

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

# *Ripperologist*

No. 62

December 2005

## 'Meat, Meat!' cried the Cat's-Meat Man

Rob Hills, Hugh Lofting,  
Henry Mayhew and Stanley Dean Reid  
on Horse Knackers, Meat Sellers  
and Jack the Ripper



Jan Bondeson

Simon Wood

Eduardo Zinna

UK Conference report

Adam Went, Amanda Howard, Antonio Sironi

PO Box 735  
Maidstone  
Kent ME17 1JF  
[www.ripperologist.info](http://www.ripperologist.info)  
[contact@ripperologist.info](mailto:contact@ripperologist.info)

## Editorial Team

### Executive Editor

Paul Begg

### European Editor

Eduardo Zinna

### UK Editor

Adam Wood

### North American Editor

Christopher T George

### Contributing Editors

Christopher-Michael DiGrazia

Wilf Gregg

Chris Scott

### Consultants

Stewart P Evans

Loretta Lay

Donald Rumbelow

Stephen P Ryder

## Subscriptions

*Ripperologist* is published monthly in electronic format. The cost is £24.00 for twelve issues, or £12.00 for six issues. Cheques can only be accepted in Esterling, made payable to *Ripperologist* and sent to the address at the top of this column. The simplest and easiest way to subscribe is via PayPal - send to [paypal@ripperologist.info](mailto:paypal@ripperologist.info)

## Back issues

Some back issues are available in hardcopy format at £4 each. Contact us for details. Single PDF files of issue 62 onwards are available at £2 each.

## Advertising

Advertising in *Ripperologist* costs £50.00 for a full page and £25.00 for a half-page. All adverts are full colour and can include clickable links to your website or email, or movie and sound files.

# Contents

No. 62 | December 2005 | [click on the title to jump to the article](#)

## Features

### Children of the Ripper: The Killing of Catrine da Costa

Jan Bondeson considers the murder of a prostitute in modern-day Stockholm, its analogies with the Ripper murders and Swedish society's quick and controversial reaction to it.

### The Enigmas of Millers Court

Simon Wood scrutinizes the evidence collected from Mary Jane Kelly's last abode and reaches some startling conclusions

### From the Bars of the Cradle

Rob Hills opens a special section remembering a once familiar street pedlar with an update on his own Ripper suspect.

### Mr Ripper or Master Ripper?

Stanley D Reid uncovers a suspect who had been hiding in plain sight.

### Man of Shadows

Adam Went, Amanda Howard and Antonio Sironi join hands across the Seven Seas to explore the fascination still exerted by Jack the Ripper from America to Oceania.

### A Last Long Journey: The St Saviour's Story

Eduardo Zinna identifies the baroque splendour that gave rise to one of the most enduring - and implausible - Ripper legends.

### Obituary: Link Wray

## Regulars

### In Brief

The 2005 UK Ripper Conference

### I Beg to Report

News news news...

### Dear Rip: your letters and comments

### On the Crimebeat

Wilf Gregg guides you through the latest additions to the True Crime shelf

### The Last Word

Christopher-Michael DiGrazia remembers Mary Jane Kelly and discusses her durable mysteries and her forgotten ghost.

## Reviews

*The First Jack the Ripper Victim Photographs, By Ear and Eyes*, and many more!  
Forthcoming publications

QUOTE FOR DECEMBER: "One day men will look back and say that I gave birth to the twentieth century."  
*Ian Holm, as Sir William Gull, From Hell (2001).*

We occasionally use material we believe has been placed in the public domain. It is not always possible to identify and contact the copyright holder; if you claim ownership of something we have published we will be pleased to make a proper acknowledgement.

We would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance given by the following people in the production of this issue of *Ripperologist*: Father Anthony Symondson SJ, Mike Umbers (Hythe Civic Society), Hugo Williams. Thank you!



## Contributors to this issue

### JAN BONDESON

Jan Bondeson is a senior lecturer and consultant rheumatologist at the University of Wales College of Medicine in Cardiff. He is also the author of many critically acclaimed books, including *The Pig-faced Lady of Manchester Square & Other London Medical Marvels* and *The Great Pretenders: The True Stories Behind Famous Historical Mysteries*. His most recent book is *Blood on the Snow: The Killing of Olof Palme*.

### ROB HILLS

Rob Hills's interest in the Ripper case developed after he read *The Complete Jack the Ripper* by Donald Rumbelow. He is currently researching a book on his favourite suspect: James Hardiman.

### AMANDA HOWARD

Amanda Howard's first true crime book was *River of Blood: Serial Killers and Their Victims*, written with Martin Smith. She is now working on *Loss of Innocence*, on Australian crime, and *Predators*, written with Dr Paul Wilson, Australia's top criminologist, and Brett Hartley, a solicitor of the Supreme Court, Queensland. Amanda lives in Sidney, Australia.

### STANLEY REID

Stanley Dean Reid is an avid student of crime history who has contributed to *CrimeBeat* and *America's Most Wanted* magazines and written a monthly series of articles for *AMW News* magazine on the most wanted criminals in world history - including Jack the Ripper. Stan is 59 years-old, has three sons and is a retiree from Caterpillar Inc. He lives in Central Illinois, USA.

### ANTONIO SIRONI

Antonio Sironi's article *A Question of Timing: The Killing of Annie Chapman*, was published in issue 61 of *Ripperologist*.

### ADAM WENT

Adam Went hails from Tasmania, Australia. Although his interest in Jack the Ripper is comparatively recent, he has become an active participant on the message boards at Jack the Ripper websites and has been designated as Moderator at *JTRForums.com*. This is his first published article.

### SIMON B WOOD

Simon Wood was born in St Austell, Cornwall. His interest in the Ripper began in the 1970s when he set straight the historical record regarding Stephen Knight's Clarence/Sickert theory. He was a contributor to the limited-edition volume *Who Was Jack the Ripper?* In the Millennium year, he was elected Mayor of Newtown, Powys. Simon has recently retired as co-director of a design and print company. He lives in Los Angeles, California.



PAUL BEGGS  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

## New Beginnings

In the mid-500s the Chinese began printing with woodblocks. I imagine that craftsmen made those blocks and that printing with them required training and skill, and that the resulting document was a rare and probably rather beautiful thing akin to a work of art. I imagine, too, that the craftsmen who made those blocks and the printers who printed with them didn't think much of the system of printing using movable metal type that a Korean named Pi Sheng developed in or about 1041. But I suppose that in time it, too, produced its craftsmen and trained and skilled printers, artists in their own right, who, like their wooden block loving forebears, thought little of the printing press developed by a rather remarkable goldsmith named Johann Gutenberg in 1450.

The printing press was truly revolutionary and meant that information could be distributed to all people, assuming they could afford it and were literate. Remarkably, by 1500 there were 20 million copies of 35,000 titles in circulation!

I suspect that those printers, setting their type by hand and carefully printing each sheet of paper thought their system was an art too and looked with an equally jaundiced eye on lithographic printing, invented by Aloys Senefelder in 1801, and lithographic printers in their turn have shaken their heads at the technological advances of the 19th and 20th centuries that have made printing an increasingly mechanised and less artistic process.

From Gutenberg in 1450 people began struggling with the increasing volume of information available to them. They were heading towards 'information overload', a term coined by Alvin Toffler in his 1970 book *Future Shock*. Today, of course, the volume of information facing us every day comes from all sorts of other media, including radio, tv, emails, phone calls, newspapers and so on. In fact a few years ago CNN founder Ted Turner was quoted in *PC Week* as saying that "a weekday edition of *The New York Times* has more information than one person in the 11th century was exposed to in an entire lifetime."

So, what's this all about? Well, as much as we love printed media - and justifiably so; it's portable, can be read in bed, in the bath, or on the bus on the way into work, and it's a tactile experience too - we are facing other ways of distributing information. And not only of distributing it. Equally and perhaps more importantly there are other ways of finding the information we want, ways that are quicker and more efficient than anything we've had before. I'm talking about electronic media - essentially reading stuff on a computer screen. Yuuch!

*Continued*

Sure, reading on a computer screen isn't something you can do in bed, in the bath or on the train - well, with a laptop you can, but it's not the same as reading a book - and as you can't stick it on your bookshelf, it has a kind of impermanence. It's all psychological, of course. I remember when software companies felt obliged to produce big, fat manuals to accompany their expensive software because consumers felt the need for something visible and tangible when they paid money - and software cost a lot of money back then - for a word processor or spreadsheet. Today manuals are largely defunct, usually supplied on the CD ROM, when they are supplied at all. And then there were the folk who loved vinyl; vinyl was big, it had satisfying cracks and pops, it was real, and by golly you needed a strong shelf or two to hold even a moderate collection. Today the tangibility of music has gone. Increasingly people don't have record or even CD collections. Music is stored on a tiny iPod smaller than a cigarette pack.

Back in 1970 Alvin Toffler wrote about people who found it painful to keep up with the incessant demand for change, who resisted it and sought flight from it. Since you're receiving this PDF in your email box, I hope you are one of the people who accept change, perhaps even thrive on it and crest its waves joyfully.

I don't think digital media will replace print media, especially when it comes to fiction, but I am sure that the publishers of small circulation academic and specialist publications will find digital media increasingly attractive. Indeed, a little while ago the British Library commissioned a study by EPS (Electronic Publishing Service Ltd) which predicted that by the year 2020, 40% of UK research monographs will be available in electronic format only, 50% will be produced in both print and digital, and only 10% will be available in print alone.

There are several reasons for this. To begin with, printing costs a lot of money. To print and

mail *Ripperologist* took all the subscription money - nobody here at Ripperologist Towers gets paid a penny and none of the contributors get paid either - which means that operating the magazine is a constant cause for anxiety. Postage costs make the subscription even more expensive, especially abroad, and the cost of mailing the mag depends on the weight, so the larger the magazine the more expensive it becomes to mail. All of which means there's no money available to do other things - and yes, we do have some rather exciting things planned for 2006, but I don't want to reveal too much about that just yet. I'm relinquishing the editorial chair with this issue to Eduardo Zinna, who has in fact been editing *Ripperologist* for most of 2005 - and done a very fine job too, as I'm sure you'll agree - and with Adam Wood as the UK Editor and Chris George as our North American Editor, I'm confident that I'm leaving the *Rip* in very capable hands, especially now that we have a pool of esteemed consultants who have graciously agreed to offer advice and opinion when required (and no, I'm not leaving *Ripperologist* altogether, just doing some important stuff I've not been able to do whilst responsible for the day-to-day editing of the magazine. So I'll still be here, taking the brickbats as usual!). Anyway, I'll leave the exciting plans for the future to Eduardo, who'll no doubt say a bit more next month.

But for me the main advantage of taking the *Rip* digital is that it means each issue can be searched quickly and easily by word. As nice as it is to read *Ripperologist* in bed with your night time Horlicks or when travelling into work, the purpose of *Ripperologist* is not to provide disposable information, tomorrow's fish and chip wrapping. *Ripperologist* is, we hope, a research tool, a repository for research papers, new information and fresh insights, to be consulted by the researchers and the writers of future books. It is not a piece of bookshelf decoration, but a tool to be used by serious students of the case. But finding the information

isn't easy. We have an archive of over 3,500 pages spread over 62 issues. That's a lot of wordage. A lot of information. You can search the *Rip* on Stephen Ryder's excellent site *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* - and I hope that Eduardo will forgive me if I let you in on one of our little secrets, namely that with some of the funds available to us by going digital we intend to produce a CD containing PDFs of every single issue of *Ripperologist* from 1 to whatever the cut off point is when we produce it. This will be available at a huge discount to subscribers. Subscribers will also receive free a fully searchable CD of all 2006's *Rips*.

And we haven't abandoned print either. We have plans, but more of that later.

So, sure, for those of us who cherish print, digital media - on-screen reading - is indeed yuuch, pretty much as CDs and iPods are yuuch for the lovers of vinyl, but times move on and these days it's important to be able to find the information you want when you want it. For serious students of the case the advantages of fully searchable digital media far outweigh the ability to read a paper magazine in bed! And, of course, peripheral advantages are that the *Rip* is less expensive (the *Rip* now costs less than a pint of beer per issue and only marginally more than a Sunday newspaper), there are no costly mailing charges, we can hopefully sustain monthly publication so you get more material for less money and are up to date with news, reviews and informed comment, and you'll get fully active links and hopefully a lot of interactivity. Furthermore, subscribers will get a complete digital archive of the magazine at a discounted price and free annual updates.

Welcome to the 21st century.

And may I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year.





JAN BONDESON

# Children of the Ripper

The Killing of Catrine da Costa

During July and August 1984, the dismembered remains of 27-year-old Catrine da Costa were retrieved in the suburbs of Stockholm, neatly packed in black plastic bin-bags. The head and some other body parts were never found. Portuguese-born Catrine had been a Stockholm prostitute and drug addict; she had consorted with the very dregs of society, and never had many friends while alive. But after her death she became an almost iconic character in Sweden, a symbol of sex exploitation and social inequality. The da Costa case became a Swedish equivalent of Stephen Lawrence's murder and caused a vigorous and acerbic debate that still grumbles on.

To begin with, the police investigation of the da Costa murder made little headway. There was no systematic trawling of her contacts in the Stockholm underworld. Nor did the police show any particular eagerness to find out when the wretched woman had been last seen alive or in whose company she had been at that time. But after a couple of months, the police received a hot tip concerning a young forensic surgeon who was known as a perverted character, obsessed with sex, and an inveterate customer of various low-class prostitutes. Moreover, the young doctor had actually been suspected of murdering his own wife in 1982. It was thought that Catrine's body had been dismembered by a person with knowledge of human anatomy. The doctor was arrested in December 1984 and closely interrogated about the strange 'suicide' of his wife and the da Costa murder. He denied any involvement in either and was released. As soon as he got home, he attempted suicide by taking an

overdose of methadone. He survived this ordeal after a lengthy hospital stay, but as a result of a mishap with the dosage of a certain antibiotic he became almost totally deaf.



Catrine da Costa

In 1985, there was another tip concerning a general practice registrar. There was evidence that he had met the forensic surgeon a few times, though they had not been close friends. The registrar's wife was an overbearing woman who was in the process of divorcing him. She was obsessed with the notion that her husband had repeatedly abused and raped her three-year-old daughter; although medical experts had pooh-poohed the idea, she repeatedly brought the child in for examination. She had strongly objected to her husband having anything to do with the forensic surgeon who, when once invited to their flat for dinner, had behaved in a forward and uncouth manner and brought along a sluttish-looking woman whom he introduced as his girlfriend. When the papers reported that a forensic surgeon was the prime suspect in the da Costa case, she phoned the police, who willingly gave her his name. She then came up with the most remarkable story: over a period of several years, her little daughter had made remarks that seemed to indicate that not only had the two doctors repeatedly raped her, but that she had also

been a witness to satanic sexual abuse, murder, dismemberment and cannibalism.

The registrar's wife submitted to the police a 200-page summary of the child's alleged statements and made frequent phone calls to them whenever she felt that some new evidence had emerged in the child's sayings. A psychiatrist and a psychologist were enrolled to evaluate this extraordinary tale. Their approach, however, was somewhat controversial. They accepted every word of the mother's story without ever questioning the child themselves, and their analysis of the evidence was

entirely ludicrous. To consider just one example: the absence of a strong reaction from the little girl when she was taken to the forensic institute where these outrages were supposed to have taken place was interpreted as solid evidence that she had really been there and was repressing her underlying strong emotional reaction! But the police believed these two experts and made sure that their sensational new evidence was leaked to the press. The allegations of incest, rape and murder made the headlines, and the two doctors, known to the newspaper readers as the Forensic Surgeon and the General Practitioner, since suspects cannot be named before trial in Sweden, became marked men.<sup>1</sup> The police leaked confidential information to large-circulation evening newspapers to put pressure on the two doctors and increase the feeling of moral outrage among the Swedes.

As the state prosecutors prepared to charge the two doctors with murder and child abuse, several witnesses emerged as a result of the media campaign, although it was now three years since Catrine had been murdered. A man and a woman





Police find Catrine's remains

running a photo shop claimed that two customers had delivered a roll of film with photographs of a corpse being dissected. In police line-ups, they appeared to pick out the two doctors. A prostitute who had known Catrine testified that she had known two perverted doctors who supplied her with drugs. She referred to them as the Strangler and Jack the Ripper and produced a diary that seemed to support her statements. An old woman claimed to have seen two men with a pram and a little child enter a building at the Karolinska Institute at about the time Catrine disappeared. A policewoman claimed to have seen the Forensic Surgeon together with Catrine on an underground train. There were also numerous character witnesses on the Forensic Surgeon and his various moral shortcomings: he was obsessed with violence and murder; he was an avid consumer of gruesome 'splatter' films; he was a familiar figure in the Stockholm blue light district, where he was known to not less than 50 prostitutes, with at least 23 of whom he had had various forms of sexual intercourse. His colleagues at the forensic institute had always thought him odd and had nourished doubts about whether he had really murdered his wife.

The trial of the Forensic Specialist and the General Practitioner, which began in January 1988, was a huge media event. Influenced by the newspaper propaganda, public opinion was wholly against the two doctors. Even the most preposterous

accusations were taken seriously, whereas arguments in favour of their innocence were ignored. Eventually, the verdict was that they were guilty as charged, but some scandalous legal mishaps led to a mistrial. In the second trial, the two doctors were acquitted of the charges of murder and child abuse, although they were formally declare guilty of dismemberment, a crime they had not been charged with in the first place. As a result, they were free men, but were relieved of their licenses to practice medicine for having dismembered a human body.

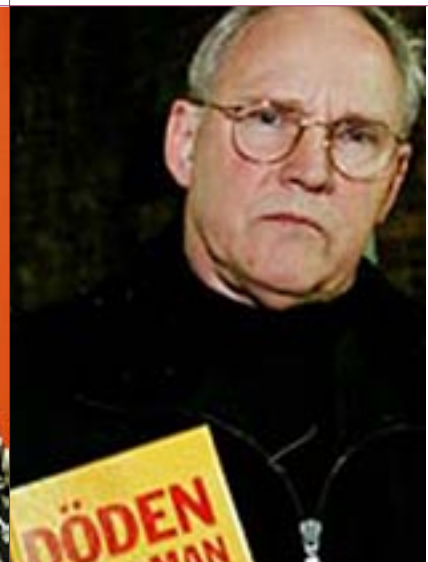
There was widespread public outrage against the doctors' acquittal. That these two monsters were free to walk the streets of Stockholm was a travesty of justice in the minds of many

people. Anders Helin, the prosecuting attorney, was harshly criticised for his feeble handling of the case. There was some truth to this, since he had not even called as witnesses the prostitutes who knew the Forensic Surgeon; one may speculate on what effect this might have had on the jury. This adverse publicity did not prevent Helin from becoming the lead prosecutor in an even more famous case: the trials of Christer Pettersson for the murder of Prime Minister Olof Palme. Like the two doctors, Pettersson was acquitted, and Helin suffered further odium in the media.

There have been three books, all in Swedish, about the da Costa case. The first one, *Catrine och rättvisan* [Catrine and Justice], Stockholm, 1990, was written by feminist Hanna Olsson, who boldly stated that the acquittal of the doctors was symptomatic of a deeper malaise within Swedish society. Did the doctors not represent the power of the male-dominated establishment elite? Was not Catrine one of the downtrodden, penniless women exploited by these men? The media coverage of the trials had made the doctors into bloodthirsty, perverted butchers, and Olsson's book echoed the feelings of many Swedes. It was widely praised in the newspapers and became a bestseller. Its author was rewarded with an honorary doctorate. All this seems excessive when the book is read today, however, since its reporting is low-quality, relying on dubious newspaper sources, and giving what can only be described as a very one-sided view of the case. The Olsson book completed the work of the press in turning the doctors into monsters: they could not find employment and were literally ostracised by society.



Feminist Author Hanna Olsson

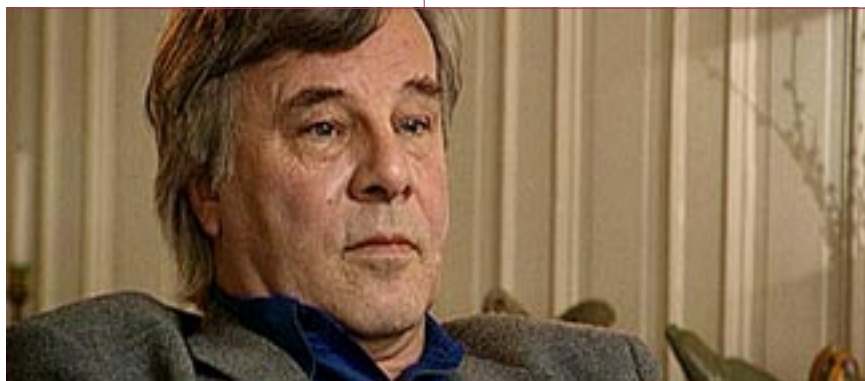


Author and Journalist Per Lindeberg

Nine years after the Olsson book, another study by journalist Per Lindeberg, *Döden är en man* [Death is a Man], Stockholm, 1999, completely challenged the established 'facts' about the case. Lindeberg, who had spent several years scrutinising the evidence, blasted the police for their obvious incompetence and the media for their one-sided and malicious campaign against the doctors. The amount of evidence against them was far weaker than the people of Sweden had been led to understand. Firstly, Lindeberg effectively demolished the child's evidence. It was hearsay throughout, and appeared scarcely credible. Was it really possible for the two doctors repeatedly to use the necropsy room at the forensic institute for their perverted practices, undisturbed by colleagues, technicians and security guards? And if they had systematically abused the child, would not the paediatricians who examined her have found physical signs indicating this? It seems much more likely that the General Practitioner's wife, who wanted to harm her husband and his disreputable colleague, had monitored the child to incriminate them. In the late 1980s various strange fads appeared within the realm of psychology, like recovered memories of child abuse, incest and Satanism. The use of a manipulated child witness in a trial of such vital importance can only be described as gross quackery.

be false. For example, the General Practitioner is accused of having provided Catrine with prescriptions for narcotics in exchange for sex, but there is no evidence to support this charge. Lindeberg also accused the witnesses from the photo shop of changing their stories each time they were questioned. Had they not been coached by the police? Had their identifications of the two suspects not been very tentative? After all, only the wife had identified both doctors; the husband had picked out a policeman instead when he faced the line-up including the Forensic Surgeon. And what about the photo shop staff: had they noticed nothing of these sinister customers? None of them had given evidence in court. The old lady who saw the two suspicious men with a pram and a child had confidently stated that the weather that particular day had been very sunny; yet the official meteorological records showed it had been a dull, overcast day, and the building she said they had entered was far from the forensic institute. Lindeberg also queried whether the policewoman who claimed to have seen the Forensic Surgeon with Catrine on an underground train had not actually seen him with his girlfriend, whose appearance may well have led to her being mistaken for a prostitute. Experts did not agree even on the question of whether Catrine had been indeed murdered; nor did they

appeared at a time when conservative elements within the Swedish ruling class had become ready to confront a shameful incident from the country's near past and to provoke a backlash against the feminist movement and various prominent left-wingers who had been active in denigrating the two doctors. Many of these left-wingers still occupied positions of influence in 1999. The more prudent of them adopted the policy of the ostrich; the aggressive and obdurate ones chose to counterattack. Seeing that most of Lindeberg's facts were hard to challenge, they tried instead to re-invoke the feelings of moral outrage that had served them so well back in 1988. But their attempts to make Lindeberg into a scoundrel because he had the temerity to defend the two doctors did not work, particularly because quite a few influential Swedes supported the book and its conclusions. Two of Lindeberg's foremost supporters were criminologist Professor Leif Persson and author Jan Guillou. The former persuaded the police to re-open the da Costa case, took active part in the investigation and publicly declared that the two doctors were innocent and that there were several leads with regard to alternative suspects. These leads turned out to be worthless, however, and the case was closed for a second time in 2000. Guillou used his acid pen to annoy the feminist lobby and to make various



Jan Guillou



Professor Leif Persson

Lindeberg also showed that the diary of Catrine's prostitute friend, which apparently proved that she knew the doctors, was almost certainly a forgery, purposely written shortly before the trial. When the prostitute contacted the police soon after the death of her friend, she mentioned neither the perverted doctors nor the diaries she allegedly kept. More than one statement in these 'diaries' could be proven to

reach consensus on the time of her death or on whether her body had been dismembered by someone with knowledge of human anatomy.

At the time of Catrine da Costa's death, Sweden still was a socialist country. After the murder of Prime Minister Olof Palme in 1986, there was a swing to the right; the country joined the European Union, and traditional socialist ideals became largely outdated. Lindeberg's book

far-reaching statements concerning the unreliability of the witnesses. Egged on by this welcome change in public opinion, the two doctors appealed to have their licenses to practise medicine restored to them, but without success.

In 2003, TV journalist Lars Borgnäs published yet another book about the da Costa case: *Sanningen är en sällsynt gäst* [Truth is a rare guest]. Borgnäs was one of the many left-wing

Swedes who had been annoyed by the Lindeberg book and its considerable success. A clever, diligent investigator, he found quite a few interesting new facts. He managed to track down the prostitute who had written the controversial diary, and pointed out that, since she was using a cocktail of illicit drugs at the time, her statements to the police may well have been at variance with the notes she had made in her diary. As for the witnesses from the photo shop, the police line-ups were far from ideal, but the woman had still picked out both doctors. Both witnesses were honest, respectable people, who lacked any motive to meddle in this notorious case.

Borgnäs also made some headway with regard to the mysterious death of the Forensic Surgeon's wife. In January 1982, she had been found hanging from her bedstead in an odd position, dressed in an elegant evening gown and a swan's-down boa. Her husband's reaction was thought callous and odd. Several experienced detectives were convinced that he had murdered her. It also turned out that their marriage had hardly been ideal. Both had been notoriously unfaithful, and the husband was an inveterate customer of prostitutes. The wife had said that he had actually persuaded her to become a call-girl for financial reasons, which had upset her very much. After she found out that her husband had invited one of his women friends to stay in their house while she was away, she decided to divorce him. Before she could do so, however, she was dead. Several people who knew her thought it impossible that she would commit suicide at a time when she was looking forward to a new life away from her spouse. The official forensic investigation spoke in favour of suicide, but other experts believed that she had been murdered; they included the distinguished German specialist Professor Bernd Brinkmann, consulted by Borgnäs.

Up to this point, the Borgnäs book is logical and convincing. He builds up a moderately solid case that the Forensic Surgeon got away with murdering his wife, and demonstrates that, even without the child witness and other hysterical overtones of the 1988 trial, he is also a credible suspect in the da Costa case. But in the final chapters, Borgnäs shoots himself in the foot by proposing a sensational theory of his own. He had found out that between 1982 and 1984 there had been three unsolved deaths of prostitutes in the Stockholm region. The three women

had been named Annika, Elisabeth and Catrine; not entirely dissimilar to Annie Chapman, Elizabeth Stride and Catherine Eddowes. Was the Forensic Surgeon a Jack the Ripper copycat, murdering prostitutes with the same names as the victims of the original Ripper a century earlier? In 1991, another prostitute reported to the police that she had been attacked by the Forensic Surgeon. Her story was entirely ludicrous, however, particularly her statement that, although she had recognised him and was afraid for her life, she had still invited him up to her flat. Once there, they had quarrelled; he had knocked her into a wall and subsequently left without further violence. The Forensic Surgeon vehemently denied having had anything to do with this woman, and even prosecuted her for perjury. But Borgnäs found out that this woman was named Mari. Had she been intended as the stand-in for the Ripper's fifth victim?

The Ripper copycat theory suffers from a phenomenon well known in Ripperology, namely a near-total lack of evidence for its various suppositions. The first two 'victims' had no marks suggestive of the Ripper's handiwork; in fact, it remains unproved that they were murdered at all. The parallels between the murders of Catherine Eddowes and Catrine da Costa are not strong: in particular, neither was the body of Eddowes dismembered nor her head cut off. As for the allegedly intended fourth victim, she was more frightened than hurt. And if the Forensic Surgeon had been a Ripper fanatic, one would have expected him to own at least one of the books about the Whitechapel murders, but that does not appear to have been the case.

So, what is the truth about the da Costa murder? I was myself active as a young doctor in Sweden at the time and had more than one opportunity to speak to colleagues who knew either the General Practitioner or the Forensic Surgeon. The former was unanimously described as an honest, hardworking doctor. He was shy and awkward, and may not have been a leading light within the medical profession, but there is no evidence that he had ever been guilty of any kind of crime or professional malpractice, nor that he was a pervert or that he abused alcohol or drugs. This agrees with what different people told Per Lindeberg and with an interview with a colleague of the General Practitioner available on

the Internet. In particular, it seems unlikely that such a respectable, timid young man would be capable of committing a gruesome murder just for the fun of it. The evidence against him is feeble in the extreme, and mainly based on the remarkable story from his estranged wife about their little daughter witnessing the crime. After he was drawn into the case through his wife's accusations, the media pressure led to further dubious witnesses being recruited. I agree with Lindeberg that it has been a serious miscarriage of justice that he has been deprived of his license to practice medicine.

The Borgnäs book contains quite a few titbits of information about the Forensic Surgeon and his strange life. Not the least interesting of them is that at the time of his wife's death, he was financially almost destitute. He had £2000 in the bank, but owed the state £2800 in extra tax and his wife £4000 for her part of the mortgage for their flat. According to his own version of events, he had always led a quiet life, free of any extravagance apart from accumulating a stamp collection. He had been employed as a forensic registrar for several years and earned a decent salary. So, how could he be in such dire straits? Even the prostitutes who knew him told many tales of his tendency to barter for the price of sexual services. How did he spend his money? Was he a drug addict? Was he being blackmailed? A colleague of his stated that during 1984 the Forensic Surgeon had become much more nervous, thin and jittery. This observation raises the question of whether he might be abusing amphetamine. Quite a few of the prostitutes who knew him stated that he tried to pay them with drugs, in particular the benzodiazepine compound Valium, a drug sometimes carried by amphetamine abusers to stave off the 'jitters' and calm down. If the Forensic Surgeon really was a drug addict, this might explain his financial difficulties, since as a forensic specialist dealing mainly with dead 'patients' he could not very well prescribe the drugs to himself, particularly not in a country like Sweden, where the prescription habits of doctors are closely monitored. It would also provide a motive for him to kill his wife, since he would inherit considerable sums from her and obtain a widower's pension from the state.

The Forensic Surgeon was a clever professional within his chosen field. He aspired to become a PhD





TV journalist Lars Borgnäs

in medical science and was an authority on strangulation and its forensic consequences and the co-author of several scientific papers. Some witnesses suggested that he had used his specialised knowledge in a more sinister way, namely through experimenting with strangulation to increase sexual gratification. There have been many cases when these perverted practices have gone too far. Was this how his wife had died? It would have been easy for her husband to use his forensic knowledge to arrange the body in such a way as to suggest suicide. According to a colleague, he had even boasted that he had the necessary skills to commit the perfect murder. It is ironic to think that the Forensic Surgeon may have got away with the perfect murder of his wife only to be framed in the da Costa case. Still, the fact that he lost his license to practice is unlikely to be a great loss for Swedish medicine. His ideas of medical ethics were very unconventional: for example, he thought nothing of illicitly inviting laypeople to witness autopsies that he performed. Nor is it appropriate for a forensic specialist to be on first-name terms with a not inconsiderable proportion of Stockholm's prostitutes.

Lindeberg and Borgnäs agree on one point, namely, that the police investigation of the da Costa case was scandalously incompetent. Lindeberg demonstrates that the early police investigation lacked drive and energy, and that very little effort was made to find alternative suspects after the two doctors had become media villains. The outrageous credulity with regard to the child's story and the mishandling of the police line-ups held for the two witnesses from the photo shop add further odium. An elderly architect, who had a history

of violence against prostitutes and was probably the last person to see Catrine alive, was never thoroughly investigated. Not far from where the bags containing Catrine's remains were found the police discovered a large blue towel. Forensic technicians found both human and animal hairs on this towel and sent it to a laboratory in Britain for DNA analysis, but 1980s technology could deduce very little from these samples.

In 1989, the Forensic Surgeon's 'legal adviser', an old man named Carl-Göran Edqvist Borgenstierna, wrote to the prosecutors asking to be allowed to borrow the towel to deduce where it came from. Borgenstierna was himself a man of the lowest repute, a convicted thief and swindler who had been active as a Nazi spy in Norway during the 1940s. What was he planning to do with this towel? The towel later went missing. Were the police really stupid enough to give it to Borgenstierna, or did the Forensic Surgeon have it stolen through his contacts within the police?

In 2004, it was discovered that although the towel itself could not be found, several samples of human hair from it had been kept at the state criminology laboratory. It was quite possible at the time to analyse mitochondrial DNA even on small hair samples. But, arguing that the two doctors had not formally been convicted of any crime and that the hairs on the towel were not necessarily those of the culprit, the inert Swedish police made no move to analyse the hair samples. In July 2005, the two doctors themselves formally demanded that DNA testing take place, and the police rather grudgingly acquiesced: the result was that none of the hair samples belonged to the two suspects.

In the 1980s, Sweden was a good

country for murderers. After all, an unknown assassin was able to shoot Prime Minister Olof Palme dead on a late February night in 1986 and to disappear into the night without a trace. As I have demonstrated in my book *Blood on the Snow*, the Palme murder investigation is symptomatic of the same malady as the da Costa case. Suggestible witnesses were coaxed to change their stories, police line-ups were falsified and the press was used to create feelings of moral outrage and to exaggerate the evidence against various suspects. The political establishment also played an important and blameworthy role in both cases. After Palme's death, people with allegiance to the ruling Social Democrat Party actively spread disinformation about his murder and tried to falsify a suitable 'solution'. In the da Costa case, left-wing and feminist elements, along with a numerous contingent of 'fellow travellers' who wanted to be on the winning side, actively spread lies about the murder and vehemently agitated against the doctors in the media. There is little prospect of the truth about either of these two notorious murder cases ever emerging. In anthologies of unsolved European murders, they are likely to make more than one appearance over the years to come.

### Sources

Bondeson, Jan: *Blood on the Snow*, Ithaca, NY, 2005; Borgnäs, Lars: *Sanningen är en sällsynt gäst* [Truth is a rare guest], Stockholm, 2003; Lindeberg, Per, *Döden är en man* [Death is a Man], Stockholm, 1999; Olsson, Hanna, *Catrine och rättvisan* [Catrine and Justice], Stockholm, 1990.

### Notes

- 1 The names of the two doctors have since been revealed in the Swedish press.





SIMON D WOOD

# The Enigmas of Millers Court

**1. Obfuscate:** To make so confused or opaque as to be difficult to perceive or understand.

**2. Obfuscation:** The activity of obscuring people's understanding, leaving them baffled or bewildered.

My own involvement with the Ripper began in the mid-1970s, when I read in the *London Evening News* a serialization of Stephen Knight's *Jack the Ripper: The Final Solution*, a melodramatic rendering of events featuring the Duke of Clarence, a secret marriage and an illegitimate child, all wrapped up in a heady brew of royal intrigue and conspiracy. I remember thinking at the time how unlikely it all sounded and, as I had some spare time on my hands, decided to check out the story for myself. Within a matter of two weeks I had the true facts.<sup>1</sup> Knight's story collapsed like a house of cards, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Since then we have endured the Maybrick Diary and Patricia Cornwell's reportedly \$6-million attempt to implicate Walter Sickert. And around it goes. Unable to separate fact from fiction, the public appetite for this stuff remains insatiable. What's the betting that, as I write, a new contender for the mantle of Jack the Ripper, complete with TV docu-drama, is being cooked up to coincide with the 120th anniversary of the crimes?

I have often wondered why we have failed to unearth the identity of Jack the Ripper. Maybe it is because, at the last count, there were 27 contenders, specific and generic, for the mantle. This offers almost infinite permutations of suspect and evidence, though any combination of these is ultimately pointless. No single suspect squares with all the 'clues' and 'descriptions', and one hundred years of investigation, plus

a seemingly endless supply of people claiming some sort of ownership or inside knowledge of the crimes, has resulted in a mystery that has grown out of all proportion to its origins.

Sir Robert Anderson, Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police CID at the time of the Ripper murders, didn't name anyone as the Ripper. But he is quoted in the 1920 *Police Encyclopaedia* as saying: '...there was no doubt whatever as to the identity of the criminal...' Really? In 1894, Sir Melville Macnaghten named Drutt, Kosminski and Ostrog, 'any one of whom would have been more likely [than Thomas Cutbush] to have committed this series of murders'. In marginalia on his copy of Anderson's memoirs, Superintendent Donald Swanson also named Kosminski, whom he believed was Sir Robert's suspect. In 1903, Inspector Frederick George Abberline said: 'I cannot help feeling that [George Chapman] is the man we struggled so hard to capture fifteen years ago,' yet added, 'Scotland Yard is really no wiser on the subject than it was fifteen years ago.' Finally, in 1913, Chief Inspector John George Littlechild wrote of Dr Francis Tumblety as his hot favourite.

There is something very wrong with this picture. Is 'more likely to have committed...' and 'I cannot help feeling that...' really the best these distinguished policemen could come up with? Why can't we look to high-ranking officials at the time of the murders for some sort of consensus? There is a very good reason for this, a reason that is also responsible for our collective failure to identify Jack the Ripper. Put simply, much information and evidence were withheld and we have not been told the truth about certain events.

The circumstances surrounding the murder of the woman we know as Mary Jane Kelly were not all we imagined them to be. What follows neither solves the murder nor identifies the person we think of as Jack the Ripper.

Indeed, it poses more questions than it answers. But I hope it will open up discussion and prompt serious Ripperologists to reappraise events in Millers Court and seek out new areas of research.

We have accepted as fact that the Kelly murder scene was discovered by the Metropolitan Police at 1.30pm on the afternoon of 9 November 1888 as seen in the photograph known as MJK 1.



MJK 1

In 1989 a second photograph, now known as MJK 3, arrived anonymously at Scotland Yard. It shows the murder scene from the opposite side of the bed. Despite its lack of provenance, we have accepted it at face value.



MJK 3



Together, these photographs warrant closer inspection, for they are a treasure trove of information about what really happened in Room 13, Millers Court.

the fireplace and mantelpiece on the end wall. From exterior photographs, I estimated the height of the room to be in the region of 8' 6". Also marked on this drawing are the positions of

than the 5 x 4" format. I therefore assumed that the photographer, who may have been Joseph Martin, a commercial photographer employed by the Metropolitan Police, used either a half-plate or quarter-plate glass negative.<sup>3</sup>

Let's play photographer. On arrival at Millers Court, we face a horizontal subject. We accordingly set up our camera to take MJK 1 in landscape format in order to capture as much as we can of the body, bed and adjacent table.

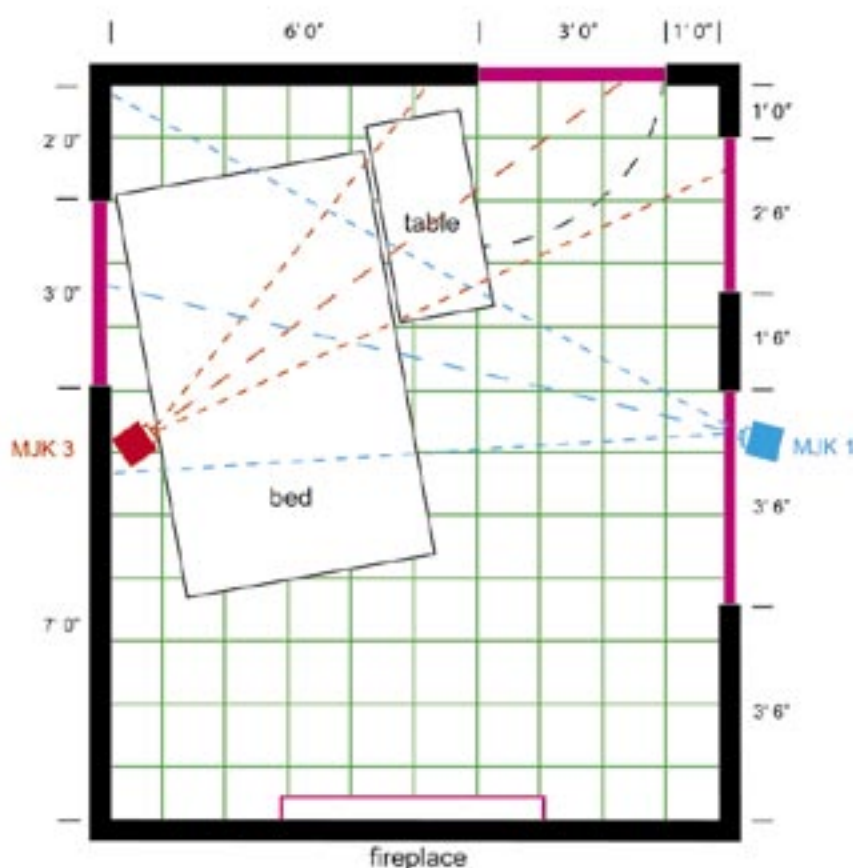
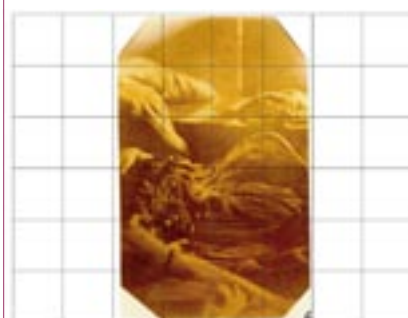


Diagram 1: The two photographs (MJK 1 and MJK 3)  
© Simon Wood



MJK 1 Half-plate format

Picture 4 above shows MJK 1 set within a half-plate format that, if the right and left sides were intact, would show us the head and foot of the bed plus the entire adjacent bedside table. Let's now look at MJK 3, which we can reasonably suppose was taken by the same photographer with the same camera. Once again, our subject is horizontal. We accordingly set up our camera in landscape format to capture as much as we can of the body on the bed.



MJK 3 Half-plate format

Here is MJK 3 set within a half-plate format. If the photograph hadn't been cropped, most of the head and foot of the bed would be visible. Yet, if we take a closer look at MJK 3, it seems that there might be a problem with my theory. How could a photograph meant to capture the whole of the body on the bed have been taken with the camera in the position shown in Diagram No. 1? With the camera hard up against the partition-wall side of

Contemporary newspaper illustrations and floor plans have given the impression that Kelly's room was fairly spacious. In fact, Room 13 was cramped: 12.0' from door to fireplace and 10.0' from windows to partition wall. Dominated by a bed, the room also contained two tables, a chair - maybe two - and a wash-stand. The first thing I set out to do was calculate where the two photographs could have been taken from. I worked on the assumption that they both show the bed in the position seen in MJK 1.

Diagram No. 1 is a scale plan of Room 13. While it is impossible to be exact in the dimensions, I believe the drawing to be sufficiently accurate for the matter in hand. I checked the size of Victorian bricks,<sup>2</sup> averaged the width of the two doors at 3.0ft and took an educated guess at the width of the windows based on calculations from the exterior photograph of Room 13. For convenience, I have centred

the camera for the photographs MJK 1 and MJK 3, together with their angles of view and centre lines.

What the camera shows in MJK 1 and MJK 3 has largely dictated the dimensions of the bed and table on the plan, which I scaled to accommodate both viewpoints. The bed is 6' 6" long by 4' 0" wide - based on occasional double occupancy - and the adjacent bedside table 3' 0" by 1' 6". I have swung the bed 10° away from the partition wall in keeping with its apparent position in MJK 1. This gives a gap of about 11 inches where bedding was rolled up and stuffed between the bed and the partition wall - a position which some believe may have served as the camera location for MJK 3. Next I thought about the size of the camera used.

In 1888 the most widely used glass plate negative sizes were full-plate (13 x 8.5"), half-plate (8.5 x 6.5"), quarter plate (6.5 x 4.25") and 5 x 4". MJK 1's proportions are slightly larger

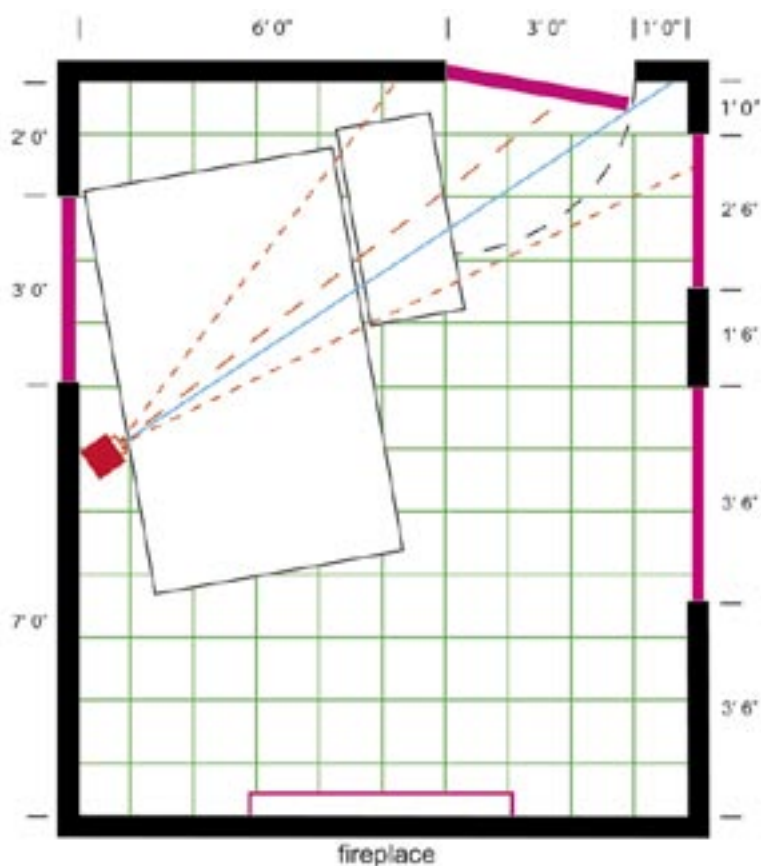


Diagram 2: MJK 3 photograph - strip of light from open door  
© Simon Wood

the photograph more context. But I ditched this notion when MJK 3 revealed evidence to the contrary.

Next, compare the positions of the bedside table in MJK 1 and MJK 3. We know that there were two tables in Room 13: a bedside table and a larger table, probably used for eating, which the police found by the larger of the two windows when entering the room. In MJK 3, the end of the bed is just out of shot to the right of the picture, extending beyond Kelly's raised knee and falling roughly in a line with the top of her foreleg. But in MJK 1 it forms a line with the top of Kelly's thigh, a difference of about a foot. Notice also the difference in height between the tables - on a level with Kelly's left elbow in MJK 1, on or just above the level of her hand in MJK 3.

Let's now turn our attention to the strip of light in MJK 3 purportedly coming through the partially open door to Room 13. Diagram No. 2 represents the alleged angle of view of MJK 3 with the door shown six inches ajar.

Diagram No. 2 shows that the camera that took MJK 3 could not have seen a strip of light coming from

the bed, the picture would require a wide-angle lens of panoramic proportions and would therefore be impossible to take with Victorian photographic equipment. In general, plate cameras with long focal lengths - ie, the distance between the lens and the plate - had fields of view in the region of 60°.

Next, let's look at Kelly's right leg in the foreground of the photograph, seen from the knee to the top of the ankle, a length of about fifteen inches.<sup>4</sup> With the camera in the position shown in Diagram No. 1, how could the photographer capture Kelly's right leg, which would have been hard up against the lens, together with all the background detail? He would have had to move the camera at least a foot further back, but this would have brought it to the other side of the partition wall. How was it done then?

The explanation is simple. If you look closely, you'll see that Kelly's right leg has been painted in afterwards, together with a crudely drawn hand touching something that looks suspiciously like the back of an old plate camera. My first thought was that, as the leg was impossible to capture from this position, these details were painted in later to give

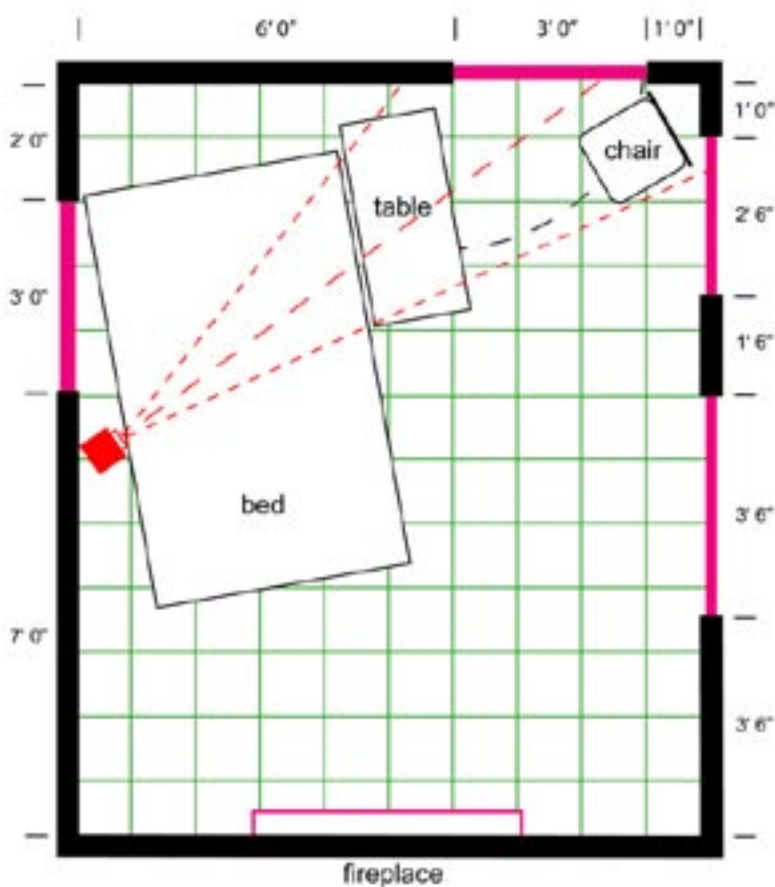


Diagram 3: The chair in MJK 3  
© Simon Wood



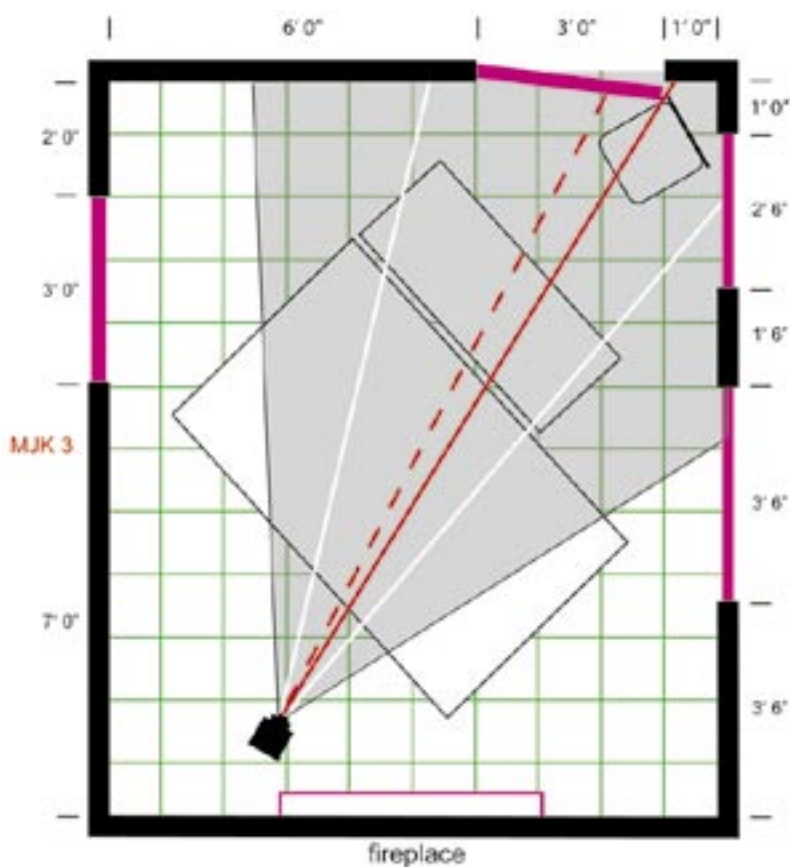


Diagram 4: Position of bed and table in MJK 3 and position of camera  
© Simon Wood

different positions from those shown in MJK 1. Diagram No. 4 shows the actual position of the bed and table in MJK 3.

The bed and table were placed almost diagonally across the room. The field of view in MJK 3 is marked with white lines. The grey area is the camera's 60° field of view. Again, it is impossible to be absolutely accurate, but this position satisfies all the detail seen in MJK 3. I have left the door ajar to show that my earlier argument still holds good. Even from this angle, a strip of light from a partially open door would not be visible to the camera.

If the bed was in the middle of the room when MJK 3 was taken, why was the victim's right leg painted in later? Let's first consider the size of the table in the diagram above (approximately 4.0' long) as we look again at a plan of MJK 1 in Diagram No. 4A.

I think that MJK 1 was taken through the window. This diagram shows the camera outside the window, its 60° field of vision marked in grey with white lines showing the photograph's field of view. The small circle marks the centre of the bed.

between the partially open door and the door frame. If the door, which opened inwards, was ajar, the camera would have seen the leading edge of the door - the view marked by the solid centre line - overlapping the door frame, with daylight illuminating the corner by the smaller of the room's two windows. But in MJK 3 that corner of the room is almost in complete darkness. This means that the door is closed. So, what accounts for the strip of light? We'll soon get to that.

In the meantime, look closely at MJK 3. You'll see an upright wooden chair sitting at an angle across the corner of the room, somewhere between the door and the smaller of the two windows. Diagram No. 3 on the previous page shows the chair in place relative to the bed and table as seen in MJK 1.

I made the chair 16 inches square, though its actual size is immaterial. Diagram No. 3 shows the angle formed by the table and the chair. Note how, from the position of the bed as shown in MJK 1, this angle converges towards the door. Now look again at MJK 3. The angle formed by the table and chair converges in the opposite direction. This means that when MJK 3 was taken the bed and table were in

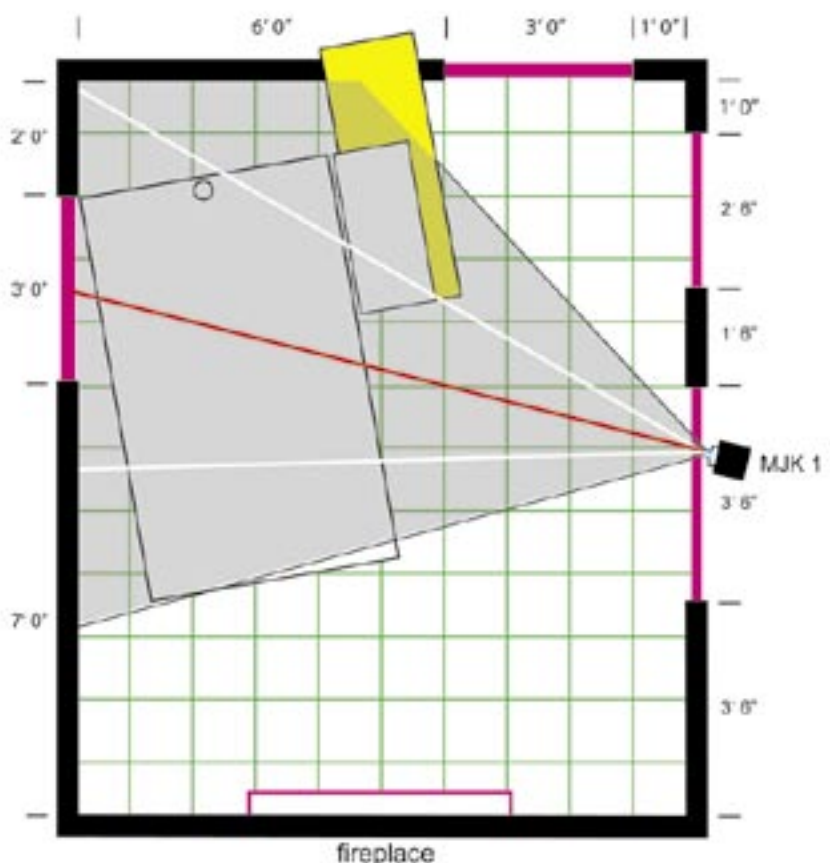


Diagram 4a: MJK 1 - relative table sizes  
© Simon Wood

I don't know the size of Kelly's bedside table. I only know that it was smaller than the table found by the larger of the two windows. In this plan it works out to just over 2.0' long. The rectangle offset behind it is the 4.0' table from the previous diagram at the same scale. With its forward edge set in the same position as the bedside table, it wouldn't fit in the room. Therefore the table in MJK 3 is not the same as in MJK 1.

Let's now return to the strip of light. How can we account for it if the door was closed? The answer is simply that it is not a strip of light. If the door were partially open, a strip of light would run all the way to the floor. But this one stops short of the table. Besides, it's in a different plane from the door, ie, nearer the camera. It's something hanging from the ceiling which has been caught in the bright light source coming from the right of the photograph. I have no great knowledge of the working parts of the human body, but I would suggest that this is an internal organ. Notice how it's almost symmetrical in shape and slightly bulbous at its base and appears stretched in places as though pulled down by its own weight.

As to the bright light in MJK 3, it looks like the curtains on the larger of the room's two windows had been opened and the light source was sunlight. The only problem with this, though, is that at mid-morning, 9 November 1888, the sun was towards the south - while Mary Kelly's windows faced north and her door faced west



*MJK 3 Spots of light*

- and cloud cover was at 100%. Hardly sufficient illumination to create the hot spots of light seen on (a) the items on the table; (b) the knee, hand and pelvic region; and (c) the internal organ dangling from the ceiling. Neither could it account for the shaft of light cutting across the top left hand corner of the picture.

The white asterisks denote hot spots of light. All of them, including the internal organ hanging from the ceiling, have been illuminated by a bright light source - a flare from which is just visible in the top right corner of the picture - and all of them fall within a small +/- percentage of intensity of each other. What was the light source then? Perhaps an earlier version of the photographic accessory shown below.



*Magnesium Ribbon Holder  
Courtesy of Theodore Gray*

Picture 11 above shows a 1913 Kodak magnesium ribbon holder. It was used to measure out a pre-determined length of ribbon calculated to generate the amount of light needed to expose film on the basis of the brightness and the rate at which the ribbon burns: about 1 to 2 seconds per inch.

You pull the amount of ribbon required out of the holder, which has a spool inside, and light it. When the flame reaches the tip of the holder, it goes out, automatically timing the exposure. In other words, it is a slow-motion flash bulb that can be moved about while burning to avoid hard shadows. But if the photographer's assistant in MJK 3 did not have access to one of these holders, he could have simply held a length of magnesium ribbon in his hand with little danger of getting burned. Magnesium provided a powerful light source, but its slow burning rate limited its use to static subjects. It was ideal, then, for use in MJK 3, which, in comparison to



*Magnesium burning  
Courtesy of Theodore Gray*

MJK 1, is well exposed with no harsh shadows.

Let's recap. In MJK 3, the door to Room 13 is closed. A chair stands in the corner preventing the door from opening easily. The bed and table are in the middle of the room. An internal organ dangles from the ceiling. All of this is illuminated by a magnesium-ribbon light source emanating from the right of the photograph. By the time MJK 1 is taken, the bed has been moved, and the larger table, together with its contents, has been substituted for the smaller bedside table. Armed with this information we can start to build up a scenario and timeline.

Alerted to Kelly's murder by her landlord, John McCarthy, and Thomas Bowyer, Inspector Walter Beck arrives at Millers Court shortly after 11.00am, followed by Doctor George Bagster Philips at 11.15am and Inspector Frederick George Abberline at 11.30am. The door and windows to Room 13 are locked. At Doctor Philips's behest - according to Abberline - no attempt is made to break into the room as everyone waits for the bloodhounds to arrive. The *New York Herald* noted on 10 November 1888:

*Not even the reporters were allowed within the police line. It was determined this time to keep the clues from being effaced, tampered with or distorted. Besides, bloodhounds were to be employed, and scent must not be obliterated.*

Everybody cools their heels until 1.30pm when Superintendent Thomas Arnold arrives with news that the bloodhounds aren't coming and instructs McCarthy to break open the door, which he does with a pickaxe. Doctor George Bagster Philips later reported:

On the door being opened it



knocked against a table which was close to the left-hand side of the bedstead, and the bedstead was close against the wooden partition... *and by subsequent examination I am sure the body had been removed, after the injury which caused death, from that side of the bedstead which was nearest to the wooden partition previously mentioned. The large quantity of blood under the bedstead, the saturated condition of the palliase, pillow, and sheet at the top corner of the bedstead nearest to the partition leads me to the conclusion that the severance of the right carotid artery, which was the immediate cause of death, was inflicted while the deceased was lying at the right side of the bedstead and her head and neck in the top right-hand corner.*

consensus was that when Kelly was killed her bed was in the position shown in MJK 1. And here is where we find evidence that the circumstances surrounding Kelly's death are not what we have imagined them to be. For the past 117 years we have believed that the door and windows of Room 13 were locked and that nobody entered the room until the door was broken open at 1.30pm by McCarthy. But someone has lied to us.

MJK 3 shows the bed in the centre of the room, demonstrating clearly that, at some time between 11.00am and 1.30pm, the police defied Warren's order, entered the room, took a number of photographs - of which I believe MJK 3 is only one - moved Kelly's bed, removed certain items of evidence and rearranged the murder scene. Furthermore, MJK 3 must

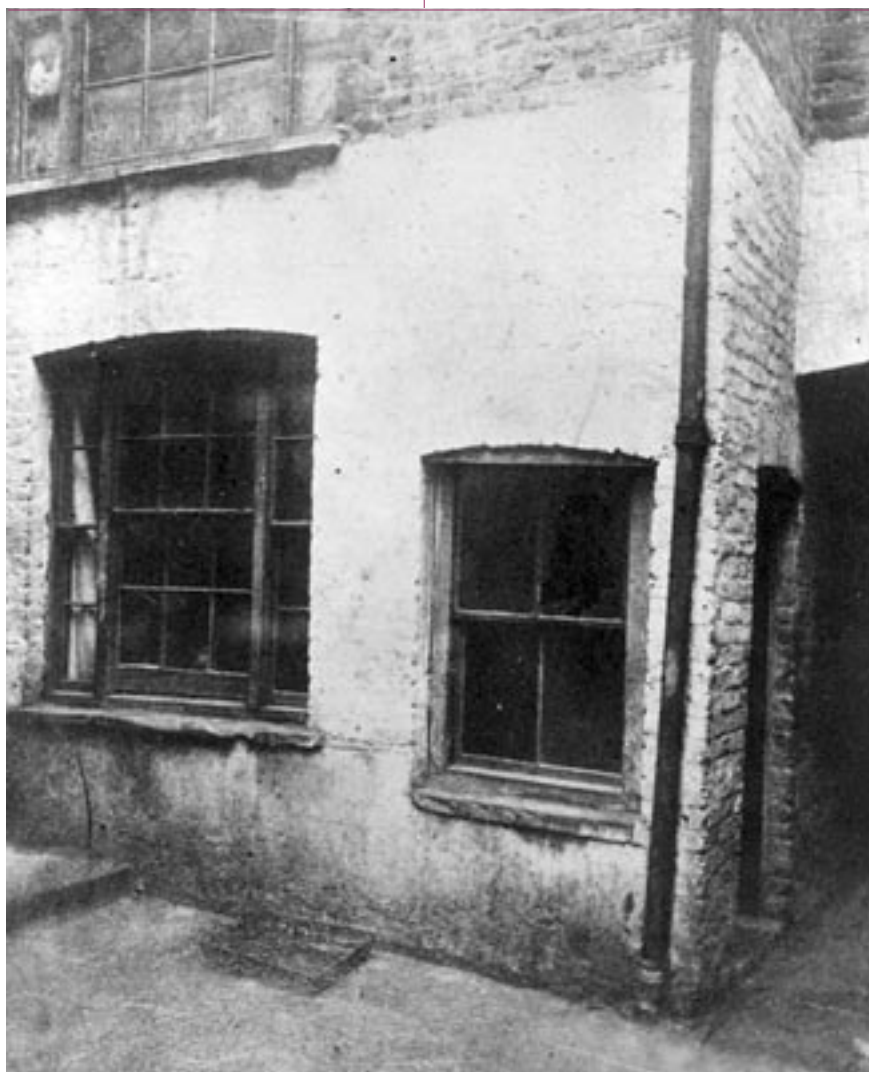
The murderer probably cut Kelly's right carotid artery with the bed in roughly the position shown in MJK 1. He later moved it to the centre of the room to carry out the mutilations. This would have allowed him 360° access to Kelly's body. But he certainly wouldn't have bothered moving it back again into its former position, since an eight or nine-stone dead weight lying on a heavy wooden-framed bed isn't an easy thing to move silently and by oneself. Accordingly, when he left Room 13 the bed would have been in this position. Logic dictates that this is the position in which the bed was discovered and subsequently photographed.

Dr Bagster Philips was in Millers Court from 11.15am when, in his own words, 'I looked through the lower of the broken panes and satisfied myself that the mutilated corpse lying on the bed was not in need of any immediate attention from me,' until 1.30pm, when the door was broken open by McCarthy. This means that Dr Bagster Philips examined Kelly's body in the full knowledge that the room had been entered and the murder scene rearranged.

According to police and press reports, prior to 1.30pm not only was the door to Room 13 locked. So were the windows. We know this because we are told that, after sending a telegram to Police Commissioner Sir Charles Warren, Superintendent Arnold ordered the removal of an entire window in order to gain access to the room.<sup>5</sup> But the police did not remove the window, as the exterior photograph of Room 13 attests.

The brickwork surrounding both window frames is intact, showing no evidence of either window being removed, though their removal would have resulted in fairly extensive damage. Note the broken panes in the smaller window and open curtain in the larger. Perhaps this photograph was taken at some time in the morning, before a window was removed? No. The angled shadow on the brickwork by the far side of door, cast by the brickwork above the alley connecting 26 and 27 Dorset Street, indicates that the sun was in the west when the photograph was taken. Consequently, the photograph was taken in the late afternoon of 9 November, after Mary Jane Kelly's body had been taken away in a coffin, but before 'the windows were boarded up and the door padlocked'.<sup>6</sup>

How did the murderer leave Room 13? Via the door, which he locked



*Exterior of Room 13, Millers Court*

Dr Bagster Philips was joined by Dr Bond, divisional surgeon of A Division, Dr Gordon Brown, Dr J R Gabé of Mecklenburgh Square, and others. The

have been taken before the door was broken open by McCarthy; otherwise the chair standing just inside the door would not be there.

behind him? In this case, why did he leave a chair positioned just inside the door? You might do that if the door didn't lock and you wanted to prevent its being opened easily from the outside. But the door to Room 13 was locked. Why else would it have to be broken open?

The murderer could just as easily have exited through the larger of the two windows. It would have been easy enough, the sill being only a little over two feet from ground level, and makes a lot more sense than running the risk of being seen locking the door from the outside. If the murderer did exit this way, he would not have been able to re-lock the window from the outside. This means that the police could have easily opened the window. Which is precisely what they must have done. How else could they have got in to take MJK 3? The door was locked. Superintendent Arnold's order to remove an entire window makes no sense except to reinforce in everyone's minds the notion of a 'locked room'.

Let's turn now to Kelly's 'lost' key:

[Inspector Abberline]: 'Barnett informs me that it [the key] has been missing some time, and since it has been lost they have put their hand through the broken window, and moved back the catch. It is quite easy.' This is an interesting remark.

Barnett moved into Mrs Buller's Boarding House on 30 October, the day of his quarrel with Mary Jane Kelly during which two window panes were broken. This event happened before the key went missing. Barnett didn't visit Room 13 again until nine days later, on 8 November. How did he know the key had gone missing, and why, if he wasn't living there, would he say that he and Kelly used to reach through the broken window to slip the bolt? Some say the key had been missing for some time before the fight. If this is true, how did Kelly and Barnett get into the room before the window panes got broken?

[Inspector Abberline]: 'An impression has gone abroad that the murderer took away the key of the room...'

From a practical point of view, it doesn't matter if Kelly's door was locked or bolted. Secure the door, commit the murder, exit through the window. The important thing, then as now, is that everybody thinks the door was locked. But if the door wasn't locked, we have to ask ourselves a question. Why didn't someone reach through the broken window to open

it? Abberline did say that it was 'quite easy.' Simply, because that would have destroyed the illusion of the 'locked room' on which so much of the 'mystery' relied and which, later, the story of the missing key would reinforce. Abberline's vague assertion about the key serves no useful purpose other than to confuse matters by neatly planting in our minds the tantalising possibility of a previous encounter between Kelly and her murderer.

At Kelly's inquest, Abberline told Coroner Roderick Macdonald:

*I subsequently took an inventory of the contents of the room [since missing]. There were traces of a large fire having been kept up in the grate, so much so that it had melted the spout of a kettle off. We have since gone through the ashes in the fireplace; there were remnants of clothing, a portion of a brim of a hat, and a skirt, and it appeared as if a large quantity of women's clothing had been burnt.*

melting may have occurred at an earlier date. But of real interest here is the answer Abberline gave the Coroner regarding the burning of the clothing in the fire:

*I can only imagine that it was to make a light for the man to see what he was doing.*

Instead of something definite, such as 'because the embers were still hot or warm or smouldering, I suspect... etc. etc,' Abberline says, vaguely and without a shred of corroborative evidence, 'I can only imagine... etc. etc,' and in one deft phrase makes the fire an indelible ingredient of the locked room mystery.

The fire has always bothered me. Clothing tends to smoulder. Bundle up a woman's dress and throw it into a small fireplace and it will probably douse the flames. For it to burn it would have to be torn up and fed to the flames in pieces, with some sort of accelerant used to get the fire roaring in the first place. Furthermore, to be hot enough to

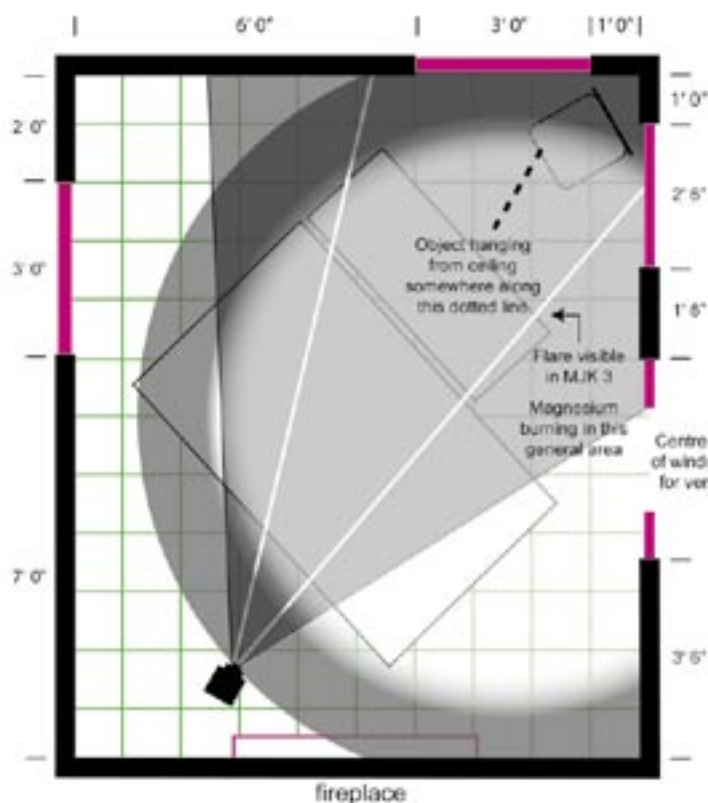


Diagram 5: Position of light sources in MJK 3  
© Simon Wood

As far as I know, we have never been told whether the 'traces of a large fire' were warm, still smouldering or cold, and many people have suggested that the incident of the kettle spout

melt a kettle spout, the fire would have required constant attention. This would have been frustrating for the killer, who wouldn't have wanted to risk setting the room ablaze whilst



busily engaged in murder, heavy furniture moving and mutilation. Can we really imagine a lone killer coping with all this? A fire this hot would also have produced a lot of smoke and ash as the flames eventually subsided and the remnants of clothing smouldered, and some of these ashes would have settled in the room, covering surfaces and contaminating evidence.

Based on MJK 3, Diagram No. 5 shows the general area in which the magnesium ribbon was burned and its circle of light. I have taken the liberty of opening the larger window - but not necessarily the curtains - to provide ventilation.

Theodore Gray, co-founder of Wolfram Research Inc. and Chemical Elements columnist for Popular Science magazine, generously conducted an experiment on my behalf. He burned lengths of magnesium ribbon in a space about half the size and height of Room 13. The space soon filled with smoke. Gray said:

*I think the degree to which the smoke would interfere with a longer exposure would depend mainly on how high the ceiling was. It [the smoke] goes up and stays at the top, so in a high-ceiling room it might stay out of the way.*

*Burning longer lengths [for longer exposures] without some form of ventilation, you could not stay in the room long enough to finish the ribbon burning, and the picture would be seriously impacted by smoke.*

Returning to the possibility that the photographer's assistant in MJK 3 didn't have access to a magnesium ribbon holder, Gray mentioned that:

*Magnesium ribbon is really a very calm material, and puts out surprisingly little heat for the amount of light. It can be burning just an inch or two away from your hand and you feel no heat. When dropped it puts itself out quickly with no danger of catching the rough wood floor on fire.*

*[And when burned] the ribbon puts off a combination of fine smoke which gets in and around everything, and clumps of the same material float around but settle out much more quickly than the fine smoke.*

The photo opposite shows remains of burnt magnesium ribbon, which generally break off and fall to the ground after a few inches have burned.

Abberline's vague statement about the fire providing illumination achieves two things. First, it establishes in

everyone's mind that the murder must have been committed at night. Secondly, the strong possibility that other photographs were taken - since the police certainly wouldn't have broken into the room to take only one - means that further amounts of magnesium were burned in Room 13. So how better to account for any possible questions about contamination of evidence by the residues of burnt magnesium than for Abberline to suggest that they were ashes resulting from 'a large fire' in the grate?

At Kelly's inquest, Sara Lewis testified that, at 2.30am:

*...opposite the lodging-house I saw a man with a wideawake [hat]. There was no one talking to him. He was a stout-looking man, and not very tall. The hat was black. I did not take any notice of his clothes. The man was looking up the court; he seemed to be waiting or looking for some one. Further on there was a man and woman - the latter being in drink.*

Before this, Caroline Maxwell, who stated that she saw Kelly twice between about 8.00 and 8.45am on the morning of 9 November, had been cautioned by the Coroner: 'You must be very careful about your evidence, because it is different to other people's.'

The Whitechapel murders had attracted unprecedented levels of press coverage. The activities of the police were under intense scrutiny, and the official version of events had to remain watertight. Mindful of this, Abberline returned after the inquest to Commercial Street police station, where at 6.00 that evening a truly miraculous event took place. George Hutchinson walked in and testified that he had been in Dorset Street at about 2.30am, when he saw Mary Kelly entering Room 13, Millers Court, in the company of a man bearing an uncanny resemblance to an almost prototypical description of the Ripper, complete with curled



Burnt magnesium  
Courtesy of Theodore Gray

moustache and small parcel in hand. At the stroke of Abberline's pen, Sara Lewis's unidentified 'man and woman' became Kelly and the 'Ripper', magically transported to the right place at the right time.

Hutchinson's story supported Abberline's assertion about the 'large fire' in the grate and also neatly demolished Mrs Maxwell's story of seeing Kelly on the morning of the murder, which, officially, took place at between 3.00 and 4.00am. How could she have seen Kelly after she had been dead for several hours? Mrs Maxwell must have confused the dates. Abracadabra! The press swallowed Hutchinson's story and the official version of events remained watertight. But with 'the large fire' in the grate in doubt, it is quite possible that Mrs Maxwell saw Kelly either before or during the murder in Room 13.

Mary Ann Cox, a resident of Millers Court, had the following exchange with the Coroner:

*[Coroner]* How many men live in the court who work in Spitalfields Market?

*[Mary Ann Cox]* One. At a quarter-past six I heard a man go down the court. That was too late for the market.

*[Coroner]* From what house did he go?

*[Mary Ann Cox]* I don't know.

*[Coroner]* Did you hear the door bang after him?

*[Mary Ann Cox]* No.

*[Coroner]* Then he must have walked up the court and back again?

*[Mary Ann Cox]* Yes.

*[Coroner]* It might have been a policeman?

*[Mary Ann Cox]* It might have been.

On 22 October, two weeks prior to the murder in Room 13, Superintendent Arnold requested the augmentation of H Division by 25 men to ensure that all patrols were filled nightly. He wrote:

*I beg to recommend that the Division be augmented by twenty five Constables for the duty, and any not required for that purpose be employed in specially patrolling neighbourhoods which may be considered more dangerous than others, or where any complaint has been made upon which it is thought necessary a Constable should for a time be placed on a short beat.<sup>7</sup>*

Dorset Street was certainly considered a neighbourhood 'more dangerous than others', and Mary

Ann Cox's testimony suggests that, even without Superintendent Arnold's augmentations, police patrols were a common occurrence. Yet, strangely, no testimony about activity, suspicious or otherwise, was sought from the constables who regularly patrolled Dorset Street and Millers Court. Where were the police throughout the early hours of 9 November?

Missing policemen, a kettle spout melted, lost keys, locked rooms, broken windows, suspect testimony from George Hutchinson three days after the event - plus a hurried inquest at which medical evidence was withheld. All these reek of sleight of hand and the misdirection of an elaborately-staged illusion. The circumstances surrounding Kelly's murder are extremely suspicious and transcend any notion of its being the work of a lone killer reaching some sort of murderous apogee.

The actions of Inspector Abberline in rearranging the murder scene, tampering with photographs and removing pieces of evidence point to an alternative scenario in Room 13. But what could have happened in that dismal room to make him undertake such an elaborate cover-up? What could have been so unthinkably gruesome or politically sensitive that it had to be sanitised and passed off as the fifth Ripper murder? For an answer to this we must again return to MJK3; or rather, to my restored version of MJK3.

But let me offer first a few words of explanation. During my research I used only materials freely available in the public domain. For my copy of MJK3 I went to that most valuable of resources, the Casebook Jack the Ripper ([www.casebook.org](http://www.casebook.org)) for which Stephen Ryder deserves our heartfelt thanks.

In my restored version of MJK3 (see back cover) there is no retouching or trickery and no colour has been added. All I have done is retrieve and restore the colour information within the photograph. The colour is crude, but the results are sufficient for our needs. The image you see is a composite, which was necessary because the two main sections of the photograph required very different levels of adjustment to reveal detail. Only the painted-in leg at the bottom of the picture remains untouched - making it look all the more phoney and out of proportion.

At the top of the photograph, we can see the chair by the door. Visible to the left of the chair is the inside

of the door to Room 13, upon which letters have been daubed in a large semi-circle. Despite my efforts, no amount of adjustment made these letters any more legible, so your guess about what they are is as good as mine. At the centre of the picture can be seen the entrails hanging from the ceiling, and beneath them, on the table, is a knife with a bloodstained handle.



*The murder weapon?*

But it is the centre section of the photograph which is of most interest.



*Objects on the bed*

Look between the victim's thighs. The flat circular object is a china plate with a patterned border, behind which stands a bowl partially obscured by a smaller, lipped, bowl and a bottle laying on its side. Behind this large bowl are three smaller shallow vessels. Atop these, sloping from left to right, a spoon rests in a heart-shaped dish, behind which sits what might be a plume of feathers or a bunch of leaves. And to the right of the photograph, half out of shot, is a round short-necked glass or porcelain container which is possibly for wine, beer or spirits. Also on the china plate is a small lump of unidentifiable matter.

I will leave it to others to discern any possible symbolism in this tableau. But, symbolism aside, why have we never heard about any of this evidence? A bloodstained knife, a plate, five bowls, a spoon in a dish, a bottle and an alcohol container, plus graffiti and hanging entrails. It has all disappeared - vanished - along with

Abberline's inventory of the room.

There are three other pieces of evidence from Room 13 which we can add to our list.

At the inquest, Thomas Bowyer stated:

*There was a curtain. I put my hand through the broken pane and lifted the curtain. I saw two pieces of flesh lying on the table.*

[Coroner]: Where was this table?

[Bowyer]: In front of the bed, close to it.'

This tallies with Dr Thomas Bond's post-mortem report, in which he wrote: 'The flaps removed from the abdomen and thighs were on a table.'

There is a pile of human flesh on the table in MJK 3 but, as I have demonstrated, the contents of the table in MJK 1 are different. Here is the detail of the table from MJK 1, showing the victim's head in the background.

A small box sits on the corner of the table nearest the camera. Behind it, against a pile of unidentifiable detritus, is a small hand mirror. The back of the glass and its handle are clearly visible, and once you know it is there you can easily see it in most published versions of the photograph. Also identifiable on the bedside table, though impossible to see at a glance, is a ring in a trinket box.

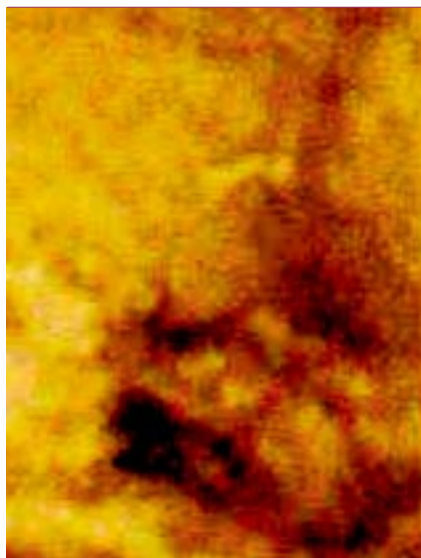


*Handmirror on the bedside table*

Doctor Bond's post-mortem report of flesh on the table suggests that, if he was telling the truth, he examined the body as shown in MJK 3. But if this is correct, why didn't he mention the bloodstained knife, which must have been something of a clue? It even matches one of the possible murder weapons he describes in his



10 November report to Sir Robert Anderson. And if he examined the body as shown in MJK 1, why didn't he question the unlikely presence of a small hand mirror amidst the detritus on the bedside table?



Ring in trinket box

The mutilated body, together with all the above paraphernalia complete with hanging entrails, must have been a truly horrifying spectacle. Yet, strangely, Bowyer and McCarthy, the very first people to see the dead body, mentioned none of it. Both men described the body as it appears in MJK 1, which suggests to me that they were coached in the story about rent arrears to provide a plausible trigger for the body's discovery. But somebody over-egged the pudding in its telling. What Whitechapel slum landlord would have allowed a tenant to run up six weeks' rent arrears?

With the doubts about the 'large fire' in the grate pointing to the killing having taken place during the early daylight hours, you must marvel at the astonishing speed with which this crime was committed, discovered, 'investigated', brought to inquest and laid to rest. Ten days from beginning to end. Somebody was impatient to get the affair brushed under the carpet.

On 12 November two MPs, a high-ranking Post Office official and two members of the Royal

Irish Constabulary visited 13 Millers Court.<sup>8</sup> What possible interest could they have had in the murder of a Whitechapel prostitute? Maybe more than we realise.

When dealing with scans of old photographs it's easy to think pixel patterns are letters and symbols. I made this mistake many years ago when I suggested that there might be initials on the partition door in MJK 1 - and look where that led! That said, writing is indeed visible all over the photograph we know as MJK3. Most of it is illegible or nonsensical, probably the result of people writing on the envelope in which the photograph was kept. But at some point an original print was die stamped. In the area below the raised left knee clearly visible concentric circles contain the letters HO. Home Office? Within the circles, and to the left, a notation reads 'SIB8FGA' and, beneath, a second reads: 'pd 2/4'.



The notation on MJK 3

It's not too much of a stretch to interpret the first as 'Secret Irish Branch [Department?]' 8 Frederick George Abberline'. He was no stranger to the secret world, having been on 'special service'<sup>9</sup> many times, most notably on 24 January 1885 when he arrested Cunningham, an Irishman, for his part in the bombing of the Tower of London. Cunningham's accomplice, Harry Burton, was arrested on 3 February at lodgings in Prescott Street, off Leman Street, Whitechapel. Believed to be prime movers in a conspiracy hatched in America, the two men were charged with high treason<sup>10</sup> and sentenced to life imprisonment on 25 May 1885.<sup>11</sup> What's interesting is that two other policemen involved with Abberline in the Tower of London bombing also worked on the Whitechapel murders:

Superintendent Thomas Arnold<sup>12</sup> and Sergeant Stephen White, who was 'rewarded and commended by the Home Office' for his actions at the Tower.<sup>13</sup>

The second notation is less certain. It could be 'police department 2 of 4', suggesting that the photograph was number 2 in a set of 4. This doesn't entirely square with the figure 4 clearly visible at the bottom right hand corner of the photograph, but together they suggest that there were at least three other photographs.

Whatever their exact meaning, these notations confirm that Abberline had knowledge of the existence and circumstances of this photograph. Further investigation, however, is required into his connections with the Secret Irish Branch, which at the time was under the immediate control of Detective Chief Inspector Littlechild.

Of course, we have to ask ourselves why, if MJK 3 was so sensitive, it ever surfaced in the first place. I have no definite thoughts on this, but do realise that owing to its lack of provenance many may now decide to dismiss it as evidence. As for me, I believe it to be the genuine article and I'm convinced that its anonymous sender was aware of its evidential value. I could kick myself that it took me 16 years to see what was staring us all in the face.

I have no fully-formed thoughts about the who or the why of what happened in Room 13. It's clear, however, that the original photographs were recognised as evidence of these events, which is why they were cropped and the leg painted in on MJK 3 to make it correspond with MJK 1. The authorities were also content to let events at 13 Millers Court rest squarely upon the shoulders of Jack the Ripper, who had been curiously inactive for the six weeks leading up to the murder and was never heard from again afterwards.

Remember the quotation with which I prefaced this article:

*Obfuscation: The activity of obscuring people's understanding, leaving them baffled or bewildered.*

With all the rumours and disinformation Abberline and others

## Write for Ripperologist!

We welcome well-researched articles on any subject related to Jack the Ripper, Victoriana or the East End. Please send your submissions email to [contact@ripperologist.info](mailto:contact@ripperologist.info)

in the know continued to encourage well after the event, is there now any reason to wonder at the lack of consensus amongst detectives and high-ranking civil servants of the time? We have all been dazzled, astonished and mystified by the grand illusion of Mary Jane Kelly's murder, supposedly at the hands of the Ripper, and the master conjuror standing at the centre of it all appears to have been Inspector Frederick George Abberline. But MJK 3 blows a big hole in the official Ripper story. The jig is well and truly up for Abberline. All we have to do now is find out how and, more important, why he staged the trick.

I hope that Scotland Yard will make the original photographs available for independent analysis and that the Home Office will release its secret files on the case together with the other photographs and missing evidence from Room 13. Perhaps we will then learn what happened, at some time during October 1888, to the killer of Mary Ann Nichols, Annie Chapman, Catherine Eddowes and, possibly, Elizabeth Stride, and discover the true identities of the victim in Room 13, the murderer(s) and the woman we know as Mary Jane Kelly.

In closing I would like to leave you with a final thought. If you can't accept that Abberline contrived to cover up the nature of the crime in Millers Court and make it look like a Ripper murder *in extremis* - toning down the crime scene considerably in the process - then consider this. Somebody took MJK 3 before the door to Room 13 was broken open. If it wasn't the police, who was it?

### Acknowledgements

My sincere thanks for the generous and invaluable assistance of Theodore Gray and Charles Shotwell, who may be visited respectively at [www.periodictable.com](http://www.periodictable.com) and [www.shotwellphotography.com](http://www.shotwellphotography.com). I should also like to thank most especially Laura Candelaria for the author's photograph accompanying this article.

### Notes

- 1 For those who are interested, my original research material is indexed at Tower Hamlets Local History Archive: stock number L. 8383, class number 341.
- 2 The Imperial brick of a nominal size of 9.0 x 4.5 x 3.0 inches was widely adopted in 1840.
- 3 The first Metropolitan Police photographer wasn't recruited until 1901. See Metropolitan Police Website ([www.met.police.uk/history/](http://www.met.police.uk/history/)



Simon Wood's restored colour version of MJK 3  
©Simon Wood

[archives.htm](#)).

- 4 My wife, who is roughly the same height as Mary Jane Kelly (5' 8"), kindly volunteered her leg for this measurement.
- 5 *Star*, 10 November 1888, *The Times*, 10 November 1888.
- 6 *Manchester Guardian*, 10 November 1888.
- 7 Home Office file A49301C/10 contains the official response to Arnold's request, which was granted.
- 8 *Irish Times*, 13 November 1888
- 9 Superintendent Arnold's retirement interview, *Eastern Post*, 3 November

1893.

- 10 *The Nation*, 12 February 1885
- 11 *The Journal of John Daniel Thompson* (<http://homepage.powerup.com.au/~ajthomps/Journal.htm>).
- 12 Superintendent Arnold's retirement interview, *Eastern Post*, 3 November 1893.
- 13 *News of the World*, 14 October 1900.

---

[Comment](#)

---

[Next article](#)

---

[Back to contents](#)





ROB HILLS

## From the Bars of the Cradle

*Ripperologist* readers are well aware that I believe Jack the Ripper was James Hardiman, a horseflesh purveyor and cat's-meat seller. His mother was Harriet Hardiman, who lived in the ground-floor front room at 29 Hanbury Street, the bleak building in whose back yard Annie Chapman's mutilated body was found on 8 September 1888. In previous articles I have chronicled Hardiman's life, showing how he moved about the East End and analysing the factors that substantiate my theories. I now return to this subject, confident that new information resulting from my continuous research will reinforce my conclusions as to my suspect's eminent suitability as the Ripper. We shall begin right in the heart of Whitechapel.

### 12 October 1859

James Hardiman is born at 31 The High Street, Mile End, New Town, in the registration district of Whitechapel (Greatorex Street today). His parents are Edward Hardiman, a shoemaker, and his wife Harriet, formerly Stockton.

### 1861 Census

The Hardimans now live at 2 Well Street. The family consists of James, his parents and his older sister Sarah, age 3. Their house is described as a dairy general, sandwiched between a butcher's shop and a coal shed. The butcher is appropriately named Chas Meatyard, age 40. He is listed as married, but, oddly enough, his unnamed wife is recorded as having 'gone away since delivery of schedule'.

### 1871 Census

James lives at 24 Preston Street with his parents, his two sisters, Sarah,



©Jane Coram

age 13, and Harriet, age 8, and his brothers Edward, age 6, and Samuel, age 4. At the age of 11, James has not followed his father's profession but has become a horseflesh vendor or cat's-meat man. He would remain in this trade for the rest of his life.

Up until World War II, the cat's-meat man was a familiar sight in British cities. He sold wooden skewers of meat trimmings unfit for human consumption and horse meat for prices which, at the time of the Whitechapel murders, ranged from a farthing to a halfpenny. Fresh horseflesh, either raw or cooked, was both good for cats and liked by most cats, but if there was the slightest suspicion of its freshness, it must be cooked. Offal

should always be cooked because of parasites and their eggs. The meat was sometimes dyed blue-green to prevent its being sold as human food and on occasion was too rotten or foul for cats to eat. Customers had to inspect the meat carefully, dipping

## The Cat's-Meat Men

From *The Illustrated Police News: Cats' meat man attacked by dogs* (August 1876)



On Friday last week, within a mile or so of Middleton, an itinerant purveyor of meat to dogs and cats, was going his usual rounds, when to his infinite surprise and alarm, a pack of hounds rushed at his barrow and basket he carried, and proceeded to devour the food so ravenously that the poor cat's meat man began to think that he was himself destined to fall a victim to his voracious assailants. Resistance being out of the question he therefore let the animals eat up the dainty viands without attempting to offer any opposition. The keeper of the dogs eventually arrived with a heavy whip and managed to keep them in subjection while he fed them with meat from the barrow. It transpired that the dogs had been a long time without food and the gate of the yard in which they were kept had been accidentally left open, and hence it was that they rushed out and made an onslaught on the cat's meat man.

it in weak vinegar and water, or in plain boiling water, and then rubbing it with a cloth to remove flies' eggs and maggots, before feeding it to their cats.

### 1873 September Quarter

The death of James's younger brother Samuel, age 6, is recorded in the Whitechapel district.

### 2 October 1876

James marries 18-year-old Sarah

Scott at St Thomas' Church in the Parish of Bethnal Green. He now lives at 1 Union Street and his occupation is given as a cat's-meat seller. The bride's address is 9 Charles Street, Mile End, Old Town. She was born on 25 February 1859 at Bishop Street, South Birmingham - just round the corner from Rea Street, which would feature later in the case as the return address on a letter purportedly sent by Jack the Ripper on 23 November 1888. Sarah's parents were Henry Scott, a bricklayer journeyman, and Catherine Scott, formerly Showell.

### 1877 September Quarter

Death of James's father-in-law, Henry Scott, age 43, in the Whitechapel district. The cause of death is not known.

### 24 February 1880

Death of James's father Edward, age 43, at 19 Hanbury Street. Cause of Death: Hypertrophy and Dilation of Heart (3 years), Bronchitis (1 month). His wife Harriet was present at his death.

### 1881 Census

#### 27 Hanbury Street

Harriet Hardiman (James's mother), age 44, widow, born London. Her children Sarah (age 23), Harriet (age 19), Edward (age 17), John (age 12) and Walter (age 9) live with her. The census also lists Catherine or Kate Hardiman, age 19, born Liverpool, as a boarder. Although her marital status is given as unmarried, further research has revealed that at some point she married James's brother Edward. Kate's maiden name was McGuinness.

#### 29 Hanbury Street

James Hardiman, age 22, occupation: Dealer in Horse Flesh (Knacker), born Mile End. Mrs James Hardiman (Sarah), age 22, born Birmingham.

It is at this point that the situation gets really interesting: James Hardiman is listed twice in the 1881 census. The second record is as follows:

James Hardiman, born about 1858 - prisoner, 'Her Majesty's Prison', Wandsworth Common. Born Bermondsey, Surrey - occupation meat seller.

The name, year of birth and occupation are accurate; the place of birth is wrong, but incorrect information was not uncommon in the Victorian prison system. It could even have resulted from James's deliberately misleading the authorities. Furthermore, there is

no other James Hardiman born in Bermondsey who fits the information. This must then be the same James Hardiman listed in the census as living at 29 Hanbury Street. Perhaps the census takers took someone's word that James lived at 29 Hanbury Street, perhaps James was imprisoned on the same day the census was taken, perhaps the prison authorities made a mistake. I am inclined to believe the first explanation.

This new information unlocks another door in the story of Jack the Ripper. We have seen that James was brought up next to a meat shop and by the age of eleven he was already selling cat's meat. Perhaps it was inevitable that he would wind up in Her Majesty's Prison at Wandsworth Common, where the gallows were popularly known as 'The Cold Meat Shed'.

It is not known for what offence James was sent to prison, or what length of sentence he served, but his conviction adds weight to the notion that the man who would become known as Jack the Ripper had committed crimes and seen the inside of a prison before beginning his murderous rampage in 1888. Neither the date nor even the year when James was discharged is known at this time, but it was certainly before the next significant date in his life. The old saying, 'Out of the frying pan and into the fire,' springs to mind.

The 1881 census also records the following couple: Catherine Scott, age 43, wife-widow, occupation Laundress, and Richard Cox, age 41, Lodger, occupation Tanner. After the death of her husband Henry in 1877, James's mother-in-law, Catherine Scott, took up with Richard Cox. I haven't found any record of their marriage, but Catherine eventually adopted his surname, Cox, as her own. Her place of birth was given as Stourbridge, Worcestershire, and his as Whitechapel. They lived at 20 Heneage Street, Mile End New Town, together with two of Catherine's children by her late husband: Catherine Scott, born in 1864 in Lambeth, and William Scott, born in 1873 in Whitechapel.

### 28 August 1884

Catherine Sarah is born to Edward and Kate Hardiman, who were living at 134 Brick Lane. Edward's occupation was given as carman.

### 8 January 1885

James's older sister, Sarah, age 26, dies at 29 Hanbury Street. Cause of death: Epilepsy. James is recorded on



the death certificate as being present at her death. He is now residing at 28 Cudworth Street, Bethnal Green - very close to Bucks Row, where Mary Ann 'Polly' Nichols would be found murdered on 31 August 1888.

### 21 August 1886

Death of Catherine Sarah Hardiman, age 23 months, daughter of Edward and Catherine (Kate) Hardiman, who are present at the death at 5 Clifton Street, Shoreditch. Cause of death: Tubercular Meningitis Convulsions. This is an infection of the membranes covering the brain and spinal cord caused by the bacteria that causes tuberculosis. Victorian disease and death were casting their terrible shadow over the Hardiman family.

### 1886 September Quarter

Death of Richard Cox, age 46.

### June 1887

Although I could find no record of her birth, it was about this time that James and Sarah Hardiman's daughter, Harriet Maria, is born.

### 3 - 4 April 1888

Murder of Emma Elizabeth Smith - the first of the Whitechapel murder victims. She died at the London Hospital on 4 April, one day after being viciously attacked in Osborn Street, at the bottom of Brick Lane.

### 18 June 1888

Harriet Maria Hardiman, aged 12 months, dies at 20 Heneage Street, the address of her grandmother Catherine Cox, who was present at her death. The child died of *Tabes Enterica* and *Marasmus* - a 19th century term for Inherited Syphilis. The cause of death is defined as Degeneration of Sensory Nerve of the Intestine causing emaciation due to lack of muscle action associated with the nerve damage caused by Untreated Syphilis. *Marasmus* may result from severe disease of the heart, lungs, kidneys, urinary tract or chronic bacterial or parasitic disease, or from malabsorption due to surgical removal of a length of small intestine.

Harriet Maria may have contracted the disease from her mother Sarah through congenital Syphilis. Bacteria can pass from an infected pregnant woman across the placenta to the developing foetus, resulting in the disease being present at birth. Sarah may have suffered from Syphilis for some time, perhaps developing one of the many complications associated with it, such as *Tabes Dorsalis*, which, along with other symptoms, causes a form of paralysis. Syphilis is a very

complicated disease which can cause many varied conditions at different stages. It is known as 'The Great Imitator' because of its ability to mimic other diseases.

I believe that Syphilis or, more exactly, Congenital Syphilis, was the main force driving Jack the Ripper to murder and mutilation.

### 18 June 1888

On the same date her daughter Harriet Maria died, Sarah was admitted to the London Hospital as a Paraplegia case. She was Patient No. 813/1888, Admission Ticket No. 307, address 13 Heneage Street, Spitalfields, age 29, wife of James Hardiman, Cats' Meat Vendor. Recommended by N Boulwood - Physician Dr Stephen Mackenzie.

James and Sarah's address, 13 Heneage Street, where James lived throughout the period of the Whitechapel murders, is an almost perfect central point for all the murder sites in relation to the psychological profile of a serial killer of the Jack the Ripper type. Is it just a bizarre coincidence that Mary Kelly, whose death was widely regarded as the last and most gruesome of the Ripper murders, was butchered in a tiny cramped room that also bore the unlucky No. 13? We will shortly see why this inauspicious number may have stuck in the Ripper's warped mind.

### 7 August 1888

Murder of Martha Tabram in George Yard Buildings.

### 21 August 1888

A daughter is born to James's brother John and his wife Amelia (formerly Downs). They name her Amelia Maud. John's occupation is listed as a Purveyor of Horse Flesh. The couple reside at 27 Buxton Street, Mile End, New Town.

### 31 August 1888

Murder of Mary Ann 'Polly' Nichols in Bucks Row, close to the London Hospital and Cudworth Street.

### 8 September 1888

Murder of Annie Chapman in the back yard of 29 Hanbury Street. James's mother Harriet and her 16-year-old son, James's brother Walter, also known as William, live in the ground floor, front room, of the house.

Among other residents at this address was an elderly widow named Sarah Cox whom the landlady, Amelia Richardson, allowed to live in an attic room rent free.

## The Cat's-Meat Men

From *The Voyages of Dr Dolittle: The Cobbler's Son* (1822)

Hugh Lofting



Another friend I had was Matthew Mugg, the cat's-meat-man. He was a funny old person with a bad squint. He looked rather awful but he was really quite nice to talk to. He knew everybody in Puddleby; and he knew all the dogs and all the cats. In those times being a cat's-meat-man was a regular business. And you could see one nearly any day going through the streets with a wooden tray full of pieces of meat stuck on skewers crying, "Meat! M-E-A-T!" People paid him to give this meat to their cats and dogs instead of feeding them on dog-biscuits or the scraps from the table.

I enjoyed going round with old Matthew and seeing the cats and dogs come running to the garden-gates whenever they heard his call. Sometimes he let me give the meat to the animals myself; and I thought this was great fun. He knew a lot about dogs and he would tell me the names of the different kinds as we went through the town. He had several dogs of his own; one, a whippet, was a very fast runner, and Matthew used to win prizes with her at the Saturday coursing races; another, a terrier, was a fine ratter. The cat's-meat-man used to make a business of rat-catching for the millers and farmers as well as his other trade of selling cat's-meat.

The 1881 census records Sarah as Sarah Wilcox - an example of the inaccuracies that sometimes plague census information. She is described as a widow, age 64, occupation Tailoress, born 1817 at St Georges, Middlesex, living at 29 Hanbury Street.

The 1871 census lists Sarah B Cox, born about 1821 in Hanover Square, London, and her husband George R Cox, born about 1822, Islington, London. They live in Gateshead, County Durham, with their son William B Cox, born about 1850 in Gateshead.

The 1891 census records Sarah Cox, born about 1818 in London, living back in Gateshead with William B Cox, born about 1859, and Emily M Cox, born about 1850.

The 1901 census records Sarah Cox, born about 1819 in Hanner Mill, London, and William B Cox, born about 1849. They live in a house in Gateshead and have a servant named Caroline Georgeson. This is a far cry from the squalor of 29 Hanbury Street.

At some point during my investigations it occurred to me that Sarah Cox might have been a relative of Richard Cox, the man who lived with James's mother-in-law, Catherine, after the death of her husband. So far I haven't found any evidence to corroborate my theory.

### 13 September 1888

Death of Sarah Hardiman, age 29, at the London Hospital. The death certificate records Sarah as the wife of James Hardiman, Cats Meat Seller, address 13 Heneage Street, Spitalfields. Cause of death was Pthisis Pulmonalis (Tuberculosis) and Exhaustion. Sarah had been confined to the hospital for 87 days.

Was this ill-fated date - the 13th - another factor in Jack the Ripper's further descent into madness? Would his own address at 13 Heneage Street, combined with the date of his wife's death and Mary Kelly's room number at Millers Court trigger off his worst bout of insanity?

### 24 September 1888

The very first letter purporting to come from the Whitechapel murderer is sent to Sir Charles Warren at Scotland Yard. Its author claims to be a horse 'slaughterer'.

### 30 September 1888

Murder of Elizabeth Stride in Berner Street.

Murder of Catherine Eddowes in Mitre Square. Catherine was born on

14 April 1842 in Wolverhampton and spent part of her life in Birmingham. Like Sarah Hardiman, she eventually wound up in London's East End.

Amongst the 'Jack the Ripper' correspondence held in the Public Record Office and the City of London Record Office there are several letters that contain links to Birmingham. One letter dated 12 September 1889 is from someone calling himself 'Brumigan Bill the Slaughterman'. He writes '...I have not got the right cow yet, I have sworn to catch the right one that as Injured me...' and goes on to say 'For they are all Brumigan Women, that I have settled for they have ruined many a honest man in their own native town, and have come to Injure honest men here but I intend to stop there little game'. He ends the letter with 'I am Sir your's Brumigan Bill the Slaughterman Not Jack the ripper.' Other letters are signed 'Bill the Boweler' and 'Jim the Cutter'.

The anonymous author of a letter to Scotland Yard dated 8 October 1888 wrote: 'I am as you see by this note amongst the slogging town of Brum... My bloody whim must have its way... For I know you cannot catch me and may I be even present in your dreams - Jack the Ripper.' This letter is decorated with drawings of crossed daggers, skull and crossbones with halo, a coffin and skeleton and a red ink smudge.

Another letter of particular interest was sent from Rea Street Lodging House, Birmingham. As we have seen, James's wife Sarah was born at Bishop Street, South Birmingham, round the corner from Rea Street.

### 9 November 1888

Murder of Mary Kelly in her room at 13 Millers Court, off Dorset Street.

As we have seen, James and Sarah's daughter Harriet's middle name was Maria - a variation of Mary which is turn is derived from the Hebrew Miryam, a name of uncertain origin whose meaning has been interpreted as 'bitter' - as in bitterly wished-for child - or as the 'beautiful' or 'perfect' one. But no other member of James or Sarah's families bore the name Maria. Could this therefore be a link with Mary Jane Kelly, who liked to call herself Marie Jeanette? Marie is the French equivalent of Mary or Maria. Mary Jane Kelly's partner, Joe Barnett, once lodged at a house in Heneage Street and lived with Mary Jane as a couple in George Street, off Commercial Street and

Brick Lane, shortly before moving to Millers Court.

### 16 November 1888

A letter posted in London NW on this date is signed: 'Joe the cats meat man & woman hunter'. Its author claims to be 30-years old and living in George Street. At this time, James Hardiman was 29 years old and a Cats' Meat Man. Perhaps he had moved westwards to lodge at one of the doss houses in George Street, in the Flower and Dean Street area, after his wife's death. This would place him closer to Mitre Square and Dorset Street. George Street should not be confused with the George Street that ran close to Heneage Street, which was known by a different name at the time of the murders. The author of this letter also asserts that he is chiefly in Hampstead Road and 'Tottenham court Rd'. Could this be where James plied his trade, conveniently staying out of the way during police activity following each murder?

### 17 July 1889

Murder of Alice McKenzie in Castle Alley.

### 8 September 1889

Discovery of a female torso underneath a railway arch in Pinchin Street.

### September Quarter 1890

Death of Amelia Maud Hardiman, age 1, in the Whitechapel district. Daughter of James's brother John and Amelia Hardiman. The cause of death is not given.

### 13 February 1891

Murder of Frances Coles. She was found under a railway arch in the area known as Swallow Gardens. Although its name sounds rather picturesque, Swallow Gardens was in fact a dismal, dimly-lit alley that ran between Chamber Street and Royal Mint Street. Frances Coles was the last victim in the Whitechapel murders.

### 1891 Census

#### 29 Hanbury Street

Harriet Hardiman (Head), aged 52 - born Whitechapel (widowed) - occupation Purveyor of Horse Flesh. James Hardiman (son), aged 31 - born Whitechapel (widowed) - occupation Purveyor of Horse Flesh. William Hardiman (son), aged 18 - born Whitechapel - occupation Moulder in Clay.

#### 31 Lloyd Row, Clerkenwell (off Goswell Street)

Edward Hardiman (James's brother), age 27 - occupation Vendor of Horse



## The Cat's-Meat Men

*From London Labour and the London Poor:  
Of Cats' and Dogs'-Meat Dealers (1851)*

Henry Mayhew

The supply of food for cats and dogs is far greater than may be generally thought. 'Vy, sir,' said one of the dealers to me, 'can you tell me 'ow many people's in London?' On my replying, upwards of two millions; 'I don't know nothing vatever,' said my informant, 'about millions, but I think there's a cat to every ten people, aye, and more than that; and so, sir, you can reckon.' [I told him this gave a total of 200,000 cats in London; but the number of inhabited houses in the metropolis was 100,000 more than this, and though there was not a cat to every house, still, as many lodgers as well as householders kept cats, I added that I thought the total number of cats in London might be taken at the same number as the inhabited houses, or 300,000 in all.] 'There's not near half so many

dogs as cats. I must know, for they all knows me, and I sarves about 200 cats and 70 dogs. Mine's a middling trade, but some does far better. Some cats has a hap'orth a day, some every other day; werry few can afford a penn'orth, but times is inferior. Dogs is better pay when you've a connection among 'em.'

The cat and dogs'-meat dealers, or 'carriers,' as they call themselves, generally purchase the meat at the knackers' (horse-slaughterers') yards. There are upwards of twenty of such yards in London; three or four are in Whitechapel, one in Wandsworth, two in Cow-cross - one of the two last mentioned is the largest establishment in London - and there are two about Bermondsey. The proprietors of these yards purchase live and dead horses. They contract for them with large firms, such as brewers, coal-merchants, and large cab and 'bus yards, giving so much per head for their old live and dead horses through the year. The price varies from 2l. to 50s. the carcass. The knackers also have contractors in the country (harness-makers and others), who bring or send up to town for them the live and dead stock of those parts. The dead horses are brought to the yard - two or three upon one cart, and sometimes five. The live ones are tied to the tail of these carts, and behind the tail of each other. Occasionally a string of fourteen or fifteen are brought up, head to tail, at one time. The live horses are purchased merely for slaughtering. If among the lot bought there should chance to be one that is young, but in bad condition, it is placed in the stable, fed up, and then put into the knacker's carts, or sold by them, or let on hire. Occasionally a fine horse has been rescued from death in this manner. One person is known to have bought an animal for 15s., for which he afterwards got 150l. Frequently young horses that will not work in cabs - such as 'jibs' - are sold to the horse-slaughterers as useless. They are kept in the yard, and after being well fed, often turn out good horses. The live horses are slaughtered by the persons called 'knackers.' These men get upon an average 4s. a day. They begin work at twelve at night, because some of the flesh is required to be boiled before six in the morning; indeed, a great part of the meat is delivered to the carriers before that hour. The horse to be slaughtered has his mane clipped as short as possible (on account of the hair, which is valuable). It is then blinded with a piece of old apron smothered in blood, so that it may not see the slaughterman when about to strike. A pole-axe is used, and a cane, to put an immediate end to the animal's sufferings.

...continued



Flesh (with the word Cat written above it) - born Mile End. Catherine Hardiman (wife), age 27 - occupation Assists Husband - born Liverpool. Edward Hardiman (son), age 2, and Sarah J Hardiman (daughter), age 5 months, both born in Clerkenwell.

### *20 Heneage Street, Spitalfields*

Catherine Scott (formerly Cox, formerly Showell) - widow - born about 1834 - Stourbridge, Worcestershire. William Scott (son), born about 1873 - Spitalfields, London.

### **22 December 1891**

#### *29 Hanbury Street*

Death of James Hardiman, age 32, occupation: Purveyor of Cats' Meat. Cause of death: Pthisis Hæmoptysis (coughing up of blood with sputum due to Tuberculosis). His mother Harriet was present at the death. The cause of death was certified by William P Dukes MD. Dr Dukes was a Police Surgeon based at 75 Brick Lane. He was at Millers Court, the scene of the murder of Mary Kelly, on 9 November 1888. Although he was not called to give evidence at Kelly's inquest, he was present at her autopsy, along with Dr George Bagster Phillips, who had relieved him at Millers Court.

In my view, James Hardiman's death signalled the passing of Jack the Ripper.

### **1901 Census**

James's mother Harriet is now living at 45A Cheshire Street, Bethnal Green. This is north of Hanbury Street, at the top of Brick Lane, running close to Buxton Street. Harriet is aged 62, a widow, occupation undefined. No other family members live with her.

William Hardiman, age 28, unmarried, lodges at 8 Morgan Street, Mile End Old Town. He has changed his occupation from Clay Moulding to Metal Working.

Edward Hardiman is still living in Clerkenwell with his wife Catherine and their children Edward, born about 1889, Sarah, born about 1891, James, born about 1893, Amelia, born about 1895, and Catherine, born about 1899.

John Hardiman, age 31 - occupation Butcher, working at home: 19 London Street, Bethnal Green; Amelia Hardiman, wife, age 35 - occupation undefined; and their children John, age 11, born Spitalfields, William, age 17, born Bethnal Green, and James, age 2, born Bethnal Green. Also living with John and his family are Catherine Scott and her son William. Is this an insight into John and Amelia's kind

nature or should another story be read between the lines?

### 3 June 1910

Harriet Hardiman dies at the age of 73 at Hackney Union Infirmary, Homerton. She is recorded as the widow of Edward Hardiman and her address is given as 54 Barnsley Street, Bethnal Green, a location very close to Cudworth Street, near Bucks Row. Cause of death: Senile Decay, Cardiac Failure. The death certificate records Edward Hardiman (son) in attendance. His address is given as 1 Arlington Street, Clerkenwell.

I like to think that James confessed to his mother in his deathbed that he had committed the murders ascribed to Jack the Ripper. If indeed he did, Harriet took his secret to the grave.



### Acknowledgements

My thanks to Jonathan Evans, Trust Archivist, The Royal London Hospital Museum, for information on Sarah Hardiman's admission records, and to Dr Hakim for his help in defining medical terms.

### Sources

For more information on my continuous research on James Hardiman see my articles: Jack a Knacker? *Ripperologist*, issue 50 (November 2003); The Whore Slaughterer, *Ripperologist*, issue 52 (March 2004); Wallah Wallah Cat's Meat, *Ripperologist*, issue 53 (May 2004); and The Butterfly Collector, *Ripperologist*, issue 60 (July 2005).

[Comment](#)

[Back to Contents](#)

[Next article](#)

### Continued from previous page

After the animal is slaughtered, the hide is taken off, and the flesh cut from the bones in large pieces. These pieces are termed, according to the part from which they are cut, hind-quarters, fore-quarters, cram-bones, throats, necks, briskets, backs, ribs, kidney pieces, hearts, tongues, liver and lights. The bones (called 'racks' by the knackers) are chopped up and boiled, in order to extract the fat, which is used for greasing common harness, and the wheels of carts and drags, &c. The bones themselves are sold for manure. The pieces of flesh are thrown into large coppers or pans, about nine feet in diameter and four feet deep. Each of these pans will hold about three good-sized horses. Sometimes two large brewers' horses will fill them, and sometimes as many as four 'poor' cab-horses may be put into them. The flesh is boiled about an hour and 20 minutes for a 'killed' horse, and from two hours to two hours and 20 minutes for a dead horse (a horse dying from age or disease). The flesh, when boiled, is taken from the coppers, laid on the stones, and sprinkled with water to cool it. It is then weighed out in pieces of 112, 56, 28, 21, 14, 7, and 3 lbs. weight. These are either taken round in a cart to the 'carriers,' or, at about five, the carriers call at the yard to purchase, and continue doing so till twelve in the day. The price is 14s. per cwt. in winter, and 16s. in summer. The tripe is served out at 12 lb. for 6d. All this is for cats and dogs. The carriers then take the meat round town, wherever their 'walk' may lie. They sell it to the public at the rate of 2d. per lb., and in small pieces, on skewers, at a farthing, a halfpenny, and a penny each. Some carriers will sell as much as a hundred-weight in a day, and about half a hundred-weight is the average quantity disposed of by the carriers in London. Some sell much cheaper than others. These dealers will frequently knock at the doors of persons whom they have seen served by another on the previous day, and show them that they can let them have a larger quantity of meat for the same money.

The class of persons belonging to the business are mostly those who have been unable to obtain employment at their trade. Occasionally a person is bred to it, having been engaged as a lad by some carrier to go round with the barrow and assist him in his business. These boys will, after a time, find a 'walk' for themselves, beginning first with a basket, and ultimately rising to a barrow. Many of the carriers give light weight to the extent of 2 oz. and 4 oz. in the pound. At one yard alone near upon 100 carriers purchase meat, and there are, upon an average, 150 horses slaughtered there every week. Each slaughter-house may be said to do, one with another, 60 horses per week throughout the year, which, reckoning the London slaughter-houses at 12, gives a total of 720 horses killed every week in the metropolis, or, in round numbers, 37,500 in the course of the year.

The London cat and dogs'-meat carriers or sellers - nearly all men - number at the least 1,000. The slaughtermen are said to reap large fortunes very rapidly - indeed, the carriers say they coin the money. Many of them retire after a few years, and take large farms. One, after 12 years' business, retired with several thousand pounds, and has now three large farms. The carriers are men, women, and boys. Very few women do as well as the men at it. The carriers 'are generally sad drunkards.' Out of five hundred, it is said three hundred at least spend 1l. a head a week in drink. One party in the trade told me that he knew a carrier who would often spend 10s. in liquor at one sitting. The profit the carriers make upon the meat is at present only a penny per pound. In the summer time the profit per pound is reduced to a half-penny, owing to the meat being dearer on account of its scarcity. The carriers give a great deal of credit - indeed, they take but little ready money. On some days they do not come home with more than 2s. One with a middling walk pays for his meat 7s. 6d. per day. For this he has half a hundred-weight. This produces him as much as 11s. 6d., so that his profit is 4s.; which, I am assured, is about a fair average of the earnings of the trade. One carrier is said to have amassed 1,000l. at the business. He usually sold from 1 to 2 cwt. every morning, so that his profits were generally from 16s. to 1l. per day. But the trade is much worse now. There are so many at it, they say, that there is barely a living for any. A carrier assured me that he seldom went less than 30, and frequently 40 miles, through the streets every day. The best districts are among the houses of tradesmen, mechanics, and labourers. The coachmen in the mews at the back of the squares are very good customers. 'The work lays thicker there,' said my informant.

[...continued](#)



Old maids are bad, though very plentiful, customers. They cheapen the carriers down so, that they can scarcely live at the business. 'They will pay one halfpenny and owe another, and forget that after a day or two.' The cats' meat dealers generally complain of their losses from bad debts. Their customers require credit frequently to the extent of 1l. 'One party owes me 15s. now,' said a carrier to me, 'and many 10s.; in fact, very few people pay ready money for the meat.'

The carriers frequently serve as much as ten penny worths to one person in a day. One gentleman has as much as 4 lbs. of meat each morning for two Newfoundland dogs; and there was one woman - a black - who used to have as much as 16 pennyworth every day. This person used to get out on the roof of the house and throw it to the cats on the tiles. By this she brought so many stray cats round about the neighbourhood, that the parties in the vicinity complained; it was quite a nuisance. She would have the meat always brought to her before ten in the morning, or else she would send to a shop for it, and between ten and eleven in the morning the noise and cries of the hundreds of stray cats attracted to the spot was 'terrible to hear.' When the meat was thrown to the cats on the roof, the riot, and confusion, and fighting, was beyond description. 'A beer-shop man,' I was told, 'was obliged to keep five or six dogs to drive the cats from his walls.' There was also a mad woman in Islington, who used to have 14 lbs. of meat a day. The party who supplied her had his money often at 2l. and 3l. at a time. She had as many as thirty cats at times in her house. Every stray one that came she would take in and support. The stench was so great that she was obliged to be ejected. The best days for the cats' meat business are Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays. A double quantity of meat is sold on the Saturday; and on that day and Monday and Tuesday the weekly customers generally pay.



'My father was a baker by trade,' said a carrier to me, 'but through an enlargement of the heart he was obliged to give up working at his trade; leaning over the trough increased his complaint so severely, that he used to fall down, and be obliged to be brought home. This made him take to the cats' and dogs' meat trade, and he brought me up to it. I do pretty comfortably. I have a very good business, having been all my life at it. If it wasn't for the bad debts I should do much better; but some of the people I trust leave the houses, and actually take in a double quantity of meat the day before. I suppose there is at the present moment as much as 20l. owing to me that I never expect to see a farthing of.'

The generality of the dealers wear a shiny hat, black plush waistcoat and sleeves, a blue apron, corduroy trousers, and a blue and white spotted handkerchief round their necks. Some, indeed, will wear two and three handkerchiefs round their necks, this being fashionable among them. A great many meet every Friday afternoon in the donkey-market, Smithfield, and retire to a public-house adjoining, to spend the evening.

A 'cats' meat carrier' who supplied me with information was more comfortably situated than any of the poorer classes that I have yet seen. He lived in the front room of a second floor, in an open and respectable quarter of the town, and his lodgings were the perfection of comfort and cleanliness in an humble sphere. It was late in the evening when I reached the house. I found the 'carrier' and his family preparing for supper. In a large morocco leather easy chair sat the cats' meat carrier himself; his 'blue apron and black shiny hat' had disappeared, and he wore a 'dress' coat and a black satin waistcoat instead. His wife, who was a remarkably pretty woman, and of very attractive manners, wore a 'Dolly Varden' cap, placed jauntily at the back of her head, and a drab merino dress. The room was cosily carpeted, and in one corner stood a mahogany 'crib' with cane-work sides, in which one of the children was asleep. On the table was a clean white table-cloth, and the room was savoury with the steaks, and mashed potatoes that were cooking on the fire. Indeed, I have never yet seen greater comfort in the abodes of the poor. The cleanliness and wholesomeness of the apartment were the more striking from the unpleasant associations connected with the calling.

It is believed by one who has been engaged at the business for 25 years, that there are from 900 to 1,000 horses, averaging 2 cwt. of meat each - little and big - boiled down every week; so that the quantity of cats' and dogs' meat used throughout London is about 200,000 lbs. per week, and this, sold at the rate of 2d. per lb., gives 2,000l. a week for the money spent in cats' and dogs' meat, or upwards of 100,000l. a year, which is at the rate of 100l.-worth sold annually by each carrier. The profits of the carriers may be estimated at about 50l. each per annum.

The capital required to start in this business varies from 1l. to 2l. The stock-money needed is between 5s. and 10s. The barrow and basket, weights and scales, knife and steel, or black-stone, cost about 2l. when new, and from 15s. to 4s. second-hand.



STANLEY DEAN  
REID

# Mister Ripper or Master Ripper?

Harriet Hardiman's Other Son

We've seen James Hardiman named as a Ripper suspect. What about Harriet Hardiman's other son - the one we know for sure was at No. 29 Hanbury Street in the wee hours of the eighth of September 1888, as Annie Chapman was being murdered in the back yard? We are looking at sixteen-year-old Master William Hardiman.

A sixteen-year-old Ripper suspect? What about common sense? First of all, let's agree that a little uncommon sense is perhaps in order, since common sense has already been tried in this case and failed. But I don't really think this hypothesis it's all that farfetched. There have been several teenage serial killers. Indeed, Jesse Pomeroy got started when he was fourteen and there have been others who have beaten even him to the punch.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most puzzling aspects of the Ripper case is why East End prostitutes, no matter how desperate, continued to go off alone with strange men despite the knowledge that a killer was about. So far the explanation has been that the killer was a non-threatening individual such as a woman, a policeman, a clergyman or a famous person. I don't wish to suggest in any way a psychic solution, but some nights ago I had a dream where I saw the Ripper - and he was a youth. That led me to think of another type of person whom the women would not have feared: a very young man.

Why choose William Hardiman over all other young men living in Whitechapel in 1888? I've always

suspected that Jack the Ripper lived within a couple of blocks of the intersection of Commercial and Hanbury Streets. The reasons why I believe this are, first, that the two murders where he may not have been finished until about dawn - the murders of Annie Chapman and Mary Kelly - were just down the street from that junction; and, second, that at that hour he could not have risked walking very far through the streets with his hands and clothes covered with blood.

A sixteen-year-old Ripper suspect?  
What about common sense?  
First of all, let's agree that a little uncommon sense is perhaps in order, since common sense has already been tried in this case and failed.  
But I don't really think this hypothesis it's all that farfetched. There have been several teenage serial killers.

William not only lived near Commercial and Hanbury Streets; he actually lived at one of the murder sites. Together with his mother, he occupied the front room, ground floor, at No. 29 Hanbury Street, from where they ran a cat's-meat shop. In fact, I suspect that William watched Annie Chapman finish up with the foreign-looking man seen by Mrs Long and attacked her as soon as the man left. [2] He could then have cleaned himself up before the murder was even discovered. It is also worth recalling that William's business was chopping up meat, usually horseflesh, for cat food sold out of the shop or

in the street. Anyone who, like him, lived and worked in a cat's-meat shop, could easily explain away any blood on his person or in his residence.

William might also have picked up some rudimentary anatomical knowledge both on the job and from going to the slaughterhouse where he and his mother got the meat. What's more, someone in his trade had access to many types of cutting instruments. Not to mention the letter authorities received on 16 November from a 'woman hunter' signed, 'Joe the cats meat man...'

Besides, William's home was only about one eighth of a mile from where Emma Smith was assaulted on 3 April. Before dying, she said that one of her attackers was a youth. And, finally, the Goulston Street graffito and the blood-spattered apron were found on a direct line between Mitre Square, where Catherine Eddowes was murdered, and No. 29 Hanbury Street.

Was William Hardiman Master Jack the Ripper? Since William can no longer defend himself - I don't think we've got a 133-year-old serial killer on the loose out there - and I believe that everybody is innocent until proved guilty, I should leave it at that. He does look like a good one though.

## Notes

- 1 In March 1874, fourteen-year-old Jesse Pomeroy murdered a ten-year-old girl near his home in Boston, Massachusetts. The following month, he killed a four-year-old boy. Pomeroy was sentenced to solitary confinement for life. He died in 1932, after 58 years in prison.
- 2 At the inquest into Annie Chapman's death, Elizabeth Long stated that she had seen Annie talking to a man near No. 29 Hanbury Street at about 5:30 in the morning of her murder. Mrs Long described the man as a 'foreigner'.

[Comment](#)

[Back to Contents](#)

[Next article](#)

## Write for Ripperologist!

We welcome well-researched articles on any subject related to Jack the Ripper, Victoriana or the East End. Please send your submissions to [contact@ripperologist.info](mailto:contact@ripperologist.info)





ADAM  
WENT



AMANDA  
HOWARD



ANTONIO  
SIRONI

# Man of the Shadows

Jack the Ripper and the Tasmanian Press

More than a century has passed since the faceless, nameless killer who has become immortalized as Jack the Ripper spread terror throughout the East End of London. There have since been more books, films, plays, documentaries, exhibitions, displays, board games, websites, message boards and even magazines devoted to the Ripper than to any other serial killer in history. Why?

The Ripper murders hardly stand out for sheer savagery when compared to those perpetrated by the ever-increasing number of 20th and 21st century serial killers nowadays found across the globe. Some link the Ripper to almost every murder that occurred in the East End between 1887 and 1891. Others assert that the lone killer was just a myth and several individuals actually committed the crimes. Most believe that the Ripper was responsible for a few murders only: perhaps three, perhaps five - as the widely accepted 'Canon' suggests - over a brief three-month period. Then he stopped, as suddenly as he had begun. A century after he stalked the streets of the 'abyss' of Victorian society, as another Jack, London this one, described it, repeat killers murder victims in their dozens over several years. So, what makes the Ripper special? Why is he the one and perhaps only serial killer whose fame and infamy endure?

Is it because of the wide choice of suspects? Over the years, we've been presented with suspects from all levels of society. They range from wandering lunatics to Royal physicians, from Princes to poets, from artists to policemen, from arsenic addicts to black magicians - and everything in between. Some died or were incarcerated in an asylum or prison shortly after Mary Jane Kelly's murder, usually considered as the last of the 'Ripper' murders.

Others lived on for a number of years, some well into the 20th century. Among the former were Montague John Druiitt, who killed himself in December 1888, and Aaron Kosminski, who was interned in an asylum in 1890. The latter include Walter Sickert, who died only in January 1942. Some were contemporary suspects, investigated more or less diligently by the police at the time, while others are modern-day inventions



Suspect M J Druiitt  
colourisation ©Jane Coram

put forward by scholars, writers and armchair detectives. Some suspects, such as Dr Pedachenko, may not even have existed. Finally, theorists have claimed the Ripper's nationality to be anything from British, Russian and Portuguese to Polish, Scandinavian, American and so on, seemingly including half the membership of the United Nations. New suspects are suggested almost monthly. Is the memory of the Ripper kept alive by the new theories being continuously advanced? Does our interest in the Ripper never wear out because there is always something new to discuss?

Does the root of our fascination with the Ripper lie in the setting of his crimes? A romantic vision of the Victorian era, with its gas-lit alleys and hansom cabs, coupled with our personal remembrances of

the mysteries of Sherlock Holmes and Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde? There is something almost magical about a shadowy figure in an Ulster coat, top hat and Gladstone bag, suddenly looming out of the dark amidst the murky fog of a long-ago London night, something that appeals strongly to our imagination. Add to this heady mix a destitute, vulnerable woman working the streets, desperate to get doss money for her night's lodgings, the sudden flash of a knife in the darkness and a muffled scream that echoes in our memory through decades and centuries. Is this why the Ripper's crimes still fascinate us?

To understand the Ripper's disturbing fascination we must go back to 3:40am on the morning of 31 August 1888, when the body of 42-year-old Mary Ann 'Polly' Nichols was found in Buck's Row, Whitechapel. Polly was a prostitute whose death could easily have been catalogued as just another murder. She was penniless, and since there were no signs of sexual contact, her murder appeared motiveless. But the post-mortem findings suggested something darker and more sinister. Polly's abdomen was ripped open and her throat cut so deeply that her head was almost severed from her body. The enduring legend of the Ripper had begun.

*Murder in Whitechapel! Another 'orrible murder in Whitechapel!* This refrain became the call of the day. News boys shouted it on street corners and people made it part of their daily conversation as the women of the East End stayed home at night for fear of becoming the next victim. A mixture of sympathy for the victims, shock at the killings and outrage at the inability of the police to apprehend the killer caused riots, protests, lynch mobs and irate letters to the government and the press.

Newspaper reporters and illustrators competed to convey the horror of the murders. 'The way to doom', 'the gruesome scene', and 'her final

moment' were just a few out of the dozens of phrases used to emphasise the ghastliness of the crimes and the viciousness of the murderer. Let's see how the Star described him:

*London lies today under the spell of a great terror. A nameless reprobate - half beast, half man - is at large, who is daily gratifying his murderous instincts on the most miserable and defenceless classes of the community...*

*The ghoul-like creature who stalks through the streets of London, stalking down his victim like a Pawnee Indian, is simply drunk with blood and he will have more.*

Newspapers jumped at the opportunity to print grisly stories, especially newly founded newspapers such as the *Star*, which used the case to get off the ground. A fair amount of the press coverage of the murders was error-ridden and misleading. One newspaper stated that the murders were so horrific that blood was found streets away; another, that a trail of blood led away from the scene. Journalists went to any lengths to find out every macabre detail of the murders, even when the police tried to downplay them as much as they could. The result of such behaviour was that evidence became mixed with gossip and rumour, some of the most ridiculous nature, still surviving to this day.

Naturally, with all these wild rumours floating amidst the latest 'Orrible Murder cry, it did not take long for the international press to grab the story. Soon, it had spread all over the world, even to an island as far away from England as Tasmania, Australia, which is home to one of the authors of this article [Adam Went]. Now, some might ask, why would Jack have been of interest to anyone in Tasmania back then? Yet there was much more information in the Tasmanian newspapers of the time than one could imagine. Much of it consisted of reprints of stories from British and American newspapers, but we will cite only those reports that have something interesting to say. The newspapers used as sources for this article are:

### The Tasmanian Mail

*The Tasmanian Mail* began production in July 1877. Reading through microfilm reels at the State Library of Tasmania, I [Adam Went] found *The Tasmanian Mail* to be the newspaper with the longest and most interesting articles on the

Ripper. As with other newspapers, there was little or no mention of the Whitechapel Murders until after the double event on September 30. The long and detailed articles came through early October and after the Mary Kelly murder on 9 November. Everything, from *Jack the Ripper - Another Letter to The Resignation of Sir Charles Warren*, appeared along the news of the day. Unfortunately, *The Tasmanian Mail* has not survived. The last microfilm reel for it runs out in June 1935 - 58 years after it first entered production.

### The Launceston Examiner

*The Launceston Examiner*, the very first proper newspaper to be printed in Tasmania, began production in Launceston, a city in North-East Tasmania, in March 1842. We found several good 'Jack the Ripper' articles in *The Launceston Examiner* on microfilm reel, though not of quite the length or quality we were hoping for. *The Launceston Examiner* is still in production today under the shortened title of *The Examiner*.

### The Mercury

*The Mercury* began production in July 1854, 12 years after *The Launceston Examiner*. Like the other newspapers, *The Mercury* had little or nothing to say about 'Jack the Ripper', 'Leather Apron' or 'The Whitechapel Murders' until after the double event on 30 September and the Mary Kelly murder on 9 November. In later articles it mentioned the earlier murders of 'Polly' Nichols and Annie Chapman. *The Mercury* is still in production today.

Other Tasmanian newspapers in print today, such as *The Advocate*, didn't begin production until after the Ripper murders, while newspapers in existence at the time of the Ripper, such as *The North-West Courier*, had so little mention of the murders that we decided they weren't worth using.

Two days after Polly Nichols's burial, while many people in the East End were still reeling from fear and shock, the Ripper struck again. This time the victim was 46-year-old Annie Chapman, murdered in the backyard of 29 Hanbury Street, Spitalfields, as the first light of dawn began to appear. Annie's murder is especially significant. First of all, because of Elizabeth Long, the first witness to see a Ripper victim with a man thought to be the killer. One of the best known myths of the case originated with this murder. The *Pall Mall Gazette*

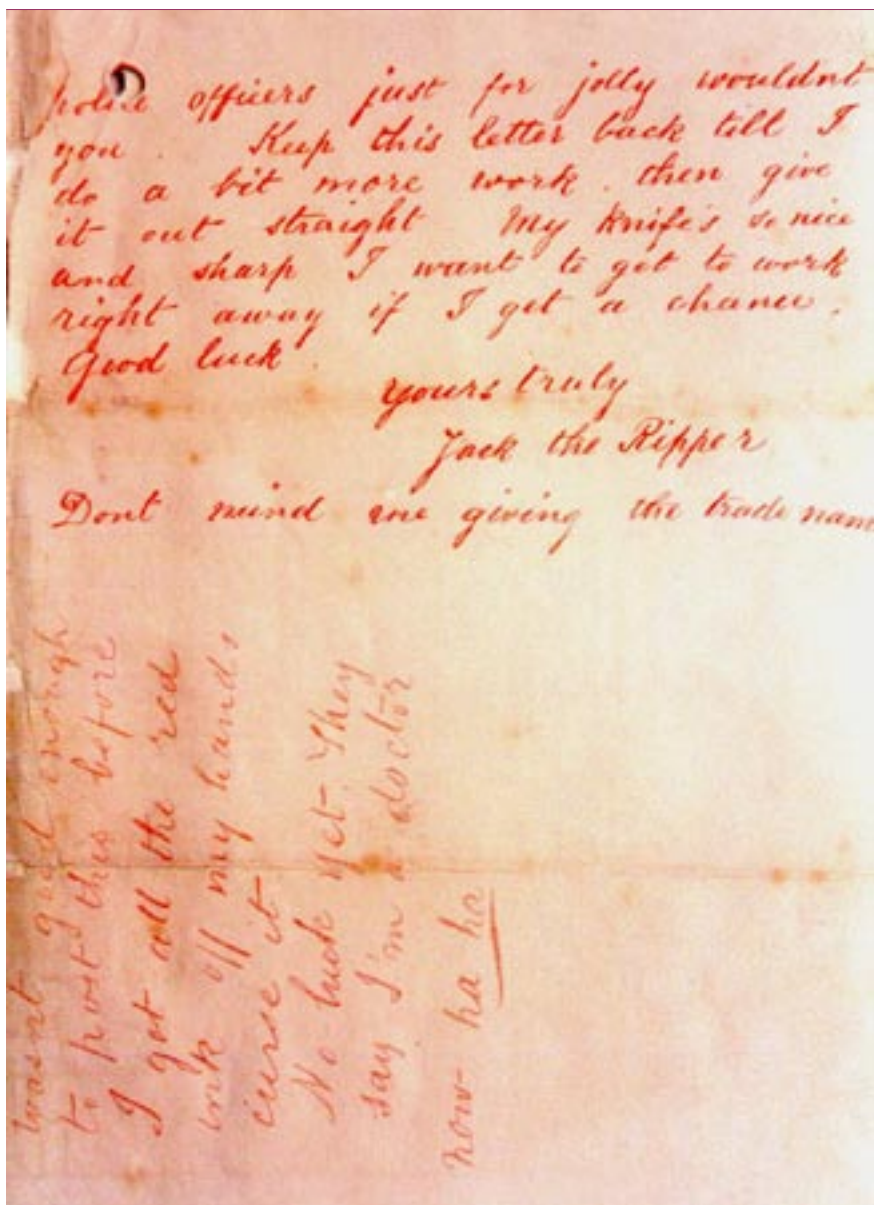


*The murders of Polly Nichols and Annie Chapman were reported in the New Zealand newspapers*

asserted that two imitation rings were taken from Annie's fingers and placed at her feet. The *Daily Telegraph* stated that 'there were also found two farthings polished brightly, and, according to some, these coins had been passed off as half sovereigns upon the deceased by the murderer.' The myth was soon transformed into 'fact' and was reported in many books. But the truth was very different. Neither the witnesses nor Inspector Chandler nor Dr Phillips mentioned any rings or farthings placed by Annie's feet. Finally, and perhaps most important, 'Leather Apron' surfaced as the appellation of the murderer just before the Chapman murder. *The Star* was the first to report it, and it became popular almost instantly. Yet it wouldn't endure. The killer's new *nom de plume* was coined less than three weeks later.

The 'Dear Boss' letter - written in red ink, posted to the Central News Agency on 27 September 1888 (though it was dated 25 September) and forwarded to Scotland Yard on





29 September - was the source of the nickname of the murderer who was terrorizing London. The text of the letter was published in the *Daily News* on 1 October and a facsimile of it in the *Evening News* of 4 October. The 'Saucy Jacky' postcard, also thought to come from the Whitechapel Murderer, was dated 1 October. This is how *The Tasmanian Mail* reported on them:

*'The Whitechapel Murders.  
An Extraordinary Letter'  
(Manchester Courier.)*

The Central News says: On September 27 the following letter, bearing the 'E.C.' postmark, and directed in red ink, was sent to this agency:

September 25, 1888.

Dear Boss

*I keep on hearing that the police have caught me, but they won't fix me just yet. I have laughed when they look so clever, and talk about being*

*on the right track. That joke about Leather Apron gave me real fits. I am down on ---, (whores), and I shan't quit ripping them till I do get buckled. Grand work the last job was. I gave the lady no time to squeal. How can they catch me now? I love my work, and want to start again. You will soon hear of me with my funny little games. I saved some of the proper red stuff in a ginger-beer bottle over the last job to write with, but it went thick and I can't use it. Red ink is fit enough, I hope, ha, ha. The next job I do I shall clip the ladies' ears off, and send to the police officers, just for jolly, wouldn't you? Keep this letter back till I do a bit more work, then give it out straight. My knife's so nice and sharp, I want to get a chance. Good luck.*

*Yours truly, Jack T. Ripper.*

*Don't mind me giving the trade name. Wasn't good enough to post this before I got all the red ink off my*

*hands, curse it. No luck yet. They say I am a doctor now. Ha! Ha!'*

The whole of this extraordinary epistle is written in red ink in a free bold clerkly hand. It was, of course, treated as the work of a practical joker, but it is singular to note that the latest murders have been committed within a few days of the receipt of the letter, that apparently in the case of his last victim, the murderer made an attempt to cut off the ears, and that he actually did mutilate the face in a manner which he has never before attempted. The letter is now in the hands of the Scotland Yard authorities. The Central News says: 'A postcard bearing the stamp 'London, E., October 1,' was received yesterday morning, addressed to the Central News office ; the address and subject matter being written in red and undoubtedly by the same person from whom the sensational letter, already published, was received on Thursday last. Like the previous missive, this also has reference to the horrible tragedies in East London, forming, indeed, a sequel to the first letter. It runs as follows:

*'I was not coddling, dear old boss, when I gave you the tip. You'll hear about Saucy Jacky's work tomorrow. Double event this time. Number one squealed a bit; couldn't finish straight off. Had not time to get ears for police. Thanks for keeping last letter back till I got to work again. Jack the Ripper.'*

The card is smeared on both sides with blood, which has evidently been impressed thereon by the thumb or finger of the writer, the corrugated surface of the skin being plainly shown upon the back of the card. Some words are nearly obliterated by a bloody smear. It is not necessarily assumed that this has been the work of the murderer, the idea that naturally occurs being that the whole thing is a practical joke. At the same time the writing of the previous letter immediately before the commission of the murders of Sunday was so singular a coincidence that it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that the cool, calculating villain who is responsible for the crimes has chosen to make the post a medium through which to convey to the Press his grimly diabolical humour. Consternation has been caused locally by the report that 'Jack the Ripper' has sent a post-card to Barrett's confectionery factory at Woodgreen, saying that he shall visit the neighbourhood and 'do for' six of the girls employed at the

factory. It is further said that a man answering the published description of the supposed murderer has been seen in Woodgreen. People speak of their intention to carry arms to be prepared for any sudden attack. '

*The Tasmanian Mail,*  
17 November 1888.

Three weeks went by with no murders. The East End began slowly to settle down. Women appeared in the streets again. The case was still making the headlines, but, had the fear passed? Were the murders over? Then, the night after Scotland Yard received the 'Dear Boss' letter, the Ripper struck again. This time he did not claim one victim but two - and he reached levels of cold-hearted viciousness never seen before.

The first victim on the night of the so-called Double Event was Elizabeth Stride, also known as Long Liz. Her body was found at 1am on the morning of 30 September in Dutfield's Yard, off Berner Street, by Louis Diemschutz, a jewellery pedlar and the steward of the International Working Men's Club, a radical association. Long Liz's throat had been cut only a few minutes before she was found. There was a large trickle of blood running down the yard, but, unlike the previous two victims, she had not suffered any abdominal mutilations. Long Liz is an important piece of the Ripper puzzle. Was she really a Ripper victim? If not, who killed her? Was the killer interrupted? If so, how many other victims like her might the Ripper have killed?

A key witness emerged from Long Liz's murder. A Jew named Israel Schwartz stated that on the night of the murder he had turned into Berner Street from Commercial Road at about a quarter to one and got as far as the gateway where the murder was committed when he saw a man stop to talk to a woman. According to Inspector Swanson's report of 19 October 1888, Schwartz added that he 'saw the man try to pull the woman into the street, but he turned her round and threw her down on the footway and the woman screamed three times, but not very loudly.' The man who assaulted Stride yelled 'Lipski' and Schwartz moved away quickly. He described the man as about age 30, 5 ft 5 in tall, fair complexion, hair dark, small brown moustache, full face, broad shouldered, wearing a dark jacket and trousers and a black cap with peak. He had nothing in his hand.

Schwartz also said that there was a second man on the other side of the street. Was he involved with the first man and the assault, or was he simply a passer by, like Schwartz? Was the man who assaulted Stride also her killer? How likely is it? What is the importance of Israel Schwartz's testimony? Is he believable? And spinning off from that, does the large increase in the number of witnesses to the Stride murder mean anything?



*The 'Double Event' murders of Liz Stride and Catherine Eddowes were widely reported in the New Zealand newspapers*

Less than an hour after Stride's body was found, PC Edward Watkins discovered the body of Catherine Eddowes in Mitre Square, Aldgate. We know she had been arrested for drunkenness earlier on the night of her death. Had she sobered up by the time she was killed? Was she drinking again after being released from the police station? Why the facial mutilations? Is the timeline between her last sighting and the finding of the body too short, or was there enough time in between?

Most of what is known about the Eddowes murder stems from the testimony of just one witness: Joseph Lawende. Along with two companions, Harry Harris and Joseph Hyam Levy, Lawende left the Imperial Club in Duke Street at 1:30 to 1:35am on the night of the murder. A short distance from the club, the trio spotted a man and a woman, whom Lawende later identified as Catherine Eddowes, standing outside the entrance to Church Passage, which led into Mitre Square. The couple appeared to be engaged in friendly conversation and the woman looked as if she was leaning against the man. Less than 15 minutes later, her body was found, horribly mutilated. There was not a soul in sight.

Lawende's description of the man seen with Eddowes was largely consistent with the description given by Israel Schwartz of the man last seen with Elizabeth Stride. According to Lawende, the man was aged 30, 5 ft 7 or 8 in tall, fair complexion and moustache, and of medium build. He was dressed in a pepper and salt jacket and a grey peaked cap, wore a red neckerchief and had the appearance of a sailor.

The testimony of Lawende and his companions also raises questions: Why did Levy leave when he saw the man? Did Harris really see nothing, as he claimed? If he didn't, why did Lawende see so much more, when they were walking together? Did Lawende even see Eddowes? Is identification simply by the woman's clothes sufficient? As regards Lawende, the most perplexing and interesting question is this: Was he the witness to whom Sir Robert Anderson referred when he said that a witness had identified a suspect at the Police's Seaside Home in 1891 as Jack the Ripper but refused to testify against a fellow Jew?

The most controversial question regarding Eddowes's murder concerns the graffito discovered at the Wentworth Model Dwellings in Goulston Street at 2:55am on the night of the double event: 'The Juwes are The men That Will not be Blamed for nothing' was the message scribbled with chalk on the wall. Beneath it lay a torn portion of Eddowes's apron, stained with blood, grime and bodily fluids. Was this a message from the Ripper? When was it written? What did it mean? Are there any clues hidden within it? Why the spelling 'Juwes'? Why was it left in Goulston Street? Why not closer to Mitre Square? If the Ripper didn't write it, who did? And



how did the apron end up beneath it? These questions continue to be debated to this day.

A Tasmanian newspaper covered the Inquests resulting from the Double Event in this way:

*English Mail News*

-----

*Per RMS Ionic*

---

*The Whitechapel Tragedies*

---

*What The Inquest Revealed*

---

*London, October 6.*

*The Press Association states that the excitement and indignation which are apparent in East London was increased yesterday by the startling announcement by Dr Brown, at the inquest, that a similar organ to that missing from the body of Annie Chapman had been cut away from the body of Kate Eddowes, found in Mitre Square. There had been suspicion of this fact, which now renders the murderer's object the more mysterious, since the doctor is so emphatic in his assertion that the obtaining of these portions of the woman's body could be of no use of medical research. Dr Brown stated that the clever manner in which the left kidney and other organs were removed betokened that the murderer was well versed in anatomy, but not necessarily human anatomy, for he could have gained a certain amount of skill by reason of his being a slaughterer of animals. These remarks conclusively show that the same hand which caused the death of previous victims is also responsible for killing Kate Eddowes and, in all probability, Elizabeth Stride in Berner street, although in the latter case he may have been disturbed before he had time to complete the mutilation, in the peculiarly horrible manner which characterizes his fiendish work. The Central News says: - The surgical evidence given at the inquest yesterday has caused a profound sensation. It had been supposed that the murderer did not have time to do more than take his victim's life, and then roughly mutilate her body, but now it appears that he completed his horrible work with reckless deliberation, and removed certain organs. The additional mutilation of the face is believed to be due to fears on the murderer's part that he may have been seen in the woman's company by someone, and*

*therefore determined to make her identification as difficult as possible. The announcement of Dr Brown of the disappearance of the uterus revived for a time the theory put forward by Mr Wynne Baxter, the coroner, in the Hanbury-street case.*

*The British Medical Journal, however, states that the foreign physician who sought to purchase specimens was a gentleman of the highest respectability, that he did not offer a large price, and that he left London 18 months ago.*

*The Tasmanian Mail,  
6 October 1888.*

Following the Double Event, October 1888 was eerily quiet. Rumours were rife, but the Ripper himself made no appearance. Had the murders finally come to an end? On 16 October, George Lusk, President of the Mile End Vigilance Committee, a private citizen group on the hunt for the Ripper, received a small parcel in the mail accompanied by a letter. Nothing could have prepared him for what he found when he opened it: half a human kidney. The heading of the letter, 'From Hell', would later become the name for several Ripper books and the most recent film on the subject.

Questions, again, spin off from this correspondence: first and foremost, why were the letter and kidney sent to George Lusk? Were they really from Jack the Ripper? Was it a hoax? If it was a hoax, who was responsible for it? If it was not a hoax, was the kidney taken from Eddowes in Mitre Square? If the correspondence is real, could other correspondence such as the 'Dear Boss' and 'Saucy Jacky' letters also be real?

The refusal of the Home Secretary, Henry Matthews, to offer a reward for the capture of the murderer and the public indignation resulting from his decision were covered in the Tasmanian newspapers as follows:

*The murder of women in London.*

-----

*Panic among citizens.*

-----

*A Government reward for conviction  
of murderer refused.*

-----

*The people indignant.*

-----

*Liberal subscriptions forth.*

-----

*London, October 1.*

*It is believed that the last reported*

*murder and mutilation of women has been by the same hand that committed the previous crimes, and quite a panic prevails among the inhabitants of the localities where these shocking crimes have occurred.*

*The police are denounced for not tracing the crime, and the citizens of London are signing a petition to the (----), praying for the offer of a large reward for the detection of the murderer.*

*Later:*

*The Hon. Henry Matthews, Secretary of State for the Home Department, has refused to recommend a reward being given, and the public are indignant. The citizens have subscribed 1,000 (pounds), and the Corporation of London has offered an additional 500 (pounds.)*

*The Daily Telegraph, referring to the refusal of the Home Secretary to sanction a reward, refers to the Kelly murders in Ireland, and the efficiency of Government reward in that instance in bringing the murderers to justice.*

*The Times suggests the employment of blood hounds to track the murderer.*

*The Mercury,  
3 October 1888.*

Mary Jane Kelly, the youngest and most attractive of the Ripper's victims, was murdered on the morning of Friday, 9 November. She was the only one to be killed indoors. Her body was viciously mutilated and her organs were found in different locations about her room. The murderer extracted her uterus, kidneys, liver, bladder, intestines and stomach, cut off her breasts and mutilated her face beyond recognition. Even ghastlier, Dr Bond's report stated that her heart was absent. Surviving photographs show what words cannot describe. Mary's murder was the last of the so-called 'Canonical Five' murders generally accepted as the work of the Ripper. With the discovery of her body the newspapers went into a frenzy all over again:

*The Whitechapel Murders.*

-----

*Another horrible tragedy.*

-----

*(From the Melbourne Herald.)*

*To-day London has again been shocked and alarmed by the discovery of the perpetration of another of the series of horrible murders which were discovered a few weeks since in Whitechapel, Houndsditch, and*

adjacent portions of Eastern London. In this instance the atrocity was not committed in the streets as were the previous ones, but there can be no doubt from the attendant circumstances that the perpetrator of the latest murder is identical with the man who committed the previous ones. It is believed that he feared the continued watchfulness of the police in the streets, and therefore beguiled his victim into a house and there butchered her.

The facts are that last night a woman of loose character, accompanied by a man, engaged a room at one of the low houses which are common enough in Whitechapel. The pair retired for the night. Nothing more was heard of them till late this forenoon, when as neither of them had been seen, the door was tried and found to be locked. It was eventually burst open, and then the horrible discovery was made that the woman had been brutally murdered. The head had apparently first been severed, and after that the breasts and certain organs had been removed. The limbs had also been separated from the trunk. The breasts and organs referred to were the only portions missing. In this case, as in the others, there was unmistakable evidence of the murderer possessing a certain amount of anatomical knowledge. This was made the more plain inasmuch as he had less fear of being disturbed, and therefore did his horrible work more leisurely. After he had completed it he seems to have taken the portions of the body he required with him, and stolen from the room which, when burst open, presented a fearful scene of blood. He locked the door on the outside and took the key with him, his object probably being to delay the discovery of the crime for as long a time as possible in order to enable him to make good his escape. He was not observed leaving the house.

The report of this, the eighth and most awful of the terrible series of crimes on record, has created a profound sensation. The inhabitants of the East End, and especially the women of abandoned character, are in a state of the wildest excitement and alarm. The police appear to be utterly helpless in the matter.

*The Launceston Examiner,*  
12 November 1888.

Although the resignation of Police Commissioner Sir Charles Warren

the day before was somewhat overshadowed by Mary's murder, it wasn't missed out either:

discussed in the House of Commons. Major-General Sir Charles Warren, Commissioner of the Metropolitan



*The resignation of Sir Charles Warren was almost overshadowed in the Tasmanian press by reports of Mary Kelly's murder*

#### *The Whitechapel Murders.*

-----

An anonymous writer, 'Jack The Ripper', Avows himself the Assassin.

-----

Resignation of Sir Charles Warren.

-----

An open verdict has been returned in the murder case in Whitechapel.

The previous murders have all been committed in the street, but this occurred in the unfortunate woman's lodgings. Her features were mutilated and organs extracted.

The police and others continue to receive letters signed 'Jack the Ripper,' admitting that the writer has committed the murders, and threatening to commit more shortly. The refusal of the Home Secretary to offer any Government reward for discovery of the murderer is to be

Police, has resigned, consequent on newspaper attacks on the incapacity of the police to track the assassin, and his being officially censured for writing an article in Murray's Magazine defending the police department.

*The Mercury,*  
14 November 1888.

Following Mary Kelly's murder, the newspapers came up with further wild ideas about how to catch her killer.

*The Whitechapel Atrocities.*

-----

Black trackers suggested.

-----

The police have not the slightest clue to the perpetrator of the last Whitechapel murder. The Times, evidently at loss for better suggestion, advocates that black trackers should



*be employed, with the hope that their skill will be as useful in crowded London as elsewhere.*

*The Mercury,  
13 November 1888.*

Well, at least they said they didn't have any better suggestions!

Just as the manhunt was at its peak, when all of London, Britain and the world were looking for this elusive killer, the crimes stopped. Jack the Ripper disappeared as he had appeared. As silent as when he murdered his victims, he vanished, never to be heard from again.

Why did the Ripper stop killing? This question has remained a lively subject of debate. Almost every scenario has been analyzed in detail by generations of armchair detectives in hundreds of books, documentaries, websites and films. Perhaps everything that could be said has already been said about the case. But why, even though the identity of this man will almost certainly never be discovered and proved beyond any doubt, does this dead-end, unsolved mystery continue to fascinate generations of Ripperologists from all over the world?

The answer is combined in a synergy of all the factors we listed at the beginning of this article. The most important factor is probably

that Jack the Ripper was never caught. His myth and his legend were born as he vanished in the dark and gloomy alleys of Whitechapel. Who was Jack the Ripper? This is the most commonly asked question. If it had been answered, most of the fascination of the case would have evaporated and present-day interest in him would probably not have reached the same levels. We can continue to speculate on his identity, though, and we can still debate the greatest murder mystery in history. In a way, he is a link with the captivating world of Victorian London, and his murders are a significant part of the history of that bygone era. He killed amidst a repressed society that was unaware of the type of murders he committed. The case drew attention to the existence of hundreds of 'unfortunates' who lived amid dire poverty. Even George Bernard Shaw labelled Jack 'some independent genius' who had done more to shed light on the condition of the poor in the East End than anyone else before him. Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* completed the formula. Indeed, a *Tasmanian Mail* correspondent said so in so many words:

*Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde  
in Real life*

*A correspondent of the Standard writes: - May I suggest that it would be well if the police were, for once, not to confine their attention to 'suspicious characters' (so-called)? When a man commits four separate murders in the same way, and on each occasion escapes without notice, the inference is irresistible that there is nothing whatever suspicious in his appearance. On the contrary, he is probably a man of most respectable exterior, calm and composed in manner, certainly dressed in dark clothes, wearing probably dark gloves, and possible even a tall hat. His modus operandi involves no such struggle as would tear or disarrange his clothes. Standing, as he does, at the right shoulder of his victim, and a little behind her, he would not be bespattered by the blood. His left hand, which he places over his victim's mouth and chin, would also escape pollution. Nor is it at all necessary that in his horrible subsequent proceedings he need be covered with blood, if he stands well away from his victim as he bends over her. That his hands should altogether escape bloodstains is improbable, working, as he does, in the dark, and it seems clear that he wipes them, and then, in all probability, puts on a pair of dark gloves. Thus, when he leaves the scene of his crime, there is absolutely nothing in his appearance*

to excite suspicion. For my part, I do not doubt that he passed several policemen on Sunday morning. The respectability of his appearance is proved by another consideration. Nothing else would account for the willingness of his last two victims to be led into danger while the whole neighbourhood was still aghast at the crimes previously committed. Each must have said to herself 'Well, I am quite safe with him!' -- that is, there can have been nothing rough or suspicious in his appearance. Probably, too, there was the offer of gold; but even this by itself would not have been sufficient to induce them to place themselves at a stranger's mercy had not his appearance been such as to disarm suspicion. When to these considerations we add the fact that the manner in which the crimes have been perpetrated goes far to prove that the perpetrator is a man of education, we are, I think, driven to a conclusion very different to that at which the police have arrived. It is not in the common lodging houses of Whitechapel that such a criminal must be sought. Were he such a man as haunts these places he must have been detected long ere (before?) this. It seems much more likely that he does not live in Whitechapel at all. He is probably a lonely, brooding monomaniac, well provided with money, occupying, very likely, a house by himself. Then, at night he puts on his murder suit, lets himself out with the latch-key, does his deed of horror, and quietly returns home, none knowing when he went out, or when he came back, or having any reason to suspect him. In fine, this is, I think, a case of Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in real life, suggested possibly to some diseased imagination by that very story.

*The Tasmanian Mail,*  
6 October 1888.

As we can see, the Whitechapel Murders offer, because of their brutal nature, seeds for speculation, imagination and fantasy. They are, in a way, a kind of 'LEGO', which you can shape any way you prefer. They have that flexibility. Even if their story has been written and re-written hundreds of times, it continues to fascinate. It's not hard to see why.

The press has always played a major part in the fascination with Jack. As we have seen, the newspapers printed sensational reports on the murders all over the world. Even though much of what they published resulted from their eagerness to

get a story and was not completely correct factually, back in 1888, when there was nothing else to go on, the newspapers were very influential and spread many myths and rumours. The fascination with Jack can partly be attributed to how contemporary Londoners took up theories that largely stemmed from local gossip and newspapers reports. On the other side of the coin, the newspapers also gave details of certain events and provided some interesting stories. While the relationship between Ripper fact and press report must remain bitter-sweet, it must be admitted that the newspapers played a very important role in the case.

The people directly affected by the Ripper were another major element. Without him, none of the victims would ever have been heard of. While alive, they were not well known, and yet, without ever being aware of it, they have been major topics of discussion for over a century. They are also a link to Victorian times, though they were innocent victims who played an unwilling role in the murders and can't be trumped up as being anything more than that.

But the Ripper did not affect only the victims. Since 1888, many names have emerged as suspects in the case: Prince Albert Victor, King Leopold of the Belgians, Lewis Carroll, Walter Sickert, Richard Mansfield *et alia* - even the Elephant Man! Would they be remembered otherwise?

Then there are the witnesses. Had it not been for the Ripper, they would also have remained unknown. In short, the Ripper shed light on the life and times of hundreds of people and affected everyone at the time. This is another reason for our fascination with him: his links with so many people, some of whom are remembered only because of him.

There are also the discoveries continuously made in the case. The 1980s and 1990s were filled with brand-new ones: the Littlechild letter, the 'Diary' of Jack the Ripper and the presumed lost medical reports of Dr Thomas Bond. At the same time, the Ripper magazines were launched: *Ripperana*, *Ripperologist*, *Ripper Notes*. Of course, the Internet has helped to fuel the fire and broaden the scope of discussion to a level never seen before. New suspects and theories are constantly proposed. There is never a drought of Ripper issues to discuss and it's a safe bet that there never will be.

Last but not least, the Ripper's

*modus operandi* was unusual, though not completely unheard of. The murders were quick, silent - and very brutal. The Ripper mutilated his victims in dark places with what must have been incredible speed. Police and medical reports help us to understand better his technique, but many unanswered questions are still debated. Psychological profiles and forensic science contribute new ideas and new theories - but the Ripper remains unidentified.

Whereas many other factors exist, those discussed here generally explain our ongoing fascination with the Ripper. We have re-visited the murders and discussed issues with which most people are already familiar. It is our hope that, in doing that, we may have suggested a solution to at least one question, even if thousands of others remain unanswered. In completely different ways, we are all victims of the Ripper, his mystery and his never ending fascination.

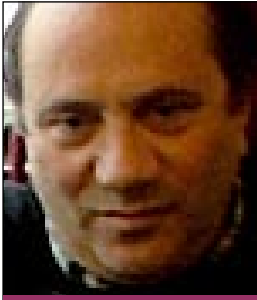
### Adam Went's Acknowledgements

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank several people who have made this article 'work': First, a special thanks to Glenn Andersson and Don Souden, the original co-authors of the article, who helped kick it off. On that same note, thanks also to Alan Sharp, who provided ideas and suggestions and helped with some 'final edits'. Sincere thanks also to Eduardo Zinna, who persevered with me and my early problems with this article and offered help whenever and wherever he could. A big thank you also to Howard Brown for his assistance. It was through him that I met the co-authors of this article, Amanda Howard and Antonio Sironi. Thanks also to Peter Sipka, Jennifer Pegg, David O'Flaherty and Chris Scott, who all provided assistance with newspaper reports, both on *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* ([www.casebook.org](http://www.casebook.org)) and in private communications. Thanks again to you all!

### Sources

Begg, Paul, Martin Fido and Keith Skinner: *Jack the Ripper A-Z* (1996); Feldman, Paul H: *Jack the Ripper: The Final Chapter* (1998); Howells, Martin and Keith Skinner: *The Ripper Legacy* (1987); Russo, Stan: *The Jack the Ripper Suspects* (2004); Sugden, Philip: *The Complete History of Jack the Ripper* (Revised Edition 2002); Thomas, Donald: *The Victorian Underworld* (1998); *Casebook: Jack the Ripper*; The State Library of Tasmania: Microfilm Reels of *The Launceston Examiner*; *The Mercury*; and *The Tasmanian Mail*.





EDUARDO ZINNA

# A Long Last Journey

The St Saviours Story

In 1973, BBC Television broadcast a six-part documentary on Jack the Ripper combining fact and fiction: the latest research on the Whitechapel Murders presented by detectives Barlow and Watt, the protagonists of the popular series *Z Cars*.



On 17 August, during the final episode, a bearded, bespectacled man told, in measured tones, in a soft Cockney voice, a wondrous tale of cruel ministers and royalty in disguise, of besotted princes and beautiful commoners, of forbidden love and secret ceremonies. The man was a painter and restorer who gave his name as Joseph Sickert. He recounted how, a few years before the Whitechapel murders, Prince Albert Victor, better known as Eddy, grandson of Queen Victoria and third in line to the throne, was introduced to the world of art by his mother's friend, the Impressionist painter Walter Sickert. In Sickert's company, the Prince learnt to feel at ease with artists and, perhaps more significantly, with models. Among the latter was one Ann Elizabeth Crook, a shop's assistant in Cleveland Street. The Prince was handsome; Ann was beautiful. They became lovers. In due course, their relationship bore fruit: a baby girl whom they named Alice Margaret. In 1885, they got married. The witnesses were Sickert and the baby's nanny, an Irishwoman called Mary Jane Kelly. It was a secret marriage, and an unwise one. Not

only was the bride a humble shop girl, wholly inadequate to be the consort of the future King Emperor. She was a Roman Catholic to boot. At the time, the possibility of revolution was thought to be a very real one - and the problems of Ireland were at their height. The marriage of the heir to the throne to a Roman Catholic was certain to bring disgrace to his family and damage the monarchy irreparably.

At first, the secret of the Prince's marriage was known only to a few intimate friends. Then, as secrets will, it leaked and spread. Government agents intervened, swiftly and ruthlessly, to eliminate every vestige of Prince Eddy's injudicious union. The lovers were separated, never to see one another again. Ann was caged in hospitals, asylums and workhouses until her early death. Her friends were stalked by a motley team of assassins composed of Royal surgeons, police officers, coachmen and amateur killers. Five women were murdered, one by one: the last one was Mary Jane Kelly. Alice Margaret, the Prince's daughter, was rescued from a frightful fate by her father's friend, Walter Sickert. He became her protector and, late in life, her lover. Joseph Sickert was their son.

In the beginning, Joseph Sickert's tale did not make much of an impression. But, shortly after the documentary was broadcast, a young and determined journalist, Stephen Knight, interviewed him for his newspaper, the *East End Advertiser*. Following the interview, Knight developed Sickert's narrative into a full-length book, *Jack the Ripper: The Final Solution*, which would become possibly the most successful book on the Ripper ever written, still in print 30 years after it was first published. Knight's story was, if anything, more fantastic than Sickert's original tale had been; the kind of yarn that can be believed only by someone who wants to believe it very badly. But many thought, at least for a while,

that Knight had indeed solved the puzzle of the Ripper crimes and found a solution consisting of a wayward heir, star-crossed lovers, a Royal conspiracy, misguided loyalists out to save the throne and a series of murders made all the more brutal because its authors were not madmen but sane men. Their motive in wielding the knife and plunging their hands into the steaming insides of their victims was not red-hot sadism but stone-cold *raison d'état*. A few more years of imperial glory had been bought at the cost of human suffering and human blood.

But Knight's triumph was short-lived and Sickert's story was soon demystified and discredited. A few years later, Melvyn Fairclough told the tale again, more unlikely and far-fetched than ever, in *The Ripper and the Royals*. Knight died young. Fairclough grew disillusioned. Only Joseph Sickert remained unwavering and unrepentant in his beliefs about the royal heritage of which he claimed to have been unfairly deprived. At the United Kingdom Jack the Ripper Conference at Bournemouth in 2001, he repeated his extraordinary tale of tea with the Queen, Royal coaches sliding silently in the night and homicidal hirelings roaming the back alleys of the East End.



Prince Albert Victor

Outside of literature and the cinema, Joseph Sickert's tale has not aged well. Much of it has been shown to be imprecise, inaccurate or plainly untrue. No record was ever found, for instance, of the marriage of Prince Eddy and Ann Elizabeth Crook. All Sickert knew was that they had gone



Choir Stalls, Buxheim Charterhouse, and detail (right)

through a ceremony at St Saviour's Infirmary private chapel. But the location of this chapel proved just as elusive as the marriage records did. Ian Sharp, a BBC researcher, explored several possibilities, of which the most plausible was St Saviour's Infirmary in Osnaburgh Street, off the Euston Road - a stone's throw from Cleveland Street. But by 1973, when the programme was broadcast, the Infirmary had long been removed to Hythe, on the South Kent coast, where no records of the old institution survived.

Years later, Melvyn Fairclough went to Hythe. There he learnt that the Little Sisters of Mercy who had run St Saviour's as a cancer hospital were the first order established after the Reformation. An article published in the *Graphic* on 6 November 1886 reported that St Saviour's had been founded in 1872 by a lady who had introduced ecumenical principles that allowed mixed-faith marriages to take place in the Chapel:

*The Chapel of the Hospital is very beautiful and the services there are greatly appreciated by the household. The sick of all denominations are received and no attempt to interfere with their religion is allowed.*<sup>1</sup>

That seemed to be the end of the trail. For years afterwards, students

of the Ripper murders and the tales woven round them have speculated on the chapel's true location.<sup>2</sup> Andy and Sue Parlour discussed several options, including an Islington house celebrated in Sir John Betjeman's poem *St Saviour's Aberdeen Park*.<sup>3</sup> The Parlours were unable to find much information about Aberdeen Park, but, oddly enough, Betjeman featured prominently in what may well prove to be the last chapter in the St Saviour's story.

On the eve of his departure for Australia in 1962, journalist Hugo Williams had lunch with Betjeman, Barry Humphries and Charles Osborne, an assistant editor at *London Magazine*.<sup>4</sup> After lunch, Betjeman took his companions on an unusual tour of London which included such places as Aldersgate Station, Farringdon, Great Portland Street and a Diorama in Peto Place. The main purpose of the tour was to visit the Convent of St Saviour's in Osnaburgh Street, which had been built in 1850 by William Butterfield, a prominent exponent of the Gothic revival.<sup>5</sup> The visitors followed a dark corridor into a tiny chapel. Williams had an impression of a dimly lit room full of black stalagmites and stalactites, and then, gradually, of towering black choir stalls seemingly occupied by

life-sized saints. In a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement*, Father Anthony Symondson recalled William Butterfield's chapel at St Saviour's as 'one of the most fascinating buildings in London.' He added that the baroque choir stalls 'were far too big for their severe mid-Victorian setting and created an impression of crushing magnificence only alleviated by the clear light of the sanctuary.'<sup>6</sup>

The choir stalls had come from the Charterhouse at Buxheim in Bavaria, Germany, a Carthusian monastery founded in 1402. For many years the monastery flourished, including within its confines agricultural buildings, vineyards and forests. Through their own diligence as copyists and authors, as well as through large donations of money and personal libraries, the Carthusians of Buxheim were able to amass books on a previously unknown scale. By the early 16th century, after Hilprand Brandenburg of Biberach donated his personal collection of some 450 books, the Charterhouse's library owned well over 1,000 volumes - something only a few European



libraries at the time could match. Hilprand is well known among bibliophiles on account of his *ex libris* bookplate - one of the earliest bookplates to be printed. The choir stalls and figures in the chapel were carved by Tyrolean artist Ignaz Waibl assisted by his apprentices and master cabinet-maker Peter of Memminger between 1687 and 1691.

In 1803, the monastery was secularized and handed over to the von Ostein family as compensation for the losses suffered during the French occupation of 1794. Upon the death of Count Johann Friedrich von Ostein in 1809, the Counts Waldbott von Bassenheim inherited the property. By 1883, the profligate Count Hugo Waldbott von Bassenheim was threatened with financial ruin. He was forced to auction off the 16,000 volumes in the library, both



manuscripts and incunabula, which are now scattered over 50 libraries across Europe and North America, with quite a few in private hands. He also sold the chapel furniture at auction in Munich, where the catalogue described it as a 'splendid, incomparable masterpiece of German carving and sculpture whose equal does not exist in Germany'. The choir stalls turned up in the art market in London, where the founder and benefactress of the Order of the Little Sisters of Mercy acquired it for St Saviour's.



had covered them in Britain, repaired the damages suffered in the course of three centuries and replaced missing parts in accordance with the original design. The stalls are now light brown, deprived of the blackness that gave them their unforgettable dramatic effect.<sup>7</sup>

Let's now imagine St Saviour's chapel as it was in 1885: a small, austere room overwhelmed on all sides by huge, intricate, ebony-black carvings of heaven and earth, saints, apostles and prophets, angels and demons, columns, leaves, flowers and



*The Charterhouse of Buxheim, Bavaria, Germany, as it is today.*

Forty-two years later, Williams returned to Osnaburgh Street, but found no trace of St Saviour's among the new buildings. After some investigations, he was able to piece together the further history of the Convent with the assistance of Mike Umbers of the Hythe Civic Society. In 1962, shortly after Williams's first visit, the Convent had succumbed to the advances of developers. With money from its sale, the Little Sisters of Mercy built a new St Saviour's hospital in Hythe. Butterfield's chapel was demolished with the Convent, but the Sisters took the choir stalls with them. The new chapel was designed round the stalls and gave them the freedom of scale they had originally enjoyed at Buxheim, though not at Osnaburgh Street. The Sisters remained at Hythe until 1975 when they became too old to carry on and St Saviour's became a BUPA Hospital. It is still there, now owned by Classic Hospitals Ltd., at 73 Seabrook Road.

Before leaving, the Sisters sold the stalls for £49,000, which went into their medical foundation. In 1980, the stalls were bought for ten times as much for the Buxheim Charterhouse from where they had come one hundred years before. The chapel at Buxheim had survived, though without its furniture. Prior to placing the stalls again in their former locations, restorers used 3,500 litres of denatured alcohol to strip them of the coating of black lacquer which

fruits. The pungent smell of incense hangs heavily in the air as solemn music issues from an unseen source. A tall, pale young man stands at the altar holding by the hand a woman, almost a girl, whose delicate features are half hidden by a thin veil. The voice of a man, perhaps a priest, drones melodiously, his words familiar but also archaic and remote. The witnesses to these furtive rituals are a raffish, strikingly handsome man and a red-headed woman whose eyes sparkle in the semi-darkness. As the light of the candles shifts and shivers, their shadows glide back and forth across the massive choir stalls. An engaging vision, no doubt. But was it ever true? I think not.

Joseph Sickert is no longer of this world, and an old injunction calls upon us not to speak ill of the dead. Suffice it to say that his stories straddled the realm of credibility. They were like fairy-tales where the famous spoke to the unknown and the highest in the realm walked together with the lowest of the low. Some of the characters in his stories may not have even existed; others, like Ann Elizabeth Crook and her daughter, Alice Margaret, did. So did a coachman named Joseph Netley. Who were they? How did Sickert come to know so many details about their obscure lives? What was his relationship to those long dead and half forgotten people? Why did he have their photographs? How did he come to know of the Chapel in

Osnaburgh Street, with its severe architecture and its baroque choir stalls? We may never find the answers to these questions. What we have instead is the history of St Saviour's: its origins, its strange beauty, its many journeys and its final fate.

### Acknowledgements

I should like to thank Father Anthony Symondson SJ, Hugo Williams and Mike Umbers of the Hythe Civic Society for their kind replies to my inquiries and their permission to quote from their writings.

### Sources

Fairclough, Melvyn: *The Ripper and the Royals*; Jones, Elwyn and John Lloyd: *The Ripper File*; Knight, Stephen: *Jack the Ripper: The Final Solution*; Parlour, Andy and Sue: *Will the Real St Saviour's Ever be Found?*, *Ripperologist* No. 22 (April 1999); Umbers, Mike: *The Buxheim Carvings*, Hythe Civic Society; *Ripperologist*; *The Times Literary Supplement* (TLS).

### Notes

- 1 Cited by Melvyn Fairclough in *The Ripper and the Royals*.
- 2 The question was further complicated by the existence of another St Saviour's in the Ripper saga. At Mary Jane Kelly's inquest, John McCarthy stated that she used to visit a fellow unfortunate at St Saviours, in the Elephant and Castle area. Joseph Barnett also referred to these visits in an interview with the Star. Among the researchers who have attempted to locate this St Saviours have been John Carey, in Mary Kelly in the 1881 Census, *Ripperologist* No. 16 (April 1998), Alan Hayday, in *Dead Men Tell No Tales*, *Ripperologist* No. 16 (April 1998) and Bernard Brown, in *The St Saviour Mystery Solved?*, *Ripperologist* No. 18 (August 1998).
- 3 See Parlour, Andy and Sue: *Will the Real St Saviour's Ever be Found?*, *Ripperologist* No. 22 (April 1999).
- 4 Williams, Hugo: *Freelance*, *Times Literary Supplement*, 24 June 2005.
- 5 William Butterfield (1814-1900) adhered to the Ecclesiological doctrine that churches must be planned and designed as metaphors for the 'spiritual functions of sacrament and worship'. His style was High-Church Gothic-Revivalist. As an architect, he reinterpreted the Gothic language into contemporary terms that would meet the functional and spiritual needs of his buildings, which were mainly religious in nature.
- 6 Symondson, Father Anthony: *Letters*, *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 July 2005.
- 7 Symondson, Father Anthony: loc. cit.

# The 2005 UK Ripper Conference

The recent Ripper conference in Brighton was the fifth held in the UK. The previous four had been of such a high standard that the organisers of this year's event would be hard pushed to go one better.

From the hard work of Rosie Howells in creating the conferences in Ipswich and Norwich, via the Bournemouth weekend in 2001 which saw a display-case full of original memorabilia, to 2005's Liverpool jamboree, it was clear that Claudia Aliffe, Andy Aliffe and Adam Wood had learned and tweaked the conference accordingly. Later morning starts, improved room usage and sound quality was all implemented to make the weekend a great success.

The seafront location of the venue was a plus, and was at its most attractive during the Saturday post-banquet entertainment, when Philip Hutchinson delivered an illustrated talk on the Ghosts of the Ripper, with the lights on Brighton pier twinkling behind him atmospherically.

Before this though was the small matter of registration, where

delegates collected their information packs and perused the itinerary over a pint or two with friends old and new. This conference was to be the best attended so far, with over 100 delegates.



Chris Coopey and Jeremy Beadle with the original Baxter certificate ©Claudia Aliffe

Kicking off the conference was our old friend Jeremy Beadle, reprising his role as Host. Jeremy swiftly introduced the Mayor of Brighton, Bob Carden, who bade us welcome, before the Mayor of Lewes, Jim Daly, gave some words of thanks for the conference's acknowledgement of his predecessor, Wynne Baxter, the main focus of weekend. In fact Baxter was, as Jim informed us, the first Mayor of Lewes. We were to find out a whole lot more about Baxter during the course of the weekend. Jeremy then introduced Chris Coopey, who was representing Wynne Baxter solicitors, the first ever sponsor of the conference. Chris expressed his delight that Wynne was being honoured, and offered up for auction the original certificate awarded to Baxter on his enrolment as a member of the Widows and Orphans Fund of the Ancient Order of Foresters in 1876. The framed certificate eventually went to Jeremy Beadle for £130, all proceeds

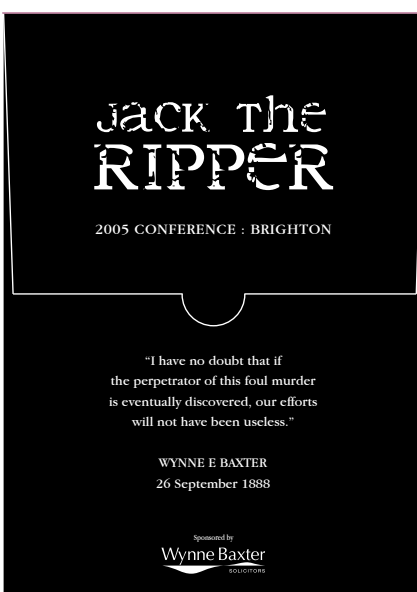
going to the children's charity Dreams Come True.

Following a well-deserved evening buffet an exclusive preview of a new Ripper film, *The Last Victim*, was shown with its creator Phil Peel actively seeking feedback. This proved to be unlike any Ripper film seen before, and with Frogg Moody's involvement several members of the Whitechapel Society made appearances. It's hoped Phil will take on board comments made by the audience and it won't be too long before we see the revised version of *The Last Victim*. And so to bed, or in the case of most, the bar...

Saturday morning saw the first lecture of the weekend, with Robert McLaughlin delivering a fantastic talk on the victim photographs and the man who took them. This coincided with the official launch of his book, *The First Jack the Ripper Victim Photographs*, which is reviewed in this issue. Without Robert's solid professionalism however, it could have been a disastrous start to the conference as the laptop being used to show his slides refused to work; moreover, the next scheduled speaker, Chris Scott, had been struck down with illness and was unable to attend. Luckily Jennifer Pegg had some sensational news based on her recent research into the work carried on by Tony Williams and Humphrey Price while working on *Uncle Jack*, and at extremely short notice was willing to report this and take questions from the floor. It soon transpired that Jenni had uncovered serious discrepancies between the documents used in *Uncle Jack* and the original files. A fascinating and brave talk in the circumstances, and it has to be hoped that satisfactory answers to the allegations will be forthcoming from the authors in due course.

An eventful first morning was discussed over lunch before we moved into the centrepiece of the conference, the Wynne Baxter session. Don Rumbelow delivered his authoritative lecture on the Siege of Sidney Street, which we were to discover was but one of the famous inquests presided over by Baxter. In can be said that Don never disappoints, and to hear this exceptional presentation in the context of a Ripper weekend was a delight.

And so to the keynote presentation, Andy Aliffe's lecture on the life and career of Wynne Baxter, based on the research of Adam Wood (see



Delegate pack ©Adam Wood





Chris Coopey, Richard Clarke and the Mayor of Brighton unveil 'Wynne Baxter' ©Claudia Aliffe

*Ripperologist* 61). Andy was ably assisted by Philip Hutchinson and Richard Clarke, the latter acting the part of Baxter. It transpired afterwards that Richard had been on board for less than a week, which is a testament to his abilities. With speaker Richard Patterson loaning the organisers his laptop, we were spared the possibility of Andy *et al* presenting without any slides, and the dozens of images shown superbly illustrated the events of Baxter's life and career. A highlight of the weekend.

Completing the morning's events, and the Wynne Baxter session, was the unveiling of an official Brighton bus bearing the name 'Wynne Baxter'. Mayor Carden explained this was a tradition of the town's, one which the organisers were delighted to have persuaded the bus company to agree to in an attempt to have Baxter recognised in the same way as Frederick Abberline was in Bournemouth. The naming ceremony itself was conducted by the Mayor, Richard Clarke still in Baxter-mode, and event sponsor Chris Coopey. A maiden voyage around Brighton was offered to those who felt the urge!

The free afternoon gave delegates the opportunity to explore Brighton and its excellent second-hand bookshops, before returning in best bib-and-tucker for the pre-banquet drinks reception. After a glass or two of wine, Jeremy ushered the throng to their seats for the three-course banquet. It's safe to say that the food at this year's event was excellent. The clattering of cutlery and glasses was hushed for the introduction of Loretta Lay, sponsor of the inaugural Outstanding Achievement award. The

first recipient of this was chosen by the organisers, but it's hoped that future winners will be nominated by delegates. Loretta spoke at length outlining the advancement of research over the past few years, primarily thanks to the internet. The main protagonist of this, in terms of Ripper data collation, is of Stephen Ryder, with the focus being his *Casebook* website. To great applause Stephen modestly accepted the award and thanked Adrian Phypers, sadly no longer with us, as the person who helped raise the *Casebook's* profile with the magnificent newspaper reports section. A nice way to mark the efforts of those who might otherwise go unrecognised, and a genuinely worthy winner.



Stephen Ryder accepts his Outstanding Achievement award from Loretta Lay ©Claudia Aliffe

Still seated at our tables following the banquet, we were treated to the hugely entertaining presentation by Philip Hutchinson, as mentioned before, complete with illustrations by the incomparable Jane Coram. Another great day, with delegates celebrating long into the night.

Those with sore heads no doubt appreciated the later starts and were able to grab some breakfast before

heading off for 'Suspects on Sunday'. The first lecture of the session was given by Ivor Edwards on D'Onston, assisted by Tyler Hebblewhite. It's been said in the past that Ivor's theory of the murder sites being pre-determined is too complex to grasp properly, but hearing him explain it in detail and seeing these ideas illustrated made a lot of attendees think again. Indeed, Jeremy suggested to Ivor that an interactive DVD might be the most suitable format to put forward his theory. Whether this comes to pass or not, Ivor's lecture was very well received and left many people prepared to take another look.

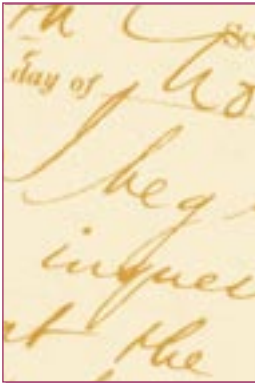
Next up was Christopher George, North American Editor of the *Rip*, who presented an illustrated update on research into Francis Tumblety. With data collated from numerous sources, including articles published here by Joe Chetcuti, Chris all but blew away Tumblety as a viable Ripper suspect, but revealed that research is continuing into this slippery character.

All weekend, raffle tickets had been sold with aplomb by Ally Reineke, and during the lunch break we finally had a chance to see if we would be lucky enough to win the unique print of Wynne Baxter and Winston Churchill, signed by all the speakers, or the signed copy of Robert McLaughlin's limited edition book. Alas, while many left with smiling faces nothing came our way...

The final lecture slot, filled at previous conferences by Joseph Sickert and Jean Overton Fuller, has traditionally been reserved for 'unusual' topics. Virtually nobody in the audience knew anything about Francis Thompson, the Victorian poet put forward by Richard Patterson in his book *Paradox*, self-published in 1997. As Richard unveiled the story of Thompson's life, and revealed numerous coincidences of Ripper-related events with Saints' Days, delegates became more and more engrossed in this overlooked suspect, and jaws literally dropped when Richard displayed a sample of Thompson's handwriting alongside that of the Dear Boss letter. In terms of writing it's the closest match seen.

A revealing and fascinating end to yet another triumphant conference.

All that remained was for Jeremy to conduct the closing speeches, and to put forward Blackpool as a potential venue for the 2007 event. The *Rip* now understand that the organisers have 90% decided on the location... watch this space!



All the news that's fit to print...

# I Beg to Report

## NEWS

**THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY.** The United Kingdom National Archives Learning Curve Education Service has established a workshop designed to investigate why the police were unable to catch Jack the Ripper. Students will study original correspondence taken from the Metropolitan Police Letter Books and the 'Jack the Ripper' letters held at the National Archives and research the different methods employed by the police in their efforts to apprehend the Ripper, as well as those suggested by members of the public, to question whether or not the police were to blame for not bringing him (or her!) to justice. They will also examine the 'Jack the Ripper' letters to understand the impact they had on the police investigation of the case and what they reveal about society's attitudes to the murders. In addition to this, students will examine original census returns from 1881 to build up a picture of Whitechapel at the time of the murders and consider how this evidence can also help to understand the difficulties faced by police in their investigations into the case.

*To find more information and to download materials relating to the workshop [click here](#).*

**JACK, TELL ME A STORY.** The Minnesota Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators has awarded Natalie Rosinsky a Letter of Merit as a runner-up in this year's Magazine Merit Competition for her article "'Facing" Jack the Ripper: Forensics Then and Now', (January 2004 *Odysey-Adventures in Science*). Ms Rosinsky is the author of several books for young readers on economics, science, American Indian tribes and - you guessed it - Jack the Ripper. For further information on the prize [click here](#). Ms Rosinsky's books are listed in all the major Internet bookshops.

**WELCOME BACK, PRINCESS ALICE.** After 20 years going under the name of The City Darts, The Princess Alice pub, located at 40/42 Commercial Street on the corner of Wentworth Street, has acquired a new landlord and recovered its name and much of its former glory, as plush leather sofas replace wooden chairs. The Princess Alice is one of the few remaining pubs with *bona fide* Ripper connections. In an article on the pubs of Commercial Street in *Ripperologist* 19, Adam Wood quoted the *Star* of 5/6 September 1888: '...Leather Apron would most likely be found in Commercial Street, opposite the Princess Alice Tavern.'



It is also alleged that Frances Coles met Thomas Sadler here on 11 February 1891. Although a sign at The Princess Alice says Est. 1884, the tenancy of the pub can be charted back to at least 1850, when James Budden was its landlord. His son Thomas took over the pub in 1852 and ran it for 16 years until his death in 1868. At this point it would have been likely for a new manager to come in, but instead Thomas's widow Ann, then aged 40, continued to run The Princess Alice for a further 16 years with the help of her

son Thomas James and daughter Alice (presumably named after the pub). In 1885, the new landlord was Richard Dipple, who was at that time also the landlord of The Queen's Head. Rather than provide temporary management cover for The Princess Alice, Dipple combined successfully the duties of both pubs before handing Alice to Arthur Ferrar in 1888. Within six years Ferrar, Robert Knapston and Elizabeth Cruse had been and gone. John Beech became landlord in 1895. He started a sequence of long-serving managers: Beech 12 years, Alfred Lamb five years, William Lashmar nine years and Samuel Goldstein 12 years. Charles Alexander served two years until 1937, when Albert Harris took over. Anyone who has seen the well-known photograph of The Princess Alice will have noted his name. Harris was still in charge in 1959, after which landlords' names are not listed in Kelly's. Truman's brewery sold The Princess Alice to Thorley Taverns in the early 1980s. It was renamed The City Darts in May 1985 as part of a refurbishment and relaunch made outside Council Planning control. As either Darts or Alice, the pub has served since 1997 as the venue for the meetings of the Cloak and Dagger Club, now the Whitechapel Society 1888.

*Tower Hamlets History File TH12568, Kelly's Directories for London 1850-1959.*

**JACK AND WALTER TOGETHER AGAIN.** On 7 December 2005, the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, presented *Walter Sickert: Was he Jack the Ripper?* Local lawyer Hartley R. Nathan QC analysed the case against Sickert and showed prints and drawings by him and his contemporaries before a sold-out house. If you have hopes of a repeat performance, [click here](#).

**TO BOLDLY GO WHERE NO RIPPER SUSPECT HAS GONE BEFORE.** James Doohan was a Ripper suspect in fiction only - but then, it was in fiction only that he was the Scottish chief engineer on the spaceship *USS Enterprise* in the original *Star Trek* TV show and subsequent films. Doohan wasn't even Scottish, but Canadian, and no one ever said 'Beam me up, Scotty' to him either. In a departure from his usual stalwart characterization, Doohan played a murder suspect in one of the series' best remembered episodes: the Robert Bloch-scripted *Wolf in the Fold*. He held the audience's attention





but the killer turned out to be not him but fellow actor John Fiedler playing the spirit of Jack the Ripper. Doohan died last July, aged 85. In accordance with his last wishes, his remains will be sent into space along with tributes from his fans and the ashes of 200 other people. The remains will be placed into a tube ejected from the Falcon One rocket and orbit Earth for up to 200 years before eventually burning up when they re-enter the atmosphere. Originally planned for December, the launch has been postponed to February pending further engine tests.

**WIFE OF THE RIPPER.** The Ripper of Florence, that is. Admirers of the novels and films featuring Dr Hannibal 'the Cannibal' Lecter will remember that Hannibal took place mostly in Florence. Dr Lecter's creator Thomas Harris had attended the trial of Pietro Pacciani - also known as The Monster of Florence - and mentioned him in his novel. Pacciani, a farm labourer with convictions for murder, wife-beating and sexual molestation, was convicted in 1994 of a series of murders committed between 1968 and 1985. He was later freed on appeal, only to die in mysterious circumstances on 23 February 1998, before he could face a retrial.



Pietro Pacciani

His wife, Angiolina Manni, died on 20 November 2005 at the age of 80 in a rest home in Radda in Chianti, Siena. Her life was marked by poverty, abuse

and violence inflicted by her husband, who also raped his two daughters when they were very young. In 1996, when Angiolina and her daughters learnt that Pacciani would be acquitted and released, they took refuge in a religious institute.

**FINGERPRINT WHO?** The value of fingerprint evidence, on which police forces worldwide have relied from the early twentieth century until the advent of recent forensic techniques such as DNA testing, has come under scrutiny. *The Sunday Herald* reported on 20 November that Euan Innes, the head of the Scottish Fingerprint Service (SFS), has expressed the opinion that fingerprint evidence is more a matter of opinion than science. A leaked report by Innes argues that fingerprint identification cannot be viewed as fact. The report 'also makes the case for two or more experts being able to examine the same print but legitimately come to different conclusions about identity.' The *Herald* continued: 'The revelations have led to an outcry from international fingerprint experts, and predictions from legal figures that the divisions at the most senior levels of the service could lead to a flood of appeals against conviction in the courts. Last night it also led to pressure on the justice minister, Cathy Jamieson, to launch an inquiry into the SFS and calls for its head [Innes] to resign.' Leading British fingerprint expert Allan Bayle said: 'For the head of the Scottish Fingerprint Service to argue this is astonishing. To start going down the route of viewing fingerprint identification as opinion, where it is legitimate to disagree about an identity, will put the whole of forensic science at risk.' [Click here for the full story.](#)

**I SHOT THE RIPPER.** Whoda thunk it? American writer William S Burroughs (1914-1997) had a thing for Jack the Ripper. Well, don't we all? Forty of Burroughs' offbeat artworks, complete with bullet holes that testify to the writer's lifelong love of firearms, are on display at London's Riflemaker Gallery as part of a retrospective: *Dead Aim: The Unseen Art of William S Burroughs*. One of his acrylic paintings, *Jack the Ripper*, described as a 'black acrylic figure with top hat on white card, 28.5" x 22.5", 12 gunshots, 1992' is a ghoulish Edvard Munch-like stick figure. The obsession



with guns manifested by Burroughs began at age eight when he was taken duck hunting by his father. Shortly before his death in Lawrence, Kansas, in 1997, Burroughs began to paint artwork as targets to shoot, creating some unusual if not bizarre artwork. 'Burroughs painted these targets and then shot them with his .38 Smith & Wesson,' said Paul Pieroni, manager of the Riflemakers Gallery. 'He created a range of bogeymen - cops and other figures of authority, but also nuns, dead boys, junkies and hustlers he used to know from New York. He'd line them up and say, "Which one of you is next?" Then he'd pop four or five shots into whichever one he'd choose.' Powder-tinged bullet holes form part of the finished work. The artwork of William S Burroughs, including the 'Ripper' sketch, is on view at the Riflemaker Gallery, 79 Beak Street, London W1 9SU throughout December.

[Click for website.](#)

**SHUT UP AND GO ON DIGGING.** The *Liverpool Daily Post* reported on 24 October the discovery of the grave of Joseph Williamson, the 'Mole of Edge Hill,' who built a mysterious series of tunnels in Liverpool in the early nineteenth century. The *Post* added: 'Archaeologists yesterday uncovered the lost grave of philanthropist Joseph Williamson for just a few hours, before burying the tomb once more. Local historians from the Friends of the Williamson Tunnels have been searching for the exact location of the grave for the past 10 years and said the find came at the 11th hour... in a car park opposite police headquarters at Canning Place, which is part of the

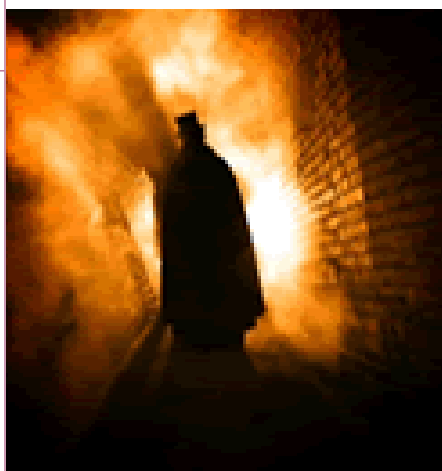
new Paradise Street development.' Williamson, who has been the subject of writings by Ripperologist Richard Whittington-Egan, is believed to have built the labyrinth of tunnels to provide an occupation for local men who were out of work during the economic slump following the Napoleonic Wars. The philanthropist had married into the Tate family. When uncovered, the family gravestone was found to have been amended to read: 'Also the Remains of Joseph Williamson of Edge Hill Who died the 1st May 1840 Aged 71 Years.' Williamson campaigner Gabriel Muies stated that the area where the grave was found will be turned into a garden with a commemorative plaque thanks to Paradise Street developer Grosvenor. Muies added: 'I am absolutely over the moon. Williamson was a great benefactor for the unemployed in Liverpool. Grosvenor have agreed, at great expense, to turn [the area] into a garden and have saved it.'

*Friends of Williamson's Tunnels website.*

**JACK THE RIPPER - THE MUSICAL.** Now that sounds familiar, doesn't it? These days it's hard to keep up with the many versions of the Ripper saga set to music. Eat your heart out, *Oklahoma!* The latest version is on from November 29 to December 22 at the Jermyn Street Theatre, 16b Jermyn Street, London, SW1Y 6ST. It is described as a musical romp through Victorian London, has a book and lyrics by Ron Pember and Denis de Marne and music by Ron Pember, and is directed by Tim McArthur. Trilby Productions have this to say: 'Phantom? Aristocrat? Or a local lunatic escaped from Bedlam? Rumours abound. Descend with our thirteen-strong ensemble into the depths of Victorian London for a heady mix of nail biting terror, suspense and musical comedy, leaving you breathless and entertained!' The star of *Jack the Ripper: The Musical* is Islington-born, red-headed Cathy McManamon, who plays Lizzie [sic] Stride, described as a vivacious landlady who was once known to frequent the numerous pubs around the East End. Miss McManamon has surprised herself by finding a number of similarities between Lizzie's character and her own upbringing. When she was growing up, her parents ran a well-known Irish music pub, The Favourite. 'My parents were landlords and so was Lizzie, so I could relate to her in that way,' she says. 'It certainly made the role easier to

understand. But I also had to do a lot of research into Lizzie's life to get the part just right.' The Favourite, which was recently pulled down, was one of the reasons Miss McManamon decided to become a performer. She would frequently enjoy evenings of dance and music there with her family and was surprised when she heard it had been demolished. 'I can't believe they knocked down my bedroom. We had so much fun in that pub,' she says. Her parents had also run one of the East End pubs where the notorious Kray Brothers could often be found during the 1950s - another East End connection which allowed her to get more in touch with her character. Miss McManamon can act, sing and dance. 'I always wanted to act,' she says. 'I did Irish dancing from a very young age and loved it, but going to Anna Scher - the Anna Scher Theatre School in Islington - encouraged me to become an actress.'

*Further information.*



**SMILE WHEN YOU CALL ME THAT.** A thief who was compared to Jack the Ripper by a judge has failed in a bid to clear his name. The Appeal Court heard how Mr Recorder Parry, sitting at Knutsford Crown Court in February, said: 'Jack the Ripper had a good character once,' as he reminded jurors that Craig Dewhurst had a previously unblemished record. Twenty eight-year-old Dewhurst, of Cherry Blossom Road, Runcorn, was subsequently convicted on charges of conspiracy to steal from his employer and theft and was sentenced to 45 months in jail. Appeal Court judges said the comments were 'inappropriate' but refused to quash the conviction and dismissed arguments to clear his name as 'unsafe'. Justice Gibbs heard how Dewhurst, who worked for mobile phone giant O2, had ordered telephones worth £169,000 on behalf

## DEAR DIARY

### Until 18 February 2006 **SAUCY JACK AND THE SPACE VIXENS**

Intergalactic, glitzy pop musical, a combination of disco, cabaret and murder! Mondays to Saturdays 8pm, Saturday matinee 3.30pm, Fridays 11.30pm.

*The Venue, Leicester Place WC2  
Telephone 0870 899 3335*

### 29 November - 22 December 2005 **JACK THE RIPPER - THE MUSICAL**

The Jermyn Street Theatre Christmas Show. A Musical Romp Through Victorian London!

*Jermyn Street Theatre  
16b Jermyn Street  
London SW1Y 6ST*

*Visit website.*

### 12-21 December 2005 **SPITALFIELDS WINTER FESTIVAL**

2005 is the 10th anniversary of the Spitalfields Winter Festival. Discover music, education events, walks and talks in this fascinating part of East London.

*Click to visit website.*

### 7 January 2006 **INTERIM MEETING** Whitechapel Society 1888

The Whitechapel Society promotes the study of the Whitechapel murders of 1888 and the social impact this event had on the East End of London. Six meetings a year with guest speakers, membership £6 a year.

*The Princess Alice  
Commercial Street*

*Click to visit website.*

*Know of an event? Please let us know!*

of real customers but had them sent to bogus addresses. His crimes only came to light after an audit.

**JACK THE RIPPER AS CULTURAL CONSUMPTION.** The Department of English of the University of London is offering a cross-disciplinary MA programme on Victorian Media and Culture co-ordinated by the Royal Holloway Centre for Victorian Studies. The programme harnesses the expertise and resources of several of the College's most highly regarded departments. The foundation course provides an advanced grounding in the theory and practice of cultural studies and an established framework within which the student can explore key aspects of Victorian culture and society. Seminar topics will include *London and Cultural Topographies*;



*Art and National Identity: Painting at the Palace of Westminster, 1841-1907; The London Art Market and the Triumph of Genre, 1845-65; William Powell Frith and the Anthropology of London; Social Exploration and the City in the Age of Empire; Gender, Sexuality and the City; Reimagining Late Nineteenth-Century London;* and - you guessed it - *Jack the Ripper: London Crime as Cultural Consumption.*

*The Department of English  
Royal Holloway  
University of London  
Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX  
Telephone: 01784 443214  
[Click for website](#)*

SAUCY JACK AND THE SPACE VIXENS. Come to the Cabaret: a seedy cabaret club on the planet Frottage III presided over by the alluring and charismatic Saucy Jack himself. All is not well, however, at Saucy Jack's: danger lurks in every corner as the cabaret acts are picked off one by one by a relentless serial killer. Soon the Space Vixens - interstellar, super-fashion crime fighters - come to save the day by the Power of Disco! They hit the ground singing the explosive house anthem *Glitter Boots Saved My Life*. As the show begins, Vulva Savannah, promising entertainer and torch-song singer, has just become the latest victim of the Slingback Killer - the heel of a murderous shoe plunged into her youthful chest! Against this backdrop of gloom and fear, we meet the characters at the bar: down-trodden waitress Booby Shevalle, talented house saxophonist Sammy Sax, cheesy barman Mitch Maypole, weirdo bar-fly Dr von Whackoff and pan-galactic plastic smuggler Chesty Prospects. Dreams are shared, secrets revealed and the evil shadow of the Slingback Killer draws ever near. Love interests develop, closets get opened, girl gets girl and the audience gets



to join in as the show builds to an extraordinary musical climax. The characters slip out unnoticed in the frenzied chaos, leaving the audience belting out the refrains to *All I Need is Disco* as they carry on dancing the night away until bar licence laws ultimately draw the fun to a close.

*Want to know more? [Click here.](#)*

THIS WAY FOR THE GIANT BAT. Visitors planning to attend the US Jack the Ripper Conference in Baltimore in April 2006 will be disappointed to learn that the city's American Dime Museum is set to close by the end of December 2005. The Museum, which opened in Maryland Avenue in 1999, is designed along the lines of dime museums of the nineteenth century as well as freak show exhibits of the era. It is famous for exhibiting Abraham Lincoln's last turd, a giant bat, a Peruvian Amazon giantess, a two-headed calf and other bizarre



*A winged squirrel*

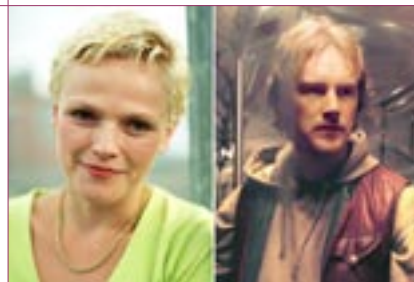
items. This year, the Museum featured a display of mortuary artifacts, including embalming shunts and Victorian-era 'animal-claw jewelry,' which helped visitors understand the evolution of death and grieving in America. In a *Baltimore Sun* interview earlier this year, curator Dick Horne said, 'I'm interested in anything obscure and in bad taste.' Describing the popularity of freak show exhibits in the Victorian era, Horne stated, 'They were collections of things related to science and the oddities. People were just then beginning to be aware of the world around them. So the museums opened up a whole

new world to people.' Although the Museum has proved popular with the public, admission fees have been insufficient to keep it open as operating costs mount. The decision to close seems irreversible unless some funding source is found in the next few weeks. 'If somebody steps up between now and then with some sort of giving plan, then we could maintain it,' Horne said. 'But it just doesn't look like it.' Until 31 December, the Museum will be open from noon to 3pm Wednesdays through Fridays and noon to 5pm Saturdays and Sundays. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children aged 7-12 years, and free for 'well-behaved' children under age 6 years.

*American Dime Museum  
1801 Maryland Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201.  
Telephone (410) 230-0263*

*Email  
[Click for website](#)*

SEE NO EVIL: THE STORY OF THE MOORS MURDERS. Granada Television and ITV have enlisted the co-operation of the families of Myra Hindley and Ian Brady's victims in turning the Moors Murders into a two-part drama. Hindley is played by Maxine Peake, who is best known for another bleached-blond role, the fiery Veronica in Channel Four's comedy *Shameless*. Newcomer Sean Harris has taken the part of Brady. The film started shooting in Saddleworth Moor, northeast of Manchester, near the Penine Way, in late October, and will be screened next year to mark the 40th anniversary of Hindley and Brady's trial at Chester Assizes. On 6 May 1966, they were both sentenced to life imprisonment for the murders of Lesley Ann Downey, 10, and Edward Evans, 17. Brady was also convicted



*Maxine Peake and Sean Harris*

of killing John Kilbride, 12. They had narrowly escaped the death penalty, which had been abolished in Britain the previous year. In 1986, they confessed to the murders of Pauline Reade, 16, and Keith Bennett, 12. The police

took them separately to Saddleworth Moor to look for the graves of their victims. They eventually uncovered the body of Pauline Reade, but Keith Bennett's body was never found and the search was eventually called off. Hindley died in prison of a heart attack on 15 November 2002, at the age of 60. Brady was declared insane in 1985 and has since been held at the high-security Ashworth Psychiatric Hospital, in Merseyside. For the past six years he has been on hunger strike and is force-fed through a tube. He has failed in several legal bids to be allowed to starve himself to death. When he heard of plans to dramatise his crimes, Brady wrote to Granada threatening legal action. He said that publicity about his crimes was now 'rivaling *Coronation Street* in longevity' and added: 'The true facts have never been divulged, only speculation in numerous books.' He also questioned the show's impact on the families of his victims. The film-makers have spent two years in intensive research with detectives who worked on the case, relatives of the murdered children and David Smith, who was married to Hindley's sister Maureen and was a key witness at the trial. Granada, which has made dramas about Bloody Sunday, the murder of black teenager Stephen Lawrence and the Hillsborough disaster, said that *See No Evil: The Story of the Moors Murders* would be 'sober' and 'unsensational' and that the subject matter would be handled sensitively with no re-enactments of the abductions or murders. 'We felt that now was the right time to make this programme', said Executive Producer Jeff Pope. 'In the anniversary year of the trial when Myra's heavily pregnant sister Maureen took the stand against her, we're going to take an in-depth look at how two of Britain's most notorious child killers were caught.' All the material set to be included is thought to be in the public domain. The drama has been written by Neil McKay, who has worked with Pope on previous factual dramas, including *This Is Personal: The Hunt for the Yorkshire Ripper*. McKay said: 'It tells the extraordinary story of how Ian Brady and Myra Hindley were brought to justice, but the focus is not only on



Brady and Hindley

their crimes, but also on the effects of those crimes on the families of their victims and on Hindley's sister, Maureen. The response from the families of the victims to the project has been enormously encouraging and we hope the finished film will do them justice.'

The producers have traced relatives of all the victims except Edward Evans, none of whose relatives is thought to be still alive. Jackie Reade, the niece of Pauline Reade, said: 'I am pleased we have been consulted throughout and I think it's been handled very sensitively. No matter what, we'll never forget what happened.' Danny Kilbride, the brother of John Kilbride, said: 'I've gone through the script with the producer and it seems accurate. I'm pleased it's being produced locally and I'd rather it was made in my lifetime so I can help as much as I can to try and make it true to life. These events shouldn't be forgotten and every time a child goes missing it all comes rushing back. The more children are warned not to speak to any strange men or women, the better.' Winnie Johnson, the mother of Keith Bennett, said: 'Keith was my eldest son and I won't rest until he is found. All I want in life now is to keep the story in the public eye and keep the case open until Keith is returned to me.' Alan West, Lesley Ann Downey's stepfather, said: 'People have got to know what happened. The younger generation might not know anything about it, but should do. It's part of our history and it's important to me to keep the memory of Lesley Ann

alive.' West's wife Ann, Lesley Ann's mother, died of cancer six years ago. Detectives trying to piece together enough evidence to convict her killers asked Ann to identify her daughter's voice on a tape recording made as she screamed and begged for her life. Those screams stayed with Ann for the rest of her life.

The killings began on 12 July 1963 when Hindley lured Pauline Reade into her car as she walked to a dance at a railwaymen's club in Manchester. Brady followed them in his motorcycle. The couple murdered Pauline in a remote spot on Saddleworth Moor. Over the next two years they killed several more children round Manchester. On 23 November 1963, they picked up John Kilbride at Ashton-Under-Lyne market. On 16 June 1964, they took Keith Bennett as he made his way to his grandmother's house in Gorton. On Boxing Day 1964, they murdered Lesley Ann Downey. On 6 October 1965, Hindley's brother-in-law David Smith was tricked into going late one night to her home at 16 Wardle Brook Avenue, Hattersley, where Brady axed Edward Evans to death in front of Smith in a bid to implicate him. But Smith rang the police from a call box on the edge of Hattersley. The police found Evans's body at Hindley's home and immediately arrested Brady and charged him with murder. A neighbour recalled several trips she had made with the couple to Saddleworth Moor. The police uncovered the body of Leslie Ann Downey in the Moor. A few days later, during another search of Brady's flat, they found two left luggage tickets for Manchester Central Station which led them to a pair of suitcases. Inside were nude photographs of Leslie Ann, tape recordings of her final moments and a notebook containing John Kilbride's name. Using a series of snapshots as a reference, police paid another visit to Saddleworth Moor, where they unearthed John's body. They now had evidence against both killers. Although they also suspected Brady and Hindley of killing Pauline Reade and Keith Bennett, they had no bodies and no other evidence. The truth would not be known for another 20 years.

## Advertise in Ripperologist

Adverts cost £50 for a full page and £25 for a half page. All adverts are full colour and can include links to your website or email, or movie and sound files. [contact@ripperologist.info](mailto:contact@ripperologist.info)



CHRISTOPHER  
T GEORGE

## Wearside Jack Caught?

**WEARSIDE JACK CAUGHT?** On 20 October, 49-year-old John Humble, an unemployed labourer and former security guard on the Ford Estate in Sunderland on Wearside, appeared at Leeds Magistrate Court charged with having perverted the course of justice during the enquiries into the 'Yorkshire Ripper' murder spree of a quarter century ago. With Humble's arrest and arraignment, Yorkshire Police believe they have cracked the case of who sent the tape recording and communications that led the enquiry into the Yorkshire Ripper murders off track in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Ultimately, Peter Sutcliffe was convicted for the murders of 13 women. He is now aged 59 and serving a life sentence in Broadmoor psychiatric hospital.

The hoaxer sent letters postmarked from Sunderland beginning March 1978 in which he claimed 'I am The Ripper.' Then, most dramatically, a tape recording with a voice with a distinct North-eastern accent led the chief of the enquiry, Assistant Chief Constable George Oldfield, and his team to believe the killer of prostitutes sought in the major manhunt was not a West Yorkshire man but a man from the Tyne and Wear areas of England. The two-minute long tape recording contained

257 words and much like the original 'Jack the Ripper' communications in 1888, the speaker taunted the



John Humble: Wearside Jack?

police. 'I'm Jack,' he said. 'I see you are still having no luck catching me... I think it's eleven [sic] up to now isn't it? Well, I'll keep on going for quite a while yet. I can't see meself being nicked just yet. Even if you do get near I'll probably top myself first. Well, it's been nice chatting to you George. Yours, Jack the Ripper.' The message concluded with a 22-second clip from the song by Andrew Gold, *Thank You For Being a Friend*. On 26 June 1979, the tape was broadcast nationwide by West Yorkshire Police. Obviously, Oldfield was convinced that the speaker was the 'Yorkshire Ripper.' Analysis of the tape recording appeared to show that the speaker was a man from the Castletown area of Sunderland.

The envelopes of the 'Wearside Jack' letters had been reported as missing as long as six years ago when a

from the inquiries. The murders meanwhile continued. It was only by luck that Police finally arrested lorry driver Peter Sutcliffe in January 1981 following a routine traffic inquiry. Sutcliffe, born in Bingley, West Yorkshire in 1949, had previously been interviewed and passed by in the massive enquiry. He had a broad Bradford or West Yorkshire dialect. At his Old Bailey trial, Sutcliffe claimed that the hoax letters and tape acted as a 'diversion' and allowed him to carry on with his 'mission' to kill women. He has also claimed the hoaxer was a friend. Sutcliffe is not easily believed, however, as he has told many lies. The Yorkshire Ripper story was further complicated when Joseph Sickert claimed that he had met Sutcliffe and that the murders were part of a Masonic conspiracy, thus emulating one of the theories

George Oldfield plays the  
'I'm Jack' tape at a press conference

about the original Ripper case of 1888. In 1978, Sickert recanted this claim to *The Times*. He said the story of the Masonic conspiracy was '...a hoax. I made it all up.'

Police are not dismissing the possibility that Humble is more than just the author of the hoax letters and tape and are exploring the possibility that he killed Joan Harrison of Preston, Lancashire, whose murder was mentioned in one of the Sunderland letters. In that letter, the writer stated: 'Up to number 8 now you say 7 but remember Preston '75.' Detective Inspector Joe Kellett of the Lancashire Police said: 'We will liaise with our colleagues in West Yorkshire and we will be reviewing our case papers on the Joan Harrison murder. Then we will make a decision on whether to go and interview Mr Humble.'

John Humble would have been age 22 in March 1978 when the first communications from Sunderland were received by the police. He is believed to have been one of the thousands of men interviewed and eliminated during the Sunderland enquiries. At his 26 October appearance in Leeds Crown Court, via video link-up from Armley Jail,



*The real Ripper, Peter Sutcliffe*

Leeds, Humble's application for bail was presented by his barrister, David Taylor. The application was rejected by the judge, the Recorder of Leeds, Norman Jones. Humble was remanded in custody. He is scheduled to next appear in court on 9 January 2006 to make a plea, with a provisional trial date of 20 February 2006.

[Click here to listen to the Wearside Jack tape](#)

[Comment](#)

[Back to Contents](#)

[Next article](#)



#### MAIL ORDER ONLY

24 Grampian Gardens,  
London NW2 1JG  
Tel 020 8455 3069  
mobile 07947 573 326  
[www.laybooks.com](http://www.laybooks.com)  
[lorettalay@hotmail.com](mailto:lorettalay@hotmail.com)

[CLICK TO VISIT SITE NOW](#)

## Loretta Lay Books

Over 200 Jack the Ripper and associated titles on the website

**Jack the Ripper Pub Sign** approx. 14" x 10" £15

**Trumans Bitter Pub pottery ashtray** of the period. 'The Brewery Brick Lane, E1/Trumans Hanbury & Brixton' written around edges - approx. 7" x 5.5" £15

**JtR navy blue mug** with red lettering which includes 'Jack the Ripper Whitechapel Tour 1888' and details of canonical 5 etc. approx. 5" high. New £10

**JtR Handmade Stoneware Pottery Mug** approx. 4" high - New boxed £15

Reproduction **1870 Metropolitan Police Whistle** - New boxed £5

**Videos @ £5 each** - **The Lodger** (Hitchcock 1926 b/w); **The Secret Identity of JtR** (Ustinov/Leeming); **Hands of the Ripper**; **JtR: The Final Solution**; **JtR Phantom of Death**; **The Diary of JtR: Beyond Reasonable Doubt**; **JtR** (Caine/Seymour/Collins)

Beadle (William) **Jack the Ripper: Anatomy of a Myth** hb/dw new signed £12

Connell (Nicholas) **Walter Dew** hb/dw new signed label £20

Hinton (Bob) **From Hell....** Reprinted May 2005 p/b new signed label £8.50

Hodgson (Peter) **Jack the Ripper Through the Mists of Time** p/b new signed £50

Leighton (D.J.) **Montague Druitt** hb/dw new signed £15

McLaughlin (R.J.) **The First JtR Victim Photographs** softcover new signed £15

Macpherson (Euan) **The Trial of Jack the Ripper** softcover new signed label £10

Miles (Chris) **On the Trail of a Dead man: The Identity of JtR** softcover new signed £17

Rumbelow (Donald) **The Complete JtR** Fully Revised & Updated p/b new signed label £9

Scott (Christopher) **Will the Real Mary Kelly...?** p/back new signed £10

Storey (Neil R.) **A Grim Almanac of JtR's London 1870-1900** h/b new £17

Turnbull (Peter) **The Killer Who Never Was** h/b scarce £190

Williams/Price **Uncle Jack** hb/dw new signed label £17

Wolff (Camille) **Who Was Jack the Ripper?** hb/dw new with 15 signatures £130

Wolff (Camille) **Who Was Jack the Ripper?** hb/dw Nr. F. 1st Edn. signed by 52 contributors £300





# Obituary: Link Wray

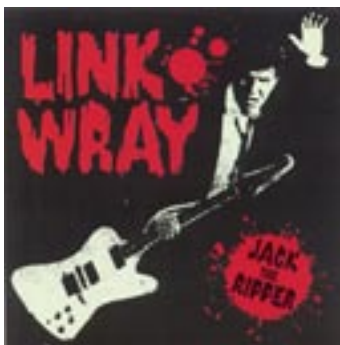
1929-2005

Innovative rock and roll pioneer and guitarist Link Wray, who wrote his name into Ripper history with the 1963 song *Jack the Ripper*, died at his home in Copenhagen, Denmark, at age 76 from a heart ailment. Wray, known for the gutsy, menacing sound established on his breakout 1958 hit, *Rumble*, was born in Dunn, North Carolina, the son of sidewalk preachers.

By his twenties, Wray's family had settled in the Washington, DC, area, and he teamed with his brothers Vernon on vocals and Doug on drums to make appearances in local clubs under the name of Link Wray and the Raymen. Trying to make his way in the music business of the late 1950s and early 1960s, Link realized that he lacked the talent and finesse of such idols as guitarist Chet Atkins. He chose instead to pioneer a raunchier sound featuring loud and clanging guitar chords and sound distortions that were distinctly different to the insipid and ice creamy sounds of the popular music day that featured performers such as Paul Anka, Bobby Vee, and Frankie Avalon, of the airbrushed beach movies made with co-star Annette Funicello.

Wray's million-selling 1958 song *Rumble* featured purposeful guitar distortion known as 'power chords.' He achieved a rawer sound by punching holes in his amplifier, producing a dark, grumbling sound.

The song *Rumble* originated during a television appearance in Fredericksburg, Virginia, on



the popular Milt Grant bandstand show. Grant had asked Wray to play a popular song of the day, *The Stroll*, by the Diamonds.

Brother Doug started to pound out the underlying beat on the drums. 'So I said "Okay," and started going GRRRRRMMM, GRRRRRMMM, GRRRRRMMM with my guitar, and [Doug] started playing the drums, and all the... kids started hollerin' and screamin' at me and they forgot all about the Diamonds.'

When *Rumble* was recorded the record was banned on some radio stations who interpreted the song to be a celebration of gang warfare. The publicity helped to make the song a million-seller hit. Meanwhile, Wray perfected his persona of black leather jacket, greasy pompadour, and an unending capacity to pepper interviews with a capacity for profanities. *Rumble* was followed by the hits *Raw-Hide* (1959) and *Jack the Ripper* four years later. Wray boasted that his music 'has always represented something screaming, something dangerous, something not normal.' With a statement like this, Ripperologists might thus see why the topic of Jack the Ripper might have appealed to the musician.

Link Wray's look, the sound, and

the anti-social demeanor proved a huge influence on later rockers. The Who's guitarist-composer Pete Townshend once wrote in liner notes that 'if it hadn't been for Link Wray and *Rumble*, I would never have picked up a guitar.' Wray's influence has continued down through the decades to punk and grunge bands.

As he aged into the 1970s, Wray settled down with his brothers at a chicken farm at Accokeek south of Washington, DC, recording from a coop and studio they christened 'Wray's Shack Three Track.' Married a total of four times, his first three marriages ended in divorce. He had little contact with his eight children by those marriages after going to live in Denmark with former fan and girlfriend Olive Julie Polvsen Ray and their son in the early 1980s.

Although Link Wray drifted in and out of the music business, he continued to tour occasionally until near the end, appearing at the Shim Sham Club in New Orleans in 2002, and was pleased to see his early songs featured in movies such as Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*. During a tour of the United States in 1997, Wray made the statement, 'I've still got black hair, I'm skinny and playing rock 'n' roll. I'm 68 years old, but my music is 20 years old. I'm just playing rock 'n' roll the rest of my life.'

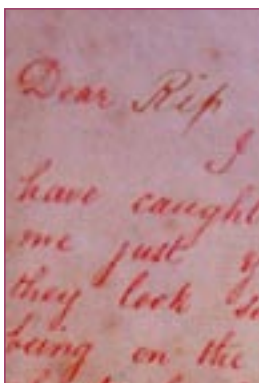
*To hear Link Wray's  
Jack the Ripper click here.*

*To read more about  
the Ripper in song, click here.*

*Comment*

*Back to Contents*

*Next article*



# Dear Rip

## Your Letters and Comments

[CLICK TO EMAIL US](#)

### Algernon Haskett-Smith and M J Druitt

[Email to Ripperologist](#)

Dear Rip,

While looking up information on the Haskett-Smith family, I found a connection with Montague John Druitt. Algernon Haskett-Smith was a barrister in the same building as Druitt. He died of a gunshot wound at age 31 in 1887. My grandmother, his niece, believed he had committed suicide. Other reports referred to an accidental gun cleaning, but she thought otherwise. Her father, E L W Haskett-Smith, told her about the suicide in later years.

Druitt is also listed alongside one W P Haskett-Smith in the Inn's Court records for 4 November 1884. I presume W P already knew Druitt, as they both were at Oxford at the same time. W P was the father of rock climbing in Britain. He was an avid Mason who wrote a book on the Druses. If Druitt was also into rock climbing he would have had strong arms and hands - perhaps good for strangling.

In about 1900, Haskett-Smith wrote of a colleague that he 'had prodigious muscle power. I have seen him go up one edge of a house gable, over the ridge and down the other side, swinging by his fingers all the way from the edges of the slates.' If Druitt was the Ripper this could explain how he was able to escape: climbing up buildings and off into the night. I have no evidence that Druitt belonged to Rock-Climbing clubs at that time,

but there is proof that Druitt knew the Haskett-Smiths, who came from Goudhurst, Trowswell.

Maybe this information will help, maybe it will not. The fun is always in the chase, anyway.

*John Crawford*  
15 October 2005

### The Butterfly Collector

[Email to Ripperologist](#)

Dear Rip,

Thank you for drawing my attention to the questions posed by Howard Brown and Neil Bell in connection with my article The Butterfly Collector, published in issue No. 60 of *Ripperologist* (July).

- 1 The word JEWES refers to the nickname given by the City Police by their Metropolitan counterparts due to their headquarters at 26 Old Jewry. This theory was put forward by Paul Harrison in his book *Jack the Ripper: The Mystery Solved*.
- 2 I contacted the British Museum initially because of PC Bowden Endacott's duties there and the map of the priory that once stood at Mitre Square being on display at the museum in 1888. I also sent the Museum a basic sketch of Catherine Eddowes's facial mutilations and a description of the mutilations in general with a ritualistic element in mind. They kindly forwarded this to the Funerary Specialists within the Department of Ancient Egypt and

Sudan to see if any exhibits could have influenced Jack the Ripper.

I am now convinced that James Hardiman was Jack the Ripper and that syphilis and, more notably, congenital syphilis were the motive that drove him to murder and mutilate his victims in the way that he did.

- 3 I have suggested that the marks on Catherine Eddowes's face could refer to the complications caused by untreated syphilis and that the mutilations in general refer to congenital syphilis - hence the attacks on the womb. Jack the Ripper used his knife to carve his bloody message. I believe that he wanted to draw attention to Catherine's eyes with the nicks to her eyelids and the arrow shaped cuts beneath.

*Rob Hills*  
19 October 2005

### Liz Stride: The Documentary

[Email to Ripperologist](#)

Dear Rip,

In view of the many emails received from *Ripperologist* readers inquiring about our documentary on the early life of Elisabeth Stride, *Jack the Ripper's Swedish Victim*, I would like to bring you all up to date on recent progress. As you are aware, the documentary will focus on Elisabeth's life in Sweden (1843-1866). It will be approximately 45 minutes long and will be released in two versions, one with a Swedish and one with an English narration. The Swedish narration will be done by Thomas Karlsson, who is best known as a musician and songwriter with the Swedish metal band Therion. Thomas has narrated several television documentaries and will be a wonderful addition to our team. As for the English narrator... you will have to wait and see. Nothing is confirmed yet, but we are confident that it will be someone who is known to all in Ripperological circles.

When we began our shoot in November 2004 my good friend

## Got something to say?

What do you think of the new electronic Rip?

Got comments on a feature in this issue? Or found new information?

Please send your comments to [contact@ripperologist.info](mailto:contact@ripperologist.info)



Christian Granqvist was behind the camera. In April 2005, Christian was forced to withdraw from the project because of other work commitments. For several months we searched for someone who could handle a camera as well as do post-production work. Only last week, 26-year-old, multi-talented Ulrik Hedin stepped into the breach. Ulrik hails from Trollhattan on the West Coast of Sweden. His CV shows that he has been a cameraman for several music videos starring such bands as Lord Belial. Our first day of shooting with Ulrik in freezing-cold Gothenburg was 24 October. It all went very well indeed and we are quite excited about the next shoot, which will take place during November.

We are still aiming for a June or July 2006 release date for our DVD. We are working on the cover layout and an accompanying booklet and we soon intend to open our website. Keep watching this space for further news.

*Daniel Olsson, Gothenburg  
25 October 2005*

## Uncle Jack

*Email to Ripperologist*

Dear Rip,

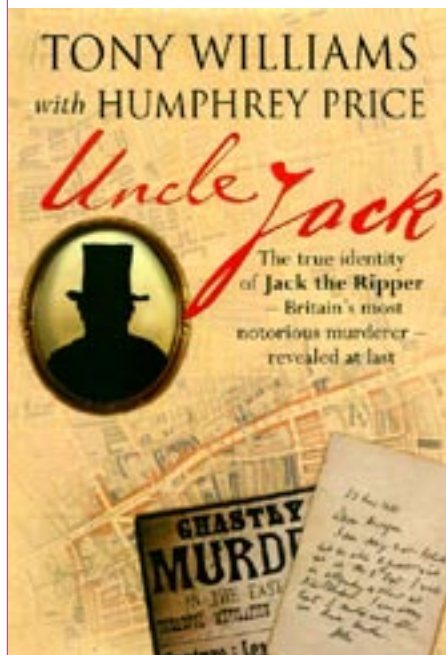
Thank you for sending through the press release from *Ripper Notes*.

It won't come as any surprise to you to learn that we are both shocked and dismayed by this discrepancy. How it came about is as baffling to us as it must be to your readers.

I [Tony Williams] first visited the National Library of Wales in January 2001 and ordered a photocopy of the page in the medical notebook that carries Mary Ann Nichols' name, and it is this copy that has been reproduced in *Uncle Jack*. Humphrey [Price] came to the library with me in August 2002 to see the archive there for the first time, and neither of us noticed anything about the page in the notebook that appeared in any way different to the photocopy I held.

Since then we have only on occasion looked again at the page but without noticing the changes apparent in the document obtained by Jennifer Pegg. Naturally we are as keen as your readers will be to learn how this came about and we will be looking further into it.

Contrary to what you say in your email, however, the appearance of Mary Ann Nichols' name in the notebook



is not in dispute and therefore we do not feel our case for John Williams as Jack the Ripper is in any way undermined. We have never made a claim for the handwriting to be an issue that indicts John Williams.

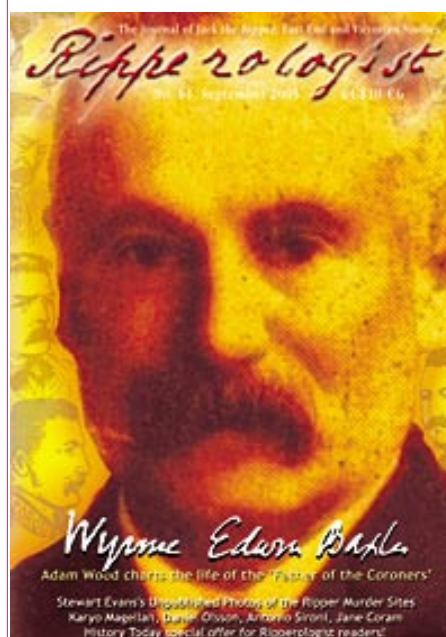
*Tony Williams and Humphrey Price  
2 November 2005*

## Ripperologist 61 (September 2005)

*Email to Ripperologist*

Dear Rip,

The latest *Rip* was truly impressive, as no doubt you know. The production of this particular issue was very high indeed and simply demonstrates the qualified expertise of *Ripperologist's* editorial team in the publishing of



a print magazine which requires no proving.

Adam Wood's article was especially remarkable in the fact of its depth and assimilation of reams of research presented in a highly entertaining and absorbing way. How ever did Adam find the time to work on his article, create the *Rip's* stunning visual layout and attend and contribute to the organisation of the Brighton Conference? Truly Adam must be a devoted Ripperophile and an inspiration in what may be achieved. So thanks to Adam and the editorial team for more happy *Rip* reading material for the memory archives.

*Spiro Dimolianis  
16 November 2005*

## The Goulston Street Graffito

*Email to Ripperologist*

Dear Rip,

I am a crossword and anagram addict and also a genealogist. For many years I have been researching the family backgrounds of the Ripper victims. A few weeks ago I spent time looking through old notes and found that some years ago I had investigated the possibility that the message on the wall might be an epigram and I had come up with the following: 'Mr Abberline, judge the one man with the tens that follow.' This was based on THE JUWES ARE THE MEN THAT WILL NOT BE BLAMED FOR NOTHING. This would explain the need to spell 'Juwes' in such a peculiar way. You would need the 'u' for the word 'Judge'. It also gives an indication that the Ripper may well have killed ten and that there were ten to follow. It tells us that although solving epigrams was a pastime of the well to do and educated, it would not have been the kind of thing the lower classes of the East End would have been doing at that time. Too busy trying to find food to eat!

*Pauline Reeves  
30 November 2005*

We'd love to hear from you! Please write to us at PO Box 735, Maidstone, Kent ME17 1JF or email us at [contact@ripperologist.info](mailto:contact@ripperologist.info). We look forward to your views. *Ripperologist*.

*Comment*

*Next article*

*Back to contents*

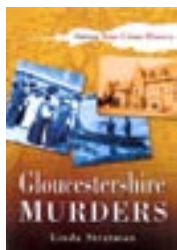


WILF GREGG

# On the Crimebeat

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE MURDERS

Linda Stratmann  
S/B, 154 pp., Illus.,  
Sutton Publishing, £12.99



The latest in Sutton's True Crime History Series. A book on the publisher's home county is a comparative rarity.

Ten cases including the unique Campden

Wonder of 1660, in which a mother and her two sons were hanged for the murder of William Harrison, on the confession of one of the sons, only for Harrison to turn up alive with a most improbable story two years later. Also included are Beatrice Pace, acquitted of poisoning her brutal and violent husband, and the case of the torso found in the Severn. The final case covers the acquittal of Ann Cornock on a charge of murdering her husband in 1946. This case - with its allegations of Cecil Cornock's dressing in women's clothes and making his wife beat him, together with suggestions that she was having a relationship with a younger crippled man - was the tabloids' delight at the time.

Strongly recommended.

[Buy now](#)

## GANGLAND - THE CONTRACT KILLERS

James Morton  
S/B, 344 pp., Illus.,  
Time Warner Books, £12.99

Another in the *Gangland* series and, as usual, packed with information and very readable. All varieties of contract killers are covered from Mafia-inspired murders to spouses hiring hit men to get rid of their one-time beloveds.

It ranges all round the world.



Curiosities such as the United Kingdom's first female contract killer, Maori Ramgimara Ngarimu, and Ma Duncan, who hired two thugs to kill her pregnant daughter-in-law

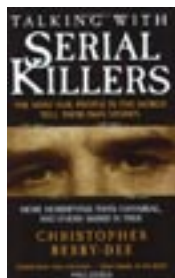
because she considered the poor girl was not worthy of her son, are just two who figure in the book.

The seventh in the *Gangland* series and certainly one of the best.

[Buy now](#)

## TALKING WITH SERIAL KILLERS 2

Christopher Berry-Dee  
H/B, 289 pp., Illus.,  
John Blake Publishing, £17.99



A follow up to the author's earlier title, this one covers John Gacy, Kenneth Bianchi, William Heirens and John Cannan, plus an American husband-killer, Patricia Wright.

Having extensively interviewed Gacy and Bianchi, the author is able to bring out many angles on their murderous careers and confirms them as willing to go to any lengths to achieve their gross desires. When writing about Heirens, who at the age of 17 was given three life sentences without parole for the murders of two women and the kidnapping, killing and dismembering of a six-year-old girl, the author comes to a different conclusion and supports the claim that Heirens confessed to the murders after being threatened with the electric chair. Having done a fair amount of reading about this

case, I have to say that I agree with Mr Berry-Dee on this. Nevertheless, almost 60 years later, Heirens remains incarcerated.

Mr Berry-Dee's analysis of John Cannan, who has been convicted of murdering a young married woman and of multiple rapes, and who is, of course, the principal suspect in the Suzy Lamplugh case, is graphic and chilling. It makes one completely understand why the judge at his trial recommended that Cannan should never be released.

The Patricia Wright case may be off the book's theme but is still interesting. However, someone deserves a rap on the knuckles for not noticing that John Cannan's name continues to appear on the right hand pages devoted to the Wright case.

[Buy now](#)

## A GRIM ALMANAC OF ESSEX

Neil R. Storey  
S/B, 180 pp., Illus.,  
Sutton Publishing, £12.99



Readers of this column will know I am a great fan of this series. High profile cases, including Browne and Kennedy and the Moat Farm murderer Dougal, are here, as well as the neglected Lothario, James Canham Read, and Eric Brown, who disposed of his crippled yet bullying father by putting a grenade mine under a cushion on his wheel chair.

Witches abound, as well as the infamous Witchfinder-General, Matthew Hopkins. A sad case is reported on 27 March 1829, when 16-year-old James Cook was sentenced to death for arson. At his execution many women were recorded as 'openly weeping'

As with the other offerings in the series, a great collection of the bizarre. Strongly recommended.

[Buy now](#)

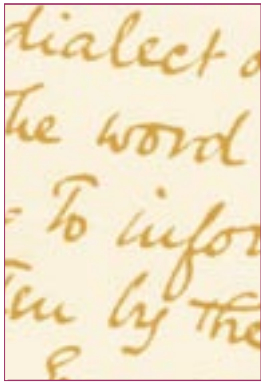
[Comment](#)

[Next article](#)

[Back to contents](#)

Got an email address? Got the Rip!





# Reviews

## Jack the Ripper in the Provinces: The English Provincial Press Reporting of the Whitechapel Murders

Stawell Heard

London: Stawell Heard  
15 Glenluce Road, Blackheath  
London SE3 7SD, 2005

[stawellh@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:stawellh@yahoo.co.uk)

softcover, illus., 37pp, £10 (inc p&p)

This pamphlet results from Heard's master's dissertation, 'Images of the Ripper', undertaken when at the University of Wales and is an attempt to be a companion to L Perry Curtis's superb *Jack the Ripper and the London Press*.

The provincial press is a very useful source of additional information about the Whitechapel murders, partly, as Stawell Heard points out in this pamphlet, because they emphasised local connections, Eddowes being the most notable, both the Birmingham and Wolverhampton newspapers following up her local connections, and the Maidstone newspapers working up her visit to Kent for the hop-picking and her purchase of a jacket and boots in Maidstone itself (where the shop still exists). The other reason, not mentioned by Heard as far as one can recall, is that they very often carried the full press agency reports verbatim, one after the other, so one can read what the Press Association had to say and then the story as told by Central News. This can be a very useful way of identifying the source of dubious stories and common errors.

Stawell Heard's small pamphlet unfortunately contains very few examples of the nuggets of new information to be found in the provincial press and in fact falls foul of one of the common problem of finding what appears to be new information but isn't. Heard found a report in the *Cambridge Chronicle* of 5 October 1888 about Thomas Cronin finding a large bloodstained knife in Whitechapel Road. It's 'a tantalising clue', says Heard, who speculates whether it was

ever followed up, but the story is in fact well known story and mentioned in several books, including the *A to Z*, the man's name being Thomas Coram and his testimony, given at Stride's inquest, was widely reported in the London press.

The bulk of the pamphlet is taken up with the historical context, Heard covering in considerably less detail than one feels he is able, the role of the provincial press, the history of crime reporting and the so-called 'New Journalism' that was emerging at the time of the Whitechapel crimes. He also looks at how the newspapers reported the crimes. All is interesting, albeit to some extent covered elsewhere, but is where the value of the pamphlet lies.

On a final note, the price tag of £10 seems high these days.

## The First Jack the Ripper Photographs

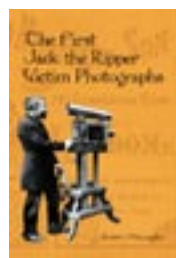
Robert J McLaughlin

London: Zwerhaus Books, 2005

softcover, 157pp, illus;

sources and notes

ISBN: 0973379405



Frankly, when one first heard of this book it sounded contrived and likely to be so devoid of new or interesting material that one expected a great deal of padding.

What we got instead is probably one of the best-written and most interesting Ripper books of the year.

We've always known that Alexandre Lacassagne published a photograph of Catharine Eddowes and Mary Kelly in an 1899 book *Vacher l'Eventreur et les Crimes Sadiques*, reprinting therein an article by Arthur MacDonald published in 1893, but neither books nor their authors have been studied in any kind of detail. McLaughlin does so and does it fairly exhaustively, even pointing out the numerous errors in MacDonald's

piece. McLaughlin also swings past an article by Dr Andre Lamoureux in a book published in 1894, which also published a photo of Kelly, the first to do so.

McLaughlin's story of the photographs is essentially broken down into three parts. The first, as said, looks at the origin of the photographs in print, particularly the influence of Arthur MacDonald on French researchers; the second looks at police photography and provides a brief biography of police photographers Louis Gumprecht and Joseph Martin; and the third is an attempt to identify who might have provided Lacassagne with the photographs he reproduced - and in so doing produces an overview of everyone who is known to have possessed copies. Now, I have a very vague memory of many years ago perusing a letters book at Scotland Yard and there being a note therein concerning a request from someone to reproduce one or more of the photographs. The request was refused, but there was a brief comment about previous requests and if memory serves, which it probably doesn't, the source was probably Scotland Yard itself (otherwise the Commissioner), responding to a formal request.

If all this sounds particularly dry, the fact is that McLaughlin's writing style and general enthusiasm for his subject makes the book riveting reading. You have to have a fair amount of knowledge of the case to understand a lot of it, but that's par for the course with specialist books such as this one and it was gratifying that McLaughlin didn't elect to sacrifice valuable space to a potted history of the case. His research was also impressive, all the more so as he was treading largely virgin territory, itself an enviable achievement in the well-trodden world of Ripper studies.

*Buy now*

## By Ear and Eyes: The Whitechapel Murders Jack the Ripper and the Murder of Mary Jane Kelly

Karyo Magellan

Longshot publishing, 2005

300 pages.



In an era fraught with disposable Ripper books read by few and quickly forgotten by most, *By Ear and Eyes* is a fresh breath of East End air (oxymoron intended). If there's any justice at all

in our little square-mile corner of historical study, Magellan's work will emerge as the most controversial, if not most important, Ripper book of 2005. While eschewing a suspect theory, Magellan, like his seafaring namesake (give or take an 'L'), sets forth for uncharted territory by applying his skills as a research scientist to delve deeper than any writer before him into areas of the case that are, quite probably, most important in fully understanding the case but are nevertheless frequently ignored by commentators because either they lack the requisite knowledge to offer anything new or, for the less scrupulous among us, pick and choose what they will discuss based on the standards (or, if you prefer, limitations) set by their preferred suspect. Magellan offers an exhaustive study of the circumstances surrounding each of the Whitechapel murders - placing particular emphasis on the wounds inflicted on the victims - with the intention of determining which of the women were slew by the same hand. Some of his observations and revelations make so much sense that it is almost inevitable that they should, over time, change the way many view the case. For instance, he offers the most persuasive argument to date - for those who still need one - for the Ripper having had some measure of medical skill, and a re-evaluation of the 'Lusk kidney' that soundly casts serious doubt on the notion that it could have come from Catherine Eddowes. The book abounds with similar discoveries and fresh interpretations of the evidence, but I will leave it to the enjoyment of the reader to find these little nuggets for themselves. Instead, I'll take a moment to note that some of the book's more controversial conclusions will, not surprisingly, find a much harder time gaining support, such as Magellan's conclusion that Mary Kelly was most certainly not killed by Jack the Ripper, while Frances Coles and Alice McKenzie most likely were. While I am not at all sold on these ideas, personally, I appreciate how and why Magellan reached these conclusions. Nevertheless, the credibility so capably earned in the first three quarters of the book suffers a blow in the final section pertaining to the murder of Mary Kelly, where Magellan spends far too much time determining that Walter Sickert and company did, in fact, know a Mary Kelly - though not the Mary Kelly - who, Magellan suggests, may have got herself into trouble in 1886, leaving our Mary Kelly, two years later, to pay the price through a very unfortunate case of mistaken identity.

At least I believe this is what Magellan was getting at. It's rather hard to follow his line of reasoning in this section as it figures into its foundation the ramblings of sources either uncorroborated (ie newspaper reports, Barnett, and Overton-Fuller) or all but discredited (Joseph Gorman). Despite these perceived deficiencies, and prose as dense as London fog, Magellan's work has more to recommend it than any other book this year, and at least as much going for it as any work of original research published in recent memory. Put simply, *By Ear and Eyes* is required reading for anyone who considers himself a Ripperphile. Very strongly recommended.

*Buy now*

### Jack the Ripper: Comprehensive A-Z

Maxim Jakubowski  
and Nathan Braund  
Eddison, New Jersey:  
Castle Books, 2005  
(Original Publication:  
*The Mammoth Book of Jack the Ripper*. London: Robinson, 1999.)  
hardcover, 499pp, ISBN: 078581616X  
\$9.99



Not a lot to say about this one. Originally published in softcover six years ago, it provided a still valuable overview of the case, including a chronology of the murders, the basic facts, areas that are

in dispute, as well as sections on witness statements, autopsy reports, the letters, police opinion and disputed documents.

This was followed by a series of essays by authors and commentators on the case, perhaps the best known being Martin Fido and Colin Wilson. Others included William Beadle, Melvyn Fairclough, Paul Harrison, Shirley Harrison, Bruce Paley, Sue and Andy Parlour, M J Trow, James Tully, Peter Turnbull, Nick Warren, and A P Wolf.

The essays were the selling point of this book six years ago, but time has passed and some are less relevant today than they were even so short a time ago. Newcomers will particularly value the various sections, some of which, such as the chapter briefly stating the weather at the time of the crimes, are handy even for seasoned veterans. What's remarkable, though, is the price - a mere £6 for a hardback!

*Buy now*

### Ripper Notes: The International Journal for Ripper Studies

Editor: Dan Norder  
2N Lincoln Ridge Dr, Apt # 521,  
Madison WI, 53719 USA

[dan@norder.com](mailto:dan@norder.com)

No. 24, October 2005, 132 pp  
USA \$40, Canada and the UK \$45,  
Other Countries \$50, for four issues

We've always said that *Ripper Notes* is a good product. Unfortunately so has Dan Norder. He rarely misses an opportunity for slapping his own back and kicks off this issue with a typically self-congratulatory editorial saying 'hey, I'm tired out producing this super-long issue' and explaining that its very respectable 132 pages means it has 'a lot more content than any other regular Ripper periodical has.' So, well done, Dan.

This isn't a case of 'never mind the quality, feel the width' either. The quality is pretty good too, although more than half the magazine is provided by two contributors, Wolf Vanderlinden, unquestionably *Notes'* most valuable asset, and Robert Clack, who, like most of *Notes'* contributors, is a *habitué* of the *Casebook* message boards.

Vanderlinden starts with a report on the recent Ripper conference in Brighton, a slightly odd editorial choice for a lead article, especially as it's followed by the loudly touted demolition of the book *Uncle Jack* by Jenni Pegg. And a very thorough job it is too. To some extent it regurgitates criticisms levelled at the book in various reviews and on the internet, but it clearly demonstrates that many of the claims made by authors Williams and Price completely lack substance. Its chief points are that the J Williams in the Whitechapel Workhouse records, argued by the authors to be Sir John Williams, is in fact a T Williams, and that the reproduction in the book of a document preserved among Sir John Williams' papers at the National Library of Wales saying that Williams performed an abortion on a 'Mary Anne Nichols' in 1885 has been tampered with. The authors have a very serious question to answer, but it's important to remember that the original document still names Nichols, so the argument advanced by Williams and Price is unaffected, not that it was much of an argument to start with.

The prolific Wolf Vanderlinden follows his first offering with the second part of his long article about Frances Tumblety, and an excellent piece it is too, with lots of new information about Inspector Andrews' trip to



Canada and about his prisoner Roland Barnet and a chunk of stuff about the Parnell Commission that might be new to some. Vanderlinden's articles seem to knock Tumblety further down the totem pole of probable Rippers.

Then come 30 pages from Robert Clack about the murder in 1901 of Mary Ann Austin in Dorset Street. It's only peripherally Ripper-related, and consists mainly of verbatim extracts from the newspapers, but it's a very welcome, valuable and interesting piece.

Don Souden, Bernard Brown and Andrew J Spallek round off the magazine. Souden contributes a piece about canards which, though well written, leaves one with a sense of *déjà vu*, since most if not all of his canards have been discussed in sources which remain unnamed and uncredited. We always like to read Bernie Brown's chronicles of London policemen, even though his present choice, Inspector Death, has absolutely nothing to do with the Ripper. Spallek's article sets forth the known info about the grave sites of the victims, who are sometimes forgotten by students of the case.

### Ripperana. The True Crime Mystery Magazine

Editor: Nick Warren

16 Copperfield Way, Pinner, HA5 5RY

[nwarren@ripperana.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:nwarren@ripperana.fsnet.co.uk)

No.54, October 2005, 28pp,

UK £8, Overseas £15, €25 or USA \$25, for four issues

There's nothing Ripper. There's nothing for us to say. We hoped a kick in the pants might have encouraged Nick Warren to get his act together, but *Ripperana* just goes from bad to worse - and that's not just our *opinion*.

### Truly A Great Victorian. A Quiet Man Before Whom Rogues Trembled

Constance Bradford

Mrs C.M. Bradford, *The Barns, Tapnell, Yarmouth, Isle of Wight PO41 0YJ*, 2004

softcover, 102pp, illus  
£12

Colonel Sir Edward Ridley Colborne Bradford (1836-1911) was appointed Metropolitan Police Commissioner in 1890, unenviably inheriting the post after the unhappy tenures of Sir Charles Warren and James Monro, but he proved extremely popular and oversaw many innovations, including the introduction of fingerprinting. Bradford is one of the almost-forgotten figures in Ripper

studies, which is stupid given that he presided over the Yard during the latter years of the Whitechapel murders series and in particular the arrest and committal of Thomas Cutbush and the 'Kosminski' case. Surviving papers in Bradford's files might therefore prove illuminating.

As welcome as this biography is, it is a somewhat disappointing book and would have benefited greatly from some editing assistance. Bradford's involvement in the Thuggee and Dacoity wars, is passed over with barely a mention, his conduct in November 1889 of Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence, on a tour of India that lasted until 28 March 1890 is little more than an itinerary, and there's no mention of Jack the Ripper.

This said, Constance Bradford's book is a good introduction to a remarkable man who restored some peace to the Metropolitan Police.

*Buy now*

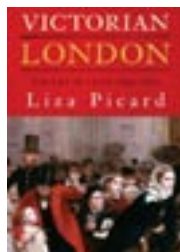
### Victorian London The Life of a City 1840-1870

Liza Picard

London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2005

[www.orionbooks.co.uk](http://www.orionbooks.co.uk)

hardcover, 368pp, illus; appendices; notes; index. ISBN: 0297847333  
£20



First off, this book doesn't cover the last twenty years of Victoria's reign, so it misses the Ripper murders and their *milieu*. Nevertheless the book is an excellent introduction to life

in Victorian London in the decades leading up to the 1880s.

Liza Picard, of course, is the distinguished anecdotal historian of London and London life, her previous books being *Restoration London*, *Dr Johnson's London*, and *Elizabeth's London*. She begins this book with a chapter about the smell of London and almost immediately provides the sort of facts and figures that have made her books such a success: the horses that powered London each excreted 45lb of faeces and 3.5lb of urine a day. That's nearly 37,000 tons a year!

Picard goes on to describe the interior and exterior of Victorian houses, the clothes people wore, what they did to entertain themselves - everything from museums to rat pits and dog fights - how they travelled - the birth of the

railways, health and medicine, and, naturally, poverty and destitution.

*Buy now*

### Prince Eddy: The King We Never Had

UK Channel 4

Monday 21 November, 21.00-22.00

Review by Karyo Magellan

Television documentaries produced with the intention of airing revelations that counter popular beliefs frequently sacrifice objectivity in order that the *exposé* might appear more robust. Although such a limited perspective allows the proponents to go where they wish without fear of being challenged, the resultant programme, especially when used as a vehicle to introduce a forthcoming book, is usually too one-sided to ever be seriously engaging. The Channel 4 offering on Prince Eddy was such a programme and with an imbalanced approach it turned out to be a rather shallow affair.

The central theme of the documentary was an assertion by the historian and biographer Andrew Cook that Prince Albert Victor Christian Edward (1864-1892), the Duke of Clarence and Avondale, was far from being the sexually ambivalent dullard that popular history had portrayed him to be. The secondary theme, and the reason why a review of the programme finds its way into these columns, was the accusation that Eddy was Jack the Ripper. The two aspects are not of course linked and Eddy's sexual orientation or wittedness in any event have no impact whatsoever on his candidacy as a serial killer, which has always been more a product of fiction than of fact. By mentioning Jack the Ripper the programme was perhaps assured of a few more viewers than it would otherwise have had, although this was only a relatively small part of the content.

Central to Cook's research, and the basis for his conclusion that Prince Eddy was in fact an educated, articulate and able man who would probably have made a good King, is recently discovered correspondence including personal letters from Eddy to his cousin Prince Louis of Battenberg. Cook must be congratulated for unearthing this correspondence, especially since there is a dearth of personal documentation relating to Eddy after the royal family destroyed his diaries and personal papers following his death. However, Cook seems to have reached a number of conclusions on the basis of not very much and in this respect his alternative assessment of Eddy's

character is no more persuasive than what already exists. Cook's characterisation of Eddy is a subjective interpretation of correspondence that was almost certainly limited in terms of the information it contained and biased in the manner in which it was written. And because Cook did not convincingly establish the nature of the relationship between Eddy and Louis in the programme there is no way of knowing how candid their exchanges would have been.

Apart from Andrew Cook, no fewer than eight historians and authors were employed to support his thesis, with additional contributions from Donald Rumbelow and Paul Begg towards the end of the programme specifically in relation to Eddy's candidature as Jack the Ripper. Suggestions that Eddy was the Ripper started with a muddle of memories from Dr Thomas Stowell published in 1970, as a consequence of which Eddy was accused of being Jack the Ripper, and progressed to a tangle of fantasy courtesy of Joseph Gorman Sickert and Stephen Knight in 1976 in which there was a royal or Masonic conspiracy to commit the murders to protect the heir to the throne. The story and versions of it have been comprehensively dismissed many times since and there can be few who seriously entertain a direct role for royalty in any of the murders. The most convincing evidence against Eddy's involvement comes from the published Court Circulars for 1888 which show that the Prince was not in London on the dates of the murder of any of the canonical victims. As Paul Begg pointed out no one has ever managed to place Eddy in the vicinity of any of the murders and until someone can produce evidence that he was not where he should have been then he has a cast iron alibi for each occasion.

Whether or not Eddy was homosexual or bisexual has relevance to suggestions that he was a visitor to male brothels and in particular the house of assignation at 19 Cleveland Street, the focus of a notorious scandal in 1889 relating to homosexual liaisons involving members of parliament and nobility. Accusations that Eddy was panerotic stemmed from his university years and from his subsequent alleged associations with the 'pleasure playground' of London's West End. During his time at Cambridge University Eddy was within a homosocial environment in which homosexual elements prevailed and gay and transvestite clubs were part of the social scene for his coterie. As one contributor to the programme suggested in relation to the period; 'that's what you do when you go to

Cambridge'. And if that's what Eddy did then he probably continued such activities after leaving university since he was also reportedly a member of, and frequent visitor to, the gay and transvestite Hundred Guineas Club in Portland Place. Cook did not clarify Eddy's sexuality and although he placed emphasis on the several women in the Prince's life, culminating in his engagement to Princess Victoria Mary of Teck, this is proof of nothing given the circumstances. It is also doubtful that Eddy would have written to anyone, including his cousin, about his sexuality either directly or by inference; dullard or not he would have been aware that correspondence always has the potential to pass into the wrong hands and even mentioned as much in a letter to Sybil Erskine. To absolve Eddy from any involvement in the Cleveland Street scandal it would be necessary to prove beyond doubt that he was heterosexual and thereby his dissipation could be excused. But even the vaguest of associations with homosexual practices, illegal and imprisonable at the time, would be cause for scandal that would surely have impacted upon his succession to the throne.

Firm evidence in support of Eddy's challenged intellect is lacking and much opinion has come to rely upon contemporary comments by those entrusted with his education. The Prince's tutor the Reverend John Neale Dalton thought Eddy to have 'an abnormally dormant condition of the mind,' and his Cambridge tutor James Kenneth Stephen considered that Eddy could not 'possibly benefit from attending lectures'. Dalton was reportedly useless in his tutorage of the Prince such that Eddy had, according to the Duke of Cambridge, an 'unaffected simplicity' and 'lamentable ignorance' of worldly matters. There are certainly significant doubts as to the standard of Eddy's education but this should not be confused with his intelligence which is rather more difficult to assess.

Cook emphasised Eddy's popularity with the people but I'm not sure that this was ever in any doubt and he generally seems to have been a likable prince. However, popularity is not a function of intelligence. The premise for Cook's belief that Eddy was far more intelligent than he was ever given credit for seems to have been based largely upon correspondence between the Prime Minister Lord Salisbury and Lord Wolsey the Commander-in-Chief in Dublin in which it was agreed that the Duke of Clarence should consider taking the position of Viceroy of Ireland. The programme narration suggested that this correspondence was the 'revelation

that finally quashed the myth of the Prince's intelligence; or rather the lack of it'. But the correspondence, interesting though it might have been, was hardly of myth-quashing calibre on the strength of what was revealed and did not justify such a conclusion. The position of Viceroy was largely symbolic so it is doubtful that Eddy's independent and liberal thinking, such as it was, would ever have significantly influenced national policy. In any case matters progressed no further because of Eddy's untimely death from pneumonia before any meetings could be arranged.

The programme unintentionally illustrated the difficulties inherent in the interpretation of personal correspondence and although there were suggestions that historians must always go back to original source documents and not rely upon hearsay, there will always be a problem with personal letters as opposed to factual records as a source material. By the very nature of personal correspondence much that is written may be done so with bias or under emotional influence, may be designed to misinform or manipulate, and what is omitted might be more important than what is stated. The programme would undoubtedly have benefited from an alternative perspective and had both sides of the argument for Eddy's character been examined then it might have been a more engaging business.

An unexpected highlight in the programme was a snippet of an interview with Joseph Gorman Sickert which featured in a detective dramatisation of the Ripper crimes produced by the BBC in 1973 and written by Elwyn Jones and John Lloyd. It was in this original programme that Gorman Sickert first revealed his dubious royal connections; a curiosity from the archives that would be fascinating to see again in full!

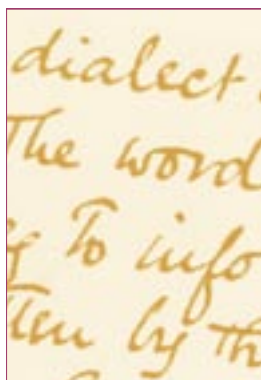
As a balanced assessment of the character and sexuality of Prince Albert Victor Christian Edward the Channel 4 documentary failed, but that was not the objective, and as an introduction to Cook's forthcoming book it worked well. It would be very unfair to criticise Cook's book on the basis of this television programme but while it will undoubtedly provide an intriguing read for anyone interested in the life of Prince Eddy, it may prove less informative for students of Jack the Ripper.

*Prince Eddy: The King Britain Never Had.*

Andrew Cook Published by Tempus Publishing, 15 January 2006.

Hardback ISBN: 0752434101, 272pp £20.00





# Forthcoming Publications

## RECENTLY PUBLISHED

### ANTI-SEMITISM AND BRITISH GOTHIC LITERATURE

Carol Margaret Davison  
Hardcover, 256 pages  
Palgrave Macmillan  
ISBN: 0333929519, £47.50



This book examines Gothic Literature's engagement with the Jewish Question and British national identity over the course of a century, from Romanticism to Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). A chapter devoted to *Dracula* considers the vampiric Count as a crypto-Jew, while immigration, syphilis, Jack the Ripper, corporate capitalism and the New Woman are all *fin-de-siècle* concerns connected with the assimilation of the Jews.

[Buy now](#)

### BLACK BY GASLIGHT

Nene Adams  
Paperback, 342 pages  
Cavalier Press, ISBN: 0974621064  
\$17.95



A novel which starts in August 1888, as consulting detective Lady Evangeline St Claire rescues prostitute Rhiannon Moore from the clutches of a bloodthirsty murderer who would come to be known as Jack the Ripper. The two women embark upon an investigation into an unrelated case that soon becomes a race against a killer whose only motive is madness. While trying to save themselves and each other, Evangeline and Rhiannon fall desperately in love. A secondary character is a detective called Sherringford Pike. Now, doesn't that name ring a bell?

[Buy now](#)

### BY EAR AND EYES: THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS, JACK THE RIPPER AND THE MURDER OF MARY JANE KELLY

Karyo Magellan  
Paperback, 320 pages  
Longshot Publishing  
ISBN: 0955024005, £12.99



Presenting a new theory on the most enigmatic of the Ripper's victims. The book is reviewed in this issue, and more information on the author can be found in his website. [Click here.](#)

### JACK THE RIPPER COMPREHENSIVE A-Z

Hardcover, 499 pages, Castle Books.  
ISBN: 078581616X, £19.98)



Edited by Maxim Jakubowski and Nathan Braund, this is largely a re-issue of the *Mammoth Book of Jack the Ripper*.

[Buy now](#)

### REVELATIONS OF THE TRUE RIPPER

Revelations of the True Ripper, by Vanessa A Hayes and published by Ivory Moon, was announced for publication in October. No more information has become available.

### SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE BIOGRAPHY

Nick Rennison  
Hardback, 240 pp, Atlantic  
ISBN: 1843542749, £14.99

Precisely what it says it is - if you are willing to suspend disbelief. This *Biography* is of particular interest to *Ripperologist* readers since it ventures beyond Holmes's published cases and recounts how the great detective

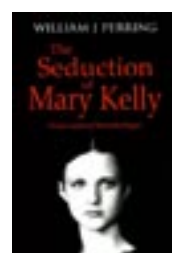


prevented Fenian attacks, advised Oscar Wilde to hotfoot it, helped Conan Doyle to solve the Edalji case and almost caught Jack the Ripper.

[Buy now](#)

### THE SEDUCTION OF MARY KELLY: FINAL VICTIM OF JACK THE RIPPER

William J Perring  
Hardback, 591pp,  
Coudsdon, Surrey: D'Arcy Collection  
ISBN: 0954977009, £17.95

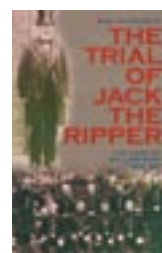


A novel recounting 'the "known" career of Mary Kelly with all the familiar faces emerging as flesh and blood characters instead of the often one-dimensional figures they appear in the non-fiction books.' (*Ripperologist*, issue 61 (September 2005)) The *Rip* also told its readers: 'You should like this book and it'll keep you occupied and out of trouble for a while.' Who could wish for anything more?

[Buy now](#)

### THE TRIAL OF JACK THE RIPPER: THE CASE OF WILLIAM BURY (1859-89)

Euan Macpherson  
Paperback, 192 pages  
Mainstream Publishing  
ISBN: 1845960114, £9.99



Discusses Ripper suspect William Henry Bury, who was hanged in 1889 in Scotland for the murder of his wife. '...whether Bury was Jack the Ripper or not,' said *Ripperologist* in its review, 'Macpherson's book is a damn good read and a penetrating analysis of a nasty murder by an equally nasty little man.'

[Buy now](#)

### WAS A QUACK DOCTOR JACK THE RIPPER? (NOTES ON A STRANGE WORLD): AN ARTICLE FROM SKEPTICAL INQUIRER

Published by Committee for the

Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. ISBN: B000AJPJSE. You'll learn more about this one when we do.

## JANUARY 2006

### PORTRAIT OF A KILLER: JACK THE RIPPER - CASE CLOSED

Patricia Cornwell  
Paperback, 400pp  
Penguin Group (USA).  
ISBN: 0425205479, \$15)

A revised edition of her controversial book reportedly including more evidence for her conclusion that the killer was the artist, Walter Sickert. A British edition will follow in September.

## SPRING 2006

### JACK THE RIPPER: THE FACTS

Paul Begg  
Paperback, 560 pages  
Robson Books Ltd, ISBN: 1861058705  
£8.99

By *Ripperologist's* Executive Editor, simply one of the most complete and authoritative books on the subject. A must-have.

### RIPPEROLOGY

By highly respected Ripper author Robin Odell, the book will be launched by Kent State Press at the American Jack the Ripper Conference in Baltimore, Maryland, in April 2006. Mr Odell has described *Ripperology* as 'the story of what we have all come to know as "Ripperology" with some personal reminiscences and a modicum of analysis.' The book's introduction will be written by Donald Rumbelow.

### THE QUEST FOR JACK THE RIPPER: A LITERARY HISTORY 1888-2000

By Richard Whittington-Egan, *The Quest...* is approaching its date of publication after several years on the making. In its last issue, *Ripperologist* reported that one of the principal

causes in the delay has been the scrupulous checking of all the facts by Mr Whittington-Egan's editor, Tom Kelly, and the minute attention and meticulous research which the latter has displayed in the construction of a really comprehensive bibliography, taking in for the first time all manner of obscure American book, magazine and newspaper reference sources. Mr Whittington-Egan has stated his belief that the delay has been worth it, because what has resulted from it will stand for all time. Hear, hear, we say.

## SEPTEMBER 2006

### PORTRAIT OF A KILLER: JACK THE RIPPER - CASE CLOSED

Patricia Cornwell  
Paperback, 416 pages  
Time Warner Paperbacks  
ISBN: 0751537225, £8.99  
The British edition of her revised book.

## LATE 2006

### UNCOVERING JACK THE RIPPER'S LONDON

A book by Richard Jones, whose recent documentary, *On the Trail of Jack the Ripper*, was described in issue 59 of *Ripperologist* as 'Perhaps the best documentary to have been produced in recent years'. [More info on Jones's web site.](#)

## STILL UNSCHEDULED

### CUATRO MIRADAS SOBRE JACK EL DESTRIPIADOR

Spanish-language collection of original essays on the Ripper to be published in Buenos Aires. The authors are the late Juan-Jacobo Bajarlia, Juan José Delaney, Christopher-Michael DiGrazia and Eduardo Zinna.

### SHADOW PASTS

By Professor William D Rubinstein, looks at Ripperologists and other 'amateur' historians.

## AND DON'T FORGET...

THE ROYAL LEGACY OF HATE, a further volume of revelations concerning the regal ancestry of Joseph Sickert, who died on 9 January 2003; the eagerly expected Second Edition of JACK THE MYTH, by A P Wolf; and journalist Tom Slemen's still untitled book on Charles Regnier Conder. The publication of all these books has been announced, in some cases several years ago, but no information is available as to their present status.

## RADIO DRAMA ON COMPACT DISC

SAUCY JACK, an original radio drama by James Vita focusing on the Ripper murders, is available on CD from Actors Scene Unseen, a Live Internet Radio Theatre company broadcasting live from Charlotte, NC, USA. This is a totally new recording and remastered edition of the live program originally broadcast on 19 June 2004 on Actors Scene Unseen and features a new, larger cast and original music. Another offering by Actors Scene Unseen, MILLER'S COURT, is a two-person drama by James Jeffrey Paul about the Ripper's encounter with his last victim. For information on programmes and schedules, to listen to live broadcasts or to find out how to buy the CDs, [go to their website.](#)

## DVD: SUMMER 2006

JACK THE RIPPER'S SWEDISH VICTIM is a documentary by Daniel Olsson and Vulvarich shot on location in Store Tumlehed, Gothenburg and other places frequented by on Elizabeth Stride. The filmmakers hope to complete all shooting by Christmas 2005, edit *Victim* and record the accompanying narration in Swedish and English between January 2005 and March 2006 and have the DVD ready to ship by next Summer 2006. More information may be found in a letter by Daniel Olsson in this issue of *Ripperologist*.

## Advertise in Ripperologist

Adverts cost £50 for a full page and £25 for a half page. All adverts are full colour and can include links to your website or email, or movie and sound files. [contact@ripperologist.info](mailto:contact@ripperologist.info)





CHRISTOPHER-  
MICHAEL DIGRAZIA

# The Last Word

It's November. And in our little neck of the world, that means that it's once again time to talk about Mary Jane Kelly. I realize that all three of you regular readers perusing this column for vicarious enjoyment of Your Humble Columnist's sybaritic lifestyle or for interminable rehashings of 1920s Hollywood scandals might find this month's column a little off the beaten trail, but for those of you who think Ripperology ought to have some place in this magazine, off we go.

Mary Kelly, if you consider it, might nearly be the distaff Jack the Ripper. Like him, she is an unknowable; like him, her motives were inscrutable, and, like him, were we to have absolute proof of her identity, she might well end up being not very mysterious after all. It is the baffling anonymity of Saucy Jack which grants these squalid East End murders their immortality, and the blank slate which is Mary Kelly that elevates her from common trollop to *femme fatale* of the Whitechapel murders.

Despite oceans of ink and forests of pages, the real, unarguable identity of the Ripper is beyond our ken. And despite the best researches, the real Mary Kelly lies beyond our grasp. As she was an enigma in life - was she Irish or Welsh? Was her name really Kelly? Were any of her stories true? - she is, too, an enigma in death. Was she the last victim of the Ripper? Was she the intended victim of the Ripper? Was she even a victim at all? Or could she (fearful thought) have been the Ripper's own handmaiden? We don't know, and I would be tempted to say that we will never know. The razored haunch of meat splayed out before our eyes in 13 Miller's Court is a mocking rebuff to all our energies and hopes to lay a hand on the ghost that flits away from us.

A ghost? Kelly is one now, certainly. But what about then?

It is, perhaps, indicative of the quicksilver nature of Mary Kelly that she was not only unknowable in life; even in death she was a mystery. Take the case of Caroline Maxwell, who insistently testified before the coroner that she saw and spoke with the living Kelly at eight o'clock on the morning of November 9, more than six hours after all medical opinion insisted she was dead. Mrs Maxwell is one of the many nagging oddities that tantalise and frustrate the Ripperologist. What did she see? A Kelly who was yet to die or one who was already dead? It's been light-heartedly suggested that Maxwell might have seen a ghost, but if she did, then Kelly's ghost seems to have been of an odd sort.

Ghosts, so those who dabble in the field tell us, are of varying types, but most often they are attached to a locality (the bibulous spirit haunting his pub), locked in an otherworldly Moebius strip (the ever-industrious maid cleaning eternal piles of cutlery) or reaching out from beyond the grave to right a wrong or complete a sadly unfinished task. One doesn't usually read of ghosts who stand wobbly over a puddle of sick moaning that they've just had their breakfast all up again!

Here in the States (and probably across the pond with you as well), you can hardly flick through a television channel without coming across one or another 'ghost hunter' programme. Generally these fellows arm themselves with mechanical and digital whizbangs that measure spiritual disturbances and run their cameras non-stop in the hope of catching an otherworldly whisper or an ectoplasmic vision. Sadly, these 'investigations' are almost always damp squibs - there might be noise, or an odd visual, but for the casual viewer it seems that the only people who see ghosts are those who *want* to see them - in other words, like the *X-Files* slogan 'I want to believe,' you seem to have more chance of seeing

a ghost if you actually accept them to begin with.

Now, I'm not suggesting that Mrs Maxwell might have seen Kelly's ghost; or that, if she did, it was because she wanted to. But I do wonder about the nearly infinite capacity of the subconscious mind to affect our waking selves. Often we see or hear something and, shaking our heads in wonder, say '*what a surprise! I wasn't thinking about that at all!*' Yet, if someone carefully walks us through the events of the day, we see that we really *did* 'think about that', even if 'that' was only a slight glimpse of a billboard, a half-heard song on the radio or a quick word glimpsed in a pile of papers shuffled over the desk.



Contemporary illustration of Mary Kelly

So let's go back to the morning of 9 November. Could it be that Mrs Maxwell heard the buzz about Kelly's death running through the crowds gathered for the Lord Mayor's parade as she went for her husband's breakfast, but didn't register it? Then, her mind primed for seeing Kelly, the Irish lass appears, woozy and slurring over her vomit. Could it be? Probably not - after all, as you're no doubt taking pen in hand to tell me, Indian Harry won't find Kelly's body until nearly 10.45, not to mention that we haven't even considered the problematic testimony of Maurice Lewis. And even if Maxwell's mind was bent on creating a ghost for her to see after hearing of Kelly's death, you'd more likely expect her to see a bloody revenant rather than a wobbly colleen.

So Caroline Maxwell, I submit, didn't see a ghost. But if she was telling the truth - if she *did* ask a sickly, shivering woman '*what brings you up so early, Mary?*' near eight o'clock on that cold November morning - then who was it who answered '*Oh, Carrie, I do feel so bad?*'



RETURN OF THE PRINCESS

The former City Darts reverts to its original name.

©Adam Wood

