of Sharon Tate. But the fact that an "industry," as the pejorative has it, has grown up around the brutal slaying of five prostitutes (mark that word, with all of the psychosexual baggage it carries!) and their taunting, elusive killer in his iconic costume of topper and Inverness cape, surgeon's bag in hand, is disturbing to some and grotesquely offensive to others.

Leaving aside the vexing question of just where such a memorial should be placed – the Ten Bells? Mitre Square? Christ Church? – we are still left with the uncomfortable fact that, to the world at large, we would be remembering Polly Nichols, Annie Chapman, Elizabeth Stride, Catharine Eddowes, and Mary Kelly not for themselves, but because they achieved immortality at the edge of *his* knife. And that, dear reader, is a conundrum to which I have no good answer.

Christopher-Michael DiGrazia is co-author of The News from Whitechapel: Jack the Ripper in The Daily Telegraph as well as the Theda Bara Mysteries series, praised by Paul Begg as "A cracking piece of crime fiction."

...Weird

Coincidences...

...253 Whitechapel Road was the location where Thomas Coran found a bloodied knife in the early hours of the 1st October 1888. It was next door to 254 Whitechapel Road, a brothel where David Cohen was arrested in December 1888. Prior to that, 254 Whitechapel Road had been a cigar shop owned by John Levy. John's brother Levi lived at 8 Mitre Street, which backed on to the spot where Catherine Eddowes body was found on the 30th September 1888...

...The Old King Lud public house at Ludgate Circus was a drinking hole for John Arnold, the newspaper vendor who informed the New York Daily Herald of a murder on Backchurch Lane, twenty-four hours before the discovery of the Pinchin Street torso in September 1889. It was also frequented by Thomas Neill Cream, the serial killer, and ex-Detective Inspector John Meikeljohn, the corrupt former policeman who conducted his dodgy dealings from the bar there...

...Suspect Edward Buckley was a cigar maker, as was Joseph Isaacs, Hyam Hyams, Israel Schwartz and Barnet Abrahams, the murderer of H Division's Ernest Thompson in 1900. The two unmarried sisters lodging at 29 Hanbury Street at the time of Annie Chapman's murder worked in a cigar shop, and 254 Whitechapel Road, where suspect David Cohen was arrested, had previously been a cigar makers...

Six Questions with...

Tobey Alexander

Interview with Madeleine Keane

Question 1 - I really enjoyed the concept of the entire *Raven* book series. What was the inspiration for this story?

Answer - For a start, thank you! You have no idea how worried I was people wouldn't like the character or idea. You see, the Raven has been in my head since I was a teenager, long before I dreamed I would ever release a book. I could never find the right way to release him on the world, and yet it all fell into place while we were on holiday in London as a family. Finding ourselves at the premiere for *Black Adam*, I heard The Rock talking about it being his passion project, and I remember thinking that I had never released mine. On the tube back to the house we were staying at, I remember telling my family, "I'm writing *The Raven*," and luckily they knew what I was talking about.

It was fine having the main character, but I had no idea how it would all fit. I've always enjoyed writing stories that blur fact and fiction and I remember growing up reading all manner of true crime magazines (OK, I used to sneak into the spare room and found where my mum hid her collection of them). It was honestly like all the dots connected as I saw the sign for Whitechapel and by the time we got back into the house I was researching Jack's crimes and reminding myself about the legacy of his murders. By the time we left London, I had fleshed out a new way to add to the mystery, while wanting to make sure the finer details were respectful and tied back to fact.

The Raven himself has lived with me that long in my head, I'm certain there are parts of me in there. Finally finding him a place in a book took a lot, as I always wanted to do him justice. Designing his outfit took the longest, and I'm happy with how he came to be. It took a few iterations to start the story off, but when I decided to set it in both past and present, I knew I could tie in Jack's murders and bring it to a new audience who may not be as aware of the murders or else hadn't spent their childhood secretly reading true crime magazines!

Question 2 - What's your research/creative process like?

Answer - Chaos! No, I'm joking. Being neurodivergent, my process isn't exactly conventional, but it works with my brain. I will always think of the idea, the rough story and then sleep on it. Leaving it a few days, I tend to find the ideas that I remember are the ones worth writing about and remembering. For every new project, or series, I will buy a brand new notebook (I'm saving up for a ReMarkable to save me money and space with half-filled notebooks). I then tend to pour out all of my ideas and then start connecting the dots. Sometimes I will roll out a giant sheet of paper and then plot the whole book, roll it up and then hide it somewhere in the house. I then only look at it once I've finished writing to see how much stayed from that original outline.

That may sound strange, but I like to go with the flow and let the characters take control in a really odd way. When it comes to research, I really enjoyed digging through the world of Jack the Ripper. I wanted to make sure I could tease people who may not know very much to go and find out the fact behind the fiction. I remember working on the infamous passage supposedly written by Jack, and you'll know it plays a part in the story. My family were fed up of seeing random news articles, print outs and other bits lying around the house. What I also wanted to do was make sure the factual parts, Frederick Abberline and the victims weren't messed with and the facts reflected the events such as locations and the likes. Where my artistic licence came into play, was when I expanded into the unknown, but I wanted to make sure details were close to reality to pay respect and add authenticity.

Question 3 - Is there a specific part of the Whitechapel murders case that stands out to you?

Answer - Jack's message. I remember watching *From Hell* when we got back from London (not for research, just because it felt right to watch as I was in that mood while researching for the book). The chalk words were taunting and it remains unclear the meaning or motive, so I thought I'd bring another level to it.

I've visited London a few times both while writing the series and after, and I still haven't had as much time as I would have liked visiting the locations. I know they look very different now, but I not only had my own photos but spent hours looking at past and present images to get the right feel and capture the locations. I think the fact Jack was never caught makes his legacy even more disturbing. I know there have been many theories over the years, bringing my unique perspective to it I wanted to add to foreboding mystery more than anything else.

Question 4 - I noticed that the books are in more of a serial format than a book series. Which of these formats do you prefer and why?

Answer - The serial format was done on purpose. When I settled down to write *The Raven*, I wanted it to be a very visual story. I write by watching scenes and elements unfold in my very active imagination, most of my editing takes place before I even write on the page as I have a very active imagination and watch scenes over and over again until it's right. Writing *The Raven* as a serial, I also challenged myself to write the books and screenplay version and pitch it as a TV series. By presenting it to the audience in this format, the idea of seeing it on the screen as some multi-season TV or streaming show wouldn't feel too alien, and would hopefully sell the idea to people who would then want to see it. I also saw it as a challenge as normally I write in novel format these days, so keeping my "episodes" to the point and interconnected was a fresh challenge as a writer. I've not had the screenplay picked up yet, but I have won a few film festival awards for the adaptation so, you never know, maybe we'll be watching it on Netflix or HBO one day?

Question 5 - What current projects do you have in the pipeline? OR What other subjects are you interested in/hobbies?

Answer - I'm currently writing my first non-fiction book which shares my experiences being late diagnosed with autism and ADHD. It's a more terrifying project than anything I've written before because it's deeply personal, but I hope it will be a useful resource for people. I'm sharing a lot about my life in there to break down some barriers and misconceptions which is why I find it rather unnerving.

My other hobbies have seen me take my oldest son who was thirteen at the time trekking to Everest in 2022 and I'm planning on taking my youngest son trekking when he's eighteen. I consider myself something of a wanderer and my favourite thing is grabbing the dog, his lead and the family and just disappearing into the Peak District for a meander. Failing that films are my special interest and I'm excited to say that I'm slowly making in-roads into the world of filmmaking with some of my short film screenplays in the hope of getting something produced and made in the coming years. All I can say is, dream big!

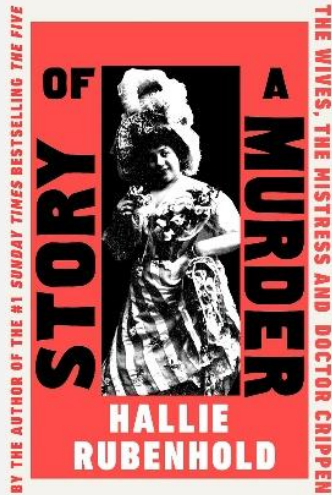
Question 6 - Anything else you want people to know about you?

Answer - A random fact about me...for a start I'm an author that (I'm not sure if I dare say this for fear of upsetting people)...I don't like coffee! I know authors live on coffee, but the only hot drink you'll see me drinking is a chai latte infrequently. When I turn down hot drinks, you can imagine the looks of horror I get. In terms of anything more interesting than that, growing up my favourite films were Indiana Jones and Robocop, so much so I almost enrolled in a degree to do Ancient History and Archaeology but opted for Psychology instead, in terms of the latter in my day job (outside of my author pseudonym) I can say I'm not a robot at least.

Review

Story of a Murder by Hallie Rubenhold

Mark Ripper



‘No murderer should ever be the keeper of their victim’s story,’ or so the blurb to Hallie Rubenhold’s new book, *Story of a Murder*, tells us. It is difficult to disagree: indeed, in the case under Rubenhold’s microscope – the murder of Belle Elmore by her husband, Hawley Harvey Crippen, in London in 1910 – extensive police investigations and legal proceedings were undertaken to ensure that this undesirable eventuality was avoided. Had Crippen really been the century-plus-long ‘keeper’ of the story of his wife, then his unconvincing explanation of her mysterious disappearance (which was that she had left the country, and then, perhaps perforce, died overseas) would have been accepted without further enquiry, and would be current today.

Of course, Rubenhold’s real point is that the circumstances of Belle’s death are not defining of her life in its totality. She is peering assiduously down through the microscope, looking for nuances; Filson Young, the editor of *Trial of Hawley Harvey Crippen* in the Notable British Trials series, published ten years after the murder it describes, was reclining on the other side of the lens, looking back up, and everything looked smaller from there. In Young’s opinion, Belle was a harridan of pantomime proportions, and his characterisation of her as ‘extravagant, shrewish, “robust and animal”, “loud”, “aggressive”, inordinately vain, talentless, tasteless, parsimonious, “excitable”, “irritable” and “quarrelsome”’ (Rubenhold’s list, page 405) was influential on subsequent writers. Young was not her murderer, but he was her character assassin and the *de facto* ‘keeper’ of Belle’s story for decades to come. His binary interpretation of the Crippens’ dynamic, in which the killer’s actions were suggested to be almost excusable in the context of the provocation provided by the victim, was both novel and novelistic.

This is not to say that it did not have its critics at the time. The essence of Young’s thesis was in place by May 1917 when, in conjunction with Sir Edward Marshall Hall, he addressed Our Society (the so-called ‘Crimes Club’) on the subject of the Crippen case. Young’s ‘conception of Crippen’s character’ was said to be ‘opposed to official records,’ and, following the publication of *Trial of Hawley Harvey Crippen* in the first weeks of 1920, Lottie Albert, a friend of Belle’s, wrote to the *Sunday Dispatch* to defend her against Young’s misrepresentations. These dissenting voices were not powerful enough to prevent Young’s analysis of Belle’s character (and Crippen’s) from becoming the standard in studies of the case, but they were at least quarrelling with the right person. Nothing of which Crippen retrospectively accused Belle approached the thorough, relentless awfulness of Young’s vivid caricature; Young had gone out on a limb, and, if Rubenhold’s (quite proper) objections to the accuracy and fairness of Belle’s reception in the historiography of the case ought to be aimed at anyone, it is Young, rather than Crippen. Anyone seeking to understand more about this can refer to Nicholas Connell’s *Doctor Crippen* (Amberley Books, 2013, reviewed in *Ripperologist* 130), alongside the present volume.

Rubenhold’s previous book, *The Five*, contended that Jack the Ripper’s victims had been routinely dismissed as ‘just prostitutes’, although no Ripperologist worth his or her salt – a crucial qualification – would be so coarse, and many have spent years conscientiously establishing as fully as possible the life histories of ‘the five’ (not to mention others involved in the Ripper narrative). But if the reader has detected a potential tactical theme here – to subtly push at an open door and then call it an act of rehabilitation, or the liberation of a victim’s story from the control of her murderer, when it isn’t quite that – then I have good news. Rubenhold does an excellent job restoring Belle Elmore and Charlotte Bell (Crippen’s first wife) to life; her biographical skills are on full display. She confines herself almost entirely to the evidence, engages in speculation rarely,

judiciously and transparently, and gives the reader the benefit of her extensive reading and research without sanctimony or condescension. There can be no doubt, following Rubenhold's investigation of the matter, that Crippen himself took steps to sterilise Belle when she was still in her early twenties, that the scar which figured so prominently in court was the physical remnant of this painful and probably unnecessary operation, and that, besides its evidential value, it provided an important insight into his character. What kind of doctor was Crippen, after all? His surgical skills may have been undeveloped, but this may not have prevented him from indulging his personal motivations, including his desire to exercise control over women's bodies, under the camouflage of medical intervention. Such were the times that iatrogenic harm – pain, disfigurement, loss of function – was an almost inevitable by-product of any invasive surgery. When he transitioned into the business of mail-order patent medicines, flogging sugar pills to those hoping to obtain relief from genuine symptoms, he offended even the homoeopaths, who liked to pretend that their own hopeless prescriptions had the advantage of having at least been informed by a personal examination of the patient. But he got rich – rich enough by today's standards – and cultivated respectable social associations alongside some very dubious ones. If we are to give the word 'doctor' any force in the common vernacular – if we are to agree that it signifies some form of higher learning, expertise and professional aptitude – then we would do well to detach it from Crippen, whose exploitative practices had nothing to do with any of the nobler aims of medicine. Rubenhold makes the point that Crippen's medical qualifications, such as they were, could not be recognised in the United Kingdom.

Ethel Le Neve, Crippen's typist and lover, comes out of Rubenhold's book with her head held, perhaps, a little higher than usual, but only just. She was lucky to encounter a justice system which had little appetite to chase her down so long as Crippen himself fell into its clutches. The stars aligned: Crippen, on one side of the prison wall, and Le Neve, on the other, persisted with their saccharine mutual expressions of love and affection until the very end, but whether these were genuine or influenced by the fear that the other may yet give away their secrets is open to interpretation. With Crippen's execution, Ethel came back to life, eventually marrying and having children. Rubenhold's Le Neve is an evolution of the 'New Woman' of the 1890s, and she defends the position with some success, although some of her (Le Neve's) agency is expressed in behaviours, such as lying to the police and committing fraud, which could be considered less than admirable. Le Neve seems to me to have been a sort of disintegrated personality who, in her insecurity, hoped to drift into the slipstream of something real, something meaningful, something authentic, and thereby to become real and meaningful and authentic herself. Her error of judgement was to think that Crippen was any more real, meaningful or authentic than she was.

I have to remark upon a couple of mistakes in the proofing and editing. To find a misplaced apostrophe in the fourth paragraph is disheartening (*'Until relatively recently, murderer's tales would jump directly from the newspaper into cultural legend'*), but such errors are relatively few and far between. On page 329, it may have been better not to describe Crippen as 'disinterested' during his capital trial; he may have been 'distracted', 'bored' or 'paying little attention', but he was hardly without a stake in it. Rubenhold reproduces the photograph, said to be of Crippen, which was attributed to the photographer Nathaniel Merrill of Johnson, Vermont, and first published in Roger Dalrymple's *Crippen: A Crime Sensation in Memory and Modernity* (Boydell and Brewer, 2020, reviewed in *Ripperologist* 167). I continue to believe that this is really a photograph of William C. Crippen, the principal of the local school in Johnson between 1875 and 1881 – but little doubt the myth will take hold irrespective of what I think about it.

Beyond this, there is little to criticise in this readable and sometimes instructive book. Perhaps the best way to read it is to overlook the eye-catching mission statement, which is only a diversion in the first place, and to allow Rubenhold to do something at which she is very good: telling interesting stories in often interesting ways.

Published by Doubleday, 2025.

494+xvi pages



An Illustrated Encyclopedia. The 1891 Murder of Carrie Brown

Howard and Nina Brown

Privately published, 2025

458pp; illus

Softcover £17.90, eBook £11.60



56-year-old Carrie Brown, known as 'Shakespeare', not 'Old Shakespeare' as almost every newspaper called her, was found in Room 31 of the East River Hotel, a run-down establishment on Manhattan's Lower East Side, in the morning of Friday, 24th April 1891. She had been strangled and her body mutilated in a manner that some thought was reminiscent of Jack the Ripper.

The murder of Carrie Brown was largely forgotten until recent years when the possible connection with Jack the Ripper attracted interest, so much so that she is quite often listed as a possible victim. In honesty, it is unlikely that Carrie Brown was killed by Jack the Ripper, but the story is fascinating in itself and introduces the reader to some people like Thomas Byrne, the famous head of New York's Detective Bureau who allegedly made several disparaging statements about the London police and said that if Jack the Ripper came to New York he would have had him behind bars in two days. Byrne was put embarrassingly on the spot when the murderer of Carrie Brown wasn't caught. Sadly, it is doubtful that those disparaging remarks were ever really made or not, but the story puts Carrie Brown firmly in the Ripper story.

Howard and Nina Brown, who have studied this case for many years, must know more about it than anyone alive. Their book *East Side Story*, a substantial 600 pages, is extremely detailed and essential reading. It's only available as an eBook, which is a shame, but this encyclopedia of Carrie Brown's murder is available as both an eBook and

a handsome, heavily illustrated softcover edition. There are 216 entries, many about aspects of the case, but mostly about everyone involved, minor and major players alike.

A lot of hard work went into *An Illustrated Encyclopedia. The 1891 Murder of Carrie Brown*, and it is a tribute to Howard and Nina Brown. A book well worth having on your bookshelf, be it an actual shelf or an electronic one. A minor criticism is that it would have benefitted from a good editor to correct typos and tidy up the writing, but it's churlish to be critical of such a valuable and indispensable reference book that tells you everything you need to know about the Carrie Brown case. Highly recommended.

Whispers in the Fog: Decoding the Crimes of Jack the Ripper

Anne Carpenter

Independently Published, 2024

52pp

eBook £1.99



"*The fog rolled in thick...*" There's a lot of fog rolling in in this book and quite a bit of teetering - London was "*a city teetering on the brink of chaos*" and "*a city teetering on the edge of modernization...*" And sewing metaphors are popular, life in the East End "*was a tapestry woven with vibrancy, struggle, and an unyielding spirit...*", and "*the social fabric of the East End was intricately woven with diverse communities...*" This isn't a bad £1.99 worth, but there's nothing here that's new.

Jack the Ripper on Film and TV

Scott Palmer

Cypress Hills Press, 2024

190pp; illus

ISBN: 9781088212325

Hardcover £26

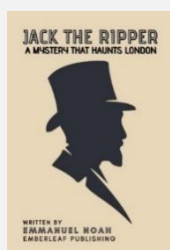


This isn't a book one can wholeheartedly recommend. The issue is that it is outdated. It primarily gives details about Jack the Ripper films from 1926 (*The Lodger*) through to 2001 (*From Hell*), which means it has nothing to say about anything that has emerged in the last twenty-five years. As for television productions, it refers to various shows like *The Veil* (which was never actually broadcast), *Thriller*, *Kolchak*, the excellent *Barlow and Watt* drama-documentary, *Jack the Ripper*, broadcast by the BBC in 1973, as well as *The Secret Identity of Jack the Ripper* (1988), but the appearance of Jack in TV shows of more recent years is ignored. Most documentaries aren't mentioned at all. The only thing that can be said in this book's favour is that it is lavishly illustrated with lots of stills from the movies, thumbnail portraits of the cast, and a scattering of movie posters, but photos can also be found on IMDB.

This is one book in a uniform series written by Scott Palmer. The publisher is given as Cypress Hills Press, but it appears to be from a self-publishing company called IngramSpark (www.ingramspark.com). Other books in the series seem to be mainly episode guides of long-finished television series and may be of interest to nostalgia enthusiasts, but a subject like Jack the Ripper doesn't lend itself to a cut-off of half a century ago, especially when that means omitting series like *Whitechapel* and *Ripper Street*. And with an eye ever on one's pocket, at £26 this book is also overpriced.

Jack the Ripper: A Mystery That Haunts London

Emmanuel Noah
Emberleaf Publishing, 2024
134pp
ISBN: 9798230169635
Softcover, £14.99



The back cover of this book states, "*In the dark and fog-shrouded streets of Victorian London, an elusive killer terrorised the East End...*" That there was fog when any of the murders were committed is an error, but it adds to the atmosphere in a way that authors are unable to resist. Nevertheless, reading about fog irritates, like hair on your collar after a visit to the hairdresser.

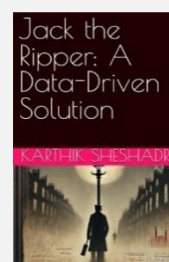
Emmanuel Noah appears to have written other books, although their subject matter, parenting and

knitting, seem far removed from Jack the Ripper, and this book unfortunately has the whiff of AI-generated about it. For example, the couple of pages about Kosminski conclude, "*Kosminski's story forces us to confront uncomfortable questions about the nature of justice, the limits of evidence, and the human tendency to seek closure, even at the expense of truth.*" Would anybody with even a basic knowledge of the story have written this about Kosminski?

Frankly, at nearly £15 for less than 150 pages, and the feel of being AI-generated, means this isn't a book one can recommend.

Jack the Ripper: A Data-Driven Solution

Karthik Sheshadri
Independently Published, 2024
56pp
ISBN: 979-8304563246
Softcover, £3.22, eBook, £2.38



This isn't an AI-written book. Karthik Sheshadri, who lives in California, has two other books to his credit, one of which is set in the chess world. Sheshadri is a chess master himself.

Jack the Ripper: A Data-Driven Solution is an intriguing book in which the author categorises and assesses the witness descriptions, determining which suspects the descriptions best fit, and ultimately concluding which suspect emerges as the most likely Ripper. Lechmerians, to coin a phrase, will be pleased with the solutions offered, even though he doesn't rank at the top of the list.

Modestly priced, easy to read, and not too long, it's worth taking a look at if the premise grabs you.

Unmasking Jack: Who Was Jack the Ripper

Owen S Grayson
Independently Published, 2025
47pp
ISBN: 979-8306163055
Softcover £4.79, eBook £3.21



I bought this book before I realised it was only 47 pages long, so I am pretty bruised now from kicking myself. But the cover is great, so I am not crying in a corner yet. The book is so short because the author only examines ten suspects, beginning with Jacob Isenschmid.

Curiously, Kosminski is mentioned once in passing, and further discussion is promised, but there is no discussion at all. He seems to have slipped Mr. Grayson's memory. It is when we get to Montague Druitt that doubts begin to creep in about whether a human being authored this book. Grayson argues that Druitt's *"background, mental health issues, and the timing of his death present a compelling narrative."* However, for me, it's the last of these that matters, along with the fact that Sir Melville Macnaghten, a senior-ranking policeman with an interest in the case who likely discussed it with those involved in the investigation, believed Druitt was Jack. The other factors are merely a not very thick icing on the cake.

Jack the Ripper: Debunking Myths About His Identity

Malcolm Michael Parker
Independently Published
182pp
ISBN: 9798306415871
Softcover £19.99



First thing to say is that asking £20 for this book is an outrage. The second thing is that Malcolm Michael Parker probably doesn't exist. My sincere apologies to Mr Parker if he is real, but this book looks and reads like yet another production by AI. There are sixteen chapters, each containing five sub-chapters. Hardly any of those chapters have much, if anything, to do with debunking myths about the killer's identity. The book doesn't deserve our attention, so I suggest you don't give it any.

Letters From Hell: Unmasking Jack the Ripper

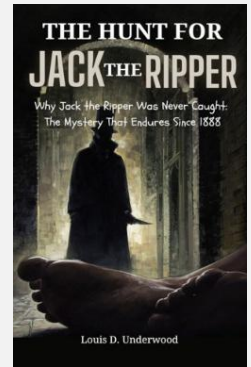
William Jones
Independently Published, 2025
210pp
ISBN: 979-8307775820
Hardcover £17.76, Softcover £10.49; eBook £2.42



Arrrrgggggh! "As the fog rolled through the narrow cobblestone streets..." Fog! There was no fog. And rolling over those cobblestoned streets... It all seems familiar, as does Druitt as "one of the earliest - and most persistent - suspects" and "Kosminski's name continued to surface in discussions among law enforcement and investigators..." Don't bother.

The Hunt For Jack the Ripper: Why Jack the Ripper Was Never Caught: The Mystery That Endures Since 1888

Louis D Underwood
Independently Published, 2025
92pp
ISBN: 979-8307638859
Softcover £9.85, eBook £4.10



Louis D Underwood has written several true crime books about famous murder cases and other mysteries. One of the odd things about this one is that he follows other books by first focusing on Druitt, Kosminski and Sickert, and another is the feel of AI about it, such as the conclusion to the assessment of Kosminski that his *"background shows the difficulties that immigrants experienced in Victorian London, including poverty, prejudice, and poor mental health treatment."*

Jack the Ripper

Fred Spooner
Independently Published, 2025
230pp
ISBN: 979-8307969595
Softcover £10, eBook £3.25



This book isn't poorly written. A lot of what it says is true, and some of it is interesting. However, Fred Spooner, whoever he is, has an abysmal grasp of the facts, or he's not real. Apologies to Mr Spooner if he's real, but I think it's fairly clear that this was written by artificial intelligence. As an example of a poor grasp of the facts, "Fred Spooner" informs us that Catherine Eddowes' death was *"followed closely by that of Elizabeth Stride."* This could be a simple mix-up, but it is hard to imagine that anyone with even a basic understanding of this subject would have made such a mistake.

A page later, "Fred" states that *"Anderson's involvement brought greater resources and expertise to the case, but it also created a degree of bureaucratic tension within the force."* Anderson, the Assistant Commissioner of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), had gone on leave on the morning that Mary Nichols was murdered and did not return until after the murders of Elizabeth Stride and Catherine Eddowes, the

Double Event. It's questionable whether he contributed anything to the investigation, and if he did, it was likely negligible.

But the mistakes get worse. "Fred" explains, *"One of the early suspects highlighted by the press was Aaron Kosminski..."* about whom there was a *"persistent media focus"*. However, Kosminski was not an early suspect, the press never associated him with the murders, and aside from an unmuzzled dog incident, he was never mentioned in the press.

A few lines later "Fred" says, *"Another individual often mentioned in early investigations was Montague John Druitt..."*. Druitt was not mentioned early in the investigations, nor later as far as is known.

He goes on to say that the origin of the name Jack the Ripper is debated, which it isn't.

I can understand that a collector of Jack the Ripper books might feel compelled to spend £10 on this book, but I suspect it won't be spent with song in one's heart and a smile on one's face.

The New Suspect: Unveiling Charles Allen Lechmere in the Jack the Ripper Case

Jonathan Nelles

Independently Published, 2025

64pp

eBook, £2.40



The opening sounded uncannily familiar, *"On the streets of Whitechapel in 1888, a heavy fog clung stubbornly to the uneven cobblestones..."* Fog is mentioned quite often in the opening paragraph of chapter one, chapter two (*"a dense fog"*), and chapter 16 (*"the fog of Victorian London"*). There may be others, but life is too short to waste looking.

Anyway, this book has the appearance of being AI-generated. Sometimes a book can hold your attention, others can be so over-written that your attention wanders. This book falls into the latter category. For example, this is how the book concludes, *"The powerful lure of unanswered questions about figures like the Ripper poses significant challenges and invites endless speculation. As we conclude this exploration, the enduring riddle of Jack the Ripper prompts us to consider other historical narratives waiting to be uncovered. These stories hold the potential to*

reshape our understanding of the past, revealing truths that remain concealed within the folds of history. The pursuit of these unexplored depths remains crucial—an endless voyage through the mists of time, driven by the hope that the shadows will one day yield their secrets."

If you have the time, you can delve into the Lechmere story as written by a computer. On the other hand, you might have something more interesting to do, like pulling lint from your navel.

Echoes of the Knife.

Investigating the Murders of Jack the Ripper

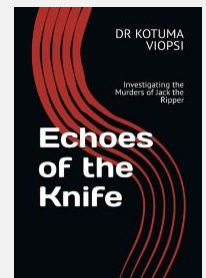
Dr Kotuma Viopsi

Independently Published, 2025

112pp

ISBN: 9798308077725

Softcover, £6.47



Echoes of the Knife.

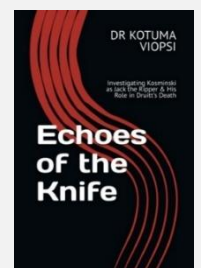
Investigating Kosminski as Jack the Ripper and His Role in Druitt's Death

Dr Kotuma Viopsi

Independently Published, 2025

84pp

ISBN: 9798308093923



Two books with the same title and very nearly the same subtitle, and both having the distinctive flavour of artificial intelligence. In the first of these books, the "author" writes about the so-called Maybrick diary and says that one of the arguments against its authenticity are anachronisms in the language. An example, is that the phrase I am Jack the Ripper *"was not used in the late 19th century."* This isn't true.

The account of Kosminski is always a reliable guide to whether the "author" possesses a reasonable grasp of the facts. Dr Viopsi's understanding sinks below the level of a farrago of nonsense. One of the principal reasons Kosminski became a suspect, *"is the proximity of the crimes to his residence in Whitechapel"*; a key piece of evidence often cited is a report from a police informant who claimed that Kosminski was seen with one of the victims, possibly Mary Jane Kelly, *"shortly before her murder"*; yet another piece of evidence that links Kosminski to the murders is the statement by a police officer that he *"was heard*

making statements in the asylum that suggested he had been involved in the murders...

I think “farrago of nonsense” is being very generous.

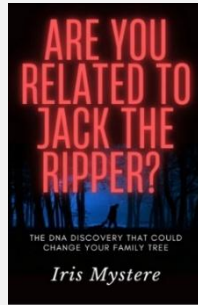
Are You Related to Jack the Ripper: The DNA Discovery That Could Change Your Family Tree

Iris Mystere

Independently Published, 2025
103pp

ISBN: 9798310943179

Softcover £14.99, eBook £4.99



“*The fog-laden streets...*” My major bugbear was rudely kicked awake with the opening words, and as I read on, the feeling grew that the text was generated or had at least been rewritten by AI. The clue is paragraph after paragraph saying a lot, but not much of it was relevant.

My ASD Obsession: Jack the Ripper

Harry Cuckow

Independently Published, 2025
319pp

eBook £7.25



In case you didn't know, ASD in the title of this book stands for Autism Spectrum Disorder, but it isn't mentioned in the book at all, making its presence in the title a bit of a mystery. But I feel that Mr Cuckow doesn't have ASD or anything else. The look and feel of this eBook once again suggests that it is an AI production, and it even follows similar volumes, such as discussion about Kosminski, Druitt, and Sickert, displaying no knowledge of how and why they are suspects, and making no mention of Anderson, Macnaghten, and Patricia Cornwell. Thumbs down.

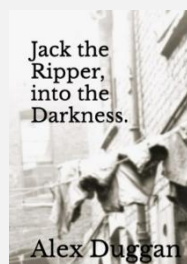
Jack the Ripper, Into The Darkness

Alex Duggan

Independently Published, 2025
336pp

ISBN: 9798313293998

Hardcover £15.99, Softcover
£9.99, eBook £3.99



This book was first published in softcover and as an eBook in 2021 under the title *Jack the Ripper:*

A New Investigation. This edition is different only in that it has been edited, with some text added here and there or removed altogether. The author does not alert readers to the book being a revised edition, nor did he indicate any additions that make it substantially different. A careful perusal suggests that it is pretty much the same book.

The review in *Ripperologist* 170, December 2021, remarked that Mr Duggan's knowledge of the case seemed superficial and that the book offered nothing new. Not mentioned in that review was Mr. Duggan's conclusion, which referred to an item in *The Star* newspaper on the day Mary Kelly died. It reported the apparent suicide of a man, name unknown, in Wanstead. Mr. Duggan states that this man is as good a suspect as any other mentioned in his book. I was particularly struck by this, recalling Macnaghten's conjecture that the murderer's mind gave way after that dreadful act, and any suicide so close to Mary Kelly's murder was therefore worth a closer look. However, the *Stratford Express*, on 10 November 1888, reported that the body was discovered at approximately 9:30 PM on Thursday, 8 November, the day before Mary Kelly was murdered.

Jack the Ripper: The Killer Who Vanished

Thomas Loki

Heritage Books, 2025

53pp

eBook £4.28



What put me off this booklet straight away was that it started with fog, an “*ever-present smog*”, a fog that “*rolled in like a living thing*”. There was no fog on the nights the Ripper killed. Then I read that “*the case against Druitt was weak*”, which it may have been, but since we have no idea what the case against him was, how do we know? Similarly, of Kosminski we are told that “*there was no concrete proof he had ever committed a murder*”, but again we don't know. Our ignorance is not proof.

Thomas Loki has churned out a number of short biographies about people as diverse as H.P. Lovecraft, Elizabeth Bathory, Kaspar Hauser, and Nikola Tesla, all published on the same day. This suggests to me that he has no real interest in the subject or knowledge about it, but it's an easy read,

just 53 pages long, and okay if you set aside my petty criticisms.

Mary Jane Kelly: England's Woman In The Iron Mask

Marco A Franzoi
Independently Published, 2025
171pp
ISBN: 9798307407479
Softcover £4.27, eBook £2.45



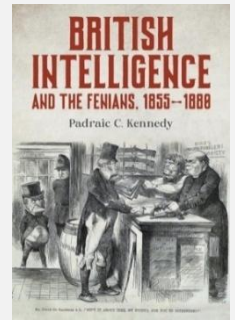
Marco Franzoi seems to have a chip on his shoulder. About 19 years ago, he presented a theory on JTR Forums regarding the identity of Mary Jane Kelly, but someone was unconvinced and suggested that he elaborate on the theory in a book. In my opinion, this was an entirely reasonable suggestion; however, Mr. Franzoi believed that the intention was to oust him from the message board, or that they would sift through the book looking for weaknesses, or, if they found nothing to critique, criticise the spelling or grammar. This was all plausible, of course, but one gets the impression that it is just a foot-stamping rant, particularly when Mr Franzoi questions why people prefer their information delivered in book form. He does not need books, he says. *"I can just algorithm the whole thing in my head,"* he states, so taken with the phrase that he employs it again a paragraph later.

The theory suggests that Mary Jane Kelly was really a woman from Liverpool called Mary Jane Wilson, but it seems that *"the Ripperologists"* couldn't find any evidence that Mary Jane Wilson ever left Liverpool, which seemed to dash the idea that she was Mary Kelly. Alternative suggestions were offered, but didn't persuade many people either and it was suggested that Mr Franzoi lay out his argument in a book, probably because those who were unable to *"just algorithm the whole thing"* in their head probably thought setting out the theory in a book would make it easier to understand.

They were wrong. To be honest, this isn't an easy book to read. It sort of makes sense when you reach the end of it. Sort of. I was tempted to read it all over again, but I was reminded that one shouldn't give in to temptation. So I didn't. The eBook is only a couple of pounds, if you fancy taking a closer look at the argument for Mary Wilson.

British Intelligence and the Fenians. 1855-1880

Padraic C Kennedy
Boydell Press, 2024
www.boydellandbrewer.com
424pp; illus; notes; biblio;
index.
ISBN: 9781837651061
£110 Hardcover, £29.99 eBook



Some time ago, a book by Michael T. Fox titled *The Fenian Rising: James Stephens and the Irish Republican Brotherhood, 1858-1867*, detailed the emergence of two revolutionary organisations, the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) and its American counterpart, the Fenian Brotherhood, both of which were committed to overthrowing British rule in Ireland. The British efforts to combat the activities of these organisations led to the rise of informers, espionage, and secret policing, which laid the groundwork for Britain's permanent intelligence agencies. The evolution of these events is described in Padraic C Kennedy's excellent book, *British Intelligence and the Fenians, 1855-1880*. What makes this book particularly interesting to historians of the Whitechapel murders is that Robert Anderson, Deputy Commissioner in charge of the C.I.D. at the time, was involved in those formative years of Britain's endeavours to gather intelligence and combat terrorism.

On 10 July 1866, Richard Southwell Bourke, Lord Naas, became Chief Secretary for Ireland, effectively the governor of Ireland, although subordinate to the Lord Lieutenant. It was to this office of Chief Secretary that Lord Frederick Cavendish would be appointed in 1882, only to be assassinated in Phoenix Park, Dublin, on the day he assumed office, 6 May, by members of a splinter group of the Irish Republican Brotherhood known as the Invincibles.

But back to 1866 and Lord Nass. He found it impossible to deal with the quantity of work flowing across his desk. Help was provided by Samuel Lee Anderson of the Law Department at Dublin Castle. In November, Naas asked Samuel Anderson for a report *"of the recent Insurrectionary movement in this country, and the antecedent events more intimately connected with it."* Samuel Anderson was snowed under with work himself and had employed his young brother,

Robert, to undertake some clerical work. Now he secured permission to use Robert to compile the report for Naas. The project took longer to complete than anticipated, but the Anderson brothers submitted the report at the end of January 1867. It apparently still exists in Ireland's National Archives. The report greatly impressed Naas and convinced him to establish an Intelligence Bureau dedicated to gathering intelligence on Fenian activities, particularly in England, where it was believed the Fenians were increasing in numbers. Naas continued to rely on Robert Anderson to provide any information he required.

The British eventually became alarmed, as much by the Fenian activities in London (such as the Clerkenwell explosion) as by their inability to effectively combat the threat. At last action was taken and a secret department was created, an intelligence gathering department, the Secret Service Department (SSD). Lt Col William Fielding arrived from Ireland to take up his position as the head of the department, and Robert Anderson was sent over to provide him with the same services he had done for his brother, Samuel Lee Anderson.

Padraic C Kennedy doesn't give much space to Anderson's activities in London but observes that Anderson's recollection of investigating leads lacks supporting evidence, but he nonetheless states that Anderson acted upon the information concerning Fenian activities he collected and indexed, and particularly suggested ways the British police could be more effective.

Inevitably the Secret Service Department clashed with the Metropolitan Police, neither cooperating even when pursuing the same leads. The petty disputes combined with a reduction in Fenian activities in Britain led to the closure of the department at the end of March 1868, but Anderson continued in London as "*special assistant on Irish affairs*" at the Home Office, receiving all information on Irish affairs in Britain and abroad, and doing much as he had done for his brother at Dublin Castle. The Anderson brothers created a comprehensive and efficient intelligence network, and "*together they comprised a semi-permanent de facto intelligence Bureau, the first of its kind in Victorian Britain.*" But as the 1860s became the 1870s there was a reduction in Fenian activities and a complacent British government wound down its

anti-Fenian activities, Padraic Kennedy brings this fascinating story to an end at the start of the 1880s. This is just when the story gets really interesting with a series of outrages and attempted outrages across Britain. Fortunately, this period is covered in an earlier book in the series, *State Surveillance, Political Policing and Counter Terrorism in Britain 1880-1914*, by Vlad Solomon (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2021).

This is an extremely well-written account of a complex story. It's essential reading for anyone interested in police history and the origins of Britain's intelligence services. It also provides some welcome insight into the early career of Sir Robert Anderson, a complex man whose life, career and personality desperately need to be examined in detail. Regrettably, the price of this book likely puts it beyond the reach of most people, but it would be worth requesting it from your local library. The eBook is more economical and could serve as a viable alternative.

The Dark and Dingy Underworld of the Victorian Slums

Bethan Watts

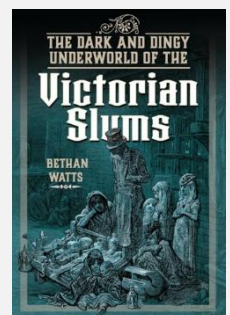
Pen and Sword History, 2025

www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

213pp; illus; notes; biblio; index.

ISBN: 9781399036986

Hardcover £25, eBook



I enjoyed this book, despite the problems mentioned below. Ten chapters explore a wide array of topics, including health, diet, entertainment, childhood, crime, and death, with each chapter looking at several related subjects. Chapter four, one of the longest in the book, is called '*Health, Hygiene and Medicine: Keeping Clean in the Slums*', and it has sections on washing, disease and death, mental illness, beauty, cosmetics, hair, and cleaning the home. As is probably self-evident, a lot of the topics don't apply to slum dwellers alone, and in some cases, such as cosmetics, probably not at all, so the book isn't just about slum life, it also embraces working-class life in Victorian Britain.

As interesting and informative as the book is, much of the research seems to have been online. This raises the spectre of using outdated and

inaccurate information, leading to errors and misleading statements, especially when it is used to provide facts about a subject one is uncertain or ignorant about. Bethan Watts makes a mistake in this regard when writing about Jack the Ripper. For example, she writes that John Davis, the elderly man who discovered the body of Annie Chapman, went to the outside toilet in the yard of 29 Hanbury Street, and, having finished ‘his business’, was returning across the yard when he saw Chapman’s body in the shadows of the early dawn. Brief as it is, this account is incorrect in almost every detail. Davis never went into the yard of 29 Hanbury Street but saw the body almost as soon as he opened the door into the yard. He immediately went for the police, returned briefly with two men he’d met outside, then left with them to get help. Bethan Watts appears to have confused Davis with Albert Cadosch, who lived next door. He had used the loo at the end of his yard, and had been returning across it when he heard what may have been the murder.

Another misrepresentation involves Mary Kelly, whom Bethan Watts claims travelled across Europe with her lovers as a high-end prostitute. In fact, Kelly, if she ever left Britain at all, went to Paris, which is hardly travelling “*across Europe*”. Bethan Watts’s source was Hallie Rubenhold’s *The Five*.

Bethan Watts fly-by of Ripper suspects (pages 127-129) consists of seven long paragraphs, three of which are taken up with the shawl / DNA story, which thankfully she dismisses. But her understanding of the other suspects is disappointing. She says Kosminski was a suspect “*as early as 1888*”, which was not the case, and that he was implicated in the case in 1914 when he was mentioned in a “*memoir*” by Sir Melville Macnaghten. In reality, he was named in a report written on 23 February 1894. Watts asserts Prince Albert Victor had availed himself of the sexual services of the victims, then murdered them to stop them from spreading rumours of his virility, which is nonsense. She says Tumblety was arrested on 24 November for acquiring sexual organs, that the Maybrick diary “*fell into the possession of the London police*” and the watch “*was found in his lodgings following his death in 1889*”, none of which is true.

I can’t imagine how these errors and exaggerations slipped past Bethan Watts, who has

both a Master’s and a Bachelor’s degree in medieval history and specialises in the everyday lives of ordinary people, but they inevitably cast doubt on the reliability of other information in this wide-ranging survey of slum and working-class life of Victorian Britain. I wish I could recommend it, but I can’t, and I am deeply sorry about that.

Dodging the Bullet. Failed Assassinations Throughout History

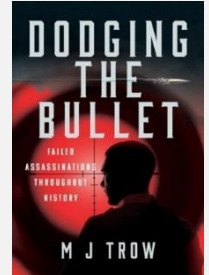
M.J. Trow

Pen and Sword History, 2024

217pp; illus; index.

ISBN:1399037625

Hardcover £22, eBook £12.99



What if the past cannot be changed, if somehow things happen as they are meant to, regardless of circumstances? This is a question science fiction writers have pondered for years, or they have imagined what it would be like if the past could be altered. Everything worked out well for 20-year-old Thomas Crook. Assorted security failures allowed him to get into position; he had Trump in his sights, and his bullet should have struck Trump in the head. But it didn’t. Something, perhaps providence, caused Trump to move slightly, and the bullet grazed his ear. He was quickly surrounded by security personnel, and with blood streaking his face, he raised a fist skyward and yelled, ‘fight, fight, fight. ‘ Later, Trump would claim that God had saved his life so that he could become President, but whether or not God was involved, Donald Trump’s approval ratings improved, illustrating how a failed assassination can aid a political campaign.

The attempt on Trump’s life came after Trow had completed this book, but he was able to include a brief account as a postscript. Otherwise, *Dodging the Bullet* provides a survey of assassination attempts, starting with the British Gunpowder Plot in 1605, when a group of Catholic conspirators aimed to assassinate the King and blow up the Houses of Parliament, and culminating in the attempt on Trump. The latter was reminiscent of *The Day of the Jackal*, and Trow tells the story of the events on 22 August 1962 that were the basis for Frederick Forsyth’s novel. Attempts on the life of Queen Victoria are covered, as are various attempts to assassinate Adolf Hitler.

Trow always writes intelligently and well; his books are easy to read. To be honest, I didn't think I'd enjoy *Dodging the Bullet*, but I enjoyed it immensely.

Failed Justice: The Craig and Bentley Case Revisited

M.J. Trow

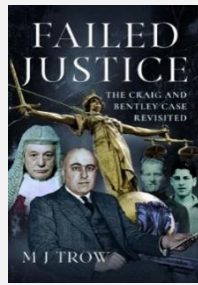
Pen and Sword True Crime

www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

224pp; illus; biblio; index

ISBN: 9781399037679

Hardcover £25, eBook £12.99



On November 2, 1952, in Croydon, Surrey, 16-year-old Christopher Craig, accompanied by his educationally subnormal friend, 19-year-old Derek Bentley, climbed onto the roof of a warehouse they intended to rob. They were seen and the police were called, several of whom soon managed to get onto the rooftop and confront the two lads. Derek Bentley was quickly arrested and put in police custody, but Craig produced a gun and started shooting, wounding one policeman and killing another, PC 550Z Sidney Miles. Before the fatal shooting, Bentley was heard to shout, "*Let him have it, Chris*". It was not clear whether Bentley was telling Craig to surrender his gun or urging him to shoot PC Miles, and what Bentley meant has since been the topic of considerable controversy.

Craig and Bentley were held to be equally responsible for all that happened once they jointly embarked on the intended crime and their trial they were both found guilty of the murder of PC Miles and sentenced to death, but Christopher Craig, who had done all the shooting, was only 16 and could not be executed, whereas Derek Bentley, who was 19, had learning difficulties, didn't have a gun, didn't shoot anyone, wasn't on the roof when the shooting happened, and was in the custody of the police at the time, went to the gallows on 28 January 1953.

The conviction and execution of Derek Bentley has been widely seen as an egregious miscarriage of justice, criticism particularly directed at Lord Chief Justice Goddard, who is said to have failed to properly instruct the jury, and the Home Secretary, David Maxwell Fyfe, who denied clemency to Bentley.

M.J. Trow became involved in the story many years later when he met and interviewed Claude

Paine, an elderly former policeman who claimed to have been one of the policemen on the warehouse roof, who said he had witnessed the events leading to the shooting of PC Miles, and emphatically stated that he had not heard the words "*Let him have it, Chris*" and that he would have heard them if they had been spoken.

Ex-PC Paine, though an old man, clearly remembered what happened on that warehouse roof many years before. He told a detailed, but straightforward story, the same story he'd told his family for years, and there was no apparent reason to disbelieve him. Mei Trow, who is not stupid, gullible, or a fool, believed him, and set out to do what he could to substantiate his story.

As Trow states in this book, he was stonewalled almost everywhere he went, to such an extent that he began to seriously suspect that three policemen had concocted a story to ensure the conviction of Craig and Bentley, and that there was a cover-up at the time and that every effort was being made to keep it covered.

And that's where I come into the story.

The 150th anniversary of the C.I.D. at Scotland Yard was fast approaching and Keith Skinner and I were working on a tie-in book, *The Scotland Yard Files*. Mei Trow wasn't the only author who thought that evidence supporting their stories could be found in the case papers, and we wanted to avoid repeating allegations, especially those that accused or implied police corruption. On the strict understanding that we couldn't use anything we saw in the closed files, we were granted access to what we needed to see, including the Craig and Bentley file. And there was PC Paine's handwritten deposition, from which it was clear that he had been on the ground throughout. He didn't hear Derek Bentley say "*Let him have it, Chris*" because he wasn't on the roof to hear it.

We wrote that we could find no evidence to support PC Paine's story. It was a serious blow to Mei Trow, who writes about it in *Failed Justice*. He had wholeheartedly accepted PC Paine's story. "*I felt guilty about my own role in this story and annoyed with myself that I was duped (admittedly along with others) by an old man who probably found himself caught in a spotlight of his own making,*" writes Trow.

There is no reason why Mei Trow should be annoyed with himself for being 'duped'. PC Pain really was at the scene and he was obviously believable. Trow made every effort to get at the truth, but, as said, he was stonewalled to such an extent that it looked like PC Pain's story was an uncomfortable truth the police were covering up.

Failed Justice tells the story of Christopher Craig and Derek Bentley, and Trow's efforts to get at the truth behind PC Pain's story. He also reveals jaw-dropping information about many of those involved in this tragic Miscarriage of justice. It is a great read and thoroughly recommended.

Failed Justice is also a salutary lesson. As Trow says, it's possible that the shoot out on the warehouse roof was one of the most exciting and important experiences of PC Pain's police career, and it must have been galling for him to have been there, but on the ground. It is easy to understand why he inflated his involvement. We would do well to remember that the stories told by retired policemen about the famous cases with which they were involved may not be true.

A Dictionary of True Crime

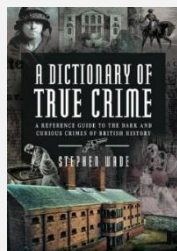
Stephen Wade

Pen and Sword True Crime, 2024

173pp; illus; sources & books cited; index

ISBN: 1399034499

Hardcover £20, eBook £12.99



Being called a dictionary, I expected this book to contain definitions of the argot of criminals throughout the ages, but instead it defines something about a person or, more often, types of crime or punishment or...well, whatever has sprung into the author's mind. So, to pick a letter at random, 'H' begins with John Smith, who escaped death when he was dangling at the end of the hangman's rope when a reprieve arrived and he was cut down. He was thereafter known as 'Half-Hanged Smith', which is why Smith opens the chapter 'H'. Edward Marshall Hall follows, then we get to Hanged, Drawn and Quartered, Hangman Tales, and Hangwomen (which I was delighted to see gave some details of 'Lady Betty') and Highwaymen, plus a couple of other murderers.

The entry for Jack the Ripper was uninformative. It won't tell anything to someone who knows nothing about the subject (and such

people do exist!), and it left me with the impression that Stephen Wade has little interest in or understanding of the subject. It is basically a rather lame review of theories and he feels that 'arguably, one of the most impressive and persuasive accounts' is *They All Love Jack*. This is a book that has its fans, but one doesn't see Michael Maybrick very high up the list of suspects, so the book wasn't persuasive. Wade refers to accepted facts being questioned at Ripper conferences and says they were "most powerfully questioned in *The Five*, which isn't the opinion of many Ripperologists."

The Ripper aside, this book is informative and entertaining reading, and definitely a book for the reference bookshelf.

The Crime Movie and TV Lover's Guide to London

Charlotte Booth and Brian Billington

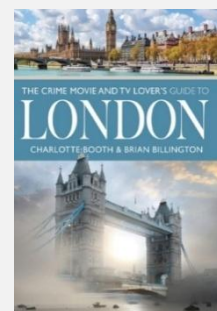
White Owl, 2025

www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

208pp; illus; indices.

ISBN: 1399031309

Softcover £15.99



Several East End locations, notably the Ten Bells, feature in a movie called *The Crying Game* (1992), and six times a year, on Saturdays, the Whitechapel Society meets to listen to a speaker and generally socialise in a pub called Crutched Friars, the exterior of which was used for exterior filming a scene for the TV series *Spooks*.

As the jacket of this book says, London has always been popular with film directors for location shooting, and many of the locations of scenes in dozens of crime movies and TV shows are collected under various crimes, such as gangs, robberies, murder, serial killers, and so on. Other sections take you on a cemetery tour and a pub crawl – the East End offers the Ten Bells, of course, but also The Prospect of Whitby, The Royal Oak (in Columbia Road), The Waterman's Arms (which I assume to be the pub once owned by Dan Farson), and several others.

Women Who Kill. A History of Britain's Most Dangerous Women

Erin Fetterly

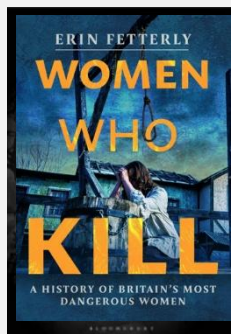
Pen and Sword History, 2024

www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

224pp; illus; biblio; index.

ISBN: 1399047701

Hardcover £22, eBook £12.99



Thou Savage Woman: Female Killers in Early Modern Britain

Blessin Adams

www.blessinadams.com

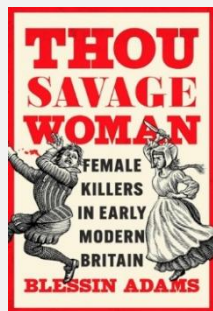
William Collins, 2025

www.williamcollinsbooks.co.uk

304pp; illus; appendices; biblio; notes.

ISBN: 978-0008500177

Hardcover £16.99, eBook £4.99, also available as an audiobook.



Victorian Britain wasn't a pleasant place and we would be horrified by much that we encountered there, but there was much about it - particularly in its later decades - that we would find reasonably familiar. But the further back in time we travelled, the less easy it would be to get by. In medieval times religion and superstition co-existed. The supernatural was real, even the legal system accepted evidence such as the testimony of cats and ghosts. A woman with a wart or a hairy upper lip could find herself condemned as a witch. If found guilty of a crime the punishment could be whipping through the streets or being burned alive.

Women didn't have an easy life. They had jobs, but they were thought unsuited to professions like medicine, teaching or the law, and an education was thought unnecessary. Women were regarded as inferior and subservient to men, and they were believed to be weak and unable to resist the temptation to do evil and immoral things.

Erin Fetterly's book covers female murderers from 1300 until the 20th century, the final case examined is Ruth Ellis, the last woman to be hanged in Britain. The book is well-researched and looks carefully at how society, the law, and attitudes changed over the centuries.

Historian and former law officer Blessin Adams does an equally good job, but examines a narrower period, what she calls 'early modern Britain', which

is pretty much the 17th century. Women were expected to be 'meek, mild and obedient', but many were the opposite. The crimes she looks at range from hiring a hitman to dispose of an unwanted husband, flogging apprentices to within an inch of their lives (and worse) and clubbing passersby and stealing their clothes.

Both books take a careful look at the crimes and society, but both treat their subject deftly and the books make informative reading.

London Uncanny. A Gothic Guide to the Capital in Weird History and Fiction

Clive Bloom

www.clivebloom.com

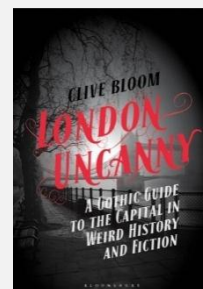
Bloomsbury Academic, 2025

www.bloomsbury.com

223pp; illus; notes; biblio; index.

ISBN: 9781350424036

Hardcover £20, eBook £17.99



I used to visit Whitechapel a lot. It was a magical place for me. Whether it would have been magical if I had lived there, I can't say. But for me, there was something about it and, much diluted by the gentrification, there still is. In the introduction to this book, Clive Bloom says it is "*the* mysterious heart of London", adding that it's "a place of myth and legend." Clive Bloom was born in the London Hospital, Whitechapel Road, and his maternal grandfather came from Middlesex Street, so I guess East London is in his blood and he always returns there as a topic.

Professor Bloom says, "This book is about the congruence of people, spaces and places in London. It is not a guide-book or gazetteer. It is a book about the uncanny..." It is a book full of interesting things and fascinating people, from the likes of Spring-Heeled Jack terrifying Jane Alsop in Bow to Jack the Ripper in Whitechapel terrifying the whole country. On one page Charles Fort and his newspaper clippings on anomalous phenomena, on the next page Ron and Reg Kray. It isn't the easiest book to read, in some places it requires effort but the effort is worth it.

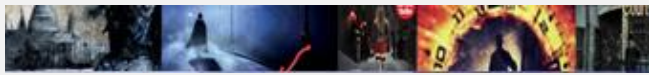
Clive Bloom was involved in curating the Jack the Ripper Exhibition at the Museum of London and rightly points out, "Like it or not, the Ripper is an East End institution, its very own bogey man, and his murders, as revolting as they are, hold an

enduring fascination.” I would argue that the mystery of his identity and the hope of solving it are the true sources of this fascination, but it is certainly true beyond question that Jack is an East End institution. And always will be.

The Whitechapel Society will also be pleased with the following, “Certainly, the Ripper’s story should be told with caution and the women he murdered treated with respect and that is the way the Whitechapel Society walks the walk.”

London Uncanny is an unusual and enjoyable book. It is one of those books you put down but feel drawn back to, itching for more.

All reviews by Paul Begg unless credited otherwise.



Fiction Reviews

The Unfortunate

Wendy Nelson-Sinclair
W. Nelson, 2021
681 pp

The Unfortunate, by Wendy Nelson-Sinclair, tells the story of Evie Harper and the trials and tribulations of her life. After her mother’s death, she and her younger sister Carmela are turned out of their room and end up homeless. Evie does everything she can to keep her sister safe. After her sister disappears, she realizes that she has to keep going and resorts to earning her living as a prostitute in Whitechapel to survive, even as Jack the Ripper stalks the streets of London’s East End. The murders, especially the murder of her neighbor, Mary Kelly, leave their mark on Evie, but still she perseveres. Even though the odds seem to be against her, Evie eventually makes her way to France and becomes a courtesan and eventually a wealthy businesswoman. Her tenacity makes it possible for her to build a life for herself where she’s thriving instead of just surviving and to embrace life’s joys as well as its sorrows.

I found Evie to be a likable heroine, and I was rooting for her throughout the entire book.



The Raven Books I – III: A Supernatural Tale of Time, Death, and Darkness

Tobey Alexander
Tobey Alexander, 2023
250 pp
Hardcover, paperback, eBook,
and audiobook



What if Jack the Ripper was actually a demon who terrorized both 1880’s and modern-day London? And what if there was a hero tasked with stopping him? Tobey Alexander explores this possibility in *The Raven Episodes I-III*.

Kimberley Mansfield visits the Nuthall Secure Hospital in London to interview one of its mysterious patients, John Smith, as part of her thesis. Smith’s origins are unclear, though his records show that he arrived at the hospital in 1889. But there’s much more to John Smith than meets the eye; during the interview, he telepathically shows her how he died. Smith had been a young police officer patrolling Whitechapel during the fateful autumn of 1888. On the night of Mary Kelly’s murder, he chased the Ripper into an open square, only to discover that the man responsible

for so many deaths in the East End wasn't a man at all, but a demon. Smith met his untimely end at the hands of the Ripper. When Death comes to fetch him, John strikes a deal: he will be allowed to return to his body, but only as Death's Hand, so he can protect London from the Ripper.

Kimberley struggles with whether or not she should believe John's tale and the visions she saw, but she can't stay away. Slowly, she begins to believe him. When a rash of Ripper-like murders occurs in Whitechapel again, Kimberley has no choice but to believe him. She returns to Nuthall and helps him to escape so he can fulfil his promise as Death's hand before someone else dies.

The novella, which features the first three episodes in the series, is action-packed and the plot moves quickly. It's almost like Jack the Ripper meets *The Crow*. The plot of the first three episodes is a self-contained story, leaving the reader with a satisfying ending but with the feeling that more is on the way. Alexander did a masterful job of incorporating the details of the case into a paranormal superhero story.

The Raven is completed series, with six books available as of this printing. All six are currently available on Kindle Unlimited.

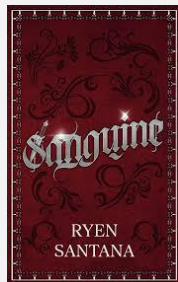
Sanguine

Ryen Santana

Ryen Santana, 2024

91 pp

Paperback and eBook



Sanguine, by Ryen Santana, is a standalone novella telling the story of a man who is on the hunt for Jack the Ripper. Or is he the killer instead? Even the narrator isn't sure of what's unfolding in front of his eyes.

The story opens with the narrator reflecting on the chronology of the murders in Whitechapel and how he was drawn into it. Even though he has found himself at each scene shortly after the murders occurred, he insists that he wasn't the one who killed them. *"I wasn't hunting women. I was hunting for something that shouldn't exist, something that prowled under the cover of night, wearing the fog like a cloak."* Despite his precarious position, he still needs answers about what is going on in London so that he can capture

the real Ripper and exonerate himself. His desperation takes him to a seer, who confirms his suspicion that the murders aren't random, but are part of a ritual to open *"a gateway to the underworld."* Not only that, but Jack is a pawn in a much larger game.

As he struggles to put the pieces together, he tries to stop the ritual, but he is too late, and the souls of the women he couldn't save haunt him. His grip on reality is slipping and the police are closing in. Even after his arrest, he insists that he isn't the murderer, but no one believes him. As his end draws near, Jack finally surrenders to his fate: *"Let them believe the story."*

While Santana has woven an eerie fantasy story of a unreliable narrator caught up in a game that he can't win, she also is careful to portray the women killed by the Ripper as human beings who were not at fault for what happened to them. She dedicates the story to the women and makes her intentions clear that she *"wanted to show the raw horror of his actions and to reflect on the humanity of those who suffered because of them."*

Santana's next book, *The Ravens of London*, was released in March 2025.

Flora Flowerdew and the Mystery of the Duke's Diamonds

Amanda McCabe

Oliver-Heber Books, 2022

190 pp

Paperback and eBook



Flora Flowerdew has moved up in the world, from her childhood as the orphan Florrie Grubbins to becoming a music hall dancer to making a name for herself as one of the most sought-after mediums in London. But Flora isn't the one with the ability to see spirits; instead, it's her Pomeranian Chou-Chou.

During her session with the wealthy Petrie family, whose daughter is engaged to the Duke of Everton, the spirit of the duke's grandfather makes an appearance. He demands that the missing family diamonds be recovered, or else the marriage won't happen. The following day, Flora pays a visit to her friend Evie, a journalist who is covering a series of murders in Whitechapel, at the *Evening Star*. It's from Evie that Flora learns about the Everton

family diamonds, which have been mysteriously lost. Flora finds herself pulled into the effort to find the diamonds when said duke, Benedict, seeks her assistance. Soon a hunt for missing diamonds turns up long-kept family secrets and a murder...and the beginning of Flora's feelings for Benedict.

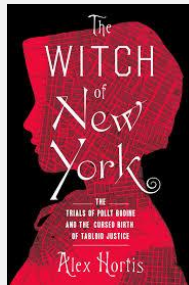
Flora Flowerdew and the Mystery of the Duke's Diamonds is the first book in the Flora Flowerdew mystery series. While the story is fast-paced and sparkles with witty dialogue, the author also makes sure to touch on the class differences and the difficulties poor women like Flora faced in British society at the time. Flora is a self-made woman, but she doesn't forget her humble beginnings. The third book in the series is due out in March 2025.

All reviews by Madeleine Keane unless credited otherwise.



The Witch of New York: The Trials of Polly Bodine and the Cursed Birth of Tabloid Justice

Alex Hortis
Pegasus Crime, 2024
336 pp; illus.



The Witch of New York is the fascinating tale Polly Bodine, who was accused of murdering her sister-in-law and niece and went through three murder trials before being acquitted of the crimes. The case is notorious for being the first trial by tabloid in United States history.

Mary "Polly" Bodine was separated from her husband and she and her daughter lived with her parents, while her son was an apprentice to an apothecary, George Waite. Even though she wasn't exactly the model of respectable womanhood, she still enjoyed a close relationship with her family, especially her sister-in-law, Emeline. But all of that changed on Christmas 1843, when Emeline Houseman and her baby daughter Ann Eliza, were found murdered in the remnants of their burned-out kitchen, and several of their belongings stolen.

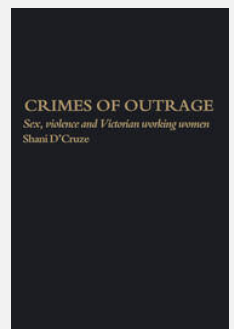
Soon enough, suspicion fell on Polly, who was ostensibly the last person to see them. Polly's secret affair with her son's employer and concealed pregnancy were revealed to the entire world, as were the details of previous terminated pregnancies. The stillbirth of Polly's child while she was in jail was the icing on the cake, and New York City's newspapers and tabloids latched on to the story. Journalists Edgar Allen Poe and Walt Whitman each reported on the story for their respective newspapers, and P. T. Barnum saw how profitable it would be to include a grotesque representation of Polly in his museum even as she was being tried for murder.

Hortis relies on the court documents to present the reader with what occurred at the trial, and he juxtaposes that with the far-fetched stories the tabloids spread about Bodine. One even purported to have taken down her confession to the murders, even though no such thing had happened. Throughout the book, it's clear that Polly, who didn't fit neatly into what society's image of women should be, was regarded as a freak of nature. The tabloids and the entire city of New York were divided on the question of her guilt or innocence.

It took one hung jury, one guilty verdict that was appealed and overturned, and finally a not guilty verdict for Polly's ordeal to come to an end. Afterward, she lived a private life, only for her death to be reported decades later. While it's clear that none of Polly's trials weren't exactly fair, the murderer of Emeline Houseman and her daughter has never been named. And that's part of what makes Polly Bodine's story so interesting: Did she do it, or was she railroaded? We'll never know for sure.

Crimes of Outrage: Sex, Violence, and Victorian Working Women

Shani D'Cruze
Routledge, 1998. 2024
263 pp



Crimes of Outrage: Sex, Violence, and Victorian Working Women, by Shani D'Cruze, is an academic text that specifically focuses on how English society and the court system treated crimes and violence among the working class during the last

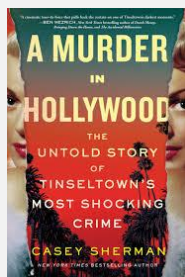
half of the Victorian era. It was first printed in 1998 and the eBook edition was released in December 2024. D'Cruze cites specific cases and uses primary documents such as court transcripts and newspapers to provide the modern researcher insight into working-class violence specifically and how the law handled it.

I've been trying to find academic text focusing specifically on working class women in the late 1800s for my own research, so when I came across this I was thrilled. And I was not disappointed. While more recent work about the Whitechapel victims examines events through a lens centering on the Victorian middle-class view of the poor and working classes, this book provides context on how those people of those classes viewed themselves and the specific expectations they had based on gender. D'Cruze also notes how these attitudes evolved as industrialization completely changed the lives of poor and working-class people as the Victorian era progressed. She also touches on the Whitechapel case in her chapter about how newspapers reported crime, which, in my opinion, serves as a warning that researchers need to be discerning regarding what they choose to use as information. In her view, some publications catering to the upper classes viewed reporting on working-class crime as a means of entertaining rather than informing their audiences and, as a result, reflected the upper classes' disdain for those of the poor and working classes.

Overall, I found the book's information to be valuable, and I'll also seek out the sources that D'Cruze cites for further study. Since the book's information is likely dated, researchers should supplement this with more recent work to get a more holistic view of the subject.

A Murder in Holywood: The Untold Story of Tinseltown's Most Shocking Crime

Casey Sherman
Sourcebooks, 2024
304 pp; illus



When we think of old Hollywood, we think of the over-the-top productions and the glamorous lives that its stars seemed to lead. But there was a much seedier side to it, where the studio system controlled every aspect of the lives of the actors signed with them

and the mob had its fingers in every part of the industry. *A Murder in Holywood*, by Casey Sherman, recounts one of the most well-known yet mysterious cases to ever come out of Tinseltown: the murder of actress Lana Turner's mobster boyfriend, Johnny Stompanato, allegedly at the hands of Turner's teenage daughter, Cheryl Crane.

Sherman begins the biographies of the three main players of the case – Turner, Stomponato, and Stomponato's employer, the ruthless mobster Mickey Cohen – as separate stories that eventually come together, culminating in an event that changes their lives forever. Sherman is sympathetic in his treatment of Turner, who started her career as a teenager in Hollywood and was quickly pushed into femme fatale roles before becoming a more serious dramatic actress. Turner's life story is a case study of how the misogyny of the studio system and post-World War II American society tried to constrain women into roles that might not fit who they were. Like so many women of the time, Turner tried to fit the expectations that society had set for her as a wife and mother, but the men who were supposed to love actually tried to bring her down. This is especially clear in the case of her relationship with Johnny Stomponato, who had ardently pursued Turner at first to extort her but then decided that he was romantically interested in her after all. Stomponato became very controlling and violent toward Turner, and it was only after the fateful night of his murder that his reign of terror ended and she and her daughter were able to work toward rebuilding their lives.

Sherman's admiration of Turner is evident throughout the book, and he ends it with his opinion that she was a feminist icon who pushed the boundaries that Hollywood and society of the time had set for her. She founded her own production company that allowed her to choose the movies she wanted to make and play the roles that she had always dreamed of. Both Turner and her daughter were survivors, and their stories still resonate with people today.

All reviews by Madeleine Keane unless credited otherwise.



A Thousand Blows

Disney+/Hulu
2025

This six-part series combines the Victorian East End bare-knuckle boxing world with an all-female criminal gang in a fictionalized historical drama that makes for entertaining television. Based on real-life individuals who most likely never met each other: Henry “Sugar” Goodson (Stephen Graham) and Hezekiah “Ching Hook” Moscow (Malachi Kirby), both Victorian era boxers, and Mary Carr (Erin Doherty) a onetime leader of the ‘Forty Elephants’. The streets are muddy, the ladies are spunky, Graham is sweaty and bloody...all good fun. Themes of race, sex and class conflicts abound but it still manages to remain light and, at times, silly. A plus is seeing Stephen Graham’s partner Hannah Walters in the supporting role of Eliza, one of the Forty Elephants. She is wonderful in Graham’s *Boiling Point* and Graham, Walters, and Erin Doherty also appear in the incredible new series *Adolescence*. If these three are forming an acting troupe, I’m there for it. It’s already been renewed for a second series.



Jack the Ripper: Written in Blood

Sky History
2025

A decent three-part documentary sprinkled throughout an otherwise mediocre movie that focuses on the *Star* newspaper’s coverage of the Whitechapel Murders. Through re-enactments, *Star* editor T.P. O’Connor, under pressure from his investors, joins sub-editor Ernest Parke and journalist Fred Best in a conspiracy to sensationalize, and at times invent, the reporting of the murders to sell more newspapers. Best creates the ‘Dear Boss’ letter and ‘Saucy Jack’ postcard, leading to fear, panic, and copycat letter writers. By the end of the series Best



is mentally collapsing under the strain of what he’s unleashed. The murder sites and mortuary scenes are exceedingly gruesome, without the viewer being spared a single cut, stab or river of blood and gore. The good parts are the talking head interviews, and there are a lot of them, including Dr Fern Riddell, Steve Keogh, and author Andrew Cook. All the commentators are informative, it’s just too bad they’re mixed in with a bad dramatic recreation. When not quoting directly from the *Star*’s actual reporting, the scenes are entirely make-believe. Fred Best and the *Star* has been covered before, and better, in the 2009 documentary *Jack the Ripper: Tabloid Killer*.

**Lucy Worsley Investigates:
Jack the Ripper**
BBC/PBS
2025



In this hour-long program historian Lucy Worsley seeks to discover how the Whitechapel murders became “*the prototype for all the true crime stories to follow*”. To accomplish this, she takes us on a walking tour. First, she visits Kensington Palace to examine letters and diary entries penned by Queen Victoria which reference the murders. Next, she’s off to St. Bride’s Church, nicknamed the ‘journalist’s church’ due to its location on Fleet Street, as it also happens to be where William and Polly Nichols were married. It’s a quick visit and then she’s off again to the British Library to examine how the newspapers competed with each other on who could produce the most “lurid stories”. Then it’s to the former site of Flower and Dean Street where she speaks to historian and author Sarah Wise. After grabbing a pint at the Ten Bells with Hallie Rubenhold and Professor Julia Laite, it’s off to the National Archives to view the Ripper Letters.

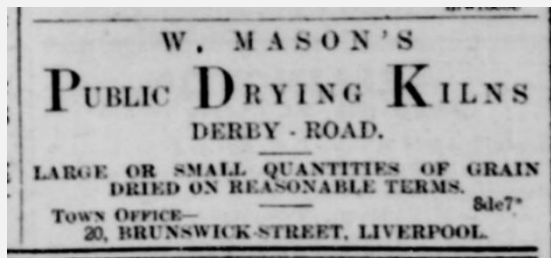
It’s a new way to examine the Whitechapel murders (television networks seem desperate for those) and not a bad show. But you won’t be worse off if you miss it.

All reviews by Jonathan Menges unless credited otherwise.

Quotes to Cogitate On...

“Faulty primary sources, dishonest research and the sheepish repetition of printed folklore have taken us very far from the truth.”

Philip Sugden, in his 2002 book *The Complete History of Jack the Ripper* – Constable Robinson publication.



Advert for W. Mason's of Derby Road, Liverpool from 1888. The body of Johnny Gill was found in Bradford wrapped in a sack from this company.

Unjam the Anagram Solution: Sir Robert Anderson

Solution to the Crossword

H	U	T	C	H	I	N	S	O	N
		E		O				S	
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