

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

Ripperologist

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ANTONIO SIRONI and
JANE CORAM look at
the Night of the
Double Event

NICHOLAS SMITH
examines the
Ripper's DNA

ROBERT LINFORD,
JOHN SAVAGE
and DAVID
O'FLAHERTY
follow the
Road to
Mitre Square

CHRISTOPHER-MICHAEL
DiGRAZIA on the
End of the World

ADAM WOOD
on the Beginnings of
the Modern Newspaper

Chris Scott
Wilf Gregg
Monty
Howard Brown
Michaela Kořistová



Stephen Long recalls
Ikey Solomon and
the real Artful Dodgers

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Quote for April

FIRST WOMAN: He's a regular Jack the Ripper. MAN: Not on your life. He used to carve 'em up. Sent a bird's kidney to Scotland Yard once, wrapped in a bit of violet writing paper. SECOND WOMAN: That will do. I'm quite sure the lady doesn't want to hear anymore about it. MAN: Or was it a bit of her liver?

Dialogue among members of a London crowd including Alfred Hitchcock in Hitchcock's Frenzy (1972).

Contents

No. 66 | April 2006 | [click on the title to jump to the article](#)

Features



Anything but Your Prayers: Victims and Witnesses on the Night of the Double Event

Antonio Sironi and Jane Coram evoke a dark night long ago to size up eyewitness testimony and conjure up vivid images of future victims and their alleged killers.



The Green of the Peak Part IV: Samuel Frederick Langham (1823-1908): The Road to Mitre Square: 1823 - 1884.

Robert Charles Linford, John Savage and David O'Flaherty further enlarge our understanding of the office of Coroner in England and Wales as they chart the trajectory of the City of London Coroner who presided over the inquest on Catherine Eddowes.



Catalyst: Dr Findlay and the Ripper's DNA

Nicholas Smith discusses the evolution of criminal identification from fingerprinting to the DNA analysis of Ripper relics.



Consider Yourself At Home: Ikey Solomon and the Real Artful Dodgers

Stephen Long considers the criminal children of nineteenth-century Britain and the men who benefited from their illicit skills.

Contributors to this issue

JANE CORAM

Jane Coram is a true East Ender, born and reared close to the locations of the Ripper murders. As anybody who has seen her work knows, she is a first-rate professional artist and illustrator. She has carried out commissions for the British Museum, the British Library, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the National Gallery, the Smithsonian Institute and many other institutions throughout the world.

ROBERT LINFORD

Robert Linford is a writer from east London and is a regular contributor to *Casebook: Jack the Ripper*.

STEPHEN LONG

Stephen Long works as a software analyst in South Manchester. He became interested in the Jack the Ripper mystery and nineteenth-century crime in the mid-1990s, after reading *The Diary of Jack the Ripper* and Philip Sugden's *The Complete History of Jack the Ripper*. Stephen has attended several Ripper conferences in the UK. This is his first article for *Ripperologist*.

DAVID O'FLAHERTY

David O'Flaherty has contributed articles on Albert Bachert and Alfred Blanchard to *Casebook: Jack the Ripper*, and transcribed articles for *Casebook's* Press Project. His short stories have appeared in *Twilight Times* and *Stirring*, and in 2004 he wrote an audio drama, *The Cleveland Street Scandal*, for Actors Scene Unseen in North Carolina. He is 39 and lives in the southern United States.

JOHN SAVAGE

John Savage is a shipping consultant living in Hull, East Yorkshire. He has been taking an interest in Jack the Ripper for over 30 years and first became "hooked" through watching the BBC *Barlow and Watt* series.

ANTONIO SIRONI

Antonio Sironi is currently completing his studies in Electronic Engineering. His interest in the Whitechapel murders was triggered off a few years ago by the film *From Hell*. Besides the Ripper case, his pastimes include wine, cookery and Martial Arts. Antonio makes his home at Inzago, a small town near Milan, Italy.

NICHOLAS SMITH

Nicholas Smith is the former Editor of Australia's first Ripper magazine, *Ripperoo*. He has recently moved to London, England.

Contents

No. 66 | April 2006

Regulars

East End Life:

Read All About It. The Hunger for News and the Newsboy's Debt

Adam Wood follows the newspaper vendors of Victorian London from West End to East End.

Cyber Jack

Website Monty does a virtual music-hall turn as he leads us through the best Ripper sites in the Internet.

Press Trawl

Chris Scott zeroes in on the criminal career of Frederick Deeming, world traveller, multiple murderer and Jack the Ripper suspect.

I Beg to Report

If it happened, you will find it here: everything from Uncle Jack to the Twilight Zone.

I Beg To Report: US Ripper Conference

Mr Howard Brown on the Ripperfest at Baltimore: from venue to menu.

Dear Diary: A Diary of Current Ripper Events

All Talking, All Singing, All Dancing.

Dear Rip

Howard Brown, Michaela Kořistová and Thomas C Wescott write to *Ripperologist* about ritual murder, grapes and sundry other subjects.

On the Crimebeat

Wilf Gregg celebrates three new additions to the True Crime shelf.

Reviews

This month's new titles, including *Ripperology* by Robin Odell, *The Yellow House* by Martin Gayford and *Prince Eddy: The King Britain Never Had* by Andrew Cook.

Ripping Yarns

Books, Films, Television, CDs and DVDs: from Oldies but Goodies to Coming Attractions.

The Last Word

Christopher Michael-DiGrazia dispenses learned advice on things to do while waiting for the end of the world.

In Future Issues

A glimpse of what's coming your way in the *Rip's* pages.

We would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance given by the following people in the production of this issue of *Ripperologist*: Jane Coram, Stewart P Evans, Dr Ian Findlay, Stephen P Ryder. Thank you!

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ADAM WOOD
UK EDITOR

The Final Frontier

1972 was a good time to be seven years old. The space programme started in the mid '60s by NASA had reached a peak with Neil Armstrong becoming the first human to walk on the Moon. Despite the problems suffered by the *Apollo 13* mission, public excitement was still tangible in the build-up to the *Apollo 17* Moon landing mission in December of that year.

The television schedules were filled with programmes capturing the excitement of the space race; *UFO* with Ed Bishop, *Star Trek*, *Thunderbirds*, and my own personal favourite, *Captain Scarlett*. David Bowie released *Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders From Mars*. A year later Pink Floyd had a hit with *Dark Side of the Moon*. TV-wise, the next few years brought *Space 1999* and *Blakes Seven*... but it was in 1972 that I decided to become an Astronaut when I grew up.



Captain Scarlett

Fast forward 34 years, and it's been reported that the European Space Agency's probe *Venus Express* has entered the orbit of that planet, and had started to send back photographs of its surface. This follows the mixed success rate of more than 30 missions between 1961 and 1989 to gather data on Venus.

Earlier this month attendees of the European Geosciences Union (EGU) annual conference in Vienna heard Dr Bob Brown, a senior team member of the *Cassini* spacecraft project which has been studying Saturn and its moons for nearly two years, state that the planet's tiny moon Enceladus may be the best place to look for life elsewhere in the Solar System. It apparently contains simple organic molecules, water and heat - the ingredients for life.

As I write this, it's been reported that a new optical telescope designed solely to detect light signals from alien civilisations has opened for work at the Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics at Oak Ridge Observatory.

The knowledge gained by these missions has increased at an incredible rate. The pale seven year old watching the Moon landings on an old black-and-white television would struggle to take in that Saturn had a moon called Enceladus, let alone that it might support life.

So imagine how bewildered the Victorians would have been.

Although solid rocket fuel in the form of gunpowder had been invented by the Chinese late in the third Century BC, it was used purely

for military purposes. By 1045 the use of gunpowder and rockets formed an integral aspect of Chinese military tactics. Chinese ordnance experts introduced and perfected many types of projectiles, including explosive grenades and cannon.

Rockets had found their way into European arsenals by the early 1300s, with serious experimentation by Sir William Congreve beginning in 1804. The British would use Congreve rockets against the French in Spain in 1809-1810, and against the Americans at Fort McHenry, Baltimore, in 1814, inspiring the line in Francis Scott Key's "Star-Spangled Banner" about "the rocket's red glare."

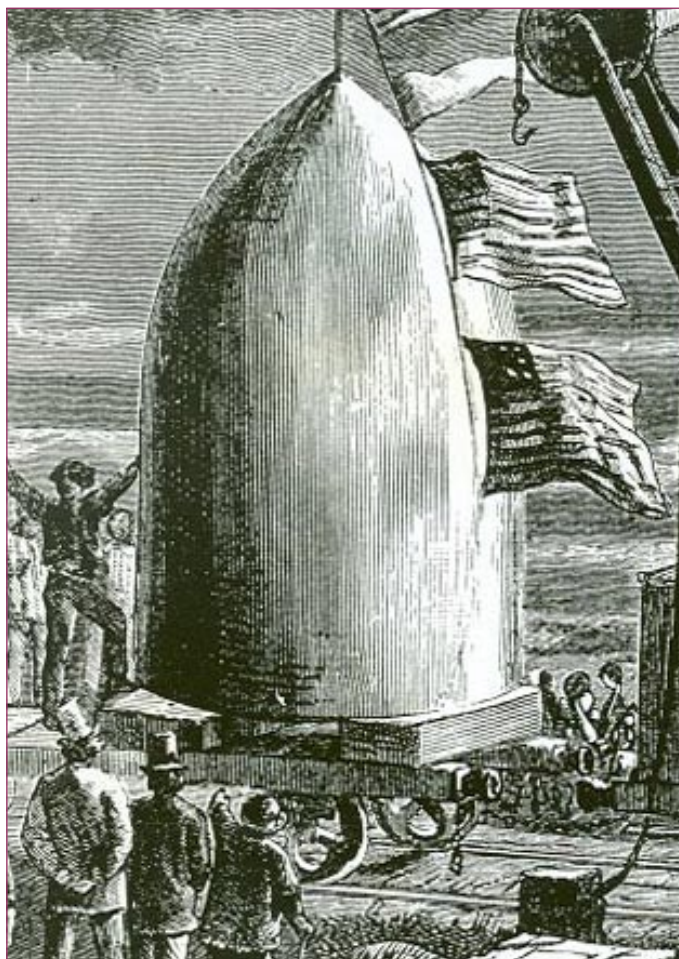
It seems the idea of using rockets for space flight simply wasn't considered, despite Cyrano de Bergerac describing the first space rocket in his *Voyage Dans la Lune* and *L'Histoire des Etats et Empires du Soleil* in 1657.

The Victorians did, however, envisage travelling to the Moon and beyond. In 1835's *The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall*, Edgar Allan Poe describes a bellows-mender, with a family to support, who had fallen on hard times. In debt, he hatched a scheme to build a balloon and to pilot it to the moon. The canopy of this balloon would not be filled with air, but something far lighter, on the nature of which Pfaall is a little reticent: "I can only venture to say here, that it is a constituent of azote so long considered irreducible, and that its density is about 37.4 times

less than that of hydrogen". On the 19th day of his voyage Pfaall finds himself plummeting towards the moon's surface, and is forced to throw overboard all his ballast including, eventually, the car itself: "And thus, clinging with both hands to the net-work, I had barely time to observe that the whole country as far as the eye could reach, was thickly interspersed with diminutive habitations, ere I tumbled headlong into the very heart of a fantastical looking city, and into the middle of a vast crowd of ugly little people."

Poe seemingly wrote *The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall* in response to a famous Moon hoax by Richard Adams Locke, which was published in the *New York Sun* earlier in 1835. Locke reported that "a new telescope, 'at the Cape of Good Hope', with a magnifying power of 42,000, had observed objects on the moon's surface, amongst which were fields of reddish flowers, bison-like creatures with specialised eye-flaps and furry, winged, humanoid inhabitants."

Thirty years later, in 1865, Jules Verne wrote probably the greatest space exploration novel, *From the Earth to the Moon*, in which members of the Baltimore Gun Club decide to fire a cannonball to the moon. Apart from being a gripping read, the noticeable thing about Verne's novel is that it has some incredible coincidences with the Apollo missions of 100 years later. In Verne's book, to test the idea of manned flight scientists launch a cat and a squirrel (NASA would later use monkeys) and recover them at sea. The three Astronauts (the same number as the Apollo programmes used) are launched from an enormous cannon named *Columbiad* - the command module of *Apollo 11* was *Columbia*. Verne's launch site was located in Florida, just a few miles from where the Kennedy Space Center would eventually sit. To escape the Earth's gravitational pull, Verne's spacecraft travels at 24,400 miles an hour. In 1968, *Apollo 8* attained a speed of 24,200 miles per hour. Both missions took three days to reach the Moon. Verne's Astronauts splashdown in the Pacific, just four kilometres from the real landing point.



Verne's spacecraft in *From the Earth to the Moon*

Astronomy continued in earnest: in 1895 Scientist Giovanni Schiaparelli reported seeing 'canali' (channel) while studying Mars through his telescope, and published his theories about life on the planet in Mars.

H G Wells, celebrated author of *The Time Machine*, *The Island Of Dr Moreau*, *The Invisible Man* and *The War of the Worlds*, wrote of his vision of space flight in 1901's *The First Men on the Moon*. This was the book that captured the imagination of one Robert Goddard, leading him to a lifetime of experiments in rocketry.

As the 20th Century began, Wilbur and Orville Wright were preparing to become the first men to fly. Goddard, however, was already designing rockets to probe the upper atmosphere and delve into space. He came to the conclusion that if a rocket was going to do the things he dreamed of, it would have to be powered by liquid fuels, as solid fuels of the time simply didn't have sufficient power. Goddard began his experiments in rocketry while studying for his doctorate at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. He first attracted attention in 1919 when he published a paper titled *A Method of Reaching Extreme Altitudes*. In his paper he outlined his ideas on rocketry and suggested, none too seriously, that a demonstration rocket should be flown to the Moon. The general public ignored the scientific merit of the paper, latching instead onto Goddard's Moon rocket proposal.

Eventually on 16 March 1926 Goddard launched a liquid-powered rocket from a snow-covered field in Auburn. The rocket flew only 152 feet - about the same distance as the Wright Brothers' first manned flight - but it was the first flight of a liquid-fuelled rocket in history.

The fuse had been lit. Less than 40 years after the Whitechapel murders, the means of propelling Man to the Moon had been discovered. 80 years later we are discovering the reality of the Solar System - with so far, not a bison-like creature in sight.

As for me, I'd like to tell you that I'm writing this Editorial from a space station above Venus. But of course I didn't get to become an Astronaut. With the recent space exploration, however, and the continued appearance on our screens of *Star Trek*, the recent *Thunderbirds* film, and even an update of *Captain Scarlett* in 2005's *New Captain Scarlett*, it's just like being seven years old again.



ANTONIO
SIRONI

Anything But Your Prayers

Victims and Witnesses
on the Night of the Double Event



ILLUSTRATED BY
JANE CORAM

At 1:00 in the morning of Sunday, 30 September 1888, Louis Diemschutz, the steward of the International Working Men's Educational Club, was returning to the Club in a two-wheeled barrow pulled by a pony. He had spent the day, as he usually did on Saturdays, selling imitation jewellery at Westow Hill Market, near the Crystal Palace. He drove his pony down Commercial Road and turned south into Berner Street. The Club was further down the road. Light could be seen through its windows and the sounds of singing and laughter came from its meeting room on the first floor. As Diemschutz drove through the gates of Dutfield's Yard and entered the dark passage running alongside the Club, his pony shied to the left. A woman was lying across the passage on the muddy ground. She was dead, but her body was still warm to the touch. Blood oozed thickly from a deep gash in her throat and ran down the gutter into a drain. Within a matter of days, she would be identified as Elizabeth Stride, a 44-year-old, Swedish-born prostitute, and go down in history as the third canonical victim of Jack the Ripper.



Body of Elizabeth Stride

But that long, dreadful night was not yet over.

Three-quarters of a mile from Berner Street, within the confines of the City of London, lies Mitre Square. It is a small enclosed square delimited by Mitre Street, Creechchurch Lane (formerly King Street), Duke's Place (formerly Duke Street) and Aldgate. Between King Street and Mitre Square is St James' Place, formerly known as the Orange Market. In 1888, the Great Synagogue and Kearly and Tonge's Warehouse stood between Duke Street and the Square. Another warehouse belonging to Kearly and Tonge formed the northwest side of the Square along a house occupied by Police Constable Pearce. Between Aldgate and the Square, stood the Sir John Cass Foundation School. There were three entrances to Mitre Square: a broad passage from Mitre Street; Church Passage, a narrow, covered foot passage from Duke Street, south of the Synagogue; and a narrow foot passage from St James' Place. On the right of the broad passage off Mitre Street were three unoccupied cottages forming a blind corner with a high fence sealing off the yard between the School and the Square.

At about 1:30am on 30 September 1888, half an hour after Elizabeth Stride was found murdered in Berner Street, PC Watkins's beat took him into Mitre Square. Everything was calm and quiet. Ten minutes later, PC James Harvey walked along Duke Street and down the Church Passage - though he did not enter the Square - and neither saw nor heard anything. Since PC Watkins's beat took him only 15 minutes to complete, he was

back in the Square at 1:44am. He first flashed his lamp to his left, where everything was clear. Then he turned it right and saw one of the most shocking sights of his life. At the inquest which followed, PC Watkins described the scene as follows:

*I saw the body of the woman lying there on her back with her feet facing the Square, her clothes up above her waist. I saw her throat was cut and her bowels protruding. The stomach was ripped up, she was lying in a pool of blood.*¹

Jack the Ripper had struck again. The dead woman, later identified as Catherine Eddowes, a 46-year-old prostitute, was the fourth of his canonical victims. Although the area was well patrolled, nobody saw or heard anything. Mark my words: Nobody saw or heard anything.

¹ Evans, Stewart P, and Keith Skinner: *The Ultimate Jack the Ripper Sourcebook*, Robinson, London, 2000, page 201.



Body of Catherine Eddowes

Indeed, this is the question that has puzzled generations of Ripperologists: Did anyone ever see Jack the Ripper? In this article we will consider this aspect of the Whitechapel Murders and look for an answer to this question.

Eyewitness testimony is one of the most widely used types of evidence available. There is a tendency, however, to believe that it is more accurate than it really is. As we will see, eyewitness evidence can be very inaccurate, even when the witnesses are fully confident about what they have seen. Before analyzing in detail the factors that determine the quality of evidence, we will examine the main features of human memory.

Memory is not like a video camera, which can capture all the events that are framed in the direction in which it is pointed, record them and replay them. Our memory cannot do this. We do not absorb information passively in order to replay it exactly as received; our memory is an active, creative process that can be inaccurate for a variety of reasons. For an item of information to be remembered it must go through three main stages: it must be *encoded* into memory, *stored* in memory and, finally, *retrieved* from memory. Problems can occur at each of these stages.

Encoding

Encoding is the process of storing or representing information in memory. What is encoded depends on the direction where an individual's attention is directed at a particular time and what is taken in or perceived. Owing to our limited capacity to concentrate, we cannot pay attention to, or take in, all the information in our environment at any particular moment, but tend to focus on what is most important for us at the time. This depends both on the person and on the environment. Information to which we do not pay active attention is rarely encoded and, obviously, something that

is not encoded in the first place cannot be remembered later on. Even when we pay attention to something there is no guarantee that it will be encoded.

Storage

Since we do not encode everything that we observe, our memory contains gaps. To make sense of these gaps, we may 'fill them in' to fit in with our attitudes, beliefs and expectations about a particular event or person. External sources may also be incorporated into memory. For example, if we are told, incorrectly, that a person we have met had a moustache, this information may be incorporated into memory. We may come genuinely to believe the person had a moustache.

Retrieval

We may have encoded information and stored it, but obviously we cannot claim to have 'remembered' material successfully unless we can retrieve it from memory. Successful retrieval from memory depends not only on adequate encoding and storage but on other things as well. Retrieval cues can have a considerable effect on our ability to 'call up' information from memory.

Eyewitnesses play an important part in crime investigations. The night when Elizabeth Stride and Catherine Eddowes were murdered, known as the night of the Double Event, offers us the best understanding of the Whitechapel murders and the greater number of positive sightings of the victims and their companions. We will accordingly focus on these two murders only. To understand and evaluate the evidence available, I have referred to modern police techniques. For this reason, it is important to analyse how the reliability of the information that witnesses provide should be assessed. Various factors, such as the nature of the offence and the situation in which it is observed, affect the reliability of eyewitnesses and their capacity to encode and recollect the event, and consequently influence the quality of eyewitness statements. The main factors involved are:

Duration of the sighting: The longer an event or person is observed, the more details are likely to be noticed and recorded and thus remembered.

Distance from the eyewitness to the person/incident: The further away witnesses are from a crime, the lower their ability to record and later remember information about the crime.

Visibility: The time of day and the quality of lighting influence eyewitnesses' ability to record events accurately and remember them later.

Obstructions: Inevitably, if something obstructs a witness's view, it will prevent the witness from seeing, encoding and subsequently retrieving the information. Research shows that witnesses tend to underestimate the amount of time that their visual contact with a person was obscured by another object, which suggests that such estimates must be treated with caution.

A reason to remember: We are more likely to remember something accurately if there was something that made it particularly salient or 'memorable'. For example, we are more likely to observe and record details of an event if the components of the event are intense or unusual in some way.

Time lapse: The longer the delay between the event and our attempt to remember it, the less complete and accurate the account will be.

Violence and the presence of a weapon: One of the most important factors identified above is that of stimulus intensity or impact. The more intense something is, the greater the impact it has on us and the more likely we are to remember it. At the same time, when violence is used, threatened or implied, most witnesses experience stress, which may affect their ability to store the information.

The encoding of the features related to the person or persons involved varies greatly. Witnesses' descriptions of clothing style tend to be reasonably accurate. Descriptions of clothing colour are less accurate, particularly when lighting is poor. The estimation of age can also be very inaccurate. Generally speaking, eyewitnesses are most precise when they are estimating the age of someone roughly of the same age as they are, because they are more familiar with that age group. The greater the difference between the age of the witness and the age of the offender, the less accurate the witness's estimate of the offender's age. The same can be said about the height. While witnesses tend to estimate poorly the height of offenders, they remember more accurately heights that are similar to their own.

Although it is not possible to say with any degree of exactitude when a particular statement by an eyewitness will be accurate or inaccurate, research helps to determine when statements are likely to be less accurate and should be treated more cautiously. We should not expect witnesses to be uniformly accurate or inaccurate when describing aspects of a crime, but we can ascertain which evidence should be regarded as more reliable and which details are more likely to be correct. Finally, memory for actions is better than memory for descriptions. So, for example, even if witnesses cannot describe accurately details of the participants in an event, they might be able to describe the event itself.

The amount and accuracy of the information that witnesses provide may be determined by the way in which they are interviewed. More complete and accurate information is associated with factors such as allowing for free recall, good rapport, open-ended questioning, sensitivity to the negative effects of leading questions and simple patience. This aspect is impossible to analyze since we have no information about the way in which the police questioned witnesses in the Whitechapel murders case.

Bearing in mind the foregoing, we will analyze in detail every single item of evidence available, highlight its main features and evaluate its reliability.

Two labourers, **J Best and John Gardner**, saw Elizabeth Stride at about 11:00pm on 29 September - two hours before her death. As they entered the Bricklayers' Arms, a pub located at 34 Settles Street, a woman, later identified as Stride, was leaving with a man. Best and Gardner described her companion as 5ft 5in in height, with a thick black moustache and no beard.² He was wearing a billycock hat, morning suit and coat.

Best and Gardner didn't appear at the Stride inquest. They gave their statement to an *Evening News* reporter.³ Bearing in mind the great number of publicity seekers at the time of the Whitechapel Murders, common sense suggests we should handle with care statements published in a newspaper. Perhaps Best and Gardner were not called to the inquest and were not interviewed by the police because their evidence was regarded as unreliable even at the time of the murders.

According to the *Evening News*, Best stated:

[Stride and the man] had been served in the public house and went out when me and my friends came in. It was raining very fast and they did not appear willing to go out. He was hugging and kissing her, and as he seemed a respectably dressed man, we were rather astonished at the way he was going on at the woman.

The couple stood on the doorway for some time. The workmen tried to persuade the man to come in for a drink but he refused. They then called to Stride: 'That's Leather Apron getting "round you"!' The man and Stride walked off towards Commercial Road and Berner Street. Best remarked to the *Evening News* reporter: 'He and the woman went off like a shot soon after eleven.'

The man and woman seen by Best and Gardner at the Bricklayers' Arms did not behave like a killer and his victim, but rather comported themselves in a way likely to attract attention. Indeed, the witnesses only noticed them because it

² Begg, Paul: *Jack the Ripper: The Facts*, Robson Books, London 2004, page 144

struck them as peculiar to see a respectably dressed man in the company of a woman who was obviously a prostitute. Apart from that, the witnesses' description of Stride's companion may be assumed to be accurate, since the spot was well lit and there was sufficient time for them to take a good look at him. They described his features and clothing in a manner that vividly evokes him.

Yet, even though the witnesses' statements meet all the requirements of valuable evidence, they are affected negatively by two factors: first, the two hours that elapsed between their sighting and the discovery of Stride's body; second, their statements are not official records.

We must also ask ourselves some questions. Were these men telling the truth? Was the woman they saw Stride? Indeed, even if she was, the man with her was unlikely to have been Jack the Ripper. The Whitechapel Murderer would hardly have attracted attention to himself by behaving in the way Stride's companion did. He was a silent killer, able to escape unseen, unheard and undetected from the murder sites. The longer a killer spends in the company of a prospective victim the higher the probability of being seen, noticed and detected. The Ripper's modus operandi suggests that he spent with a victim no more than the minimum time necessary to approach her, kill her and mutilate her body.

Analysis of Best and Gardner's Evidence

Duration of the sighting: *Long enough*

Distance from the eyewitness to the person/incident: *Very close*

Visibility: *In full view and enough light*

Obstructions: *None*

Any reason to remember: *Present (The man was kissing the woman)*

Time lapse: *Not known but estimated at one or two days*

Violence and the presence of a weapon: *None*

While Best and Gardner were not called to the Stride inquest, other witnesses were. Since the Official Records of the Inquest have not survived, I have used the information found in various articles published by *The Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*, which covered the Stride Inquest, as reproduced in Stewart P Evans and Keith Skinner's *The Ultimate Jack the Ripper Sourcebook*, and other sources.

At 11:45pm on 29 September, William Marshall, a labourer, was standing on his doorstep when he saw a woman he later identified as Elizabeth Stride. She was on the pavement opposite No 68, Berner Street, between Christian and Boyd Streets, three doors down from where Marshall lived. He noticed her talking to a man about 5ft 6in in height, rather stout, wearing a black cut-away coat, dark trousers and a round cap with a small peak, 'something like what a sailor would wear.' He seemed middle aged and had the appearance of a clerk. According to Marshall, the man was 'decently dressed'. When the couple passed by, Marshall overheard the man's words: 'You would say anything but your prayers.'⁴ The next day, Marshall was taken to the mortuary where he identified the deceased as the woman he had seen.

Marshall appeared at the inquest, where Coroner Baxter questioned him. He admitted that the spot where the couple was standing was badly lit. The nearest lamp was about 20 ft off, at the street corner. He added that what attracted his attention first 'was her standing there some time, and he was kissing her'. When the couple set out in the direction of Ellen Street, they went towards Marshall, but they were walking in the middle of the street and the man was turning towards Stride. As a result, Marshall couldn't see his face. This affected his descriptions, which are too vague to be of much help in a possible identification.

Marshall said that the man he had seen had the 'appearance of a clerk'. Yet this seems to be more an impression than a deduction based on the evidence available. He simply said, when questioned by Coroner Baxter, that he felt that 'clerk' was the best way to describe the man's appearance from his clothes and behaviour. He looked more like someone accustomed to doing some 'light business' rather than hard work. Marshall thought that he appeared to be an 'educated man'.

It is interesting that Marshall described the woman as wearing a black jacket and skirt but did not see anything pinned to her jacket. This will be discussed in detail later. Let's just mention at this point that the clothes worn by the woman seen by Marshall fit the clothes worn by Stride. Could therefore the man who was with her be the same man seen by Gardner and Best? The height fits and also the clothes in general, with a little discrepancy regarding the cap. Besides, only 45 minutes elapsed between the two sightings. Yet, as said above, this sighting was too early in the evening for the man to be Stride's killer. In addition, Marshall's sighting took place in far worse conditions than Gardner and Best's sighting, because the spot was badly lit and the witness just glanced cursorily at the couple.

3 Begg, Paul: *Jack the Ripper: The Definitive History*, Pearson, London 2003, page 176

4 Sugden, Philip: *The Complete History of Jack the Ripper*, Robinson, London, 2002, page 204

Analysis of William Marshall's Evidence

Duration of the sighting: *Short*

Distance from the eyewitness to the person/incident: *Relatively close*

Visibility: *Limited. The spot was not well lit*

Obstructions: *None*

Reason to remember: *Present*

Time lapse: *One day*

Violence and the presence of a weapon: *None*

At 12:35am, PC William Smith saw Elizabeth Stride with a man in Berner Street, opposite the International Working Men's Educational Club, a few yards away from where her body would be discovered. PC Smith described the man as of 'respectable appearance,' about 28 years old, 5ft 7 or 8 in, of dark complexion, with a small dark moustache. He wore a hard felt deerstalker hat of dark colour and a black diagonal cutaway coat and dark trousers and was carrying a parcel wrapped in newspaper approximately 6 or 8 inches in width and 18 inches in length. Both he and Stride appeared to be sober. PC Smith did not overhear any of their conversation.⁵

Since it came from a policeman, PC Smith's account of his sighting of Stride is usually regarded as the most reliable. He recognized her at once when he saw her body at the mortuary and he clearly had seen her face whilst walking his beat in Berner Street. In addition, he had noticed a red rose pinned to her jacket, which corroborated further that she was really the deceased. Unfortunately, he 'did not see much of [Stride's companion's] face except that he had no whiskers.' In fact, he gave only a vague description of the man, though it agreed in general terms with the description given by Marshall. There is therefore a possibility that they saw the same man, even if at a 50-minute interval. Of course, it is not uncommon for prostitutes to be with a client one moment and another the next, but both men were of respectable appearance and wore similar dark overcoats and dark trousers. Marshall added that the man was 'rather stout', a detail that Smith didn't record. But the man seen by Marshall had nothing in his hand and, more important, the woman with him did not wear a flower on her jacket. If indeed both Marshall and Smith saw Stride, this could be either because she got her flower later, between 11:45pm and 12:45pm, or because, having only glanced quickly at the couple, Marshall didn't see the red rose pinned to her jacket. On the other hand, the man seen by Smith had a parcel in his hand, which means that he and Marshall might have seen different men.

PC Smith saw Stride 15 to 20 minutes before her estimated time of death. As a result, the probability that the man in her company was her killer is quite high. PC Smith was the only witness who described the man as comparatively young. As said above, while the estimation of age can be very inaccurate, eyewitnesses are most precise when estimating the age of someone roughly of the same age as they are, because they are more familiar with that age group. Since PC Smith himself was only 26 years old, his estimation of the man's age at about 28 can be considered as quite reliable.

Chief Inspector Donald Swanson considered PC Smith's evidence as important. In a report dated 19 October 1888, he compared PC Smith's description of the man seen with Stride with the description provided by another key witness, Israel Schwartz. What Swanson wrote shows that the Metropolitan Police regarded these statements highly. Schwartz's sighting took place closer to Stride's estimated time of death but, on the other hand, PC Smith's statement may be deemed more reliable, since he was a trained police officer and, unlike Schwartz, was not under stress at the time.

Analysis of PC William Smith's Evidence

Duration of the sighting: *Short*

Distance from the eyewitness to the person/incident: *Close*

Visibility: *Good*

Obstructions: *None*

Reason to remember: *None*

Time lapse: *The statement was given the same day*

Violence and the presence of a weapon: *None*

At about 12:40-12:45am, James Brown, a dock labourer, was returning home after buying his supper from a chandler's shop at the junction of Fairclough and Berner Street. He saw a man and a woman standing at the corner of the Board School. She was leaning against the wall talking to a man who had his arm up against the wall. The place was rather dark and after just a quick glance Brown described him as being 5ft 7in tall, wearing 'a long coat which came very nearly down to his heels' and a hat. Unfortunately, he couldn't describe the hat. The man appeared to be of stoutish build. Brown heard the woman saying 'No, not to-night, some other night'.⁶

Brown's statement to the police suggests that he saw the couple at about the same time as Schwartz. In 1888, clocks were not always reliable and pocket watches were not that common. Brown estimated the time based on the fact

5 Sugden, Philip: *op. cit.*, page 201; Evans, Stewart P, and Keith Skinner: *op. cit.*, page 167

6 Evans, Stewart P, and Keith Skinner: *op. cit.*, page 166

that he had arrived home at 12:10 and not long afterwards went out to get his supper. He didn't notice the time at the chandler's shop but simply guessed that it must have been about 12:40 when he saw the couple. Since Schwartz's estimation of time is not necessarily correct either, a matter of a few minutes' discrepancy neither affects Brown's statement nor eliminates Schwartz's evidence - although the possibility remains that they saw different people.

The real problem with Brown's description is that he saw nothing pinned to the woman's jacket. According to the *Daily Telegraph*, Coroner Baxter asked him 'Did you notice any flower in her dress?' and witness replied 'No' and later added that he 'saw nothing light in colour about either of them.'⁷ As Stride wore dark clothes, the red rose would have been the only splash of colour on her and surely the main detail to be noticed and remembered. Five minutes earlier, PC Smith had noticed the flower. And Stride, when found, was wearing a red rose. There is therefore a possibility that another couple was in Berner Street that night.

Brown's description of the woman's companion is very vague, partly because 'the place where they were standing was rather dark'.⁸ He didn't notice any distinctive features of the man's face and the only particular encoded was the 'long coat which came very nearly down to his heels.' William Marshall saw a man wearing a 'black cutaway coat,' PC Smith mentioned a man wearing a similar garment and Schwartz saw a man with a 'dark jacket'.⁹ These sightings are incompatible with the long coat coming down to the heels, so perhaps the man seen by Brown was not the man seen by Marshall, Smith and Schwartz. This, together with the absence of the red rose from the woman's jacket, points to the possibility that Brown saw a different couple. The evidence is also unreliable because the spot was badly lit and the witness didn't pay much attention.

Analysis of James Brown's Evidence

Duration of the sight: *Short*

Distance from the eyewitness to the person/incident: *Close*

Visibility: *Spot badly lit*

Obstructions: *None*

Any reason to remember: *None*

Time lapse: *One day*

Violence and the presence of a weapon: *None*



'Pipeman' ©Jane Coram

⁷ *Daily Telegraph*, 5 October 1888, page 3

⁸ Evans, Stewart P, and Keith Skinner: *op. cit.*, page 166

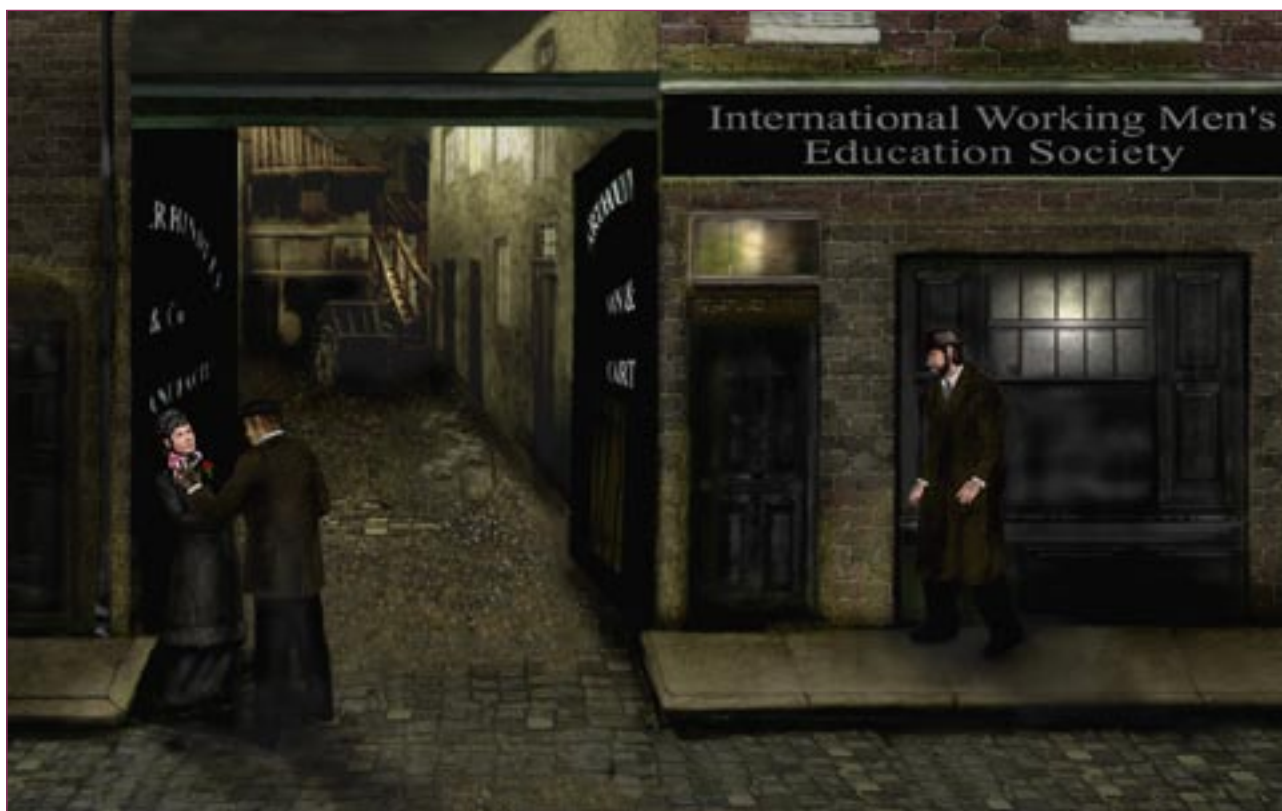
⁹ Evans, Stewart P, and Keith Skinner: *op. cit.*, page 123

In his report of 19 October, Chief Inspector Donald Swanson stated that Israel Schwartz, of 22 Helen Street, Backchurch Lane:

[At 12:45 am]... on turning into Berner Street from Commercial Road, & had got as far as the gateway where the murder was committed he saw a man stop & speak to a woman, who was standing in the gateway. He tried to pull the woman into the street, but he turned her round & threw her down on the footway & the woman screamed three times, but not very loudly. On crossing to the opposite side of the street, he saw a second man lighting his pipe. The man who threw the woman down called out, apparently to the man on the opposite side of the road, "Lipski" & then Schwartz walked away, but finding that he was followed by the second man, he ran as far as the railway arch, but the man did not follow so far. Schwartz cannot say whether the two men were together or known to each other. Upon being taken to the mortuary Schwartz identified the body as that of the woman he had seen & he thus described the first man who threw the woman down: age about 30, 5ft 5in, complexion fair, dark hair, small brown moustache, full face, broad shouldered, dress, dark jacket, trousers black, cap with a peak, nothing in his hand.¹⁰

The police regarded Schwartz's evidence as very important. Some students of the case think that Schwartz was the only witness to have seen the Ripper. Others, including Chief Inspector Donald Swanson, had their doubts. In his report he further wrote:

...I understand the Inspector to suggest that Schwartz' man need not have been the murderer. True only 15 minutes elapsed between 12:45 when Schwartz saw the man and 1:00am when the woman was found murdered on the same spot. But the suggestion is that Schwartz' man may have left her, she being a prostitute she accosted or was accosted by another man and there was time enough for this to take place and for this other man to murder her before 1:00am.



Israel Schwartz ©Jane Coram

We don't know how Schwartz established the time. Yet this is a very important detail. Schwartz's evidence is crucial mainly because what he saw was very close to the time of Stride's death. If he had been off just 15 minutes in his reckoning, for example, his evidence would be far less important. Not only that, it could be construed as exonerating the broad-shouldered man.

Schwartz was not called to the inquest. We can only speculate why. There are, at any rate, reasons to doubt his evidence. He was on his way home when he turned in Berner Street, reached Dutfield's Yard gates and noticed a man stopping and then talking to a woman. Looking carefully at his statement, as reflected in Swanson's report, we see that the man 'tried to pull the woman into the street' and not into the yard, where Stride's body would be found 15 minutes later. Then the man 'turned her round & threw her down on the footway'. This was not typical of the Whitechapel Murderer, who attacked his victims from behind and left them no escape.

¹⁰ Evans, Stewart P, and Keith Skinner: *op. cit.*, page 123.

We don't know what the woman did after being thrown to the ground because Schwartz, feeling his life was in danger, left the scene followed by the pipe smoker. The broad-shouldered man may have been able to grab her again, pull her into the yard and cut her throat within the space of 15 minutes. The evidence available, however, appears to disprove this hypothesis. Doctors at the scene of the crime stated that there were no signs of struggle and Stride's clothes were not creased. When found, she still held a packet of cachous in her left hand. This suggests that the attack on her was so sudden as to afford her no possibility to fight for her life. Her attacker must have cut her throat so unexpectedly and so swiftly that she collapsed to the ground in shock. This seems to be inconsistent with the struggle witnessed by Schwartz.

In addition, anyone being thrown to the ground would almost inevitably suffer injuries in the palms of the hands or in the knees. There were no indications of such injuries in the post-mortem report on Stride prepared by Dr George Bagster Phillips which could be regarded as consistent with her having been thrown to the ground a few minutes earlier.¹¹ It is true that Dr Phillips said at the subsequent inquest that 'Over both shoulders, especially the right, from the front aspect under the collar bones and in front of the chest there is a bluish discolouration...' ¹² which could be bruising to the shoulders consistent with being grabbed there. But it is possible that it was the Ripper who caused that bruising when seizing Stride prior to cutting her throat. It has also been argued that Stride's clothing could have protected her knees when she was thrown down to the ground and that she might not have fallen on her hands with sufficient force to sustain grazing in them.

The packet of cachous found in Stride's hand also points to the possibility that Schwartz did not see her but another woman. In effect, if the woman seen by Schwartz had been Stride, she would most likely have dropped the cachous when thrown to the ground. Yet no cachous were found scattered about the yard or in the street. Furthermore, the behaviour of the woman seen by Schwartz was not that of someone who felt her life in imminent danger. She 'screamed three times, but not very loudly'.¹³ If she had really feared for her safety, she would have tried as best as she could to attract attention to herself and her attacker, possibly even seeking help from Schwartz. She didn't call out and she didn't try to escape, react or defend herself. The behaviour of this woman and the broad-shouldered man looks more like a simple quarrel than like a murder attempt.

Again, it is possible that the broad-shouldered man refrained from further violence after he realised Schwartz had witnessed his attack on the woman. Prostitutes were often used to domestic violence and probably to being treated roughly by their customers as well. If the woman was Stride, she may have accepted the broad-shouldered man's outburst of anger, whatever its cause may have been, as an occupational hazard, and unwarily followed her killer into the darkness of the passage. Be it as it may, it cannot be ascertained from Schwartz's testimony that the woman he saw being thrown to the ground was indeed Stride and that her attacker was Jack the Ripper.

It is worth noting that Schwartz was on his way home when he witnessed the attack. When he heard the man cry out 'Lipski' he 'walked away, but finding that he was followed by the second man, ran as far as the railway arch'.¹⁴ I find odd that he didn't continue along Berner Street, turn in Helen Street and reach the safety of his home but instead preferred to stay on the streets until he reached the railway arch. For all we know this was never explained. Schwartz gave his statement at the Lemon Street Police Station through an interpreter and inevitably details of what he said were lost in translation.

When violence is implied, witnesses are likely to devote virtually all of their attention to the perpetrators of the crime and what they are doing. Stress leads to a narrowing of focus. The implication of this is that, since attention is concentrated on the perpetrators and what they do, accounts of them and their actions are likely to be both detailed and accurate. However, this will also mean that other more peripheral information, such as the activities of other persons involved, might not be noticed and will, as a consequence, be remembered less well. Reading again Schwartz's evidence we can see that he was able to recollect and remember almost everything about the attacker including height, build, complexion, moustache, hair, clothes, cap and behaviour, but said nothing about Stride. Even though he positively identified the body as the woman he had seen, the intriguing possibility remains that what he saw had nothing to do with her murder. Israel Schwartz may have been witness to nothing more than a street brawl.

Analysis of Israel Schwartz's Evidence

Duration of the sight: *Short*

Distance from the eyewitness to the person/incident: *Close*

Visibility: *Enough light*

Obstructions: *None*

Reason to remember: *Present*

Time lapse: *The statement was given the same day*

Violence and the presence of a weapon: *Present*

¹¹ Magellan, Karyo: *By Ear and Eyes*, page 77

¹² *Daily Telegraph, The Times*, 4 October 1888.

¹³ Evans, Stewart P, and Keith Skinner: *op. cit.*, page 123.

¹⁴ Evans, Stewart P, and Keith Skinner: *op. cit.*, page 122.

Fanny Mortimer lived on the same side of the street and only three doors north of Dutfield's Yard, where Stride was killed.¹⁵ Even though Mrs Mortimer didn't play a central role in the investigation, and even though she didn't see Stride, she was standing on her doorstep at about the time Stride was murdered nearby. Her statement ties in with other witnesses' statements and casts new light on what may have happened in Berner Street that night. What she saw or didn't see is relevant in connection with evidence already discussed. Finally, and more important, Mrs Mortimer raised the possibility that another couple were in Berner Street that night. Although she didn't appear at the inquest, her statement was covered by many newspapers. On 1 October, the *Daily Telegraph* reported it as follows:

I was standing at the door of my house nearly the whole time between half-past twelve and one o'clock this (Sunday) morning, and did not notice anything unusual. I had just gone indoors, and was preparing to go to bed, when I heard a commotion outside, and immediately ran out, thinking that there was another row at the Socialists' Club close by... There was certainly no noise made, and I did not observe anyone enter the gates. It was just after one o'clock when I went out, and the only man whom I had seen pass through the street previously was a young man carrying a black shiny bag, who walked very fast down the street from the Commercial-road. He looked up at the club, and then went round the corner by the Board School. I was told that the manager or steward of the club had discovered the woman on his return home in his pony cart. He drove through the gates, and my opinion is that he interrupted the murderer, who must have made his escape immediately under cover of the cart. If a man had come out of the yard before one o'clock I must have seen him. It was almost incredible to me that the thing could have been done without the steward's wife hearing a noise, for she was sitting in the kitchen from which a window opens four yards from the spot where the woman was found... A young man and his sweetheart were standing at the corner of the street, about 20 yards away, before and after the time the woman must have been murdered, but they told me they did not hear a sound.

In his report of 19 October 1888, Chief Inspector Donald Swanson stated that the man with the black bag was Leon Goldstein, who on reading about himself in the newspapers had reported to the Leman Street Police Station and subsequently been ruled out of the investigation. So, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, Mrs Mortimer went back inside after seeing Leon Goldstein pass by. Shortly afterwards, she heard Diemschutz go by with his pony and cart and then heard the commotion at the club. Assuming that she had heard PC Smith on his beat, she was outside for nearly thirty minutes, from 12:30 -12:35am to 1:00am. However, other people were in Berner Street that night and apparently not one of them saw anyone else in the vicinity. Had Mrs Mortimer actually been outside from 12:30am to 1:00am, she could not have missed Charles Letchford (walking through Berner Street at 12:30am), Joseph Lave (who exited the club via Dutfield's Yard at about 12:30am, was outside for about 5 minutes, and went as far as the street), James Brown (coming back home at about 12:45am after having bought his supper from a chandler's shop at the junction of Fairclough and Berner Street), Morris Eagle (returning to the club at 12:40am and trying the front door before going through Dutfield's Yard), or, of course, the entire Schwartz incident. It is very hard to believe that she could really miss all these people coming and going. So, how can we reconcile all the evidence available?

The *Evening News* reported Mrs Mortimer's actions adding a detail that is helpful in establishing when and how long she stayed at her doorstep:

...shortly before a quarter to one o'clock [my italics] she [Mrs Mortimer] heard the measured heavy stamp of a policeman passing the house on his beat. Immediately afterwards she went to the street door with the intention of shooting the bolts, though she remained standing there ten minutes before she did so. During the ten minutes she saw no one enter or leave the neighbouring yard, and she feels sure that had any one done so she could not have overlooked the fact.

According to this statement, she went out immediately after having heard 'the measured heavy stamp', and she put the time as 'shortly before a quarter to one o'clock'. Was the man who walked with 'the measured heavy stamp' PC Smith on his beat? Well, possibly, but this assumption generates more than one contradiction. PC Smith stated at the inquest he had seen a woman later identified as Elizabeth Stride at about 12:30-12:35am, so if the man whose step was heard by Mrs Mortimer was really him, he estimated the time wrongly. Yet he had in fact established the time quite accurately and cross examination of his statement proved it to be correct. His beat took him about 25 minutes. He stated at the inquest that 'At 1 o'clock [he] went to Berner Street in [his] ordinary round' when he saw 'a crowd of people outside the gates of No. 40'. Stride's body was discovered at 1:00am or very shortly before - a point corroborated also by Diemschutz, Eagle, PC Lamb and Spooner - so PC Smith had also been in Berner Street at about 12:35am. A 10-minute discrepancy is irreconcilable.

Even assuming that Mrs Mortimer could have missed Brown and Eagle, whose actions were unremarkable and could therefore have gone unnoticed, she couldn't have missed the incident witnessed by Schwartz at 12:45am. Three men and a woman were involved, a fight took place and the woman was thrown to the ground. We can't ascertain when Mrs Mortimer went out and how long she stayed at her doorstep, but it is likely that the 'measured heavy stamp' was not PC Smith's. She said she had 'just gone indoors, and was preparing to go to bed, when [she] heard a commotion outside'. So possibly she went indoors only minutes before Stride's body was discovered, with a discrepancy of just

15 Chisholm, Alexander, Christopher-Michael DiGrazia and Dave Yost: *The News from Whitechapel: Jack the Ripper in the Daily Telegraph*.



Church Passage ©Jane Coram

a few minutes, about 12:55-12:58am. Considering more reliable evidence taken at an official inquest, we could reconcile all statements assuming that Mrs Mortimer went out just after the Schwartz incident, possibly shortly after a quarter to 1 o'clock. This would explain why she saw nobody. However, it is also possible that she overestimated the time she stood at the door.

Finally, it is interesting to note that she saw a couple in Berner Street. In her own words: '...a young man and his sweetheart were standing at the corner of the street, about 20 yards away, before and after the time the woman must have been murdered, but they told me they did not hear a sound.' James Brown also saw a couple 'standing at the corner of the Board School,' exactly on the same spot where Mrs Mortimer had seen a couple. Brown didn't see a red rose pinned to the woman's jacket and described her companion as dressed in a 'a long coat which came very nearly down to his heels' while PC Smith noticed the flower in Stride's jacket and described her companion as dressed in 'a dark diagonal cutaway coat'. These details are irreconcilable. Brown and PC Smith probably saw different men and possibly different women too. Brown's description of the woman is very vague. He only remarked he had noticed no flower,

admitting also that the spot was badly lit. Yet he was 'almost certain that the deceased was the woman to whom his attention was attracted'.¹⁶ Most likely, Brown didn't see Stride with the man seen by PC Smith but the couple seen by Mrs Mortimer.

The body of Elizabeth Stride was discovered by Diemschutz at 1:00am. Even though the Ripper was almost caught, he was able to leave the scene of the crime undetected. Only 45 minutes later, he claimed a second victim, Catherine Eddowes, whose body was found by PC Watkins in Mitre Square. In marked contrast to the Berner Street Murder, we have only one positive sighting of Eddowes. Yet this sighting took place only nine minutes before the discovery of her body. If the woman seen was really her, there are good chances that the man in her company was the Ripper.

At 1:30am, Joseph Lawende, a commercial traveller in the cigarette trade, Joseph Hyam Levy, a butcher, and Harry Harris, a furniture dealer, left the Imperial Club at 16-17 Duke Street. Lawende established the time by the Club clock and his own watch. They had spent the evening drinking together and delayed their departure from the Club only because of the rain. The distance between the Club and the Church Passage was nine or ten yards. It must therefore have been about 1:35am when Lawende, who walked a little ahead of his companions, noticed a woman and a man talking at the corner of Duke Street and Church Passage. He only glanced briefly at the couple, but could later remember and describe what he saw. His statement could in fact be of prime importance. Of all the sightings of victims in company of a man, Lawende's sighting, if proved reliable, would be the closest to the estimated time of the victim's death.

Joseph Lawende stated that the woman he saw was standing facing a man with her hand on his chest, but not in a manner to suggest that she was resisting him. Lawende described the man as 30 years old, 5 foot 7 inches tall, fair complexion and moustache and medium build. He was wearing a pepper-and-salt-coloured jacket which fit loosely and

¹⁶ Evans, Stewart P, and Keith Skinner: *op. cit.*, page 173

a grey cloth cap with a peak of the same colour. He had a reddish handkerchief knotted around his neck. Overall he gave the appearance of being a sailor.¹⁷ Lawende later identified Eddowes's clothes as those worn by the woman he saw that night. Joseph Hyam Levy, one of Lawende's companions, said that he was on the opposite pavement to the couple and took only passing notice of them. He remembered very little of what he saw. He described the man as three inches taller than the woman, who was, in his opinion, perhaps 5ft high. He didn't give any other particulars. The third man, Harry Harris, saw nothing.

As many authors have noted, there's the feeling, reading Levy's statements at the inquest, that he was being evasive. On leaving the Club at half past one, Levy said to Harris: 'I don't like to go home by myself when I see this sort of character about. I'm off.'¹⁸ But the couple had done nothing to attract their attention. It is a mystery why Levy made this remark and it is a real pity that this was never explained at the inquest. Levy corroborated the time given by Joseph Lawende by stating at the inquest that when they came out of the Club it was '...3 or 4 minutes after the half hour'.¹⁹ When they went down Duke Street into Aldgate the couple were still talking on the same spot.

The description of the man Lawende and his friends had seen at the top of Church Passage was kept secret at the inquest and made public by the *Police Gazette* only on 19 October 1888. Lawende's evidence was mainly affected by the fact that he hadn't seen the woman's face. He recognized her at the mortuary only by her clothes, raising the doubt whether the woman seen was indeed Eddowes. At the time of her murder, Eddowes was wearing a straw bonnet in green and black velvet with black beads and black string worn tied to the head, a black cloth jacket trimmed round the collar and cuffs with imitation fur, an old white apron, a dark green chintz skirt with three flounces, a man's white vest, a brown linsey bodice, a green stuff petticoat and a piece of red gauze silk worn as a neckerchief.²⁰ The spot in the passage where the man and woman were standing was badly lit, but Eddowes's clothes were more noticeable than Stride's. It was not unusual for a woman to wear a white apron; Mary Kelly was also described wearing such a garment by Walter Dew. But a dark green chintz skirt with three flounces and a red gauze silk worn as a neckerchief must have been quite distinctive features to note and encode. Levy estimated Eddowes's height accurately as 5ft tall. As a matter of fact, she was identified by her height and her clothes.

Lawende took more than a passing glance at the couple because of what Levy said to Harris: 'I don't like to go home by myself when I see this sort of character about. I'm off.'²¹ According to Levy, he said this when they left the Club, and they left the Club together, even if immediately afterwards Lawende walked a little ahead of his companions. This would have been enough for Lawende to focus on the couple and notice and encode the scene. He was also very close to the couple: 'The man and woman were about nine or ten feet away from me,' he would state later.²²

The three Jews were not the only witnesses to have seen a couple near Mitre Square. In an uncorroborated account in the *Daily Telegraph*, 13 November 1888, we read that:

*About ten minutes before the body of Catherine Eddowes was found in Mitre Square, a man about thirty years of age, of fair complexion, and with a fair moustache, was said to have been seen talking to her in the covered passage leading to the square. [The description] was given by two persons who were in the Orange Market and closely observed the man. The City police have been making inquiries for this man for weeks past, but without success, and they do not believe that he is the individual described by Cox.*²³

Analysis of Joseph Lawende's Evidence

Duration of the sight: *Short*

Distance from the eyewitness to the person/incident: *9 or 10 feet*

Visibility: *Badly lit*

Obstructions: *None*

Any reason to remember: *None*

Time lapse: *The statement was given the same day*

Violence and the presence of a weapon: *None*

Did anyone ever see the Ripper?

Our analysis suggests we must take especially into consideration the evidence of PC Smith and Joseph Lawende. While we should not expect their descriptions to be totally accurate, their evidence and the details they give should be regarded as the most reliable to be had. Their recollection was affected by gaps and lacunae, but they both probably described the same man. They saw him in the company of the victim and, as far as time and place were concerned, very

¹⁷ *Police Gazette*, 19 October 1888

¹⁸ Begg, Paul: *op. cit.*, page 172

¹⁹ Evans, Stewart P, and Keith Skinner: *op. cit.*, page 213

²⁰ Evans, Stewart P, and Keith Skinner: *op. cit.*, page 203

²¹ Evans, Stewart P, and Keith Skinner: *op. cit.*, page 213

²² *Daily Telegraph*, October 12, 1888, Page 2

²³ *Daily Telegraph*, 13 November 1888

close to the murder site at the time of the murders. Lawende and PC Smith saw what looked like a typical punter on the point of picking up a prostitute and behaving in such a manner as to attract as little attention as possible to himself. The couple were very discreet and kept their voices low. They didn't even arouse the suspicions of a policeman like PC Smith. The man's attitude was so unremarkable as to deflect PC Smith's attention, preventing him from encoding and remembering his appearance.

Was he the Whitechapel Murderer? Very likely. I don't claim to know the Ripper's identity. But I am sure he was someone who could move about unheard and unnoticed, someone so average in his appearance he could avoid being noticed and suspected. He was probably dressed like a perfect nobody, an East Ender among hundreds of East Enders, with no distinguishing features except perhaps a 'cap with a peak'. To minimise the chances of being seen, he must have approached his victims stealthily and won their confidence with just a few words. He certainly knew what he was doing. His MO left his victims no way out. He was a fast worker and carried out his crime in the space of only a few minutes. Then he left as he had arrived; unnoticed.

Jack the Ripper has just avoided detention again, vanishing down a grim, gaslit alley in Whitechapel in the year 1888. But this time we have seen him.

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ROBERT LINFORD, JOHN SAVAGE AND DAVID O'FLAHERTY

Between Austen and Dickens

For many years, the Langham family operated a venerable legal practice, Langham Solicitors, from 10 Bartlett's Buildings, Holborn. Langham Solicitors had been in operation since at least 1803, when *The Times's* bankruptcy notices mention 'Attorney, Mr Langham, Bartlett's buildings, Holborn' representing a debtor.¹ In the 1830s and 1840s, the practice was in the capable hands of Samuel F Langham Sr, who at one time also served as the Under-Sheriff of London and who would go on to represent the ward of Farringdon Without in the Court of Common Council, 1851-1862.²

We find Bartlett's Buildings in the world of Jane Austen:

*About this time, the two Miss Steeles, lately arrived at their cousin's house in Bartlett's Buildings, Holborn, presented themselves again before their more grand relations in Conduit and Berkeley Street; and were welcomed by them all with great cordiality.*³

While Langham Solicitors' existed in the cordial world of Jane Austen, some of its business was firmly rooted in the world of Dickens. Part of Langham Sr's work had him serving as a public defender, an 'attorney of London', so clients of Langham Solicitors included the less than cordial elements of society, particularly smugglers. In 1833, a solicitor who was presumably a member of Langham Solicitors, possibly the father of the coroner, unsuccessfully represented the entire eighteen-man crew of the *Ramona* against a charge of smuggling tobacco.

*Mr Langham and Mr Lawrence cross-examined the witnesses, and made an able defence for the prisoners, but they failed in shaking the evidence for the prosecution.*⁴

The future coroner, Samuel Frederick Langham, was born 29 July 1823 in Finsbury Street, London. As a youth, he attended Holloway Academy. The following advertisement for the school, although it dates roughly twenty years after Samuel's attendance, adds some flavour to his early years.

*EDUCATION, at HOLLOWAY ACADEMY, conducted by Mr SAYER, successor to Mr Baker. - In this establishment, while that importance is attached to the ancient classics which a liberal education demands, prominent attention is directed to the French and German languages, thorough mercantile accounts, and the higher branches of arithmetic, good business handwriting, and a grammatical and critical acquaintance with the English language. The pupils are exercised weekly in English composition, are instructed in the principles of chymistry, model and perspective drawing, and every endeavour is made to render the education as practical as possible. Punishment, not corporal. The grounds comprise large cricket field, covered and dry playgrounds, &c. Terms 30 guineas per annum.*⁵



Samuel Frederick Langham
From *The Corporation of The City of London and The First Twelve of The Great City Guilds*, ed. Alfred Arthur Sylvester, (London 1897) [CLRO REF; JACB/223]. Courtesy of the Joint Archives Service - Corporation of London Records Office.

1 'Bankrupts', *The Times*, 7 February 1803.

2 George Sylvester (Ed.) *'The Corporation of The City of London and The First Twelve of The Great City Guilds'*, (London 1897) [CLRO REF; JACB/223].

3 Jane Austen. *Sense and Sensibility*. <http://www.pemberley.com/etext/SandS/chapter32.htm> Accessed 30 November 2005.

4 'Conviction of the Crew of a Steamer for Smuggling', *The Times*, 4 December 1833.

5 *The Times*, 14 January 1856.

After receiving his well-rounded Holloway education, with its dry playgrounds and happy absence of canings, Samuel was apprenticed to his father in the family's legal practice in Holborn.⁶ We offer little about the early years of the coroner. We imagine the young Samuel Langham as a refined English gentleman with a rather soft, patrician face, rather in the mold of one of Austen's characters. He had a classical education. He could speak French and German. He could draw. Most importantly, he could compose a well-written sentence in good business handwriting, a necessary skill to have as he wound his way through the family practice at 10 Bartlett's Buildings under his father's guidance.

In 1851, he married Matilda Elisabeth Obbard, the daughter of Joseph Obbard of De Crespigny Park, Denmark Hill. Samuel and Matilda are most likely to have met through Langham Sr's connections, as one Robert Obbard was a political force in Farringdon Without, the same ward that Langham Sr represented in the Common Council.⁷ Matilda and Samuel had numerous children: Joseph, David, John, Arthur, Edith, and Ethel.⁸

The Virtues of a Coroner

Throughout his coronial career, which began in 1849 and ended in 1901, Langham served the City and Liberty of Westminster, the Duchy of Lancaster, the City of London and the Borough of Southwark. They were franchise coronerships, and although their duties were more or less the same, they were a different type of animal from county coronerships such as those of Wynne Baxter, Roderick Macdonald and Thomas Diplock.

'Coroners are of three kinds', wrote Richard Henslowe Wellington in *The King's Coroner*, and each held his office under different virtues.

1. *Virtute office*.⁹ This was the High Court. All the Justices were coroners for a practical reason - coroners were judicial officers or magistrates. That made the Lord Chief Justice the Chief Coroner, by virtue of his office, and the lesser Judges of the High Court were sovereign coroners. Their jurisdiction was the entirety of the realm, and all the coroners in it. That meant that the High Court reviewed disputed inquests to ensure that coroners had properly followed legal procedure. If they found that he hadn't, the High Court had the power to quash inquest verdicts and instruct coroners to perform specific legal actions called a mandamus. Coroners had to explain their actions to the Court, usually through affidavit.

2. *Virtute electionis*.¹⁰ Borough and county coroners fall into this category. They held their office by virtue of election, and in 1888, their jurisdiction was confined to their relative districts, barring the illness, absence, or death of a neighbouring coroner. While most came from legal or medical backgrounds, by 1888 their only qualification was that they be fit persons owning an unspecified amount of property. Wynne Baxter, Thomas Diplock and Roderick Macdonald are examples of county coroners. As City Coroner, Samuel Langham was a member of this group; he held office by virtue of election because the Court of Common Council, an elected body, interviewed a small pool of candidates, ultimately determining the winner by a vote in Council.

3. *Virtute cartæ sive commissionis*.¹¹ This was the franchise coroner, the chartered or commissioned coroner, as defined by The Coroners Act 1887:

*The expression 'franchise coroner' means any of the following coroners, that is to say, the coroner of the Queen's household, a coroner or deputy coroner for the jurisdiction of the Admiralty, a coroner appointed by Her Majesty the Queen in right of Her Duchy of Lancaster, and a coroner appointed for a town corporate, liberty, lordship, manor, university, or other place, the coroner for which has heretofore been appointed by any lord, or otherwise than by election of the freeholders of a county, or of any part of a county, or by the council of a borough, and the expression 'franchise' means the area within which the franchise coroner exercises jurisdiction.*¹²

The Queen's household, the Admiralty, the Duchy of Lancaster, the Cinque Ports and the Isle of Ely all had their own coroners. The Clerk of the Crown was a coroner of the High Court and had jurisdiction over deaths in the prison of that court. In some cases, the lord of a franchise or head of a corporation could personally act as coroner within their franchise. In some of the rural franchises, the qualifications for coroners were odd. 'In Derbyshire,' Lord Francis Hervey told the House of Commons in 1876, 'a Coroner was appointed by right of the possession of a horn - a hereditary relic.'¹³

6 Sylvester.

7 When Robert Obbard's election to the Common Council was disputed in 1847, Langham Sr unsuccessfully represented Obbard's co-defendant, H. John Lyas ('The Farringdon-Without Ward Election,' *The Times* 21 January 1847). Langham Sr went on to secure his own seat on the Council in 1852.

8 RG11 222/60.

9 R. Henslowe Wellington. *The King's Coroner: Being a Complete Collection of the Statutes Relating to the Office Together with a Short History of the Same*. (London: William Clowes & Sons, Limited, 1905),

10 Wellington, 30-4.

11 Wellington, 24-30.

12 *The Public General Acts Passed in the Fiftieth and Fifty-first Years of the Reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, etc. Third Schedule*, (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1888), 24.

13 *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 3rd Series, 1830-189, Vol. 1-356 (London: T.C. Hansard). 11 July 1876, Col. 1301-14.

Samuel Langham was also a member of this group acting under commission or charter, as deputy coroner for Westminster and for portions of the Duchy of Lancaster. The Dean and Chapter of Westminster had the power to appoint a coroner for the franchise, the City and liberties of Westminster. Somewhat confusingly, we can also classify the coronership for the City of London here, since it too was a franchise, and the Lord Mayor, by charter, could act as the coroner of London or delegate the office to a deputy. During vacancies in the office in 1872 and 1884, the Lord Mayor acting with the Court of Common Council appointed both the City Solicitor and the Town Clerk as acting coroner until the Council elected replacements.



Thomas Wakley

In 1849, Langham began his career as deputy coroner for Westminster against an epic background of turmoil and reform. Thomas Wakley was at the height of his activities as West Middlesex coroner, and at the time Langham's story really begins, barely three years had passed since Wakley's 1846 Hounslow Flogging inquest had illustrated to the public the usefulness of pathology as a tool of the inquest. The young Samuel Langham entered a system in the process of redefining itself. Wakley began the medicalization of the English inquest; Langham helped professionalize an office that carried no professional qualifications.

The Coroner's Form of Prayer

September 1849: England was in the grip of a horrendous outbreak of cholera. On the individual level, people contract cholera by drinking dirty water or eating food contaminated with the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae* - for example, devouring undercooked shellfish that once sat in brackish coastal waters carries unpleasant consequences. Most cases of cholera are mild, but according to the Centre for Disease Control, severe cases present symptoms of 'profuse water diarrhoea, vomiting, and leg cramps.' We can snicker about embarrassing stories of 'Montezuma's Revenge', but read on. 'Rapid loss of body fluids leads to dehydration and shock. Without treatment, death can occur within hours'.

Now imagine a densely populated area with poor sewage. It's asking for trouble, because cholera is spread through contact with the faeces of infected people.¹⁴ In these pleasant industrialized countries that many of us are fortunate to inhabit these days, with their efficient sewage and water treatment systems, contact with infected faeces isn't something most of us particularly have to worry about. As long as we have the ability to wash our food, and ourselves, we're safe from awful bacteria like *Vibrio cholerae*. The next time you have occasion to visit the often-maligned public toilet, take a discrete look around. The well-maintained facility (and the custodian who keeps it clean) has saved you from many an illness, perhaps even from a sudden, but painful and undignified, death.

Nineteenth century England, with its inadequate sanitation, was a much different story. Let's look at some figures for just seven days in the life of the cholera outbreak. For the first week of September 1849, 2,513 people died of the disease across England and Wales; another 450 died of diarrhoea. That's *without* including increasingly congested London, which accounted for another 2,061 deaths all by itself.¹⁵ Cholera spread at that level speaks of frequent contact with infected excrement. Six thousand deaths in a single week eloquently speak of an overcrowded population with an inadequate sewage and water treatment system. Dirty water. Dirty food. Dirty hands. Close quarters. Cholera.

From Balmoral, also during that first week of September 1849, Queen Victoria's response to the outbreak was that everyone should pray harder:

It is this day ordered by Her Majesty in Council that his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury do prepare a form of prayer to Almighty God on account of the great mortality caused by the cholera; and that such form of prayer be used in all churches and chapels in England and Wales, and in the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, as soon as the ministers thereof shall receive the same.



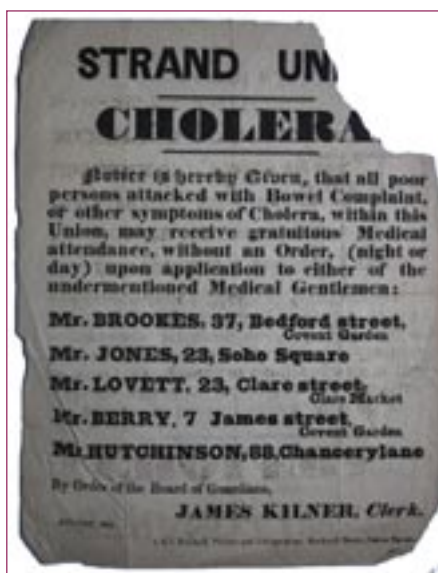
Queen Victoria

14 'Division of Bacterial and Mycotic Diseases: Cholera.' http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/cholera_g.htm Accessed 16 March 2006.

15 'The Cholera', *The Times*, 10 September 1849.

*And it is hereby further ordered that Her Majesty's printer do forthwith print a competent number of copies of the said form of prayer, in order that the same may be forthwith sent round and read in the several churches and chapels in England and Wales, and in the town of Berick-upon-Tweed.*¹⁶

Especially affected by cholera were London workhouses and prisons, two institutions that, under the Birth, Deaths, and Marriages Registration Act of 1836, routinely fell in the realm of enquiry since governors were required to register all deaths in gaols and workhouses. Just like Queen Victoria, coroners also reacted to the great mortality, but unlike Victoria, the coroner's form of prayer was inquest - find out what caused cholera and determine how to prevent it in the future. In January 1849, West Middlesex coroner Thomas Wakley held a series of much criticized but celebrated series of inquests into the cholera-related deaths of children.



1849 poster advising on cholera

Cholera also struck the Liberty of Westminster, where 54 people succumbed that week of 8 September 1849. One of the first cases the twenty-six-year-old Langham presided over was that of Joseph Williams, an inmate of Tothill Fields House of Correction. Williams, a former baker of about middle age (35 in 1848), 'almost destitute of forehead' with a 'singularly ill-looking countenance', had achieved notoriety the year before, when he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for spreading sedition in support of a free Ireland.¹⁷ Halfway through his sentence, Williams was dead.

*He was what was termed a first-class prisoner; he had first-class diet, and had no work whatever to perform. John Butler, another warder, deposed, that deceased was taken ill on the 4th inst., and complained of diarrhoea. The surgeon saw him and he was removed to the infirmary. On the 7th about 11 o'clock in the morning he complained very much of his head and by this time the diarrhoea had ceased. He complained also of pains in his back and requested that his bed might be made softer. This request was complied with, and on replacing him in bed he was immediately seized with a fit. Dr Lavies, the prison surgeon, was sent for without delay, and that gentleman attended in about 20 minutes, when deceased was pronounced to be a corpse.*¹⁸

For some coroners and juries, that would have been enough to return a verdict. However, a barrister appearing on behalf of friends of Williams, Tyndal Atkinson, asked Langham to adjourn for further evidence. Not all was as it should have been inside the prison, he suggested.

*Sir, I have to request an adjournment of the inquiry, in order that we may have the evidence of the absent warden; for as I am rightly informed by the friends of the deceased, this may turn out something very different from a case of cholera, as there is yet more important evidence to lay before you.*¹⁹

The deputy-coroner and the jury agreed. 'For it was due to the friends of the deceased that the most searching investigation should take place,' Langham said. When the inquest resumed the next day, Atkinson put procedure at the prison under scrutiny, rather as Henry Hunt had done at Ilchester Gaol almost thirty years earlier. Atkinson attempted to place blame for Williams's death on ill-treatment.

It appeared from the evidence of William Watts, a warden, and Thomas Cres, deputy-governor of the prison, that in consequence of having refused to work, the deceased, by order of the magistrates, was placed under solitary confinement and bread and water diet on the 26th of August last; that on the 28th he complained of constipation, and was ordered gruel; that he recovered on the 29th, and was again placed under the bread and water diet until the 1st of September, when he appeared to be quite well. Deceased never complained of the bread and water diet, nor of his treatment. His confinement was strictly 'separate,' and on the silent system. Previously to the deceased being placed in solitary confinement he had done no labour, his friends having paid 5s. a week for his abstinence from labour. Latterly that sum had not been paid. It was a rule in the prison in all cases of convicted prisoners not sentenced to hard labour to impose labour of some sort upon them if they did not pay 5s. a week. That was done under the 38th section of the 4th of George IV.



Tothill Fields prison

¹⁶ 'The Form of Prayer', *The Times*, 10 September 1849.

¹⁷ 'Apprehension of the Chartist Leaders', *The Times*, 8 June 1848.

¹⁸ 'The Cholera', *The Times*, 10 September 1849.

¹⁹ Ibid.

Mr John Lavies, surgeon to the prison, stated that deceased was at all times extremely unmanageable, refusing to obey his directions, and in fact acting as contrary to them as possible. He attributed his death entirely to his utter disregard of witness's directions. He died in a state of syncope from the effects of Asiatic cholera.

William Williams, the father of the deceased, deposed that he was a shoemaker, residing at 12, Halfmoon-street, Bishopsgate Without. He saw the deceased on the 5th inst., about 9 o'clock in the morning, in his cell in bed. He complained that he was very ill from starvation; that he had been six days in solitary confinement on bread and water, and that he had never got over it. Deceased said it was not cholera at all that was the matter with him, but that he was a dead man, and he attributed his death to cold and starvation.

Langham advised the jury that they should place more weight on Lavies's medical testimony than Williams's dying statement, given 'when suffering under irritation'. The jury acquiesced, finding that Williams 'died in a state of syncope from Asiatic cholera'. However, they also recommended that the change of diet to bread and water be discontinued.²⁰ The jury would have done better to suggest that authorities provide an uncontaminated supply of water, wash the food and clean up the foul excrement that must have been prevalent within Tothill Fields prison, but the Victorians hadn't quite figured cholera out in 1849.

Langham's inquest invokes the James Ford Inquest and Henry Hunt's investigation of Ilchester Gaol.²¹ What part did the prison system play in the death of inmates? What could be done to improve conditions? At Ilchester, Hunt had shown the prison surgeon to be in thorough sympathy with prison officials; that surgeon had based his medical evidence on mere hearsay. Hunt had recommended that surgeons outside the influence of the prison conduct post-mortems. At Tothill Fields, Lavies sounds suspiciously anti-patient, yet Langham apparently found him trustworthy. One wonders how Hunt's Radical disciple, the surgeon Thomas Wakley, would have reacted in Langham's place and whether he would have questioned Lavies's impartiality.

That belongs in the realm of discretion. Langham was no slouch when it came to coronial policy. Even at this early stage of his career, he already played an important role in a new group that had formed expressly to inform and advise its membership on the latest developments in coronial law and procedure.

People Who Understand

Imagine you're a London coroner working in the make-believe district of Little Middlesex during the 1820s. Although most of your brethren in London are either legal or medical men, you've succeeded in gaining your office without any professional qualifications whatsoever. By law, the only requirement for you to hold office is that you're a fit person who owns some property and that you've made a good case for the freeholders in your district to elect you their coroner.

In the context of the coronial system pre-reform, you're not a bad coroner. You investigate suspicious deaths that are reported to you. You have a copy of the directory legislation for your office, *De Officio Coronatoris*, even though, after being on the books for six hundred years, it is so outdated as not to be of much use. Instead, you guide your juries through English law by aid of some legal reference books you've purchased. You fulfil the legal obligation to view the corpse with your jury. You do your best to convince medical witnesses to come testify as to the cause of death. Since there's no legal requirement to compel medical witnesses to testify, and since there are no fees involved, the quality of these doctors varies - some are herbalists, astrologers and hexologists, men who are as likely to curse you with the Evil Eye as correctly explain the cause of death to your juries. Once in awhile, it becomes necessary to convince a surgeon to come open up a body so your jury can determine the cause of death, but you only do so rarely, because you also act out of a sense of humanity and regard for the feelings of the deceased's anguished family and for the community's squeamishness. The corpse feels nothing, but you know the autopsy is still a painful ordeal.

Then the 1830s arrive, bringing a period of tremendous change in the coronial system. The first harbinger of reform is an 1830 coronial election that brings an uncomfortable debate (for you) about professional qualifications: should the coroner be a legal or medical man? Of course, you're neither.

Then the 'Big Four' catalysts²² begin rolling out in mid-decade, a combination of a new police force, legislation, and a reaffirmation of the open inquest. Taken together, they cause an abrupt increase in your activities. You find that more sudden deaths are being reported to you and that you're holding a lot more inquests than ever before, and you now have the ability to summon a qualified surgeon to attend your inquest and testify. If you desire, you can order him to perform a comprehensive post-mortem that traces the cause and effect of death throughout the body. No more hexologists for you. Your inquests show a marked improvement in quality.

There's a drawback. Now you find that the local financial authority, the magistrates who allow you your fees, mileage and expenses, are looking at you cross-eyed. That's because, along with the number of inquests in Little Middlesex, your

²⁰ 'Cholera Inquests', *The Times*, 11 September 1849.

²¹ *Ripperologist* 63 (January 2006), 24-5.

²² The formation of the Metropolitan Police, the Births, Deaths, and Marriages Registration Act 1836, the Medical Witness Act 1836, and a general reaffirmation of the open nature of the inquest See *Ripperologist* #63 (January 2006), 27.

expenses are going up. With growing suspicion, they wave their ledger books at you. 'Just look at all these additional disbursements!' they cry. 'Are you trying to cheat the ratepayers?' The criticism makes you reluctant to exercise some of your new powers. After all, is it so terrible to save the ratepayers some money and spare the feelings of relatives by being selective with your inquests and autopsies?

Then in 1839, Thomas Wakley gets himself elected to office in West Middlesex. Outrageously, he starts insisting that he (and by association, you) should be informed of all sudden deaths in the district, not just the obviously suspicious ones. That means even more inquests; the magistrates frown at you even more. Even worse, Wakley suggests that post-mortems should be routine features of the inquest, and that ideally, you should order them performed *all the time!* Everyone's outraged - the press, the public and the magistrates who pay you. 'Where's the coroner's humanity?' they all complain.

Wakley thunders, 'Don't you see that incompetent doctors and quacks are killing you people? Don't you know that the government murders people every day? Don't you realize that mothers smother their babies all the time and make it look like an accident? Don't you see that you're being sold poison advertised as medicine? Through pathology and the open inquest, I tell you, we're going to drag bad practice out into the light of day. We coroners are going to save your lives - what's more humane than that?'

Everyone grumbles, unconvinced. However, as a coroner, you realize what Wakley means. You look around Little Middlesex, and notice that many of the hexologists' patients are dying after visiting their shops. You observe that many people die of cholera in the workhouse, all within a short period. You realize that in a single month, twenty people fall into machinery at the local factory and are chewed to pieces. Children drown in your stretch of the Thames because they don't know how to swim. Everywhere you look, you see the residents of your district trying to go about their lives, but suddenly you understand that there are a thousand ways to die in Little Middlesex. It's like watching people dance on the edge of a precipice they can't see. How fragile they are, how unprotected.

Later, Wakley's combination of science and publicity illustrates just how useful the inquest can be when, in 1846, it exposes the nasty practice the military has of flogging soldiers senseless, and how one poor Hussar has even been flogged to death. Not only can you see that Wakley's been making sense all along, but the average person begins to see that the inquest works to protect him. It publicizes and criticizes poor management policy in the factory where he works. It accuses of manslaughter the herbalist who prescribes poison to his sister. When Joe Public's pauper cousin dies suddenly in the workhouse, it's the coroner and his jury who demand an accounting for his death. Because of the increasing number of inquests and post-mortems accurately revealing causes of death, new regulations come into place in hospitals, factories, mines, and workhouses.

There are still plenty of things wrong in London, and lots of ways to encounter death suddenly, but for the average person, Wakley's reformed inquest has made life a little better than it was. Someone cares what happens to them. Coroners become protectors of people who have no recourse to protect themselves.

By 1851, your whole world has changed. Everything is different. Your relationship to your jury is different. Your relationship to your medical witness is different. Your relationship to your financial authority is different. Your relationship to the public is different. You have new powers and new discretion. How should you exercise them?

What you desperately need is someone to guide you about the policy of this strange new system. You're not a lawyer. You're not a doctor. You're just a man who owns a house; once you were popular enough to win an election. You've got over twenty years' experience with the inquest, but now reform has transformed your intentions. You're an independent officer, but there are people who exercise an influence over your office: the magistrates, Parliament and the Lord Chancellor, and the High Court. Perhaps they can offer some words of wisdom.

They are of little help. The magistrates accuse you of corruption and insist that you hold fewer inquests. In Parliament, Members argue over ancient coronial statutes strewn across the floor. Some of them look you up and down and wonder whether you're more bother than you're worth. They question whether your office is even necessary any more. The Queen's Bench, splendid in their robes of office and powdered wigs, can only dissect your procedure after you've made a public and embarrassing mistake, which of course is what you're trying to avoid. They suggest you research precedent law. That's not of great help either, because, since you're not a lawyer, you have no idea where to find precedent law, anyway.

No one understands your needs. What will you do? For a start, contact Samuel Langham.

In 1851, Langham served as Secretary for a little-recognized organization, the Coroners' Society of England and Wales. Although the Society was new and shiny in 1851, the concept of coroners gathering wasn't. There were earlier attempts at organizing individual coroners into a cohesive voice.

*TO CORONERS. - A GENERAL MEETING OF the CORONERS of ENGLAND and WALES will be held at the York Hotel, Bridge-street, Blackfriars, on Monday, the 23d instant, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, at which time and place the company of every Coroner then in London, or who can make it convenient to attend, is earnestly requested. - 14th Sept. 1816.*²³

²³ *The Times*, 17 September 1816.

Such attempts appear to have been infrequent. With the reforms and developments of the 1830s and 1840s, coroners needed something more habitual, and about the same time as Wakley's Hounslow Flogging inquest, the Coroners' Society formed in 1846 - a permanent membership organization with officers and regular meetings.

What did the Society do? In Part I of our series, we discussed the consolidation of coronial law that began in 1876 and led to the Coroners' Act, 1887. In 1846, thirty years before any of that took place, one of the purposes of the Society was to consolidate procedure among its membership. The East Middlesex coroner, William Baker, wrote in 1851:

The Coroners' Society.

It is not, perhaps, generally known to the public that the coroners of England and Wales have formed themselves into an association, under the above title.

This society has now been established for four years. It is based upon the principles of promoting, in the most efficient manner, the public service in that department of the law, by affording coroners the means of ascertaining, in all questions of difficulty, the duties which devolve upon them, by rendering to its several members, through reports and otherwise, prompt information of the several decisions in the courts, and the changes which take place in the law affecting the office; and to add to its efficiency, by promoting such further improvement as circumstances may from time to time render necessary.

It has hitherto been found to work well under the management of its president, Wm. Payne, Esq., Barrister-at-Law (the Coroner for London), and a committee, who hold their meetings monthly, and oftener if found necessary.

All coroners and deputy-coroners are admissible as members upon an annual subscription of £1 1s. each. Those who have not yet joined the society, are earnestly invited to do so, it being desirable not only that the most extended benefits should be afforded to the public, but that every coroner and deputy-coroner may reap the advantage of acquiring, at the earliest period, that general knowledge which has been found to be so essential in promoting regularity and uniformity of practice in an office of such importance.

Communications may be addressed to Mr Langham, Jun., the Secretary of the Society, No. 10, Bartlett's Buildings, Holborn.²⁴

Ethics. Circulars notifying members of relevant cases and new laws. Analysis. Discussion. Standards. Consolidation. Advocacy of coroners. Annual meetings with relevant keynote addresses. In the mid-nineteenth century, that's what the Society did. In 1851, the confused coroner of Little Middlesex found that the best source of professional advice came from the shared knowledge and experience of other coroners.

When the Society recommended that he undertake legal training, he did. When they recommended that he attend lectures on medical jurisprudence, he did. He acquired something of a professional education, and the quality of his inquests improved. Although not a surgeon, he was knowledgeable enough to ask relevant questions of medical witnesses. On legal issues, he knew not to inhibit juries in their examination of evidence. The High Court never found a reason to assess his procedure, because his procedure was solid.

Eventually, the Coroners' Society became the Voice of practically every working coroner in England and Wales. As the Society's long-standing Honourable Secretary for nearly forty years (including a period as President), that Voice often emanated from Samuel Langham, the Society's scribe.

In 1851, when a magisterial committee suggested that magistrates should replace the coroners, Langham sent a memorial from the freeholders of Middlesex in protest, which was read in the Sessions.

Mr Maude, the Deputy Clerk of the Peace, then read the memorial, and a letter which with it was accompanied, signed by a Mr Langham, as the secretary of the Coroners' Society.

The memorial appeared to be one from a number of householders and ratepayers of the county, protesting against any interference with the present duties and functions of the coroners. It stated that the memorialists had heard with indescribable astonishment the recommendations of the special committee of the court, and that the report of that committee contained passages insulting to the ratepayers and householders, who were liable to serve as coroners' jurors. It further stated that the mask was thrown aside in that part of the report where it was recommended that the duties now discharged by the coroner should be imposed upon the police and other magistrates, and that the propositions of the committee were preposterous. It urged that the coroner's office was a time-honoured protection to the liberty of the subject, in prisons, asylums, Poor Law unions, and in private life, and protested against any alteration in the coroners' jurisdiction. A long string of signatures was attached to the memorial.²⁵



Emblem of the Coroners' Society

²⁴ William Baker. *A Practical Compendium of the Recent Statutes, Cases and Decisions Affecting the Office of the Coroner, etc.* (London: Butterworths, 1851), 388-9.

²⁵ 'Meeting of Middlesex Magistrates', *The Times*, 13 June 1851.



Coroner William Webb Ward

In 1856, after the coroner for Staffordshire, William Webb Ward, held an inquest on the death by poisoning of John Parsons Cook (Rugeley Poisoning) and surreptitiously advised the suspect in that case on evidence, the Society condemned him at its annual meeting on 29 May 1856. It couldn't advocate good practice without criticizing bad practice, so via Samuel Langham, the Society made its condemnation public.

To the Editor of The Times.

Sir. - As secretary of the Coroners' Society, I beg to forward you a copy of a resolution unanimously adopted at the annual general meeting of the society, held on Thursday, the 29th inst., in order to your giving it insertion in your columns, should you think it right to do so.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,
Samuel F. Langham, Jun.
10, Bartlett's-buildings, Holborn, May 30.

At the annual general meeting of the Coroners' Society of England and Wales, held in the city of London on Thursday, May 29, on the motion of Mr R. Bremridge, coroner for Devonshire, it was unanimously resolved, -

*'That the conduct of Mr Ward, the coroner for Staffordshire, on the occasion of the holding of the inquest on the body of John Parsons Cook, as appears by the report of the trial of William Palmer, was discreditable, and if left uncensured by this society will have the effect of lowering the office of coroner in public opinion; and that, regarding this ancient institution as one of the surest safeguards for the security of life and the detection of crime, we cannot but lament that Mr Ward should have acted as he appears to have done on the late inquiry, and that he should have laid himself open to the severe censure he received at the hands of the Lord Chief Justice.'*²⁶

As the Society's President, Langham took stock of the reformed coronial system. As Ian Burney has observed in his book *Bodies of Evidence: Medicine and the Politics of the English Inquest, 1830-1926*, Langham's view of the coroner's role was more conservative than Wakley's. Rather than an active reformer, Langham's vision saw the coroner as a conservative sentinel protecting the reforms of Wakley's generation, in particular the reform of prisons. Langham wrote in 1865, 'The coroner is now called upon to be the watchful guardian of the public, to prevent a relapse into the oppression of the past.' Prevention was two-pronged, according to Burney: prevent the system from backsliding into abuse, and prevent appearances of abuse by open, publicly accessible, investigation of prison deaths.²⁷

In 1872, when the Japanese Minister of Justice arrived in London to observe various examples of English judicial courts, apparently for possible imitation in Japan, Langham's court served as the model specimen of inquest.

*Yesterday evening, Mr Sasalli, the Japanese Minister of Justice, and four of his associates, who have been sent to England by the Japanese Government for the purpose of reporting upon the practices and proceedings of the various judicial Courts in this country, attended by Mr Eyre, of John-street, Bedford-row, were present at an adjourned inquest, held by Mr Langham, at St Martin's Vestry-hall, on the body of Edward Bridges, aged 52, an army pensioner, who was found dead in the Seven Dials on the evening of Tuesday last Mr Sasalli and his associates watched the proceedings with great interest, and the evidence and the mode of taking it were explained to them by Mr Eyre. The verdict of the jury was one of natural death from heart disease. After the verdict had been given Mr Langham handed the depositions and the other official forms to Mr Sasalli for his inspection, and fully explained to him the procedure of the coroner's court.'*²⁸

The Coroners' Society is still in existence, with an address at the Court House in Stourport on Severn and a website, www.coroner.co.uk.

As we write, the coronial system promises to enter another period of considerable reform that will unquestionably lead to a new comprehensive Act. Some of the proposed reforms, which we won't address here, are controversial. It suffices to say that England will once again debate coronial law and the nature of the coroner's office, and the Society will continue to act as the coroner's advocate, and in some cases, the critic of faulty procedure. Follow its website and the press during the next several years, and remember Langham's forty-year involvement with the Society that began so early in its inception. As the Society speaks and advises on policy, you'll be witnessing, in a large measure, Samuel Langham's legacy.

²⁶ 'The Rugeley Poisoning Case', *The Times*, 31 May 1856.

²⁷ Burney, Ian A., *Bodies of Evidence: Medicine and the Politics of the English Inquest 1830-1926* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 48. Burney cites *Journal of Social Science I* (1865-1866) as the source for Langham's comment.

²⁸ 'Japanese Visitors', *The Times*, 25 May 1872.

'Nobody Can Say That You Are Safe'

Ah, the Strand, one of London's great avenues. In 1853, between Norfolk Street and Arundel Street, on the south side of the Strand, there stood a clump of eleven interconnected and rather irregular-looking houses owned by the Duke of Norfolk. They were, as *The Times* put it, 'something of an eyesore to this otherwise handsome portion of our great leading thoroughfare', having been built at different periods with no regard to uniformity in their widths, depths, and heights. His Grace had leased his unsightly clump to various businesses: tailors, booksellers, and a linen warehouse (operated by one Mr Hebbert), but apparently agreeing that his properties were something of a blight, the Duke employed an architect, H R Abraham, to pull down the buildings as their leases expired. His Grace and Abraham planned to erect a more elegant structure, which the Duke had already leased to W H Smith and Son, stationers and pocketbook-makers.

Since the leases were no more uniform than the buildings they related to, that meant the houses went down piecemeal while the remaining structures were left standing, and the businesses inside them left to operate until the expiration of their leases. Since the buildings were interconnected, the remaining houses lost much of their structural support. Therefore, the clerk of the works, a man named George Rowe, who enjoyed a reputation as a competent and thoroughly intelligent fellow, had shored up the surviving structures to prevent collapse.

One of them was No.184, which was three hundred years old and housed the business of Robert Thompson, tailor and draper. Whilst Rowe shored up 184 and his construction crew laboured next door, preparing to build the new structure for W.H. Smith and Son, Thompson carried on with his own work somewhat nervously. Alarmed visitors warned him that the shop wasn't safe. As Thompson measured the insides of legs with pins clenched between his teeth, he couldn't help but cast a wary eye about his wobbling environment. He couldn't afford to move since he depended on the continuing operation of his shop to survive.



The Strand

When Abraham determined to tear down a remaining party wall, Thompson pleaded with him not to do it, since the loss of support would make No. 184 so unsafe he'd have to leave. Abraham consulted the district surveyor and decided to leave the party wall standing. Instead, his men would build a new external wall against it.

However, safety concerns mounted when Rowe and his men broke through Robertson's cellar, damaging a supporting arch within No. 184. Absent from the site when this occurred, Abraham was most displeased.

I observed that they had continued to proceed improperly with the excavation, and that they had broken through Mr Thompson's cellar-wall under the arch. I was very much concerned about it; but Rowe told me it was done for the purpose of keeping their cement dry, and that he had 'made it all right' with Mr Thompson. I said it was a very improper proceeding, and must have shaken the wall above. I had a ladder brought me, and I carefully inspected the wall, and I found a slight crack. Rowe said it was nothing - that it was not a new crack. I have no doubt, however, that it was a new one, and I said, whether new or old, that no one should be in the building next door with my consent under such circumstances, and I begged him at once to go in with me to Mr Thompson to apprise him of my opinion. We went in and looked carefully round. Poor Rowe said, with an air of satisfaction, looking at all the corners of the ceiling, 'You see, Sir, there's not a crack in the place.' However, I told Mr Thompson that he must leave, for I must pull the wall down, as I considered it dangerous. He said, 'If I go out who's to pay me for it?' I said that it had already been determined by agreement that the district surveyor would award him compensation for any loss he might suffer. He said he should like to know for a certainty what he was to have; and he said that he would take £10. I felt that the sum he proposed was far too small, and I said that I did not go to make a bargain with him, that he was in the hands of Messrs. Smith, and that, no doubt, they would deal liberally with him. Mrs Thompson said, 'Everybody says that we are not safe;' and I said, 'Nobody can say that you are safe.'

The next day, 8 September 1853, Rowe and his men shored the old party wall in preparation of putting up the new exterior wall - again while Abraham was absent from the site. Once the supports were in place, Rowe ordered his men to excavate the old supporting wall down to a depth of 18 inches. William Shrimplin, carpenter, said:

The wall was very tender. It was an old wall, and the mortar did not appear to have much strength... I apprehended no danger myself, not a bit, or I should not have been at work under the wall. I was at work under the wall, within two or three yards of it, when I heard the crack and it fell. Mr Rowe was there also. We both ran, but he stumbled and fell. When I heard the crack I looked up and saw the wall sinking. It fell out about 12 feet from the top, and then it all came down together.

The excavation undermined the party wall, despite its shorings. The three-hundred-year-old No. 184, already weakened by the absence of its neighbouring buildings and the damage Rowe did to one of its interior walls, collapsed.

Elizabeth Stanhouse was inside at the time. A waistcoat maker working for Thompson, she was 'an extremely neat, well-looking girl, apparently about 18 years of age', and possessed of particular common sense. She provided a perspective of the collapse from inside the doomed building:

I was in the kitchen of the house at the time the accident occurred, which was about a quarter to 8 in the morning. I heard a slight crack. It seemed to proceed from just where I was standing, close by the pavement. I at once threw myself down into the vault in front, which goes down under the street by four steps from the kitchen. I felt considerably alarmed when I heard the crack, because we had been saying for the last three or four days that the house was not safe. So, when I heard the crack, I thought directly, 'That is the house going;' and I threw myself down into the vault. As soon as I recovered and got upon my feet I heard a noise like thunder. It was perfectly dark, and I could see nothing. None of the ruins fell upon me, but they blocked up the entrance to the vault, and made the place completely dark. I was about an hour and a-half in the vault altogether before I was got out. After I had been in about half-an-hour, the rubbish was removed from the top of the grating in the street, and I managed to make myself heard. But before that I should say that I had put the gas out, because a beam had fallen down and had broken the gaspipe, and I was being suffocated with the escape of gas and the rubbish. I got upon a box, and, as I knew the position of the meter, I reached it and turned off the gas. About an hour after that I made some one hear me, and the people called down to me. I told them that I was all right, and explained to them where I had left Mr and Mrs Thompson and George Dunne. About five minutes before the falling of the house I left Mrs Thompson in the back parlour, where she was dressing. Mr Thompson was standing in the back shop, between the parlour and the front shop, and I spoke to him as I went through. Dunne was standing on a pair of short steps, cleaning the fanlight over the door. I went downstairs to get a bottle of ale, and I saw no more of them. I had stooped for it, and had the bottle in my hand, when I heard the crack and fell into the vault.

The house fell straight down on top of itself, as if a giant foot had stamped upon it. A reporter from *The Times* described the scene.

The fallen house appears to have dropped down bodily and nearly perpendicularly into its foundations, scarcely any of the rubbish having escaped over the hoarding which surrounded the premises into the Strand. The ruins present an extraordinary appearance. One remarkable feature is the extremely small fragments into which everything is broken, and the manner in which the large mass of masonry has been shattered into single bricks, the majority of which have been entirely separated from the mortar, and look like bricks which have been through the hands of the mason, with the view of being employed again in another building. The bricks generally do not appear to have broken in themselves, but to have broken from one another, and to have cleared themselves almost wholly from the mortar in which they were set.

Constables and carpenters rushed to the scene to comb through the dense rubbish for survivors. Dust smothered and coated them as they worked. They found the quick-witted Miss Stanhouse alive, but she was the only survivor. Thompson, his wife, and young George Dunne, their twenty-one-year-old shopman, were all dead. So was George Rowe, who had stumbled as he tried to escape.

The Medical Witness Act in Practice

At the opening of the inquest, the jury viewed the bodies and then heard the medical testimony of how the victims had died. Langham summoned two surgeons to testify, per the Medical Witness Act 1836.²⁹

The first medical witness was Thomas Skeel, a resident of No. 42, Norfolk Street, Strand, which backed onto the scene of destruction. He made an external examination of the Thompsons.

I am a surgeon. I was called in to see the deceased on the day of the accident, between 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning. I saw Mr and Mrs Thompson taken out of the ruins as I was standing on my lead flat, which is just at the rear of their house. I examined all the bodies yesterday at the hospital, except that of Mr Rowe. I found that the features of Mrs Thompson were pale, but not at all distorted. In fact, there was not the slightest abrasion even of the skin. The body, generally, was not mutilated, and I could discover no fracture of the limbs. I attribute death to suffocation. Mr Thompson's features also were not distorted. The countenance presented a livid appearance, and was very much swollen. There was a slight indentation upon the side of the head, as if it had been subjected to some pressure; and

²⁹ Wellington, 120-1.

there were slight abrasions of the skin. There was a large quantity of blood-coloured mucous issuing from the nose. The body generally was not mutilated in any way, and I could not detect any fracture of any of the limbs. He also died from suffocation - in fact, he was completely buried in the rubbish. Deceased's features appeared quite natural, but there were slight abrasions of the skin and hand. I should attribute death in this case also to suffocation.

Mr J W Holt, the house surgeon for King's College Hospital (where the bodies were taken), was the second medical witness Langham summoned. Some legal wrangling follows, affording us an opportunity to observe the Medical Witness Act 1836 in action and dissect Langham's procedure.

The Coroner. - When were the four deceased persons brought to the hospital?

Witness. - Excuse me. I think there is some mistake here. My warrant is only for George Rowe, and I only speak as to the person specified in my warrant.

The warrant Holt referred to was Schedule A, the form of summons as provided by the Medical Witness Act, reproduced below.

CORONER'S INQUEST at (blank) upon the Body of (blank) By virtue of this my Order as Coroner for (blank) you are required to appear before me and the Jury at (blank) on the (blank) Day of (blank) One thousand eight hundred and (blank), at (blank) of the Clock, to give Evidence touching the Cause of Death of (blank) [and then add, when the Witness is required to make or assist at a post-mortem Examination, and make or assist in making a post-mortem Examination of the Body, with [or without] an Analysis, as the Case may be], and report thereon at the said Inquest.

(Signed) Coroner.

To

*Surgeon [or M.D., as the Case may be.]*³⁰

Because Langham hadn't specified the Thompsons and Dunne on Holt's warrant, Holt refused to testify on their condition. Langham therefore attempted to confine Holt's examination to Rowe, the only victim on Holt's summons.

The Coroner. - Well, tell us as to him; we will dispense with your evidence in the other case.

Witness. - The deceased, George Rowe, was brought to the hospital at about 40 minutes past 7 on Thursday morning last He was then alive. His right leg and thigh were broken. He received immediate attention. The leg was not amputated. He rallied slightly on the morning of the following day, but towards evening he became lower, and sank and died this morning about 9 o'clock. In my opinion the accident was the cause of the death. I cannot say what was the immediate cause of his death, not having made a post mortem examination. I have no doubt of his having died from the injuries he received.

However, a juryman, still perturbed by Holt's refusal to testify about the other victims, spoke up.

A juror. - Why do you object to answer with respect to the other deceased persons?

Witness. - I consider that when any bodies are brought to the hospital, and are there seen, examined, and attended to by the house surgeon, he is the person who should receive the coroner's warrant in respect of those bodies.

The Coroner. - I was informed that Mr Skeel was the gentleman who first saw the deceased, and therefore I had no alternative but to give him the warrant.

Holt criticized Langham's procedure. Let's look at Langham's reply - that he selected Skeel because he was the 'first who saw the deceased'. There's a reason that Langham looked to the person who first attended the victims. Ideally, in the rationale of the Medical Witness Act, the best medical witness a coroner could summon was a surgeon who knew the history of the victim - he was the best source for medical testimony, and certainly the best person to conduct the post-mortem, if there was to be one. Attending physicians knew the victim's medical history and could better chart the course of death in the body. Therefore, Section I of the Medical Witness Act directed that the coroner should summon the attending physician as the first option:

That from and after the passing of this Act, whenever upon the summoning or holding of any Coroner's Inquest it shall appear to the Coroner that the deceased Person was attended at his Death or during his last Illness by any legally qualified Medical Practitioner, it shall be lawful for the Coroner to issue his Order, in the Form marked (A) in the Schedule hereunto annexed, for the Attendance of such Practitioner as a Witness at such Inquest...

But what if there was no attending physician? In Section I, the Act directed the coroner to a second option:

...and if it shall appear to the Coroner that the deceased Person was not attended at or immediately before his Death by any legally qualified Medical Practitioner, it shall be lawful for the Coroner to issue such Order for the Attendance of any legally qualified Medical Practitioner being at the Time in actual Practice in or near the Place where the Death has happened...

³⁰ Wellington, 123.

But what if the attending physician killed their patient? Then they became the inquest's target for accusation of murder or manslaughter, and not the person the coroner wanted to determine the cause of death or perform the post-mortem for the jury. Therefore:

*...if any Person shall state upon Oath before the Coroner that in his or her Belief the Death of the deceased Individual was caused partly or entirely by the improper or negligent Treatment of any Medical Practitioner or other Person, such Medical Practitioner or other Person shall not be allowed to perform or assist at the post-mortem Examination of the Deceased.*³¹

In the case of the Strand accident, Thomas Skeel was the physician on the scene. In the absence of an attending physician, Skeel knew most about the victims' history, ie he had seen them in situ. We believe this is why the divisional surgeon functioned as medical witnesses in so many inquests, particularly the Ripper inquests. For the unfortunate prostitute, the closest thing she had to an attending physician was the divisional surgeon who examined her corpse at a crime scene.

So, when Langham replied that he summoned Skeel because he was 'the first (surgeon) who saw the deceased', the justification was that Skeel was the closest the inquest had to an attending surgeon. Langham's procedure in calling Skeel, which Holt had just criticized out of professional jealousy, was correct.

Although Holt deferred that Skeel may have been first on the scene, he disagreed that Skeel was the appropriate source for medical testimony.

Witness. - Possibly so; but I understand that, though that gentleman saw them, he did not examine them.

A juror. - I think it very important, if this gentleman can give us information which the other medical gentleman could not give, that the public should have the benefit of his testimony.

Witness. - Exactly so; but if I have no warrant I receive no remuneration. (Some disapprobation, and a voice in court, - 'He ought to be ashamed.') I have attended a great many inquests since I have been at the hospital, but not having received the proper warrant have obtained no remuneration.

That illustrates why the Medical Witness Act 1836 was so important to the English inquest - Holt refused to testify without payment. Imagine how it must have been *before* the Act existed - surgeons must have flatly refused to donate their time, just as Holt resisted before Langham. To ensure that qualified medical men participated in the inquest, improving the quality of the proceedings, the Act allowed payment for the first time in 1836, with Parliament determining the sum. Schedule B, the table of fees:

1. To every legally qualified Medical Practitioner for attending to give Evidence under the Provisions of this Act at any Coroner's Inquest whereat no post-mortem Examination has been made by such Practitioner, the Fee or Remuneration shall be One Guinea.

*2. For the making of a post-mortem Examination of the Body of the Deceased, either with or without an Analysis of the Contents of the Stomach or Intestines, and for attending to give Evidence thereon, the Fee or Remuneration shall be two Guineas.*³²

However, the Act disqualified payment in certain cases, for example, if a surgeon conducted a post-mortem examination without the coroner's direction. Section IV:

*Provided nevertheless, and it be further enacted, That no Order of Payment shall be given, or Fee or Remuneration paid, to any Medical Practitioner for the Performance of any post-mortem Examination which may be instituted without the previous Direction of the Coroner.*³³

There's a second qualifier. Section V disallowed fees for institutional surgeons, when the victim died in that institution.

*Provided also, and be it further enacted, That when any Inquest shall be holden on the Body of any Person who has died in any public Hospital or Infirmary, or in any Building or Place belonging thereto, or used for the Reception of the Patients thereof, or who has died in any County or other Lunatic Asylum, or in any public Infirmary or other public Medical Institution, whether the same be supported by Endowments or by voluntary Subscriptions, then and in such Case nothing herein contained shall be construed to entitle the Medical Officer whose Duty it may have been to attend the deceased Person as Medical Officer of such Institution as aforesaid to the Fees or Remuneration herein provided.*³⁴

There's Holt's real objection: Section V. Langham summoned him to testify only about George Rowe, who had died in hospital. Under Section V, Holt stood to receive no remuneration whatsoever. Skeel, on the other hand, whom Langham had summoned to testify on the Thompsons (dead at the scene), would receive a fee.

Langham attempted to placate Holt by amending the warrant.

³¹ Wellington, 120.

³² Wellington, 124.

³³ Wellington, 122.

³⁴ Ibid.

The Coroner. - Let me see the warrant. (The document was here handed up, and some alteration having been made in it, and, as we understand, the names of the other deceased having been added, he continued.) Now, Sir, you are summoned to give evidence with regard to all the bodies, and, of course, you will answer any questions that may be put to you.

Witness. - Certainly.

The Coroner. - Have you examined the other bodies?

Witness. - I have not examined them carefully.

The Coroner. - Then your evidence is worth no more than Mr Skeel's.

Witness. - Of course not, because I did not receive the warrant till this moment, and I never examine a body without receiving a warrant. Had the warrant been handed to me at the time I should have been enabled to examine them properly.

At this point, Langham could then have ordered Holt to perform an autopsy. Section I:

*...it shall be lawful for the Coroner to issue such Order for the Attendance of any legally qualified Medical Practitioner being at the Time in actual Practice in or near the Place where the Death has happened; and it shall be lawful for the Coroner, either in his Order for the Attendance of the Medical Witness, or at any Time between the issuing of such Order and the Termination of the Inquest, to direct the Performance of a post-mortem Examination, with or without an Analysis of the Contents of the Stomach or Intestines, by the Medical Witness or Witnesses who may be summoned to attend at any Inquest...*³⁵

There was a second option. Section II:

*And be it further enacted, That whenever it shall appear to the greater Number of the Jurymen sitting at any Coroner's Inquest, that the Cause of Death has not been satisfactorily explained by the Evidence of the Medical Practitioner or other Witness or Witnesses who may be examined in the first instance, such greater number of the Jurymen are hereby authorized and empowered to name to the Coroner in Writing any other legally qualified Medical Practitioner or Practitioners, and to require the Coroner to issue his Order, in the Form herein-before mentioned, for the Attendance of such last-mentioned Medical Practitioner or Practitioners as a Witness or Witnesses, and for the Performance of a post-mortem Examination, with or without an Analysis of the Contents of the Stomach or Intestines, where such an Examination has been performed before or not; and if the Coroner, having been thereunto required, shall refuse to issue such Order, he shall be deemed guilty of a Misdemeanour, and shall be punishable in like Manner as if the same were a Misdemeanour at Common Law.*³⁶

As you can see, Section II gave juries dissatisfied with medical testimony the power to name a substitute, whom the coroner was then required to summon; the coroner who failed to act was guilty of a misdemeanour. Having tried to accommodate Holt by altering his warrant, Langham was apparently now disgusted with him - Holt acted out of professional pride and jealousy. Langham appealed to the jury's discretion.

The Coroner (to the jury). - If you are not satisfied with the medical testimony as far as it goes I am empowered under the act to order any further evidence you may think necessary. Mr Holt appears to have taken some sort of offence at not having received the warrant in the first instance. Of course, I could only act upon the information which was communicated to me, and I was informed that Mr Skeel was the first medical man who saw the bodies, he being on the spot at the time of the accident. I summoned him, and, of course, he will be remunerated for his attendance. As to the man who died in the hospital, no fee is allowed; but if the warrant had included the other three there would have been a fee.

Given the reference to the jury's satisfaction, the above would seem to be an invocation of Section II. However, by citing his power, Langham appears to have also extended the jury's discretion to Section I. It seems that the jury chose not to exercise their power under Section II, and neither did Langham order Holt to perform a post-mortem under Section I. There was no further medical testimony - perfectly permissible under the legislation. The Thompsons (and presumably Dunne, unmentioned in *The Times*, but whose cause of death the inquest would have had to address) suffocated in the debris while Rowe died of his injuries at King's College Hospital. The cause of their deaths had been determined.

Langham appears somewhat self-conscious in his defence for summoning Skeel ('I could only act upon the information which was communicated to me'). However, under the wording of the Medical Witness Act, 1836, his procedure was entirely correct. In *The Times*, the medical testimony in the Strand case only occupies a very short amount of print, perhaps a quarter of a column. Yet behind that brief exchange, the Act, simple in theory, and composed of only seven short sections, was intricate in practice.

The inquest continued.

³⁵ Wellington, 120-1.

³⁶ Wellington, 121.

The Wavering Is the Hardest Part

The jury turned to issues such as how to properly shore a building, what made a proper shore (length, etc.), and whether the Building Act had been complied with. Over three exhaustive sessions, a parade of carpenters and builders appeared to answer the jury's questions. Langham and the jury also toured the scene of the accident.

However, when it was suggested that independent surveyors would be most helpful in determining proper construction procedure, Langham balked.

Mr Hawkins (appearing on behalf of the friends of the deceased) said it would be very desirable if two or three independent surveyors would also examine the premises.

The Coroner said that he had no power under the act either to order such an examination, or to pay the gentlemen who made it. He could only pay them for their attendance according to the usual scale for witnesses, and the expenses of these investigations were very jealously watched by the magistrates at quarter sessions (the magistrates were the financial authority for the City and Liberty of Westminster).

Mr Ford, on behalf of the Messrs. Smith, volunteered to bear the expense of employing either one or two or three surveyors, to be named by the coroner, so desirous were they for a thorough investigation.

Langham took Ford up on his generous offer, and three independent surveyors examined the former site of No. 184 and prepared a report for the coroner, which Langham read for the court after all the witnesses were heard (the surveyors also presented themselves for questioning). They found that Rowe's shoring of No. 184 was insufficient. However, in their professional judgment, Rowe and his superior, Abraham, weren't negligent.

The deceased Rowe, in charge of the works, was stated to be a man of undoubtedly sound practical experience and judgment, with every facility at his command for obtaining and using the means of rendering everything secure; and that Mr Abraham, the architect, and himself had paid every attention they had deemed necessary to that end.

And further, that as such operations as the foregoing are of extreme difficulty, and so frequently matters of difference of opinion with the most practical men, we consider, generally speaking, that there can be no better judges of what is necessary to be done to insure safety than those persons in charge of the works and interested in their proper execution.

Langham summed up for the jury:

Serious as the calamity was into which it was their duty to inquire, it must be a matter for great thankfulness that it had not occurred at a somewhat later period, when, in all probability, there would have been a great many more persons on the premises. The miraculous escape, also, of Elizabeth Stanhouse, the result of that wonderful firmness and presence of mind which she had exhibited, and which had enabled her to give her evidence with the clearness and distinctness that she had, was likewise a matter for congratulation. It was their duty, however, carefully to weigh the evidence, and to say whether any criminality attached to any of the parties engaged in the work in progress. He hoped, as this inquiry had created a great amount of public attention, and had occupied a great deal of their time, that its effect would be to show that persons could not engage in responsible undertakings of this description without taking care that the utmost attention was paid to the safety and security of every part of the work. First, it would be their duty to ascertain the cause of the calamity, and then it would be for them to determine whether any criminal responsibility rested with any person... the whole responsibility of the works appeared to be thrown upon the builders, but it would be stating the question too broadly to say that every builder was personally to inspect every work in which he was engaged. It was the duty, therefore, of the builders to appoint some perfectly competent and well-trained person to represent them, and it would be for the jury to say whether Mr Rowe was such a person... With respect to Mr Abraham, they had heard that gentleman's evidence, and they had also heard the evidence of Mr Stevens who stated his belief that the works as described by Mr Abraham to have been left by him on the day before the accident were perfectly safe (the 18-inch holes which had undermined the party wall had been dug in Abraham's absence). It was for the jury, upon the evidence before them, to say whether in this case there had been gross criminal negligence. It was not sufficient that there should have been an error of judgment, but that there must have been actual culpable negligence proved in order to justify a verdict of 'Manslaughter.'

Abraham had put Rowe in charge, and Rowe had undermined the party wall by not shoring it sufficiently as he excavated. Neither had he adequately shored No. 184. By placing Rowe in charge, had Abraham simply made a mistake, or was his mistake so horrendous that he was criminally negligent? The jury wrestled over Abraham's fate for two hours before returning their verdict.

We unanimously find that Robert Thompson, Sarah Thompson, George Dunne, and George Rowe came to their respective deaths by the falling of the house No. 184, Strand, and that the falling of such house is to be attributed to the gross negligence of Mr Abraham, the surveyor employed by the Duke of Norfolk and the Messrs. Smith, in not causing the party-wall to be sufficiently shored up and underpinned before the excavations for the new building were commenced. Before we separate we are anxious to express our approbation of the conduct of the Messrs. Smith in volunteering to bear the expenses of employing the three independent surveyors to ascertain the cause of the accident.

Gross negligence? Had the jury confused Langham's instructions about gross criminal negligence? The jury's intent was unclear; Langham probed the verdict, gently, so as not to inhibit them. Had the jury meant to accuse Abraham of criminal negligence - of manslaughter - or did they simply intend to chastise him?

The Coroner. - Your verdict, then, gentleman, amounts to a verdict of 'Manslaughter' against Mr Abraham - that I understand to be the verdict of you all?

Mr Berger (a juror). - We did not contemplate that. We consider that it was 'gross negligence,' arising from an error in judgment.

The Foreman. - We did not intend our verdict to amount to 'Manslaughter' against Mr Abraham. Can we not alter the words 'gross negligence' into 'want of due care?'

The Coroner. - I understand that you do not mean to convey that there was criminal negligence, but that there was a want of care.

The Foreman. - Just so; that there was something more than an error of judgment.

Mr Carr (another juror). - We cannot think Mr Abraham was deficient in judgment.

The Coroner suggested that the verdict might be altered by simply leaving out the words 'gross negligence.'

The Foreman. - We are anxious that our verdict should not amount to 'Manslaughter.'

Mr Berger. - At the same time, we do not wish the verdict altered. We have well considered it, and cannot help what its consequences may be.

Mr Gannon (another juror). - There is no difference of opinion among us as to the cause of the accident, though, out of kindness of feeling to Mr Abraham, we did not wish him to undergo the serious consequences that would result from a verdict of 'Manslaughter.'

The jury again consulted together for a few minutes, at the expiration of which time,

The Foreman said, - We cannot retract our verdict, whatever the consequences, although we did not intend to bring in a verdict of 'Manslaughter' against Mr Abraham.

That was the end of that; Langham recorded a verdict of manslaughter against Abraham. Langham issued a warrant for his arrest and bound all the witnesses over for a trial at the Old Bailey. The proceedings that day, the final session of three, had lasted eleven hours.³⁷

In reply to an apparent public backlash against the jury's wavering in issuing the manslaughter verdict, an anonymous letter purporting to be from one of the jurors appeared in *The Times*.

Sir, - I was one of the jury summoned to inquire into the cause of the falling of the house No. 184, Strand. Since the verdict has been given I have heard it said in my presence by several persons living in the neighbourhood of the accident, that the jury were the most imbecile and unfit to perform their duty they had ever met with.

Allow me to say they were all unanimous that gross negligence was to be attributed to Mr Abraham. The law of the matter, or the consequences of delivering that verdict, was not at all considered, and, I think, very properly so. The wavering of some of the jury on hearing from the coroner the result of their verdict, has, I suppose, given rise to the improper remarks I have heard made.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

*ONE WHO DID NOT WAVER.*³⁸

The Central Criminal Court found Abraham not guilty. Mr Justice Cresswell rebuked the inquest verdict:

*[It] was very right in the case of such a dreadful accident that an inquiry should take place, but, perhaps, in the present instance the law of manslaughter had not been quite understood.*³⁹

The witness depositions that Langham would have provided to the criminal court wouldn't have recorded the coroner's probe of the verdict, however. Langham had indeed sought to ensure that jurors understood the meaning and consequences of their verdict while not inhibiting it.

'A Malignity of Disposition'

Around 4 o'clock on the afternoon of 30 September 1864, two gas meter inspectors for the Chartered Gas Company stood outside the door of No. 102, Piccadilly. They were there to fix the gas, but rather than immediately announce

³⁷ We take our account of the Strand inquest from a series of articles titled 'The Late Fatal Accident in the Strand', which appeared in *The Times*, 12, 20, and 27 September 1853.

³⁸ 'The Late Accident in the Strand. To the Editor of *The Times*', *The Times*, 29 September 1853.

³⁹ 'Central Criminal Court', *The Times*, 29 October 1853.

their arrival to the inhabitants, they engaged in a hurried exchange. One of the gasmen, a reserved man named George King, had been blowing through gas pipes earlier that day, and his co-worker, William Castell (or Cazely), could see that the gas had made his partner dim-witted, almost as if he had been drinking. Castell worried that their customer would think that King was inebriated on the job.

'You are queer from the effects of the gas, and, as the gentleman is particular, you had better go home,' Castell told King. King blinked and nodded, handing his tools over to Castell. They parted, Castell going to work inside No. 102 while King set across Green Park on his way home to Pimlico and his wife, Harriet.

Forty minutes later, Police Constable McFarlane (618 A) found King stretched out on the grass in Green Park. McFarlane watched King attempt to rise, then fall down so heavily that McFarlane feared he was near death. The constable carried him to St George's Hospital, where surgeons examined the insensible gasman. When King woke, still terribly groggy, the surgeons declared him uninjured and believing he was drunk, they told McFarlane to take him home. Unfortunately, King was unable to tell McFarlane where he lived, so the constable escorted his charge to the station house at King Street, where King spent the night in a cell for drunkenness.

The next morning, three of King's friends, John Dolman, Joseph James and W H Beveridge, bailed him out. The gasman's wife, Harriet King, accompanied them to the station. When they saw King's condition, they were appalled. He was shivering and insensible. He could barely stand, couldn't see and couldn't speak. When he took his hat off to brush away some of the sawdust which was sprinkled on cell floors, Beveridge saw 'a dreadful bruise across his forehead, which was much discoloured'. The inspector on duty, Swanston, advised them that King was simply cold and that they ought to get him some tea.

That advice was rejected on the instant. 'There has been foul play here,' Dolman told Mrs King, who then confronted Inspector Swanston.

'You have murdered my husband while he was in your custody,' she exclaimed. If her husband had been unable to tell police where he lived, she demanded to know why they hadn't examined his pockets to get his address.

'We are not allowed to pick pockets,' a frosty Swanston explained. Regulations forbade the search of drunken men, or anyone who wasn't charged with a felony.



Westminster Hospital

With that, the quartet escorted King to the Swan public house, where Beveridge had to carry him up the steps. They poured brandy into him and then took him to Westminster Hospital. There, unlike procedure at St George's, surgeons stripped their patient for examination. They found him insensible, and his body battered as if someone had beaten him. They admitted him for treatment, but King died of his injuries a few days later.

What had happened to George King? Did the fall that P.C. McFarlane witnessed cause King's injuries, or was the gasman a victim of police brutality? The inquest, held at Westminster Hospital, straddled three sessions (14, 21, and 28 October). Medical witnesses painted two portraits of King for the

jury. One was the uninjured patient of Friday night, the other the battered man of Saturday morning. Could the surgeons of Friday night have missed King's injuries?

The medical officer at St George's Hospital, Mr Jones, had inspected King the Friday he was taken into custody, and told the jury that he had observed no bruises on King's face or hands, but that he hadn't inspected the rest of King's body. Jones also claimed that King had smelled strongly of alcohol. A second surgeon from St George's, S.G. Freeman, concurred with Jones, adding that it was rum he smelled. King was in their care for two hours, insensible when he arrived, but he regained consciousness, just as a man recovering from the effects of over-drinking might.

Langham noted that King had been blowing through gas pipes.

Then there was the evidence of Charles St Aubyn Hawker, the house surgeon at Westminster Hospital, who saw King on Saturday morning. Hawker had King stripped, observing 'dreadful bruises on the top and back of his head, and on his back, chest, hands, abdomen, and legs. The skin of the shins was broken and appeared to have been injured by a kick. He was quite insensible.' He disputed that a fall, such as McFarlane had seen in Green Park, could have caused King's injuries. He conducted a post-mortem, with Jones and Freeman from St George's, in attendance. Hawker found

an extensive fracture of the temporal bones. He also found that King's brain had ruptured.

In Hawker's opinion, one person couldn't have caused the injuries he observed. Someone had kicked King's legs; another had pummelled the body with his fists. Someone else had fractured King's head and damaged his brain. The surgeon Jones allowed that a blow from a blunt instrument could have caused King's skull fracture, and Freeman noted that the bruises were small and round.

Jones also held out the possibility that King had accidentally fallen in his cell. Police cells, Jones observed, usually had floors of asphalt covered with sawdust.

However, police witnesses, like PC Mordaunt (or Maidmont, 232 A) claimed to have visited King at regular intervals during his confinement in the cell. Mordaunt said he could hear prisoners speaking to one another through the night, but he hadn't heard the sounds of King's falling at any time. None of the other men on duty that night had either. An accidental fall while in custody seemed unlikely.

Langham adjourned in the hope that publication of the proceedings would turn up more witnesses. When the inquest resumed on 21 October, the coroner also arranged for a visit to King Street police station, in order that he and the jury could observe King's cell and determine the validity of Jones's theory that King had fallen there.

It was a small room 10ft. long by 6ft wide. A fixed bench 2ft in width ran around two sides of it in such a manner as to render the space of the floor available for walking or falling violently upon very small indeed. All the edges of the bench were planed off, and there was hardly an angle in the cell upon which a person could fall so as to hurt himself. The floor was asphalted and covered thickly with sawdust. It was remarked by a juror that if a man desired to commit suicide by dashing himself about in such a cell he could not possibly do so.

The jury's visit ruled out Jones's scenario. Two others were left for them to consider - King's fall in Green Park or a possible beating while in custody. Langham's adjournment had yielded new witnesses.

One was John Matthews, a draper, who encountered King stretched out in the grass in Green Park. He watched King try to rise, then fall and violently strike his forehead against the ground. King tried again, fell once more, and then struck the back of his head on the ground. 'It was a most fearful fall,' Matthews said, 'and he lay as if dead.' Matthews ran to assist King while another man smelled King's breath and found no sign of alcohol. King 'had not staggered like a drunken man, but like a person giddy, or in a fit.' Matthews observed a large bruise on King's forehead, at which point, McFarlane took charge and conducted him to St George's.

On the subject of drunkenness, a waiter in Windmill Street named Thomas Chambers testified that he had seen King and Castell shortly before their trek to Piccadilly, and that King was perfectly sober. A gasman named Henry Davy, confirmed that when he told the jury of meeting King an hour-and-a-half before his fall in Green Park and finding him clear-headed.

Therefore, King had not been drinking. Gas had made him giddy, and he'd had a bad fall in Green Park. He had not injured himself in his cell. Had the fatal injuries observed Saturday morning escaped the surgeon Jones when he examined King on Friday night? Jones returned to testify.

[He] had seen the police cell in question. It was in a better state than he expected to find it. He would say that it was possible that the deceased might have received the injuries in the cell, but it was not probable. He had examined the deceased when he was brought into the hospital on the Friday night, and saw no bruises. There was ample light, and at a subsequent period the gas was alight. He was still of opinion that there was no lesion of the brain when deceased was brought in. The eyes were sensitive to light. The skull might have received the fracture from the fall mentioned, but the rupture of the sinus was an enormous one, and that could not have taken place or the blood have issued from it at that time. He did live afterwards for five days with the rupture, but he was then wholly unconscious. He had heard Cazely's (Castell's) statement as to the effects of gas, but in that case and in others known to witness insensibility took place at the instant. The deceased remained conscious for a long time.

Now Hawker, the surgeon at Westminster Hospital, also returned and addressed the fall in Green Park.

[He] said that the fall spoken of was one that might have produced a fracture of the skull, but he was led to suppose that it did not on account of the peculiar spot from which the deceased's fracture commenced. It began midway between the occipital protuberance and the ear, that was to say in a hollow; if the fall on the back of the head had done the mischief, the fracture would have been produced elsewhere. No blow struck on any other part of the head would produce a fracture in the spot mentioned. There were 14 distinct and separate bruises on the head externally - three on the forehead, seven on the top of the head, and four at the back of the head, one of the latter being behind the left ear. All had been inflicted within a few hours of the time of witness's first seeing him. He could not tell the exact number of hours, but the bruises were just getting dark in colour. The blow behind the ear had produced the fracture of the skull and the rupture of the sinus; but the clot of blood would not have formed on the brain when Mr Jones saw the deceased, or he must have noticed the symptoms. Consequently, witness was led to believe that the rupture of the sinus was only completed after reaction had set in. The deceased had experienced reaction before leaving St George's, for he partly roused himself up, and witness believed that if the fissure of the skull then existed the blood would instantly have flowed from the rupture, which was not the case. It was utterly impossible that the deceased could have inflicted the injuries on himself in the police-station. Falling down the flight of steps into the

park could not have produced the injuries on the deceased.

Although Matthews insisted that he had witnessed a bruise on King's forehead, none was observed at St George's, and Hawker's testimony had just shown that King's sinus rupture would have been obvious, for blood would have poured from the man's nose. King, therefore, had received his fatal injuries *after* he left St George's in the custody of PC McFarlane. However, he did *not* receive them from clumsily stumbling about his cell, which had been shorn of all rough edges and padded with sawdust.

The medical evidence was pointing in an ugly direction - police brutality. Langham, however, concluded the 21 October session saying, 'The case was far from being cleared up. The medical evidence especially had rendered it impossible to arrive at any conclusion, and he should therefore adjourn for further evidence.'

The resumed inquest on 28 October examined members of A Division.

Inspector Green said that he was on duty at the station on the night of the 30th of September. The reserve man Maidmont (Mordaunt) was on duty at the cells from 9 in the evening till 6 in the morning. The witness came on duty at 12 and stopped till 3. He had relieved Inspector Branstock, and Inspector Swanston relieved him. The witness had first seen deceased in the Green-park. He seemed to be dying, and witness sent him to the hospital at Hyde Park-corner. He did not seem drunk. When he came on duty at 9 o'clock he found the deceased under charge of being drunk. He went to the cell-door, and he believed turned on the light and spoke to him. He did not seem to have any injuries.

A Juror. - You believed the man was dying when you saw him in the park, and yet you were not surprised, and did not send for the surgeon when you found him in custody for drink?

The Witness. - I should have done so as a matter of course, but that the surgeons at the hospital had examined him and pronounced him to be drunk. I could not gainsay a doctor.

Inspector Branstock said that he was on duty when the deceased was brought in and charged. He walked in, the constable having hold of him by the arm. If he had been struck or knocked about while he was in charge - up to 9 o'clock - he must have heard the noise. He breathed heavily, just as men do when drunk. If there had been any injury on his forehead he must have seen it.

Inspector Swanston said that he was on duty when the deceased was bailed out... If the deceased had knocked himself about while witness was in the station he must have heard the noise.

Police-constable Samuel Hancher deposed that in the early morning he went to the cell to get the deceased's address from him, but he could not speak. He appeared to be drunk.

Langham honed in on this particular witness, Hancher. For the next question, Langham selected his words carefully.

Now, I ask you a question which you need not answer if you object to it. Did you strike the deceased when you entered the cell and he did not answer you?

Point of procedure: in the fifth edition of Jervis (1888), Rudolph Melsheimer wrote, 'As to criminating evidence, the proper course is for the coroner to tell the witness that he is not bound to criminate himself, and to allow him to make any statement he may wish.'⁴⁰ Although Melsheimer wrote in 1888, twenty-four years after the George King inquest, he's relevant to 1864 because he cited an 1847 precedent, *Wakley v. Cooke* (a libel case that West Middlesex coroner Thomas Wakley brought against the publisher of *The Medical Times*).

Let's now return to 1864. Hancher answered the coroner. *Witness said he did not strike or even touch him. It was not usual to go into the cell. The key was given to him by the inspector. He spoke first through the door, but deceased would not answer. He could see inside the cell. The deceased was sitting down on the seat; he was not asleep. When he went into the cell witness told deceased to put his hat on, and he walked a yard and picked his hat up and put it on. It was usual for the police to carry the truncheons at their sides, but he did not think he had one at that time.*

Langham put the question, with its caution, to several more constables. They answered:

PC Theobald (163 A): *[I] did not strike the deceased.*

PC Maidmont: *[I] did not strike the deceased.*

PC McFarlane: *[I] did not strike the deceased during that time (when he escorted King from St George's to the station house) or subsequently. The deceased walked feebly, but without any resistance.*

Langham summed up for the jury.

The Coroner said that it would be hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of the case or the difficulty of coming to a satisfactory conclusion with regard to it. Although the fall which it was proved the deceased underwent in the park might have caused some of the injuries, yet it did not follow that all of them were thus occasioned. He would not waste time by considering the suggestion that the fatal injuries were received after the deceased was bailed

⁴⁰ R E Melsheimer. *The Coroner's Act, 1887, With Forms and Precedents. Being the Fifth Edition of the Treatise by Sir J. Jervis on the Office and Duties of Coroners.* (London: H Sweet & Sons, 1888), 222.

out at the station, as the facts and the evidence conclusively negated such a supposition. It might, then, be first assumed that the deceased was perfectly sober when he entered the park. The medical evidence was decisively given that the injuries were not the result of a fall, but of a fight or a very brutal assault. Now, it appeared improbable the fatal injury was the result of an attack made in open daylight, in the midst of the park. The medical evidence, conflicting enough on various points, agreed in this, that the injuries to the skull and brain had not been inflicted at the time the deceased left St George's Hospital in the custody of Police-constable McFarlane. Where, when, were they inflicted? McFarlane led him along Constitution-hill and Birdcage-walk at 7 in the evening. It seemed improbable to believe that the officer, who appeared to have behaved with kindness to the prisoner, could have inflicted them. Then came the period during which the deceased was in the police cell. He was handed from the custody of one inspector and one constable to another, and all those men, when asked, after the usual caution, replied that they had not struck the deceased. But it should be borne in mind that the injuries were not such as could have arisen accidentally. The bruises were about the size of a walnut, and Mr Hawker stated expressly that they were such as would be produced by the blows of a truncheon. If the jury were of opinion that the police had struck their prisoner, a defenceless, unprotected man, such repeated blows with a truncheon, it was his duty to tell them that such an act would be proof of such malignity of disposition that it would amount in the eye of the law to wilful murder. It was painful to arrive at such a conclusion with regard to the A Division of Police, which was the picked corps of the force. It would shake the confidence of every one in the force; but if the evidence led to that conclusion, the jury should not shrink from its duty, but return a verdict of wilful murder against some persons unknown. But if, in spite of the medical evidence, they should still think it possible that the injuries resulted from falls or an assault or fight in the park, then they should return an open verdict, to the effect that the evidence did not show how the deceased came by his injuries.

The jury parted with the medical evidence. Their verdict:

*That the deceased died from fracture of the skull; but that the evidence is not sufficient to prove how the fracture arose, and the jury are unanimously of opinion that the surgeons of St George's Hospital ought to have kept the deceased in that institution, and not to have given him over into the hands of the police.*⁴¹

The verdict suggested that although they couldn't determine who killed George King, a portion of the blame for his death should rest with St George's Hospital, which had released a man believed to be drunk into the custody of a police constable. It's not quite clear, however, how the house surgeons could have predicted that the men of A Division would murder their charge - given that the verdict's implication is that the police killed King.

The inquest provoked an investigation by the Medical Committee of St George's Hospital. Its report appeared in *The Times*, defending the Hospital's treatment of King. Their surgeons had instructed McFarlane to take him home, not to gaol.⁴² It's unknown whether the inquest led to an internal investigation within the Metropolitan Police.

Although in this case the jurors had dismissed Hawker's medical evidence for the timing of King's injuries (Hawker thought they occurred a few hours before his examination, early Saturday morning), the trend in Westminster was to place a greater emphasis upon the post-mortem in the inquest. According to Mary White Greenwald and John Greenwald, the percentage of post-mortems rose from 17% in 1835-1838 to 49.7% in 1865, one year after the King case.⁴³

'A Hundred Pounds to a Shilling'

Besides the one-sided contests apparently held at the King Street police station, those who appreciated pugilism could also venture into a secluded part of Great Windmill Street, stroll into the Queen's Head public house and have a pint or two before ambling up to the first floor to watch cockfights, rat fights and prize-fights. Among circles of illegal boxing aficionados and gamblers, the Queen's Head might have enjoyed a certain prestige. William Shaw, who owned and operated the tavern, enjoyed a pedigree - he was the son of the prize-fighter Jemmy Shaw. The Queen's Head had a reputation and, while the activities there were thoroughly illegal and included opportunities for illicit gambling, unlike the cruel cockfights and rat fights, and A Division's cell beatings, boxing at Shaw's establishment at least made an effort to ensure that prize fights had at least a semblance of fairness, sporting a roped ring, gloves and a referee.

Shaw organized an event for 9 October 1866.

Prince of Wales Athletic Club, established and holden every Tuesday and Saturday evening, M.C. Jemmy Shaw himself, assisted by Little Alec, and several other first-rate professors. On Tuesday next, Oct. 9th, 1866, a trial of skill in the manly art between Young (of Bloomsbury) and Ned Wilmot (of Shoreditch) for a handsome purse of sovereigns presented by a few gentlemen, patrons of the noble and manly art of self-defence. Admission by tickets, 1s. each; reserved seats, 2s. 6d. To commence at half-past 8.

41 We take our account of the George King case from three reports in *The Times*: 'Supposed Death from Violence in the Green Park', 15 October 1864; 'Death from Alleged Violence in the Green Park', 22 October 1864; and 'The Alleged Murder in the Green Park', 29 October 1864.

42 'The Case of George King'. *The Times*, 10 November 1864.

43 Greenwald, Maria White, and Gary. 'Medicolegal Progress in Inquests of Felonious Deaths: Westminster, 1761-1866.' *Journal of Legal Medicine* 2 (1981); 193-264, 208 cited in Burney, 195-96.

One of the hundred or so attendees of the John Young/Edward Wilmot fight was James 'Nuts' Evans, who worked as a blacksmith's hammer man, and who on that occasion moonlighted as one of Edward Wilmot's seconds.

'Nuts,' Wilmot had told him earlier in the evening, 'I want you to second me in a fight.' Evans agreed readily enough, probably for a percentage of Wilmot's purse, but soon he had good reason to regret his decision when, after Wilmot spent the first hour of the fight winning, he sustained a serious head injury. He was taken to Charing Cross Hospital, where he died early on the morning of 10 October. Consequently, the authorities charged all the seconds as accessories in Wilmot's death and the men of C Division rounded them all up except for Nuts Evans, who managed to avoid capture.

Samuel Langham held an inquest on Wilmot's body at Charing Cross Hospital, where the jury heard testimony from George Airey, the house surgeon who had treated Wilmot and then performed his post-mortem.

The deceased was brought [to the hospital] a little before midnight on the 9th inst. He was then alive, but perfectly insensible and in a comatose state. He was very cold, very weak, and sinking rapidly; he was put to bed, but never became sensible, and died at half-past 5 on the morning of the 10th. From a post mortem examination it was found that there was a very extensive bruise covering the elbow, and the arm was bruised from the elbow to the wrist. The face was also covered with bruises, and a number of blows over the head given by the gloves then produced was sufficient to cause concussion of the brain. There must have been considerable violence used, and if the deceased had lived longer the external signs would have been more manifest.

Witnesses of the fight, however, claimed that Wilmot hadn't been beaten to death. In fact, Wilmot had been winning the fight, and had Young 'flushed and heated' at the end of an hour. He and Young had clinched, Wilmot lost his balance, fell, and struck his head against a wooden post. Wilmot got up, but was weak on his legs. His seconds revived him with some water, but Shaw called the fight. 'No more, gentlemen,' he said. 'It's all over now, downstairs please.'

Langham and the jury toured the Queen's Head to see where the fight had taken place before Langham adjourned to give the police a chance to pick up Nuts Evans. Evans either surrendered or was apprehended and made an appearance at the adjourned inquest on 29 October. After Langham cautioned him that he didn't have to incriminate himself, Evans testified.

Deceased and another man named Young then went into the ring together and sparred with gloves on for an hour or an hour and a half, witness and a man named Donnelly acting as seconds for deceased, two men named Morris and Dawes, the first-named a pugilist, the other a coke merchant, acting in the same capacity for Young. A man named Flynn acted as timekeeper. Witness could not say whether Shaw, the landlord, was or was not present during the fighting. Witness thus described the actual fighting: - 'I can't say as much violence was used. My boy was licking the other and it was a hundred pounds to a shilling whether the other could touch him. I went to Young's father and told him he had better call his boy to give up; but he called out to his boy to go on. Just after then Young gave my boy a blow with the glove on the jaw and knocked him over, and he struck his head against a post. The people did not call out to stop the fight, as there was nothing unfair, and on my going up to my boy I found his head on his chest. I called out that the fight was over, giving in on my boy's behalf, and then I gave him some brandy. He said he felt very ill, and in half an hour's time I brought him in a cab to this hospital.' In reply to Mr Lewis the witness said he had sparred himself, and he could say that there was nothing but fair sparring all the evening. The two young fellows were in good spirits, and were laughing and joking together. Witness did not see the sparring matches at the Crystal Palace, for he was not in the habit of going to 'such places.' In answer to the jury he said of course the men hit each other no harder than they could, and matches lasted a long time sometimes. Witness did not know that the two were going to fight for a purse of sovereigns; he believed the fight was for £2 a side. Shaw, the landlord of the Queen's Head, was quite aware of what was going on in his house. The man Goode gave the deceased half a sovereign with which to back himself. Goode [disputing Evans] here said that he owed the deceased half a sovereign, and paid him. Witness owned that he knew of 'glove fights,' stated to the public to be for £5 a side, which were not for money at all; and Good was pressing these questions when the witness got so excited that the Coroner deemed it prudent to stop the questioning.

Langham summed up for the jury, contrasted the witness evidence against the medical evidence, and cited legal opinion on prize fighting. If two men voluntarily engaged in combat for sporting purposes, and one died, was it manslaughter?

He reminded them that the evidence they had heard showed them that the deceased was taking part in a fight in the house of William Shaw, and no matter where such exhibitions took place, they were illegal. The evidence of those who were present at the fight showed that at a certain stage of the proceedings the young man's foot slipped, and he struck his head against a piece of wood. The medical evidence showed that death was from apoplexy, the result of a blow or a fall, either of which must have been caused by much violence, and the blows struck over the head of the deceased by the gloves would be likely to cause concussion. If repeated blows were struck over the face and head a person would be rendered unable to stand upon his legs, and would be likely to stagger and fall. If the jury thought the deceased's death was caused by a fall or blow in the fight, then they would have to consider the legal liability attached to the persons engaged in it.

Langham read aloud from *Foster's Crown Law*. 'Death ensuing from accidents happening at sports and recreations, such recreations being innocent and allowable, falls within the rule of innocent homicide.' Skimming over Foster's references to 'cases of playing at cudgels and foils, or wrestling by consent', Langham continued reading.

In the case of persons who in perfect friendship engaged by mutual consent in any of these recreations for a trial of skill or manhood, or for improvement in the use of their weapons, here is, indeed the appearance of a combat; but it is in reality no more than a friendly exertion of strength and dexterity for the purposes I have mentioned, and which takes the case out of the general rule laid down by Lord Hale, for bodily harm was not the motive on either side. I, therefore, cannot call these exercises unlawful; they are manly diversions, they tend to give strength, skill, and activity, and may fit for defence, public as well as private, in time of need. I would not be understood to speak here of prize-fighting and public boxing-matches, or any other exertions of courage, strength, and activity of the like kind which are exhibited for lucre, and can serve no valuable purpose; but, on the contrary, encourage a spirit of idleness and debauchery, for these disorders, will I conceive, fall under a quite different concern.

Next, the coroner turned to East's Pleas of the Crown, which he said, 'gave a similar view, and it was distinctly laid down that all engaged in these contests, which were illegal, were liable in a case of death caused in them to be charged with manslaughter.'

Quickly, let's visit 1888, when Rudolph Melsheimer wrote of 'struggles in anger':

When sports are unlawful in themselves, or tend to disturb the peace, or to produce danger, riot or disorder, if, in the pursuit of them, death ensue, the party killing will be guilty of manslaughter. Such were, in former times, a tilt or tournament - the martial diversion of our ancestors; and such are boxing, prize-fighting, sword-playing, and the like - the succeeding amusements of their posterity. It is said, indeed, that if such diversion be commanded or permitted by the sovereign, the act being in that case lawful, the killing would be misadventure only. Generally it may be stated that all struggles in anger, whether by fighting, wrestling, or otherwise, are unlawful, and death occasioned by them is manslaughter at least.⁴⁴

Therefore, in the eyes of Victorian law, prize-fights were not friendly trials of combat; their intent was to cause bodily harm.

Back to 1866. If the jury determined that Wilmot's death came through the fight, Langham advised, it was their duty to return a verdict of manslaughter against everyone involved: the seconds, the referee, and the landlord of the Queen's Head, William Shaw.

The jury struggled with their verdict. After they were 'absent for some time', they returned to ask Langham whether, if they found that Wilmot fell without a blow (remember the clinch and Wilmot's loss of balance), they would be correct to return a verdict of accidental death.

Langham carefully replied, 'If you thought his fall was quite unconnected with the blows he had previously received. But if the blows he had received had rendered him unable to stand upon his feet, as was suggested by the medical testimony, and he then fell, the death could not be called accidental.'

After another three-and-a-half hours, the jury returned a verdict of manslaughter against John Young, all the seconds, including Nuts Evans, and William Shaw. Langham issued warrants for their committal to Newgate Prison until their criminal trial at the Old Bailey.⁴⁵

A Hard Day's Night, 1871

August 1871: On Tuesday night Mr Langham, deputy coroner for Middlesex, held no less than five inquests, two at St George's Hospital, and three at the workhouse, Mount-street, Grosvenor-square. The first inquest at the first-named place was held on the body of George Mayes, aged 40, a brewer's labourer, of 52, York-street, Pimlico. The poor fellow had suffered some time from a varicose vein in the leg, and on the 8th inst., while using an axe, he struck his leg and the vein burst. He died in the hospital on Saturday last from the effects of that illness, and a verdict was returned accordingly. The second inquiry was held into the circumstances attending the death of William Roche, aged 52, of 62, Salisbury-street, Marylebone. The deceased was on Saturday morning at work at No. 11, Brooks-terrace, Mayfair, and by accident overbalanced himself and fell down a trapdoor into a stable, a distance of 12ft., fracturing his skull and collarbone, from the effects of which he died shortly afterwards. Verdict, 'Accidental death.' The third inquiry was held at the workhouse, Mount-street, on the body of William Garrett Green, aged 15. The poor lad was employed by Miss Graham, court milliner, 26, Conduit-street, Regent-street, and on Saturday afternoon he was cleaning the windows of the second floor back room, and fell backwards into the stone area beneath, a distance of over 40 feet, receiving so severe a fracture of the skull that death was instantaneous. Verdict, 'Accidental death.' The fourth and fifth inquests were held on the bodies of newly-born children, one of which was found in a third-class carriage at the Victoria Station, and the other in the waters of the Serpentine. Both children had been still-born, and verdicts were recorded to that effect.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Melsheimer, 184.

⁴⁵ 'The Late Fatal Fight at the West End', *The Times*, 19 October 1866. 'The Fatal Prize Fight'. *The Times*, 30 October 1866.

⁴⁶ 'A Batch of Inquests', *The Times*, 31 August 1871.

Hundreds of Children, Hundreds of Times

5 June 1884: Mr Langham, Deputy City Coroner, yesterday held an inquiry at St Bartholomew's Hospital as to the death of William Ballard Fox, aged eight years, the son of a signalman on the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway. The evidence went to show that on Whit Monday afternoon the child went to play in a field adjoining the railway at Brockley with several other children. They were on the line, when two trains came along, one going towards the Crystal Palace and the other towards Nunhead Station. The deceased got in front of the latter and was knocked down. His skull was fractured, and he died before he could be taken to the hospital. It was stated that it was usual for children to play upon that part of the line where the accident happened. The driver of the train informed the Coroner that as he neared the spot he saw 'hundreds of children' on the line and on the embankment. Some laid down and placed their heads on the rails, and would not get up until the train was close upon them. Every Bank holiday this part of the line swarmed with children, and the drivers of trains were continually on the alert, otherwise serious accidents would occur. The witness had seen several narrow escapes of children being run over. There was a fence, but they broke it down and ran upon the line. A juror. - Have you ever reported this to the company? The witness. - Yes, hundreds of times. A juror. - Has any notice been taken? The witness. - Yes; men have been sent to watch the line. The juror. - Was anyone stationed there on Monday? The witness. - Not that I know of. I saw two policemen close by, but they were watching some sports in the fields. A gentleman watching the case on behalf of the company informed the coroner that all possible precautions had been taken to prevent accidents. The fence was in good condition, and notice boards were put up warning people, on pain of prosecution, to keep off the line. The jury returned a verdict of 'Accidental death,' and added that they were strongly of opinion that the line should be more adequately protected.⁴⁷

In 1884, Langham the Deputy City Coroner was sixty-one, in the thirty-fifth year of his career, and a veteran of over five thousand inquests.⁴⁸ Men of equal age who were engaged in other occupations would have thought about retiring at this point in their lives. Retirement from the coronial system was rare, just like it is in the mafia - typically, coroners were 'in for life'.

It was so for Langham's superior, City Coroner William John Payne, whose father, William Payne, had also held the same office from 1829-1872. Only a few months older than Langham, W J Payne died suddenly at his home in Reigate early on the morning of 14 April 1884.

The funeral procession formed and departed Charing Cross leading towards Highgate Cemetery, with Langham occupying one of the mourning coaches, perhaps sharing it with his wife Matilda and old Mr Case, the clerk who had served the Paynes since 1844. Payne's death ended Langham's tenure as City Deputy Coroner; perhaps thoughts of retirement skipped around Langham's mind on the ride to Highgate. If they did, he buried them in Highgate Cemetery along with Payne.

The City's acting coroner, Town Clerk Sir John Monckton, re-appointed Langham to serve as deputy - which is why we find him holding the Fox inquest on 5 June, two months after Payne's death in April. A week after that inquest, on 12 June 1884, Langham went to the Guildhall and presented himself to the Court of Common Council as a candidate to replace Payne. Thirty five years in the coroner's court. Five thousand inquests, many of those in the City. An important role in a professional advisory group, the Coroner's Society. Langham had much to offer, and the Common Council elected him the same day.

Next month, as Langham's story continues, we're going to encounter all sorts of people: Richard II, a perplexing native of Wolverhampton, Edward IV, Captain Shaw of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, a thirsty juror, and Sir Homewood Crawford, to name just a few. We'll examine the City Coroner's office, watch how juries functioned and interacted with coroners, and follow a revolution in Surrey. We'll also see how as City Coroner, Langham secured an ability that *no other coroner in England or Wales had*: the ability to hold inquests into non-fatal fires.

See you in Golden Lane.

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank Jeremy McIlwaine, Senior Archivist, Corporation of London Records Office.

We also thank the editors of Ripperologist: Paul Begg, Eduardo Zinna, Adam Wood, and Christopher T. George.

⁴⁷ 'Dangerous Play', *The Times*, 6 June 1884.

⁴⁸ 'Obituary', *The Times*, 29 April 1908.

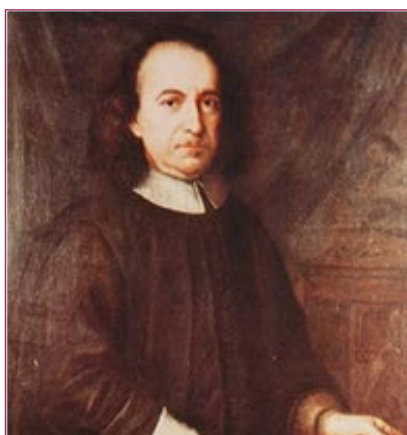


NICHOLAS SMITH

Catalyst

Professor Findlay and the Ripper's DNA

Most of us have a general idea about what DNA is - well, at least most of us have heard about it and know that it has something to do with blood, saliva, skin or something that belongs to our bodies and is unique to us as individuals. I guess the best way to start this article would be at the beginning or, as Julie Andrews said - or rather sang - in *The Sound of Music*, let's start with ABC.



Marcello Malpighi

In the 1800s, the concept of identifying individuals through other means than their name, face, hair colour, physical appearance or features seemed an impossibility. Yet, as far back as 1686, a bloke by the name of Marcello Malpighi, a Professor of Anatomy at the University of Bologna, noticed that his fingertips had spirals, loops and ridges. Unfortunately, he didn't realise that his fingerprints were unique to himself.

In 1823 Jan Evangelista Purkinje, a Czech Professor of Anatomy and Pathology at the University of Breslau, distinguished nine different fingerprint patterns. Yet once again the possibility of using this observation to identify individuals was overlooked. It wasn't until July 1858 that taking someone's fingerprints was put to a practical purpose. Sir William Herschel, Chief Magistrate of the Hooghly District in Jungipoor, India, took the handprint of Rajyadhar Konai and placed it on a contract. The idea was, more or less, to replace his hand-written signature by his hand-print so he couldn't renege on the contract. It was a ruse, but it worked, and future contracts were 'signed' in the same way.

The person credited with first using fingerprints as a means of personal identification was a Scotsman, Dr Henry Faulds, the British Surgeon-Superintendent of Tsuchiji Hospital in Tokyo, Japan. In the 1870s, Dr Faulds, having studied fingerprints on ancient pottery and compared them to his own, realised they could be used for identifying an individual. Not only did he develop a means of classifying the fingerprints, but he also wrote to Sir Charles Darwin, of *The Origin of Species* fame, explaining his discovery.

But Charlie was pretty old and sick at this time and didn't have the time or energy to put Dr Faulds's theory to the test. Instead he promised to pass the information on to his cousin, Sir Francis Galton. In 1880, Dr Faulds published an article in the scientific journal *Nature* where he proposed fingerprinting as a means of personal identification. Personally

I still wonder how such a scientific breakthrough could stand alongside the superstitious belief that a murderer's image could be retained in the victim's eyes. If only the police and those in power had opened their eyes, then I'm certain Jack would have been caught with this new discovery.



Herschel's fingerprints

In 1883 Samuel Langhorne Clemens, Mark Twain, published his novel *Life on the Mississippi*, in which a murderer was identified by a fingerprint. Just before, in 1882, Gilbert Thompson, a member of the US Geological Survey in New Mexico, used his own fingerprints to prevent a document from being forged. In a later book by Mark Twain, *Pudd'n Head Wilson*, a dramatic trial revolved round fingerprint identification. In 1888 - the year of the Ripper - Sir Francis Galton remembered the papers Darwin had sent him and began to make some observations about fingerprints as well. In 1892, he published a book, plainly entitled *Fingerprints*, which established the validity of fingerprinting as a source of identification. Perhaps more important, in the same year the first criminal identification by means of fingerprints was made. Senior Police Officer Eduardo M Alvarez was confronted with the murder of two small children in Necochea, Buenos Aires Province, Argentina. The children's mother, Francisca Rojas, denounced as the murderer a man who had been importuning her to marry him. Alvarez, however, was not convinced. Eventually, he remembered his conversations



Sir Francis Galton and Juan Vucetich

with Juan Vucetich, a police officer who had set up a fingerprinting system in Argentina. Alvarez found a bloody fingerprint which Vucetich successfully matched with Francisca Rojas's fingerprints. This evidence secured her conviction for murder.

Although this might be the first documented case of fingerprint evidence being used in a murder trial, I am aware of a prior case in Japan where a student was declared innocent of a crime because his fingerprints didn't match those left at the crime scene. This event is not chronicled anywhere I can find, but I do remember reading about it, as it occurred prior to Jack's rampage, and wondering why they didn't use this technique to catch Jack. Incidentally, it wasn't until 1901 that fingerprinting for criminal identification was introduced in England. A bloke by the name of Sir Edward Richard Henry looked at Galton's observations and decided it wasn't a bad idea.

Anyway, Galton went on to prove what Faulds and Herschel had already discovered and he, rather than they, claimed the accolade of being the 'Father of Fingerprinting'. Certainly he should be given credit for establishing the probability that no two fingerprints are the same and that the odds of this occurring would be one in sixty-four billion. Yet personally I reckon the credit should go to Marcello Malpighi, who came up with the concept just by looking at his own hands.

These days, fingerprinting is still the bread and butter of law enforcement agencies round the world, but there's a new kid on the block called DNA fingerprinting. DNA, or, more specifically Deoxyribonucleic acid, is the stuff of life. It doesn't just apply to us mere mortals, but to anything that has ever lived or breathed regardless of how long ago. In 1977, Alec Jeffreys (now Sir Alec) moved to Leicester University after graduating from Oxford University and developed genetic fingerprinting. Unfortunately, this form of identifying an individual from the billions of people who now inhabit our planet is far more complicated than simply taking a fingerprint.

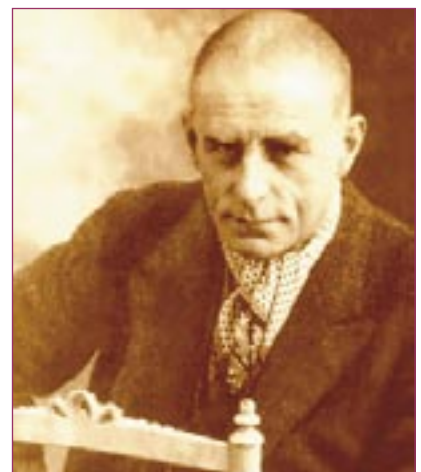
Describing the process through which DNA is analysed would take quite some time and leave most of us scratching our heads even if the simplest words were used. Among those of us who have researched the Ripper case there are few who are genetic physicists or nuclear biologists, and I believe that, intelligent as we may be, there are some things which are beyond our grasp. That's why we call on those who do understand the things we don't to explain them to us.

Having asked someone who understands DNA analysis to explain it to me, I will do my best to try and explain how it works. Just as we are all born with unique fingerprints and personalities, we are all born with unique DNA - biological bits and pieces which are ours and ours alone, which define who we are genetically and can help us trace who our ancestors were. In fact, these bits and pieces can tell us a lot about how our ancestors lived - just like the possessions found on Catherine Eddowes told us how she lived.

These 'biological bits' are found in our blood, bones, hair and toenails. Any one of these 'bits' can be traced to us as individuals and, just like the fingerprints Marcello Malpighi first discovered, this new 'fingerprint', the DNA fingerprint, might help to find out something more about who Jack the Ripper was. Even if it didn't, it may still open the door to other aspects of the case we haven't thought about before.

Most of us are aware of the débâcle of Patricia Cornwell's reputation in the wake of her book *Portrait of a Killer* and her refusal to answer questions. To cut a long story short, Cornwell, after meeting a 'high ranking' officer from Scotland Yard, was told to look into the background of Walter Sickert if she wanted to find out who Jack the Ripper was. Dutifully she bought up Sickert's paintings and furniture as well as his letters and stationary.

In all, she sent 55 DNA samples to the Bode Technology Group to see if Sickert's DNA matched DNA found on known 'Jack' documents. None of them did, or rather, the results were 'inconclusive'. When questioned about her findings, Cornwell responded with the adage 'Those who study the "Ripper" case would rather it not be solved.' Another fallback she had was: 'It's not up to me to prove I'm right, but for you to prove I'm wrong.' Cornwell based her theory that Sickert was the Ripper not only on the whisperings of a senior Scotland Yard officer, but on his paintings. 'You've just got to look at them,' she once stated. With 'evidence' like that, I'm very glad she hasn't seen some of the drawings I did as a kid - although my DNA would be all over them.



Walter Sickert

Fortunately, in our midst there are some who are not only familiar with DNA analysis, but who analyse DNA for a living and are eminently qualified to express opinions about whether it would be possible to solve at least some of the Ripper case mysteries. One of these people is Dr Ian Findlay, who not only has enough letters after his name to make a new alphabet, but was named Scientist of the Year in 1998 by the European Society of Human Genetics, Lisbon, Portugal. Dr Findlay is currently Director of Forensics for Gribbles Molecular Science Laboratory, Company Secretary and Director for Id-DNA Pty Ltd and Professor of Molecular Diagnostics for Griffith University. In his spare time he tells kids where they come from and how they are made. (Only joking).

On 30 March this year, the ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) televised a program called *Catalyst*. The topic of this program was Jack the Ripper and whether DNA testing could prove once and for all who he was. The reporter for the program was Dr Paul Willis who, along with producer Evan Wilkes, researcher Leonie Hansell, renowned researcher and author Stewart P Evans and Dr Findlay, set about seeing whether it was possible to identify some of the DNA extracted from the known documents of the case.

Professor Findlay's breakthroughs in DNA cellular detection methods are certainly an improvement on Patricia Cornwell's mitochondrial approach, but would it help in actually tracking down the killer?

When Eduardo Zinna of *Ripperologist* asked me to write this article I was in the middle of writing a children's story about a baby chicken who gets kidnapped by an eagle who teaches it how to fly and ends up saving the farm! Suddenly I found myself thrown from writing about flying chooks to Nuclear and Mitochondrial DNA! To say I was a little out of my depth would be an understatement, so I contacted both Dr Findlay and Mr Evans who were both great to talk to and obliging in answering every question I asked. It might be useful to reproduce some of the transcript of the actual programme, which is not very long, but does bring up some interesting points worth looking at more closely. Elaboration on what was happening visually have been included in italics to help in following the transcript.

Transcript of the programme:

DR PAUL WILLIS, REPORTER: In 1888, Whitechapel was a dark, depressing corner of London's East End and the killer easily procured his victims from the many impoverished women who had turned to prostitution out of desperation. The dimly lit streets provided the perfect stalking ground for Jack the Ripper.

Now Jack the Ripper himself is being stalked by a Brisbane-based professor of forensic and molecular diagnostics, Ian Findlay. Ian has developed a DNA profiling technique hundreds of times more powerful than those currently used by crime fighting bodies such as the FBI.

DR IAN FINDLAY: Our technology is a leap ahead of those kind of forensics. We've tested the technology on real 106-year-old hairs and obtained profiles from those hairs.

NARRATION: To snare history's most notorious serial killer, Ian needs access to objects that may contain Jack the Ripper's DNA. So, Ian's off to the old dart where the evidence is held.

His first step is to hook up with England's pre-eminent Ripperologist, Stewart Evans.



Stewart Evans

NARRATION: Stewart, a retired police officer, has written several books on the Ripper and knows the history of the case inside out. This makes him the perfect guide for Ian's forensic investigation.

STEWART EVANS: It was just this brief period of horrendous brutal murders that really captured the public gaze. The newspapers loved it, they gave it huge publicity. And when the name Jack the Ripper emerged it seemed to seal the whole thing. They had a name to focus on and a name to frighten people with. And of course he became the universal bogey man.

Dr Findlay and Stewart Evans then went on a tour of Mitre Square, the murder site of Catharine Eddowes, which is still reasonably intact and where it is still possible to imagine the scene as it was on the night of the murder. From there they travelled to Duval Street, formerly Dorset Street, and Millers Court, where Mary Kelly was murdered, now totally unrecognisable as the place where Jack the Ripper's most horrific murder took place.

NARRATION: The list of prime suspects includes a phoney doctor, a real doctor, a famous author, an artist and even a member of the royal family. Confusion about the Ripper's identity was increased by hundreds of letters claiming to have been from the culprit, sent to police at the time. Most were hoaxes, but a handful are still believed to have been penned by the killer. One authentic letter may be all it takes to crack the Ripper's profile.

STEWART EVANS: The letters that Ian will be looking at are certainly the ones that we feel are worth looking at. The ones that are most likely to yield DNA, the ones that may possibly have come from the killer. A very interesting letter is what is now referred to as the Openshaw letter. That's the letter postmarked the 29th October 1888 and again signed Jack the Ripper. If we could identify the writer of that letter we might be getting somewhere to proving who the killer was.

NARRATION: The evidence from the Ripper case is stored at London's National Archive. It's been here since 1961, when it was handed over by Scotland Yard who had kept it under lock and key since the time of the murders.

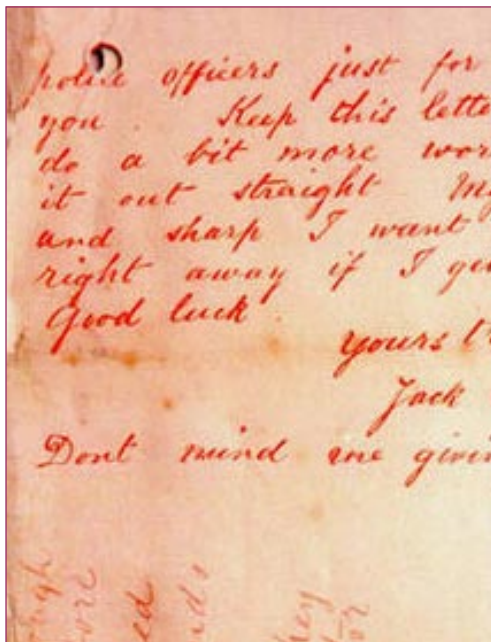
The programme now moves to the [National Archives](#). Dr Findlay was shown around by Mario Aleppo.

MEPO 3/3157 The Whitechapel Murders ("Jack the Ripper"): Letter written by person claiming to be Jack the Ripper to Dr TH Openshaw of the London Hospital, Whitechapel, dated 29 October 1888. The subject of the letter is the human kidney, which was sent to G Lusk of the Whitechapel Vigilance Committee.

MARIO ALEPPO: The public have got confidence in the fact that they have access to original material which has not been altered.

NARRATION: Inside this carefully guarded file are the letters that may lift the lid on the Ripper once and for all.

DR IAN FINDLAY: This is the famous *Dear Boss* letter.



Excerpt from the *Dear Boss* letter

DNA. The genetic markers create a DNA profile. What we do is we take those genetic markers and effectively multiply, photocopy the very specific DNA fragments. So what we want to do is make sure that the DNA that we get is as robust and it's correct as possible, and that's some of the techniques that we've developed to make sure that we try and get as correct as technical as possible.

NARRATION: Conventional DNA sampling methods require at least 200 human cells. When the FBI analysed Ripper case evidence, they came up empty. While it can last for thousands of years in the right conditions, DNA will deteriorate over time. Ian's technique amplifies the information from a single cell to create a profile. Ian's searching for specific genetic markers. If we think of the markers as pieces of a puzzle, we need at least 10 to complete our picture.

DR IAN FINDLAY: These markers consist of fragments of DNA that are very specific to particular individuals. So what we do is we combine these specific markers altogether and we build up a picture to create a DNA profile, a very specific DNA profile, something in the order of 10 billion to one.

NARRATION: After being fed through a genetic analyser, the DNA fingerprint will appear as a set of spikes on a graph. It's all come down to this one moment - have we got Jack the Ripper's DNA?

DR IAN FINDLAY: We've got some results, it's just fantastic that the technology actually works, got a partial profile from such old and degraded samples. It's not a full profile, it's a partial profile, which means it's not sufficient to identify an individual and not good enough for forensic purposes but it is a partial profile.

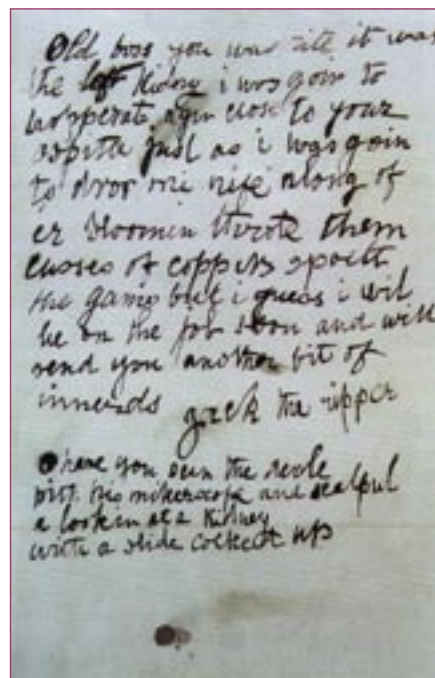
NARRATION: The letter has what appears to be bloodstains. So it would be incredible to think that these blood stains either belonged to the Ripper himself or to one of the victims.

Ian takes swabs from the back of stamps and the gum under the envelope flaps, where DNA from the Ripper's saliva may still remain.

DR IAN FINDLAY: This is the letter that was written to Dr Openshaw. It does talk about the left kidney, and it was in fact the left kidney that was removed. It's incredible to hold these letters in my actual hand, history in your hand. It's incredible to think that these could be the letters that Jack the Ripper actually wrote.

NARRATION: Ian needs just one cell from one sample and he has the Ripper's DNA fingerprint. Armed with his precious swabs he heads back home to Brisbane. Back in his lab, he has just one thing on his mind: DNA. Everybody has their own unique DNA profile, no two are alike, which is why DNA is so effective in crime solving. DNA carries genetic information in the nucleus of a cell. The extraction process begins with this machine: It uses enzymes to break open the cell and retrieve the DNA. The second stage is where Ian has revolutionised the process.

DR IAN FINDLAY: We take the DNA and add a number of genetic markers to the



The Openshaw letter

DR PAUL WILLIS, REPORTER: But, Jack the Ripper is not going to jail on this evidence.

DR IAN FINDLAY: No, he's not going to jail for this.

NARRATION: Ian's partial profile was taken from the Openshaw letter, one of the most likely to have been sent by the Ripper. A partial profile simply means fewer markers than we would like to call a profile. Normally in a full profile we get 10 or 11 markers, a partial profile we would get only 4 or 5 markers and the specificity is much, much lower and we can not use that to identify a particular individual. But there's a shock revelation

DR IAN FINDLAY: This is the sample from the Openshaw letter.

DR PAUL WILLIS, REPORTER: So, I could be holding in my hands the DNA of Jack the Ripper.

DR IAN FINDLAY: It's possible, but we do know this sample is likely to be a female sample.

DR PAUL WILLIS,REPORTER: Maybe Jill the Ripper?

NARRATION: Jack the Ripper a woman? Curiously enough, it was considered a credible theory at the time of the murders that Jack might have actually been a Jill. In fact, Frederick Abberline, the detective in charge of the case, raised the idea himself.

He based this line of thinking on eyewitnesses sighting victim number five, Mary Kelly, hours after she was killed. Abberline believed this was the Ripper escaping in Kelly's clothes. The only female suspect was one Mary Pearcey. She was convicted and hanged for killing her lover's wife shortly after the Ripper murders - and she used the same MO. Was she the Ripper?

DR PAUL WILLIS: Using the most sophisticated DNA fingerprinting technique in the world we have not been able to pin-point the killer, but we have unearthed an unexpected twist. And until forensic science makes the next great leap forward, the case of Jack, or Jill the Ripper seems destined to remain filed under mystery

Program finishes.

While this may be true as far as the progress of forensic science goes, I believe there is hope. Dr Findlay's experiments did extract some female DNA, which is a far better conclusion than other tests have achieved, and although other tests he conducted proved inconclusive, as with the tests conducted by the Bode Technology Group, I believe DNA analysis and technology is still in its infancy and its limitations are yet to be fully explored.

In November of last year, when a discussion of these matters took place on the *Casebook: Jack the Ripper*, Dr Findlay kindly posted up his comments, which do help to shed some light on the methods he uses and helps to clarify what he believes he can achieve using his techniques. One topic that came up was a supposed plait of Catharine Eddowes's hair. Although its provenance was doubtful, it would of course be possible to test it for DNA and compare it to samples taken from Catharine's known descendants. Samples of their DNA were forwarded on to Dr Findlay in November of last year. This would at least confirm or disprove whether that plait of hair did indeed belong to Catharine.



Catharine Eddowes plait

Dr Findlay's response to the suggestion of using his technique on Kate's plait of hair was this:

Sunday, November 6, 2005

Dear all,

I am the Ian Findlay mentioned in the above message boards. It is certainly true that we have obtained excellent results from very small and very old samples (160 year old single hairs), which predate the Ripper by 30-40 years.

However much of what has been stated has, as often happens in the press, been blown out of proportion. The main purpose of our Cell track technique is in unsolved, old crimes. I was asked by a journalist if since the hairs were before the Ripper whether the techniques could be used on the Ripper case. I replied that if samples were available, it would be great to try. Most of the rest is press embellishment and how DNA can be used to link generations!

Then followed a number of approaches to me including Stephen Ryder. (Administrator, Casebook: Jack the Ripper).

Basically the position is this. The Cell-Track DNA system is a significant advance over mitochondrial (used by Cornwell), which as others have noted has significant limitations. STR profiling is the standard DNA fingerprinting used worldwide and has much increased specificity to genetically identify the source of small and/or old samples.

If samples (such as stamps, letters) exist, they could be tested for DNA fingerprint. Of course the presence of the DNA fingerprint does not confirm the Ripper - just adds additional supportive info to the puzzle. The DNA fingerprint could be compared to living (or dead) relatives (just need some direct relatives certainly don't need ALL the relatives) of possible suspects to establish links. As the specificity of this DNA fingerprint system is so high (billions to one), then a close link could strengthen the case against that suspect.

Of course a hoax, contamination etc, therefore should not match any descendants.

Gribbles is a fully accredited forensic lab -similar high standards to FBI and police labs etc worldwide including UK and US. The difference is that we have a very strong research component hence the advances in RFID and single cell testing.

In a later posting Dr Findlay clarified his position further:

While I agree that it's unlikely any conclusive "discoveries" can be made right now via DNA evidence, particularly about the killer's identity, can't we all agree that if there is indeed DNA surviving on any bit of evidence even remotely related to the Ripper case, that there is merit in retrieving, analyzing, and documenting it? Granted we may have nothing valid to compare it to now, but who knows what might pop up in the future?

It would be possible, yes, to make a DNA profile from the spittle used to lick a stamp on one or more of the envelopes, as Cornwell did, but most likely it would be the DNA of a letter hoaxer, not the killer. And then probably you would not have a control sample to compare it to, to know whose DNA it is, unless that is you want to go out on a limb and choose a suspect such as Walter Sickert, as Ms. Cornwell did, against the indications that the artist was totally innocent of the murders.

There are of course many areas in Ripperology that this technique might be applied to, if only to put to bed erroneous beliefs and narrow down possibilities. The bloodstained shawl that allegedly belonged to Catharine Eddowes, or her apron, should it ever turn up. Who knows how it could be used in the future - if not to catch Jack, at least to eliminate suspects and artifacts.

I will finish this article with a comment by Dr Findlay: 'Our main plans for the future are to fully test and validate the technologies. As I'm sure you can understand, forensics needs to be very accurate and reliable as it has major ramifications such as sending people to prison. Hopefully then the techniques can be a standard part of the arsenal against crime.'

See *The Adventure of the Plaited Hair*, *Ripperologist* No. 61 (2005).





STEPHEN LONG

Consider Yourself At Home

Ikey Solomon and the Real Artful Dodgers

Actor and singer Jack Wild, who was nominated for an Oscar in 1968 for his role as 'The Artful Dodger' in the film *Oliver!*, died on 1 March 2006 of mouth cancer. He was 53. In the 1960s, Jack Wild had been in the cast of *Oliver!* in the West End playing several other boys in Fagin's gang before landing the role of the Artful Dodger. After *Oliver!* he signed up to star in his own American TV series, the psychedelic *H R Pufnstuf* (1969-70). He played an English boy with a talking flute who is marooned on a magic island inhabited by an array of weird creatures, including the friendly dragon of the title.

But when Charles Dickens's novel *Oliver Twist* or *The Parish Boy's Progress* was published in serial form in *Bentley's Miscellany* in 1837-39, the author based the character of Jack Dawkins, aka 'The Artful Dodger', on typical members of the gangs of child pickpockets which were common in London at that time. Indeed, by setting the lair of Fagin's gang in Saffron Hill, Dickens was placing them less than a quarter of a mile from his own home in Doughty Street. Saffron Hill was a notorious area in the 1830s, especially for stolen silk handkerchiefs.

A little later, in 1851, Henry Mayhew wrote: 'Youngsters are taught to be expert thieves... a coat is suspended from a wall with a bell attached to it and the boy attempts to take the handkerchief from the pocket without the bell ringing. Until he can do this with proficiency, he is not considered well trained.'



Publicity photograph of Jack Wild as the Artful Dodger



Artful Dodger, 19th century engraving

The papers reported a particular example in the winter of 1850/51. The deputy of a lodging house in Grey's Inn Lane appeared on a pick-pocketing charge at the Middlesex sessions. A police officer gave evidence that he had managed to peep through a window into the lodging house where he saw the prisoner surrounded by a group of small boys. From a line stretched across the room a coat was hanging with a number of handkerchiefs tucked into the pockets. Each boy in turn tried his skill in removing a hankie without moving the coat or shaking the line. Those who performed well received the congratulations of the prisoner while bunglers were punished with a kick. Others used tailors' dummies and there was one method in which clothes used for practice were sewn all over with little bells that tinkled at the slightest vibration.

Maybe an unfortunate pick-pocketing incident was the spark for Dickens to write the novel, but he certainly had no shortage of models from the society of the time on which to draw. With industrialization driving more people into the cities, the population of London had increased by about 40 per cent between 1800 and 1830. Also, as with *Oliver Twist*, many orphaned children found their way to London, and were quickly recruited to these gangs.

But on whom did Dickens base the character of Fagin? It has been assumed, ever since Dickens's time, that Fagin was based on Isaac or Ikey Solomon or Solomons, a notorious fence, or receiver of stolen goods. He was also a 'kidsman': a manager of child thieves.

Solomon was born in the East End of London about 1785. After an early career as a pickpocket resulted in a conviction in 1810, he changed tactics. He started training boys to be pickpockets while he would only 'dispose' of the stolen goods. He was certainly not the only one to use such gangs in the early half of the 19th century.

Solomon was eventually charged with possession of stolen goods and jailed at Newgate while awaiting trial. But he submitted a writ of habeas corpus and appeared before the courts at Westminster. Even though his appeal was not accepted, he persuaded the turnkeys - allegedly with a couple of glasses of drugged brandy and water - to take him back to Newgate Prison in a hackney cab. It was certainly not a coincidence that the cab was owned by his father-in-law, Moses Julian. Instead of taking him back to jail, the cab went a long way round and eventually ended at Petticoat Lane, where Solomon jumped out while several accomplices held the cab door shut to stop the officers from pursuing him. He hid for a while in Petticoat Lane and later managed to escape to Denmark and then New York. Meanwhile, his wife, Hannah, sentenced to 14 years for receiving, was transported with four of their six children to Van Diemen's Land - the southeastern Australian island colony that was renamed Tasmania in 1855. Her older boys, John and Moses, who were in their late teens, early 20s, also went to Van Diemen's Land, not as convicts but as free settlers.

At the time of Hannah Solomon's trial, her husband was in New York. But soon after she arrived in Van Diemen's Land, in late 1828, he showed up there as well. He had learnt that his wife and children were there and wanted to join them. He is reputed to have said he was 'determined to brave all for the Sake of my dear Wife and Children - I don't care what may happen.' From New York, where he had laid low for a while, he had travelled through the Americas, leaving for Hobart, the capital of Van Diemen's Land, on a ship from Rio de Janeiro. He was recognized the moment the ship touched shore. After a while, the authorities arrested him and shipped him back to Britain, where he was tried for his earlier crimes and sentenced to transportation to Van Diemen's Land! He was given 14 years, but was pardoned after four years' imprisonment at Richmond Gaol. His wife was released in 1840. But the family reunion did not go smoothly, and they soon separated. Ikey Solomon died in 1850 in Newtown, Van Diemen's Land, at the age of 63. He was buried in the old Jewish cemetery in Harrington Street, Hobart. In 2004, a block of housing was pulled down, and underneath they found the old Jewish cemetery, including the remains of Ikey Solomon. The skeletons were removed and reburied in the main cemetery at Cornelian Bay.



Fagin by George Cruikshank



Alec Guinness as Fagin



Ikey Solomons in The Potato Factory

There has been a revived interest in Ikey Solomon exemplified by the publication of a number of books either based on his life or inspired by his representation in Dickens's novel. A graphic novel adaptation by American comic artist Will Eisner of the story of *Oliver Twist* called *Fagin the Jew* (Doubleday, 2003), views events from Fagin's perspective and recasts the character as a complex and troubled anti-hero who struggles with prejudice, poverty and anti-Semitism. Non-fiction books include *The Prince of Fences: The Life and Crimes of Ikey Solomons* (Valentine Mitchell & Co Ltd, London, 1974), by John J Tobias, and, more recently, *The First Fagin: The True Story of Ikey Solomon* (Acland Press, 2002), by Judith Sackville-O'Donnell. A novel called *The Potato Factory*, by Bryce Courtney (Penguin Books Australia Ltd, 1996), which features Solomon as one of the characters in a complex tale, was turned into a four-hour television mini series by Australian broadcaster ABC in 2000.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the purpose of a prison sentence was solely to punish the offender for the crime that had been committed. This was the same whether the criminal was man, woman or child. However, by the middle of the century, several landmark cases had introduced a level of proportionality that took into account the mental state of criminals and, increasingly, their age. Whereas at the start of the century children would be sent to the same prisons as adults, the courts now had the option of sending them to the Reformatory.

However, the punishments meted out to youngsters were severe. In 1821, the *Manchester Guardian* noted the case of a boy arrested for a petty felony and being in possession of stolen property. He offered to show the officers where his accomplices were, and took them to a cellar where a man of about fifty was supervising three boys breaking up some brass item to make it look old. They were all arrested. The man was given fourteen years transportation, while two of the boys received punishments of two years and the other was sentenced to six months imprisonment.

A lesser offence would be punished by a spell in a reform school - a hard regime. If the children's parents could pay, they bore the cost of their schooling. This was undoubtedly an added incentive for parents to keep their children on the straight and narrow. In the case of orphans, the parish had to bear the cost; so, for these children, transportation was a more common, though not universal, punishment. Repeat offenders would find themselves in prison, where adults and children were kept together and treated in the same way.

Eventually, a way to remove the child pickpockets from the streets was found. The first step was the formation of the Ragged Schools, which were charitably funded institutions, usually in the poorest parts of each city. Children found begging in the street were often sent to these schools. Lord Shaftesbury became president of the Ragged School Union in 1844, which was joined a decade later by the Industrial Schools, where voluntary contributions and state aid were used together to fund the education and training of many poorer children under the age of 14. Lobbying by Lord Shaftesbury and others led to a series of parliamentary acts over the next twenty years, especially the 1870 Elementary Education Act, which required every child over the age of five to attend school. These schools were run by boards of governors, and were funded from the rates. A distinction was still made between the poor, who went to Industrial Schools, and the young criminals, who were still sent to the Reformatory, where the regime was harder. However, these changes led to the eventual disappearance of the child gangs of trained pickpockets. The number of children committed to prison between 1856 and 1881 decreased by almost two thirds⁵. In addition, after 1877, the prisons came under the control of national instead of local government, and the practice of keeping child offenders in the same prisons as adults was eventually phased out, with the reform schools taking a greater role in the education of the offenders.

The days of the Artful Dodger and the child pickpocket gangs were gone, but he was brilliantly captured in fictional form by Dickens and is still one of the most memorable figures of the nineteenth century.

Further information

Jack Wild's obituary was published in Ripperologist No. 65 (March 2006). See also [Times Online](#)

Websites devoted to Charles Dickens: [fidnet.com](#) and [charles-dickens.org](#)

Mayhew, Henry: London Labour and the London Poor, London, 1865.

Duckworth, Jeannie: Fagin's Children: Criminal Children in Victorian England, Hambleton Continuum, London, 2002

Wikipedia entry for [Ikey Solomon](#)

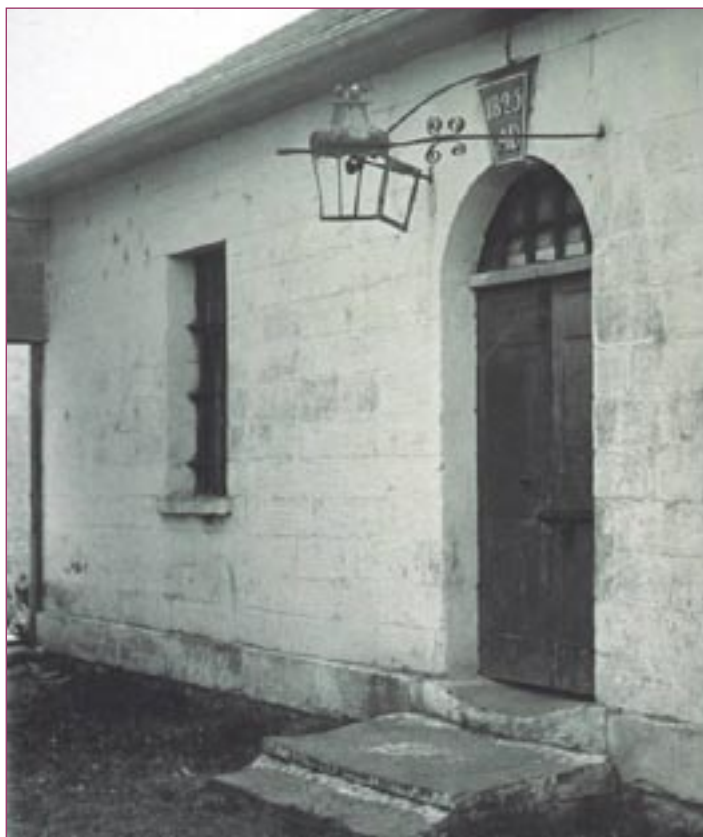
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The Proceedings of the Old Bailey; and Decisions of the Nineteenth Century Tasmanian Superior Courts, R v Solomon, Colonial Times, 6 November 1829.

Interview with Judith Sackville-O'Donnell on [The Ark](#), ABC Radio National, 29 January 2006



Lord Shaftesbury



The door of Richmond Gaol, Tasmania, where Ikey Solomon served his prison term.



ADAM WOOD

Read all about it

The Hunger for News and the Newsboy's Debt

Only last year, at Christmas Tide
While pacing down the the city street

A tiny, ill-clad paperboy
As ragged as you'd ever meet

Raised his torn cap with purple hands
Said, "Paper sir, The Evening News?"

He brushed away a freezing tear
And shivered, "Oh sir, don't refuse!"

These are the opening lines of the anonymous Victorian tale *The Newsboy's Debt*, and paint a picture a world away from the cheery ragamuffin newsboy seen running down a cobbled street associated with fictional treatments such as Michael Caine's *Jack the Ripper* and *Oliver!*

The British newspaper - and newsboy - dates from the mid 17th century. During the Civil War there were regular news-sheets carrying general information, along with propaganda. Following the Restoration there arose a number of publications including the *London Gazette*, the first official journal of record and the newspaper of the Crown. Publication was controlled under the Licensing Act of 1662, and by the 1720s there were twelve London newspapers (the *Daily Courant* being the first) and 24 provincial papers. This number had grown by the early 19th century to 52 London papers, and over 100 other titles.

In the early 19th century, newspapers were taxed in order to keep them expensive and out of the hands of the potentially revolutionary lower classes. The tax took the form of a stamp duty, paid and recorded on every copy. Newspaper sales continued to rise however, aided in 1836 by the reduction of duty to 1d. Reuters News Agency opened in London in 1851, and on 1 July 1855 the Stamp Act was repealed, opening the way for cheap, mass-circulation newspapers.

Harold Herd, in 1952's *The March of Journalism: The Story of the British Press from 1622 to the Present Day*, recorded some of the important landmarks in newspaper publishing: the launch of the first coloured newspaper, *Coloured News*, on 4 August 1855; the first penny London morning newspaper, the *Daily Telegraph*, launched on 20 September 1855; the formation of the Press Association in 1868, followed by the rival Central News in 1871. On 20 March 1889 the *Illustrated London News* published the first photographs, of the Cambridge and Oxford boat crews. Finally, on 4 January 1890 the *Daily Graphic* was launched - it was the first daily illustrated paper.

The cheap daily newspapers had no trouble finding an eager audience. As successive generations of Britons became increasingly literate, so did their demand for information of events near and far.

J Ewing Ritchie's *About London*, published in 1860, described the demand for information, and a typical newspaper office's attempts to keep up:



The London Gazette, 1865

From *About London* (J Ewing Ritchie, 1860)

I would also speak of another class of newspaper people - the newspaper boy, agile as a lamp-lighter, sharp in his glances as a cat. The newspaper boy is of all ages, from twelve to forty, but they are all alike, very disorderly, and very ardent politicians; and while they are waiting in the publishing-office for their papers they are prone to indulge in political gossip, after the manner of their betters at the west-end clubs. On the trial of Bernard, the excitement among the newspaper boys was very great. I heard some of them, on the last day of the trial, confess to having been too excited all that day to do anything; their admiration of the speech of Edwin James was intense. A small enthusiast near me said to another, "That ere James is the fellow to work 'em; didn't he pitch hin to the hemperor?"

"Yes," said a sadder and wiser boy; "yes, he's all werry well, but he'd a spoke on t'other side just as well if he'd been paid."

"No; would he?"

"Yes, to be sure."

"Well, that's wot I call swindling."

"No, it ain't. They does their best. Them as pays you, you works for."

Whether the explanation was satisfactory I can't say, as the small boy's master's name was called, and he vanished with "two quire" on his youthful head. But generally these small boys prefer wit to politics; they are much given to practical jokes at each other's expense, and have no mercy for individual peculiarities. Theirs is a hard life, from five in the morning, when the daily papers commence publishing, to seven in the evening, when the second edition of the *Sun* with the *Gazette* appears. What becomes of them when they cease to be newspaper boys, must be left to conjecture. Surely such riotous youths can never become tradesmen in a small way, retailers of greens, itinerant dealers in coal. Do not offend these gentry if you are a newspaper proprietor. Their power for mischief is great. At the *Illustrated News* office I have seen a policeman required to reduce them to order.

What would the Englishman do without his newspaper I cannot imagine. The sun might just as well refuse to shine, as the press refuse to turn out its myriads of newspapers. Conversation would cease at once. Brown, with his morning paper in his hand, has very decided opinions indeed, - can tell you what the French Emperor is about, - what the Pope will be compelled to do, - what is the aim of Sardinia, - and what is Austria's little game. I dined at Jenkins's yesterday, and for three hours over the wine I was compelled to listen to what I had read in that morning's Times. The worst of it was, that when I joined the ladies I was no better off; as the dear creatures were full of the particulars of the grand Rifle Ball When I travel by the rail, I am gratified with details of divorce cases - of terrible accidents - of dreadful shipwrecks - of atrocious murders of ingenious swindling, all brought to light by means of the press. What people could have found to talk about before the invention of newspapers, is beyond my limited comprehension. They must have been a dull set in those dark days; I suppose the farmers and country gentlemen talked of bullocks, and tradespeople about trade; the ladies about fashions, and cookery, and the plague of had servants. We are wonderfully smarter now, and shine, though it be with a borrowed light.

Let us think awhile of a newspaper-office, and those who do business there. Externally, there is nothing remarkable in a newspaper-office. You pass by at night, and see many windows lighted with gas, that is all. By daylight there is nothing to attract curiosity, indeed, in the early part of the day, there is little going on at a newspaper-office. When you and I are hard at work, newspaper people are enjoying their night; when you and I are asleep, they are hard at work for us. They have a hot-house appearance, and are rarely octogenarians. The conscientious editor of a daily newspaper can never be free from anxiety. He has enough to do to keep all to their post; he must see that the leader-writers are all up to the mark - that the reporters do their duty - that the literary critic, and the theatrical critic, and the musical critic, and the city correspondent, and the special reporter, and the host of nameless contributors, do not disappoint or deceive the public, and that every day the daily sheet shall have something in it to excite, or inform, or improve. But while you and I are standing outside, the editor, in some remote suburb, is, it may be, dreaming of pleasanter things than politics and papers. One man, however, is on the premises, and that is the manager. He represents the proprietors, and is, in his sphere, as great a man as the editor. It is well to be deferential to the manager. He is a wonder in his way, - literary man, yet man of business. He must know everybody, be able at a moment's notice to pick the right man out, and send him, it may be, to the Antipodes. Of all events that are to come off in the course of the year, unexpected or the reverse, he must have a clear and distinct perception, that he may have eye-witnesses there for the benefit of the British public. He, too, must contrive, so that out-goings shall not exceed receipts, and that the paper pays. He must be active, wide-awake, possessed of considerable tact, and if, when an Irish gentleman, with a big stick, calls and asks to see the editor or manager, he knows how to knock a man down, so much the better. Of course, managers are not required for the smaller weeklies. In some of the offices there is very little subdivision of labour. The editor writes the leaders and reviews, and the sub-editor does the paste-and-scissors work. But let us return to the daily paper; - outside of the office of which we have been so rude as to leave the reader standing all this while.

At present there is no sign of life. It is true, already the postman has delivered innumerable letters from all quarters of the globe - that the electric telegraph has sent its messages - that the railways have brought their despatches - that the publishers have furnished books of all sorts and sizes for review - and that tickets from all the London exhibitions are soliciting a friendly notice. There let them lie unheeded, till the coming man appears. Even the publisher, who was here at five o'clock in the morning, has gone home: only a few clerks, connected with the financial department of the paper, or to receive advertisements, are on the spot. We may suppose that somewhere between one and two the first editorial visit will be paid,

and that then this chaos is reduced to order; and that the ideas, which are to be represented in the paper of to-morrow, are discussed, and the daily organs received, and gossip of all sorts from the clubs-from the house-from the city-collected and condensed; a little later perhaps assistants arrive - one to cull all the sweets from the provincial journals - another to look over the files of foreign papers - another it may be to translate important documents. The great machine is now getting steadily at work. Up in the composing-room are printers already fingering their types.

In the law-courts, a briefless barrister is taking notes - in the, police-courts, reporters are at work, and far away in the city, "our city correspondent" is collecting the commercial news of the hour - and in all parts of London penny-a-liners, like eagles scenting carrion, are ferreting out for the particulars of the last "extraordinary elopement," or "romantic suicide." The later it grows the more gigantic becomes the pressure. The parliamentary reporters are now furnishing their quota; gentlemen who' have been assisting at public-dinners come redolent of post-prandial eloquence, which has to be reduced to sense and grammar. It is now midnight,. and yet ire have to wait the arrival of the close of the parliamentary debate, on which the editor must write a leader before he leaves; and the theatrical Critic's verdict on the new play. In the meanwhile the foreman of the printers takes stock, being perfectly aware that he cannot perform the wonderful feat of making a pint bottle hold a quart. Woe is me! he has already half a dozen columns in excess. What is to be done? Well, the literature must stand over, that's very clear, then those translations from the French will do tomorrow, and this report will also not hurt by delay- as to the rest, that must be cut down mid still further condensed; but quickly, for time is passing, and we must be on the machine at three. Quickly fly the minutes - hotter becomes the gas-lit room - wearier the editorial staff. But the hours bring relief. The principal editor has done his leader and departed - the assistants have done the same - so have the reporters, only the sub-editor remains, and as daylight is glimmering in the east, and even fast London is asleep, he quietly lights a cigar, and likewise departs; the printers will follow as soon as the forms have gone down, and the movements below indicate that the machine, by the aid of steam, is printing.

Once the newspapers were printed and ready for distribution the newsboy began to earn his keep. Max Schlesinger in 1853's *Saunterings in and about London* explains how:

Let us now turn to the mechanical means and contrivances by which the London papers are distributed among the public. The English post-office has nothing whatever to do with newspaper subscriptions. It forwards newspapers exactly as it forwards other parcels, whenever they are posted, but it does not undertake to obtain them from the publishing-office. The newspaper-offices, too, know nothing of the continental system of abonnement; they sell their papers over the counter, and for cash, exactly as all other wholesale dealers do. Under these circumstances, the public want retail shops, and such retailers are to be found in the newsvenders.



Generally speaking, the newsvenders occupy small shops in or near some of the principal streets, where they frequently carry on the business of stationers as well. They supply their London customers with papers; they send papers to their customers in the provinces, and they lend papers by the hour or day. For success in the various branches of his business, the newsvender wants a good connexion and a small capital. His connexion once established, he can make a guess at the numbers of each paper he is likely to want, and for these he sends to the various publishing offices. The news-boys are the chief "helps" and props of his trade.

In the dawn of morning, even before the publication of the great journals has commenced, the newsvender, represented by his boy, is at his post in the outer room of the publishing-office. These plenipotentiaries of the various newsvending firms sit and gape and rub their eyes, or warm their hands by the fire, until the first batch of papers is hurried into the room. A thin, sleepy man, who has hitherto been hid in a kind of cage, gets up from his office chair and takes charge of the bulky parcel. The boys at once make a rush towards the cage, and the taller ones elbow their way up to it, while the small boys must be content to wait until their turn comes. "Fifty copies!" "One hundred copies!" "Two hundred copies!" Each bawls out the number he wants, puts down his money, and runs off through the moist, cold, morning air to another newspaper-office, or back to the shop, where the various numbers are put into wrappers as fast as it is possible for human hands to perform that operation,

and despatched by rail to the various country customers. All this is done at express speed; and the newsvender's boy, though gifted with a leaning to politics, can hardly find the time to stop by a street lamp and read the last "Submarine from Paris."

He is hard at work all the morning. When the parcels have been despatched into the provinces, he is at once compelled to devote himself to the other important section of his daily duties, and provide for his master's town customers, of whom there are two classes, purchasers and hirers of newspapers. The former receive their papers about nine o'clock through the medium of the news-boy. The latter receive their papers at various times according to the terms of the contract. Some keep a paper two hours, some keep it three or four, and the terms are, for the short period, 6d, and for the longer, 1s per week. It is the newsboy's business to know all the various customers of this kind, and to call with the paper, and for it, at the exact time desired by each individual reader.

Charles Manby Smith, in *Curiosities of London Life, or Phases, Physiological and Social of the Great Metropolis*, published in 1853, recorded a day in the life of a typical newsboy:

Charley Potter is Polly Potter's biggest boy; and Polly Potter is a hard-working woman, with another boy and a baby to provide for, whose father died in the hospital the same week the baby was born. Mrs Potter lives in one of the courts running out of St Martin's Lane, in a central nest of struggling poverty and hardship, situated not very far from the National Gallery. Ever since Tom Potter's death, owing to a fall from a scaffolding, to say nothing of the weary weeks he lay ill, it has been work or starve - do or die - with the Potter family. The club-money luckily came in at the death and birth, and helped the widow over the double trouble; and as soon as she got upon her feet, she set about helping herself. She took Charley, who was going in thirteen, and as sharp a young fellow as need be, away from school, and told him he must now go to work instead of his father - a proposition which the boy accepted in the very spirit of a young middy unexpectedly promoted to a lieutenancy; and thus it was that the child became, in a manner, a man at once. By the recommendation of Polly's old master, a tradesman in the Strand, Charley was helped to employment from a newspaper agent, whom he serves manfully. While Polly is at home washing or ironing, or abroad charin' or nussin', little Billy meantime taking care of the baby, we shall amuse ourselves by following Charley through the routine of one day's operations. It may not be altogether time thrown away: there is many an old boy as well as a host of young ones who may learn a lesson from it.

It is a dark, dreary, and foggy morning in January; the wind is driving from the south-east, bringing along with it a delicious mixture of snow and rain; and it yet wants two hours of daylight, when Charley, slinking from the side of his sleeping brother, turns out of bed, and dons his clothes. He has no notion of washing his face just yet - that is a luxury which must be deferred till breakfast-time, which is a good way off at present. The pelting sleet, the driving wind, and the fog are such small trifles in his category of inconveniences, that he takes no more notice of them than just to button his jacket to the chin, and lug his cloth cap down over his eyes, as he gently shuts the door after him, and steps out into the darkness. Then he digs his hands into his pockets, and bending his head towards the storm, in the attitude of a skater in a Dutch frost-piece, steers round the steps of St Martin's Church, and then straight on through the Strand and Temple Bar, and along Fleet Street, near the end of which he disappears suddenly in the dark and narrow maw of Black Horse Alley. This Black-Horse Alley is a place of no repute at all: among all the courts and closes which debouch into Fleet Street on either side of the way, it is almost the only one which is not celebrated for something or somebody or other in records either literary or dramatic, ghostly or convivial. By daylight it is particularly dirty, dark, and unsavoury, having no outlet but a narrow one at the centre, on the right, which lands the explorer in Farringdon Street, opposite to the ruined gateway of what a few years ago was the Fleet Prison. A black horse, or a horse of any colour, once fairly in the alley, would find it a difficult matter to turn round, and would have to back out, or else, like an eel in a water-pipe, wait till destiny chose to release him. Wretched old tenements are the tall buildings on either side, which shut out the daylight from the court, and one, the biggest of them all, belongs to an association of newsmen; being open all day, and very likely all night too, for we never saw it shut, it serves as a central depot whence whole tons of newspapers, received damp from the printing-machine, take their departure daily for all parts of the kingdom.

Here we must follow close upon the heels of Charley. Diving into the court, and proceeding a score of yards or so, we find the old house bathed in a flood of gaslight from top to bottom. Men and boys are rushing up and down the angular stairs, some with damp loads upon their backs, and others hastening off to procure them. The morning papers have all been "put to bed," as it is termed, and their respective machines are now rolling off copies, each at the rate of several thousands an hour. As fast as they come into being, they are counted off in quires, and borne away by the agents, who undertake to supply the country districts. An enormous number of them come on the shoulders of the newsboys to Black-Horse Alley. On the top-floor of the house - and we notice, as we ascend, that all the floors are furnished and alike - we find Charley already at his work. He stands a score of other lads and men, behind a continuous flat deal-board, which runs round the whole circuit of the floor, elevated on tressels, and standing about two feet from the wall. Those next him are folding, packing, and bundling up papers in time for the morning mail, which will carry them to Bristol and to Birmingham, more than a hundred miles distant, and to a hundred places besides, in time to lay them upon the breakfast-tables of the comfortable class. Charley, with paste-brush and printed addresses, is as busy as the best. Post, Herald, Chronicle, Advertiser, and Daily News are flying - like so many mad flags amidst the clamour of voices, the stamping of feet, and the blows of hard palms upon wet paper. By and by the Times, which,

on account of its omnivorous machine, can afford to sit up longer, and go to bed later than its contemporaries, pours in a fresh flood of work. All hands go at it together; but as fast as one huge pile is cleared off, another comes, and neither the noise nor the activity relents until the moment for posting draws nigh, when the well-filled bags are hoisted on young shoulders, or piled on light traps waiting close by in the street - and off they roll or run to the post-office. Charley himself staggers out of Black-Horse Alley, looking, with a huge bag upon his shoulders, like a very great bird with a very small pair of legs, and in six and a half minutes - the exact time allowed - shoots his body into the aperture at St Martin's-le-Grand, and, catching up the emptied bag, which flies out upon him the next moment, walks leisurely away.



Charley knows now that the immediate hurry is over, and, in spite of the rain which still continues to drizzle down, he has a game at bolstering a comrade with his empty bag, in which friendly interchange of civilities the two together make their way, not back to Black-Horse Alley, but to their master's shop, at which they arrive before it is open, and before the neighbours are up. Here they meet half-a-dozen more boys, distributors hired by the week to do a few hours' work in the morning, in the delivery of newspapers to subscribers. The post-office, which will carry a stamped newspaper 100 or 500 miles for nothing, will not carry it a short distance without payment of a penny, and therefore the newsman has to deliver by private hand all papers within the limits. For this responsible commission, there are always plenty of candidates among the London boys; and here are half a dozen of them this morning waiting the arrival of the master with his budget. Pending his advent, as the rain peppers down unceasingly, they wrap their bags round their shoulders, and, arranging themselves in a rank under the projecting eaves of the shop-window, commence the performance of an impromptu overture with their heels against the wooden framework that supports the shutters which they are polishing with their backs. The neighbours know this sort of demonstration well enough; it is as good as Bow Bells to all within hearing, and has the effect of rousing many a sleeper from his bed. Day has dawned during the performance, and, soon after, the master's little pony-cart is seen in the distance rattling over the stones. He jumps out of the trap almost before it has stopped, throwing Charley the key of the shop-door. The boy has the door open and the

shutters down in an instant; the piles of newspapers are transferred from their swaddling blankets to the counter, and as rapidly as is consistent with a cautious accuracy, they are allotted, among the different distributors, each of whom, as he receives his complement, starts off upon his mission. Charley has a round to go over, the course of which has been suited to his convenience, as its termination will bring him within a short distance of his own home, where he arrives by nine o'clock.

Before breakfast, he makes his toilet, and rubs off the residuum of London particular which has accumulated upon his skin within the last twenty-four hours. This necessary preliminary settled, he addresses himself to sundry logs of bread and butter, and a basin of scalding coffee, which has been kept simmering on the hob for him. Solid and fluid are dispatched with a relish that is to be earned only by early rising and outdoor work. He talks as he eats, and tells his mother the news which he has contrived to pick up in the course of the morning - particularly about that murder over the water, and the behaviour of "the cove what's took in custody about it." Perhaps he has an extra paper; and if so, he reads a bit of the police-reports, especially if anybody in the neighbourhood is implicated in one of the cases. Breakfast over, he gets back to his master's shop, where he finds a bundle of newspapers ready for him, which he is directed to get rid of at the railway station, if possible. For a certain reason, well known to master and servant, he has a decided fancy for this part of his business; and he loses no time in transporting himself to an arena always favourable to this branch of commerce. The bustle of trains arriving and departing excites his spirits and energies and, determined on doing business, he gives full scope to his lungs. "Times, Times - to-day's Times! Morning Chronicle! Post! Advertiser! Illustrated News! Who's for to-day's paper? Paper, gentlemen! News, news! Paper, paper, paper! Chronicle! - Who's for Punch?" In this way, he rings the changes backwards and forwards, not even pausing while engaged with a customer, and only holding his peace while the station is vacant. Then he takes breath, and perhaps, too, takes a dose of theatrical criticism from the columns of the Chronicle, or of the last new jokes in Punch. The arrival of a new batch of passengers wakes him up again, and he is among them in a moment, with the same incessant song and the same activity. His eyes are everywhere, and he never loses a chance; he cherishes the first-class carriages especially, and a passenger cannot pop his head out of window for a moment, without being confronted with the damp sheet of the

Times, and assailed with the ringing sound of his voice. Charley generally continues this traffic till dinner-time, which with him is at one o'clock. Whether he continues it after that time, is a matter frequently left to his own discretion; and as he has a interest in exercising that upon sound principles, we may be sure he does the best he can.

The newsboy's dinner might be described in mathematical terms as an "unknown quantity." It may consist of a warm and savoury mess, discussed at leisure beneath the eye of his mother, or it may be a crust of bread and cheese, eaten in the streets while hurrying shopwards from the station of a railway, on the deck of a steam-boat. Sometimes he has to eat dinner and supper "all under one," cheating his appetite in the interim with a hunch of bread and a cup of coffee; at other times, he will patronise the pie-shops, and dine upon eel or mutton pies. But, dinner or no dinner, he must be at the beck and bidding of his master early in the afternoon, to give in an account of his sales and stock, and to assist in the important proceedings which have to be gone through before the departure of the evening mails. Of course, it is the object of every newsman to get rid, if possible, of all the papers he buys; for if they are kept to the next day, they are worth only half price; and if a day beyond that, they are but waste-paper. The newsman, therefore, has in one sense to take stock every day - in fact, oftener; and the evening post-hour, which is six o'clock, is to be looked upon as the hour for striking a balance of profit: because, whatever is left on hand after that hour has struck, is wholly or partially a loss. Newspapers which have been lent by the hour, have to be collected in time for the evening mail, or they may some of them. be left for further hire, and go as half-pricers next morning. Charley is running about on this business for an hour or two in the afternoon; and it happens to-day that by five o'clock, or a little before, his master has discovered that he has more of one or two of the daily papers than he wants, and that he is short of others, which he must procure to supply his country customers. It would be very easy to purchase those he wants, but in that case it might be impossible to sell those he does not want, and the loss of the sum they cost would constitute an unwelcome drawback to the profits of day's business. But it happens that there are a score of other newsmen in the same awkward predicament - a predicament which is sure to recur to most of them every day the week, and which has, therefore, begotten its own as all difficulties of the sort invariably do in London. The remedy is the Newspaper Exchange, which has its locality in no recognized or established spot, though it is oftener held in Catherine Street, Strand, or at St Martin's-le-Grand, in front of the Post-office, than elsewhere. This Exchange, it is originated with the newsboys; and though it has been in existence, to our knowledge, for a dozen years at least, boys are the only members to this hour. It consists of a meeting in the open street, very rapidly assembled - the parties appearing on the ground soon after four in the afternoon, continuing to increase in numbers until after five - and still more rapidly dispersed, under pressure of the Post-office, when the business of the hour has been transacted.

On the present occasion, Charley is entrusted with a dozen newspapers which are of no use to his employer, and his mission is to replace them by as many others, which are wanted to go into the country by the six o'clock post. He tucks them under his arm, and, it being already upon the stroke of five, is off towards 'Change as fast as he can run. He can hear the sharp eager cries of the juvenile stock-brokers as he rounds the corner: "Ad. for Chron.," "Post for Times," "Post for Ad.," "Herald for Ad.," "Ad. for News," &c., including well nigh all the changes that can be rung upon all the London newspapers. He mingles with the throng, and listens a moment or two. At the sound of "Ad. for Chron.," he explodes suddenly with a "Here you are !" and the exchange is effected in that indefinable fraction of time known among newsboys as "two twos." "Times for Chron." is an offer that suits him again, and again the momentary transfer is effected. Then he lifts up his voice, "Post for Times, Chron. for Times," and, bestirring himself, effects half-a-dozen more exchanges in less time than we should care to mention - now and then referring to the list of his wants, and overhauling his stock, in order to be sure, amidst the excitement of the market, that he is doing a correct trade. He finds, after half-an-hour's bawling and bargaining, that he wants yet a Times and an Advertiser, and he knows there is a boy present who has them to dispose of, but Charley has not in his stock what the other wants in exchange. So he sets about "working the oracle," as he terms it: instead of bawling Chron. for Times, which is the exchange he really desiderates, he bawls "Chron. for Post," because the boy with the Times wants a Post for it, which Charley hasn't got to give; but by dint of bawling he at length gets a Post for his Chronicle, and then he is in a condition to make the desired exchange. Sometimes he will go so far as to "work the oracle" "three or four deep" - that is, he will effect three or four separate exchanges before he has transmuted the newspaper he wanted to get rid of into the one he desired to possess - or changed bad stock into good: by such intricate exploits, he has obtained among his fellows the reputation of a "knowing young shaver ;" and it is to be hoped that he gets, in reward of his ingenuity, something more substantial from his employer, for which the little family at home is none the worse.

Before the affairs on 'Change have come to their sudden conclusion, Charley is back to the shop; and now all hands are busy in making up the big bag, which must start on its passage to the Post-office, at the very latest, by ten minutes before six, the distance being fully a nine minutes' walk. There is the same ceremony with the evening papers as there was with the morning ones, and there is the same limit as to time for its performance. But what must be done must, and of course is done; and in a well-ordered concern, like that of which young Potter is a member, it is done in good time too. Before the race against the clock commences, Charley has got the bag hoisted on his shoulders, and, with a fair couple of minutes to spare, is trudging steadily towards St Martin's-le-Grand. We shall leave him to find his way there, which he can do well enough without us, and walk on before, to see what takes place at the post-office at this particular hour of the day.



The Post Office at St Martin-Le-Grand, scene of the Newsboy's Exchange

The newspapers, of course, had a field day with once Whitechapel Murders commenced. The London evening paper, *The Star*, sometimes labelled the first sensationalist tabloid, was launched on 17 January 1888. It realised that by following the murders closely, and marketing itself as the 'voice of the people', its popularity - and circulation - would increase.

On 8 October 1888 it reported on the ill-treatment of a newsboy by a policeman:

THE POLICE DOWN ON NEWSBOYS.

A constable ordered a newsboy selling papers in Ludgate-circus on Saturday evening to move on. No reason was given, and the lad moved away somewhat reluctantly. While he was crossing the road, the policeman suddenly seized his arm and marched him off to the station. There he was charged with three specific offences:

- * Causing obstruction;*
- * Refusing to go away when ordered;*
- * And refusing to give his name and address.*

The first offence was of so trivial a nature that to base a charge of breaking the law was of course farcical. The lad did not refuse to go away when ordered; he was not, for all the spectators could see, asked his name and address. The sergeant heard these two last facts from Mr. Rowe, of 11, Northwood-road, Highgate, who followed the policeman and the newsboy to the station. The charge was not pressed, and the lad was released.

[Several cases of the police interfering with the sale of evening papers have recently been brought to our notice. We shall be glad if those who observe other instances will notify the facts to us, to prevent oppression and injustice. Send the number of the policeman.]

Two days later, on 10 October, it carried a letter from a reader in response:

THE POLICE AS NEWS CENSORS.

Pat Ennis writes from 46, Great Peter-street, Westminster: - Having seen in your issue of to-day a paragraph, headed "The Police Down on Newsboys," and having been victimised myself in a somewhat similar manner as the lad in the case referred to in The Star, I would take the liberty of bringing the matter before you. On Friday evening last I was standing near the Aquarium, at the corner of Tothill-street, endeavoring to earn a crust by the sale of The Star, United Ireland, &c., but the "active and intelligent" member of the force on duty there compelled me to move on, and that at a very quick pace, for he chased me down the Broad Sanctuary, and only desisted when exhausted nature

compelled him. Now, sir, if this sort of treatment was meted out impartially to vendors of newspapers of all shades of politics alike, it would be harsh and cruel enough, but what can be said when it is reserved only for those who commit the terrible crime of exposing for sale such rabid Radical organs as *The Star*, *United Ireland*, &c. For while I was being chased the vendors of the Unionist evening papers were left unmolested; and when I complained to the inspector he said exposing such cartoons was infamous, and that I deserved six months.

The Star's staunch championing of the humble newsboy was forgotten when their sales were threatened, however. In their column 'THE PEOPLE'S POST BOX' during November the paper published a reply to a letter from someone calling himself 'A Disgusted One':

A DISGUSTED ONE - Thanks. We know of the newsboys' trick of shouting "Star" and selling other evening papers instead to the unwary, and we are trying to meet it.

Perhaps more balanced was the *Daily News*, who on 22 November 1888 published an insightful letter from a correspondent who had visited Whitechapel during the peak of the hysteria:

As an old stager who has been in the thick of many excitements in London and knows his metropolis pretty well east and west, north and south, I started yesterday morning on receipt of intelligence that another horrible murder had been committed in Whitechapel. It so happened that I had seen nothing of the sanguinary horrors of previous occasions, and therefore carried a fresh mind with me down to Whitechapel and the thoroughfares around it.

To say that on the tops of the omnibuses, at the street corners, outside the public houses, and wherever groups had formed, the people were painfully excited, is nor sufficient. Many of them, especially the wretchedly clad and unwholesome looking women who were so evident on every pavement, were simply frantic. They gesticulated wildly, used the most awful language, and threatened miscellaneous violence against the unknown murderer. If ever they had any mental balance they have lost it. They were, poor creatures, ripe for any panic, and, I should say, keep up their courage by constant visits to the hateful ginshops. Women of this description, of various ages, in the course of a couple of hours I saw, not in twos and threes, but in scores. Their opinions could be elicited without eavesdropping. The shrill voices of the viragoes were as proclamations of terror and disgust. The men had less to say; but they, too, were full of the subject, and looked at every stranger with a suspicion that boded ill for any one who they would conclude was Jack the Ripper. Amongst the obvious waifs and strays, the evil livers, the vicious by stress of necessity or the prompting of a crooked moral nature, were numbers of the struggling poor who have retained their self respect, if they have not yet proved that to be virtuous is to be happy. Like the rest, they were terribly agitated and appalled.

The seamy side of the seamy East end was, in short, turned out to the cold winds this blustering November day, discussing, inquiring, fearing, hoping - hoping strongly that this time the criminal would be brought to justice. But as the afternoon wore on it was clear that something like the real facts of the case were being understood, and the newsboys no longer dared flaunt the placards which described the event as a murder. They displayed their sensational catchlines as long as they dared, and were only driven to unfold the more truthful contents bills of later editions by oaths, cuffs, and kicks.

The thing that impressed me most during my rambles was the likelihood of some innocent person being some day lynched. The people are at heart panic stricken, and ready, on what they might deem to be reasonable grounds, to take the law into their own hands. This would have happened long ago, I am convinced, if there had been any general agreement as to the appearance of the murderer. The most widespread impression is that he always carries a black bag, but otherwise few men and women can agree upon a pattern. With regard to this last criminal of the George street lodging house, one

From Byways of the Modern Babylon (James Greenwood, 1867)

HE is a "business man," without doubt. While the heads of his customers were as yet pressing their several pillows; while the horrible shrieks of the London and North-Western mail-train whistle was startling the babyhood of day, while the omnibuses, now so prim and bright, still reposed in "the yard," spattered and grimy with yesterday's mire, this small radical was up and doing. He was whistling over Blackfriars Bridge while St Paul's was chiming four; and before six o'clock he had borne the brunt of four battles in as many newspaper-publishing offices, coming off in each case with flying colours. True, you may find the result of one of his skirmishes recorded in a crimson smudge over the latest American war news; but, don't be alarmed, it was only his nose, and you should have seen the other chap's eye! That was the way the row began; in the short space of seven minutes it was all over-the stuck-up one defeated, the quire of *Stars* secured, the wounded nasal organ bathed at the pump, and Battered Breeches is enlivening daisy Fleet Street with "Sally come up the middle" as he makes his way to the office where a supply of "grafts" (BB's playful abbreviation of *Daily Telegraphs*) may be obtained.

And did the publisher of that eminently peaceful newspaper the *Star* permit this pugilistic encounter on his premises? Did he not instantly take measures for the protection of the stuck-up one and the expulsion of Battered Breeches? Did the porter take BB by his baggy part and the nape of his neck, and, thrusting him out, warn him never to show his face in Dorset Street again? He did not. The obligations he and his employers are under to BB forbade any such unceremonious proceeding. For, be it known, Battered Breeches is one of the chief pillars of the cheap press. Had it not been for BB and his numerous friends, that mighty engine the penny paper would have stood still long ago; the requisite money, so necessary for lubricative purposes, would have been wanting; and creaking, and rust, and decay would speedily have ensued.

THE NEWSBOY'S DEBT.



"HE STOOD AND GAZED WITH WHITEN FACE."

Only last year, at Christmas-time,
While pacing down a city street,
I saw a tiny, shivering boy—
One of the thousands that we meet—

As ragged as a boy could be,
With half a cap, with one good shoe;
Just pining to keep out the wind—
I know the wind blew keenly too!

A newsboy, with a newsboy's lungs,
A native Scotch face, an honest brow,
And eyes that liked to smile as well.
They had not yet forgotten how!

A newsboy, hawking his last sheets
With loud persistence. Now and then
Stopping to heat his stiffened hands,
And trudging heavily on again.

Dodging about among the crowd,
Shouting his "Extras" clear and clear;
Pleading by wiles to cheat the wind
Within some alley, by some door.

All but he stopped—six papers left,
Tucked hopelessly beneath his arm—
To give a publisher's outspread store!
Here products from some country farm.

And these conditions, all adorned
With wreathed and clustered leaves and flowers,
While little hands, like frost-bitten spires,
Took up and down their mimic stairways.

He stood and gazed with whitened face,
All a child's longing in his eyes;
Then started, as I touched his arm,
And turned in quick, mechanic wise.

Raised his torn cap with purple hands,
Said, "Papers, Sir? World? Herald? Times?"
And brushed away a frosty tear
That marked his cheek with trusty lines.

"How many have you? Never mind—
Don't stop to count—I'll take them all;
And when you pass my office home,
With stock on hand, give me a call."

He thanked me with a broad Scotch smile,
A look tall wondering and half glad.
I furnished for the proper "change,"
And said, "You seem a little lad."

"To rough it in the streets like this,"
"I'm ten years old this Christmas-time!"
"Your name?" "Jim Hanley." "Here's a bill—
I've nothing else, but this one dime—"

"Five dollars. When you get it changed
Come to my office—half the price.
Now wait a bit, there's time enough;
You need not run a headlong race."

"Where do you live?" "Most any where.
We hired a stable-lift today.
Me and two others." "And you thought
The fruiterer's window pretty, hey?"

"Or were you hungry?" "Just a bit."
He answered, heavily as he might,
"I couldn't buy a breakfast, Sir,
And had no money left last night."

"And you are cold?" "Ay, just a bit."
"I don't mind cold," "Why, that is strange!"
He smiled and pulled his ragged cap,
And started off to get the "change."

So, with a half-memorable sigh,
I sought my office desk again;
An hour or more my busy wife
Found work enough with book and pen.

But when the minute clock struck five
I started with a sudden thought,
For there beside my hat and clock
Lay those six papers I had bought.

"Why, where's the boy? and where's the 'change'?"
He should have brought an hour ago!
Ah, well! ah, well! they're all alike!
I was a fool to forget him so.

"Dearest! Well, I might have known;
And yet his face seemed earnest too.
He would have earned the difference
If he had brought me what was due."

"But caution often comes too late."
And so I took my homeward way,
Dreading distrust of human kind
The only lesson of the day.

Just two days later, as I sat,
Half dozing, in my office chair,
I heard a third knock, and called,
In my foreign fashion, "Who is there?"

An archer entered, barely woken—
The same Scotch face, the same blue eyes—
And stood, half doubtful, at the door,
Abeared at my forbidding gaze.

"Sir, if you please, my brother Jim—
The one you gave the bill, you know—
He couldn't bring the money, Sir,
Because his back was hurted so."

"He didn't mean to keep the 'change'?"
He got run over, up the street!
One wheel went right across his back,
And tumbled down-ward mashed his feet.

"They stopped the horses just in time,
And then they took him up for dead,
And all that day and yesterday
He wasn't rightly in his head."

person assured me that he was a man with a fair moustache; another that he was black bearded. Towards evening you might hear pretty strong opinions expressed that there was no man in the case at all, and that the woman's wounds were self inflicted.

At the end of *The Newsboy's Debt*, the newsboy - Jim Hanley - is run over in the street and killed while running to fetch change for his customer; with typical Victorian mawkishness, the prose is almost impossible to read:

*I turned and something in my throat
Made it impossible to speak*

*My sight was blurred as tears cascaded,
Unchecked, down my manly cheek.*

*Dead?... dead so soon, how young he looked,
Pale and cold as marble rare,*

*Poor lad!... Well, he would live in Heaven
And God's sweet love... will warm him there.*

A happier version, where the horse stops 'just in time', was rewritten by Miss H R Hudson for *Harper's new monthly magazine*, May, 1873.

In 1914 Donald Cornwallis directed a film version. What happens in the end of the cinematic version is not known... one thing is for sure though; the Victorian newsboy was a poor, hardworking individual, much abused in life but remembered with affection.

Further information:

Jack the Ripper and the London Press, L Perry Curtis

London Correspondence: Jack the Ripper & the Irish Press, Alan Sharp

The Newsboy's Debt as published in Harper's, 1873

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Cyber Jack: the Ripper on the Internet

MONTY

Monty enters stage right. Dressed in a Dinner Jacket with a huge cane in hand and top hat sat jauntily on his head. He clears his throat as he kicks away the vegetable debris off the stage. The audience's roar dies down as he takes a deep breath and opens his mouth to sing...

*'Strolling so happy down Bethnal Greeeeen
This gay youth you might have seeeeen,
Tompkins and I, with his girl betweeeen,
Oh! What a surprise!
I prais'd the Conservatives frank and freeeee,
Tompkins got angry so speedileeeeeeeeee,
All in a moment he handed to meeeeeeee,
Two lovely black eyes!*

All together now:

*Two lovely black eyes!
Oh! What a surprise!
Only for telling a man he was wrong,
Two lovely black eyes!'*

A hail of rotten tomatoes descends from the stalls with one smacking him slap bang on the forehead, yells of 'rubbish' and 'get orf' cascade around the Music Hall. What I put up with for my art. You're all Palistines. Monty slowly exits stage left, but not before telling you all about what's what in the Cyber world of Jack...

JTR Forums.co.uk asks a pertinent question: Why, after all the excitement of two in one night, were there [no murders in the area during October 1888?](#)

They also want to nose into your [Jack book collection](#). Go on, go and brag that yours is bigger than theirs. I know mine is. Apart from Mr Evans' huge collection, that is.

JTR Forums.com now. I had a 'what to' from *JTR Forums'* Tim Mosley. Firstly I got his name wrong, many apologies Tim. Secondly, Tim felt the need to set the record straight. Whatever your thoughts are I felt it only right to include the thread here as my views are everyone has the right to express their opinion. This is [Tim's response](#) to last month's column of mine. Suffice to say that as far as I am concerned the issue is dealt with, and the site, in my opinion, is certainly one of the best around.

[Topic of the month for JTR Forums.com](#) is what made the Whitechapel Murders unique for you? Why do these crimes stand out from other contemporary, horrific and just as gruesome killings?

The *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* message board throws us a follow up thread on Rob House's finding of Aaron Kosminski's birth certificate. As seen in last month's *Rip*, [Rob has set up this thread](#) to expand on his hard work.

The only known photograph of Mary Kelly is a shocking and disturbing one. However, there is a claim regarding [another photograph](#) on this thread: Is this Mary Kelly?

Was the fact that Jack wasn't captured down to snobbery? The good old British class system that made the Empire great. Chin, chin, pip, pip, old bean. Here are some views on [Snobbery and the escape of Jack the Ripper](#), what what don't you know. (Irene Handel circa 1955).

Regular contributor to the *Casebook* message boards, author A P Wolf, raises W T Stead's view in *The Pall Mall Gazette* dated September 19, 1888. [Was our boy crusading?](#) A social do-gooder?

For those of you who cannot travel to the East End to see the sights then this thread, [East End pictures & drawings](#), is for you... Packed with wonderful then and now photos and pictures of the area supplied by contributors, this thread not only has some interesting pictures but also some valued local information. Having toured the area recently with some of the chief participants I can tell you that these guys know their jellied eels from their anguilles de gelée, or rather mishti doi.

Veering away from the message boards, the *Dissertations* are well worth a butcher's hook (look in Cock and eye slang). Here are a few that grabbed my interest:

- * Dr Frederick Walker's [Barnett dissertation](#). Windsor Street stakeout.
 - * The much-missed-by-Monty [Adrian Phyper's \(Viper\) work](#) on the layout of Millers court, Dorset Street.
 - * Stawell Heard's take on the [victims' photographs](#), mainly Kelly's.
 - * And finally, [Scott Hannaford's analysis](#) of the Macnaghten Memoranda.
-

Want to [chat with Jack](#) himself? Maybrickites may want to visit this one. Strangely he doesn't want to talk about cricket or the effects of the Internet upon modern life. Actually, Jack is a dull boy.

A [history lesson of Whitechapel](#) and its surroundings now in *East London History.com* site. Everything you ever wanted to know about the East End but were afraid to ask.

Fancy a trip to the theatre? Joe Dickenson's play, [Jack the Ripper - Monster of Whitechapel](#) will be showing at Brentwood Theatre, 15 Shenfield Road, Brentwood, Essex, on 15, 16 and 17 June 2006. If you fancy a Rip-snorting night out. Geddit? Rip-snorting, oh please yourselves.

A [Sherlock Holmes short story](#) here: Never fear, Holmes has got the case sorted, even if we haven't. Unless your name is Cornwall or Williams or Knight or...

The villain with full Eduardo Zinna beard. His eyes blacked, hands ringing as he approaches the maiden fair. Want to read what happens next? Well, the E-text of some [Penny Dreadful](#) crops up here: as Mr Zinna would say, 'Whooo ha-ha-haaaaa!'

Ta-ra-da-bom di-aye as the famous Deeming song goes. More on the man himself, [Frederick Deeming](#). Was he Jack the Ripper or just a poor fireplace installer?

The blurb goes... '[AIM25](#) is a major project to provide electronic access to collection level descriptions of the archives of over fifty higher education institutions and learned societies within the greater London area.' Collection level descriptions? Learned societies? Those related to Jack the Ripper and the Royal London Hospital are here.

[Victorian Culture and Society's Jack the Ripper as Victorian Entertainment](#) by Jamie Kinsler -an interesting insight on how these crimes were reported and became entertainment for some readers.

[CSI time now](#): Geographical profile. Cue moody barely lit backdrop and sexy blonde hunched over a bloody knife whilst her older yet just as tasty bearded male cohort intensely examines a blood splatter. Reality was old Nightwatchman Morris spitting out his pipe and blowing on his whistle whilst Watkins is trying to keep his mutton sandwich down. Then again, I heard Morris did have blonde streaks.

Monty's site of the Month

Obviously created to coincide with the book, Karyo Magellan's work *By Ears and Eyes* forms the basis of this site, [The Whitechapel Murders](#). An attractive site where Karyo takes you through the post-mortem reports and tries to decipher what actually went on during those minutes of death and destruction. Respectfully done and very informative. This site does not glorify the murders but, at the same time, does not go in the opposite cold clinical direction either. There is a balance of information, keeping to the facts whilst providing historical and personal victim information. Basically, what I am trying to get across is that thought, and a lot of it, has gone into this site. It shows.

Now for a rarity. Why? Because I've never done this before so it cannot be any rarer. Monty's thread of the month. Take note folks cos' this will never happen again. A new section entitled [Photo Archive](#). Well, The Photograph and Illustration Archive, to give the correct name. Compiled by John Bennett and Rob Clack, this is must viewing. Almost every conceivable photo and illustration relating to the crimes and the area can be found here along with the more arty pictures. Clearly labelled and easy to navigate, this archive is a step on from the *East End pictures & drawings* thread mentioned earlier. And as mentioned earlier as well, I had a day in Whitechapel with these Guys and, man, do they know the buildings and the area. A must see section, so stop reading this and go look see for yourselves, you fools.



Well, that's yer lot. If yer not wanting a song then I shall leave. I do believe the Top of the Bill is on next. Monty reads the programme. Adam Wood and his amazing voice of a thousand exotic birds. That'll never work, Adam doesn't know that many women, let alone the exotique ones. He's a good boy.

Boom-boom.

Monty waits for audience applause - not a sausage.

Gerrroofffff - SPLAT!

Defeated, Monty exits stage left.



CHRIS SCOTT

Frederick Deeming in Chris Scott's Press Trawl

Davenport Daily Leader
27 March 1892

IS HE JACK THE RIPPER?

London, March 26.

A dispatch from Melbourne says that Deeming, the murderer, has confessed to having killed his wife and four children at Rain Hill, Liverpool and that he also murdered the last two women who were found in White Chapel. It is believed that he also killed the other White Chapel unfortunates and that the Jack the Ripper mystery is solved. The police of this city, however, affect to belittle the story and claim that Deeming could not have been in London at the time of the last two Whitechapel murders. On the other hand it is asserted that there is no certainty that Deeming was out of England at all during the White Chapel murders and it is further pointed out that Jack the Ripper's last murder coincided in point of time with the Rainhill tragedy.

Bismarck Daily Tribune
29 March 1892

CAUGHT THE RIPPER

Great Excitement Caused at Melbourne by the Confessions of a Murderer
He Acknowledges Two of the Horrible Butcheries at Whitechapel, London
There is a Strong Suspicion That He Is the Notorious Jack the Ripper
Caught in Australia

Melbourne, March 25.

Considerable excitement was caused here by a statement published by The Argus which declared that Deeming, the murderer, had made a confession. There has been a strong suspicion entertained here that Deeming is none other than the notorious Jack the Ripper, the slayer of Whitechapel, London, outcasts, and this suspicion is borne out in a measure not only by Deeming's appearance, which closely tallies with the description given of the Whitechapel fiend, but by his alleged confession. The Argus is a reliable newspaper, and there is no reason to doubt the truthfulness of the statement it makes that Deeming has acknowledged that he killed his wife and four children at Dinham villa, at Rain Hill, near Liverpool, and that he murdered and mutilated the last two women whose bodies were found in the purlieu of Whitechapel. Although he has confessed that these two Whitechapel women fell victims to his mania for murder, he, while not denying, does not admit that he killed the other Whitechapel women, whose murders at the time attracted the attention of the whole world. It is believed, however, that when he finds all hope of escape from the clutches of the law cut off he will confess not only these murders, but others of which the police know nothing. In his confession, The Argus says, Deeming makes no mention of his object in mutilating the bodies of his



Frederick Bayley Deeming

Whitechapel victims, and removing certain of the organs, but, it adds, there is scarcely a doubt that the man is afflicted with a disease similar in some respects to nymphomania. The case is a most peculiar one in all its respects, and public curiosity here is excited to the highest pitch to learn all the details of Deeming's many crimes. It is said that Deeming made his confession to an official at Perth, West Australia, where he was arrested on the charge of having murdered his wife at Windsor, a suburb of Melbourne. Deeming secured counsel and made a strong fight against being sent back to Melbourne, but the court ordered his surrender to the authorities of the city and he has started in custody of the officers on his return. He told the Perth official, to whom he made his confession, that he was not guilty of the Windsor murder. His wife, he claimed, had eloped with another man.

Davenport Daily Leader
8 April 1892

DEMONIAC DEEMING

London, April 8.

A dispatch from Melbourne states that the coroner's jury which investigated the cause of the death of Mrs Deeming, wife of the man who went by the name of Williams at Rainhill, a Liverpool suburb, and under the hearthstone of whose residence, Dinham villa, were found the bodies of his former wife and children, has brought in a verdict of guilty of wilful murder. It will be remembered that after disposing of his other wife and family Deeming married a Miss Mather, of Rainhill, and went to Australia, where that lady suddenly disappeared, and her body was found under the hearthstone, just like the other bodies. Deeming's object in murdering his wife was the same as in the former case - to marry another woman.

THE JACK THE RIPPER THEORY

While this examination at Melbourne has been proceeding the London police has been busy getting at the ends of the tangled clue that pointed to Deeming being the notorious Jack the Ripper, who murdered half a dozen or more of the depraved women of the Whitechapel district in 1888; and though the evidence is not conclusive it presents many facts that seem to indicate that Deeming and Jack the Ripper are identical. Deeming was in London during the autumn of 1888, when several of the Whitechapel murders occurred. On the 7th of August in that year, Martha Turner was found dead with thirty nine stab wounds on a landing in the model dwellings known as George Yard buildings, Commercial street, Spitalfields. On Aug. 31, another woman belonging also to the unfortunate class, and known as Mrs Nichols, was murdered and mutilated in Buck's Row, Whitechapel.

THE STORY OF A DRESSMAKER

And just here it will be well to introduce the fact that a dressmaker living in the East end of London has recognized a portrait of Deeming as that of a man who courted her under the name of Lawson in the autumn of 1888. On Sept. 7 came a murder with which the dressmaker connects Deeming. Mrs Chapman was the fourth victim, and her body was found after daylight on the morning of Sept. 8. Her throat had been cut from ear to ear and the body cut open as if by a dissector. The heart lay on the ground, and a portion of the remains had been tied around the neck. Like the other women killed, she was dissolute character, and lived in a wretched and densely populated part of the city.

DEEMING'S SIGNIFICANT REMARK

The dressmaker says that she met Deeming or Lawson, as he was known to her, on the afternoon of Sept. 30 (sic). They had a long conversation on the subject of the Whitechapel murders, and Deeming showed that he was conversant with every one of the horrible details. A remark was made concerning a suggestion in a newspaper that the murders were committed shortly after midnight. Deeming seemed to forget to whom he was talking, and said to the girl, "Look at the time; I could not have committed the murders." The girl was very much struck by this uncalled for remark, and she has often since thought of it.

HAD AN HOUR FOR THE WORK

Though the remark inadvertently dropped by Deeming, and his subsequent actions, aroused a suspicion in the girl's mind that Deeming perhaps was the murderer, she did not until now communicate her suspicions to the police. The dressmaker says that the time Deeming left her company on the evening of Sept. 7 was about an hour before the time at which the medical testimony at the inquest indicated that the Chapman woman was probably murdered. A few days after the crime the man she believed was Deeming disappeared, and she never saw him again.

RECORD OF THE MURDERER

DEEMING IN LONDON WHEN THE CRIMES WERE COMMITTED

The dressmaker's statement shows that for part of the time, at least, he was in London, and this again arouses the suspicion that he was there at the time the other murders of that year were committed. There was nothing to prevent him from being there from April to November, 1888, during which time seven murders were committed. The chronology of Deeming's record, so far as ascertained, agrees with the dressmaker's story. It is as follows: Frederick Bailey Deeming marries Miss Mary James, leaves England for Cape Town - 1880. Deeming joined by his wife (now identified as Mary James), in Sydney - 1882. Deeming received six weeks imprisonment for theft - 1882. Absconded from Sydney on charge

of fraudulent insolvency - 1886. Returns to England (11th of August) and to Birkenhead, leaving that place and his wife after the birth of his fourth child, about four months afterwards - 1889.

KEPT AN ASSORTMENT OF KNIVES

Deeming returned from South Africa in the spring of 1890. He had a formidable assortment of knives. Samuel Mercer, of Rainhill, who was well acquainted with Deeming, says: "Deeming represented himself to me to be a military man, and said he had fourteen scars on him. He went on to talk very glibly as to the engagements and hand to hand encounters which he had gone through as inspector in the army. He would not call himself a soldier, although he had said that he had been under fire. Deeming showed me various weapons, including swords, knives, spears, and an assegai, which he said he had got from Zululand.

PROUD OF A HANDSOME SWORD

"He particularly dwelt on a very handsome sword, which was adorned with silver and a band of gold, and which he said he had fought two hours for. He next showed me a beautiful knife with a sheath made of woven silver wire, and said it belonged to Cetewayo." The opinion that Deeming committed several of the Ripper murders is strengthened in public opinion by the dressmaker's statement.

WILL DEMOLISH DINHAM VILLA

London, April 8.

Dinham villa, the building in which Deeming, alias Williams, perpetrated the murder of his wife and four children, is to be demolished. Mrs Hayes, the owner, says, "I could not expect people to again occupy the building. I will, however, build another house near or on the site."

Jamaica Gleaner
19 April 1892

THE LIVERPOOL AND AUSTRALIA MURDERS Is Deeming "Jack the Ripper"?

The arrest of the man Deeming in Australia, and the disclosures of the various murders which are attributed to him have created the most profound sensation throughout the world. Greater interest is attached to the case as it is uncertain yet whether Deeming is not the veritable Jack the Ripper whose atrocities roused the public excitement to the highest pitch in 1888 - 91.

DEEMING THE MURDERER

It is believed that the trial of Deeming at Melbourne will prove one of the most interesting that has ever taken place in the world. The defence will be insanity and many experts will be called upon to testify as to the species of madness with which his counsel claims that he is afflicted. No denial has yet been made that Deeming did not commit all the murders attributed to him.

In fact his counsel by his tacit admissions at the Coroner's inquest shows that he believes that his client is at least guilty of the killing with which he is charged here but claims that owing to congenital influences he is not responsible for his homicidal mania.

Notwithstanding the fact that the jury has returned a verdict of wilful murder against Deeming he shows the same characteristics that marked him since his arrest. The verdict does not seem to affect him in the least and he is in turn jocular or insolent. The more the man is studied the deeper becomes the belief of many persons that he is utterly without conscience and equally devoid of fear. Those who have studied him closely, however, think that his conduct is mere bravado and that when he finds the noose tightening about his neck he will become an abject coward. All his known murders have been of women and children, and though it is said that he has killed men, every one believes that, if he has, he has done it through treachery, striking them from behind in the dark.

A STRANGE CAREER

The following chronological table represents in a concise form the main incidents in the career of Deeming, under his different names, since his marriage with Miss James, whom he subsequently murdered, and buried with her four children, in Dinham Villa, Rainhill, near Liverpool. For convenience of comparison the dates of all the Whitechapel murders are embodied.

DEEMING

1881 - February - Married Miss Maria James at Higher Tranmer. Subsequently proceeds alone to Australia.

1882 - Sends home pass for his wife, who joins him in Sydney. Suffers six weeks' imprisonment for theft. In business as a plumber.

1886 - In Sydney.

1887 - Towards the end of the year absconds from Sydney, after fraudulent bankruptcy. Goes to Melbourne.

1888 - January to June - Arrives from Melbourne in Adelaide under name of Ward. Sails from Port Adelaide after a month's stay there. Two brothers with whom he sails on ship Barossa are robbed of £60. Deeming suspected but nothing proved. Boy Sidney (third child) born on voyage. On arrival at St. Helena tranships to Dunrobin Castle, and arrives with wife and family at Cape Town about middle of year, say June.

April 3 - Emma Smith died in her lodgings of injuries received at the hands of Whitechapel roughs.

Aug. 7 - Martha Tabram. Murdered and mutilated, George yard buildings, Commercial street, E.

Aug. 31 - Mary Ann Nicholls. Murdered and mutilated Buck's row.

Sept. 8 - Annie Chapman. Hanbury street, Whitechapel.

Sept. 30 - Elizabeth Stride, Berner street, Whitechapel, and Catherine Eddowes, Mitre square.

Nov. 9 - Mary Jane Kelly. Murdered and mutilated in a room of Dorset street.

Deeming at work for a firm of engineers in Cape Town from the middle of the year. Subsequently at Port Elizabeth, Natal, and Kimberley, where he passes as a gold mine manager.

1889 - April - In Kierksdorp, Transvaal, having previously obtained £600 in Durban by fraud.

July 18 - Gets £2,800 at Johannesburg on worthless securities, obtains £420 of jewellery, and decamps, sailing from Durban in SS Dunkeld.

July 17 - Alice MacKenzie murdered in Castle alley. Some attempt at mutilation.

Sept. 11 - Mutilated remains found under a railway arch in East end.

Sept. 14 - Having reached Suez in August or September, Deeming embarks on Sept. 14th on British India steamer Jumna.

Sept. 27 - Arrive at Plymouth.

Oct. - Joins his wife and family at Birkenhead.

Oct. 16 - Disappears from Birkenhead, a detective being in pursuit of him. Flees to Camberwell, then to Stockton on Tees, and back again to London.

Nov. - Sails on the Jumna for Australia. Leaving the vessel at Port Said, he doubles on his pursuers and returns to Birkenhead.

LAWSON.

1890 - Jan. - Leaves Birkenhead.

Feb. 18 - Arrives at Beverley, and marries Miss Matheson, a fortnight afterwards.

March 8 to 13 - At Star Hotel, Gosport, with his bride.

March 15 - Obtains jewellery by false pretences at Hull.

March 16 - Sails from Southampton for South America.

April 7 - Arrested at Monte Video.

Oct. 16 - Tries at Hull Assizes and sentenced to nine months' hard labour.

1891 - July 16 - Liberated from Hull Gaol.

Feb. 13 - Frances Cole murdered, no mutilation.

ALBERT OLIVER WILLIAMS.

July 21 - Makes his first appearance in Rainhill, to enquire about Dinham Villa, and takes up residence at the Commercial Hotel.

July 22 - Has tea at the hotel with a dark lady, who turns out to be his wife, Mrs. Deeming, of Birkenhead.

July 23 - Lunches at the hotel with his wife. Is afterwards accompanied to Huyton by Miss Mather, and signs the agreement of tenancy.

July 23 - The first barrel of cement supplied from St. Helen's to Dinham Villa to the order of Miss Mather.

July 24 - He orders furniture from Messrs. Bay and Miles.

July 24 - Furniture removed from Birkenhead to Rainhill.

July 26 - Mrs. Deeming and four children arrive at Dinham Villa.

July 26 - 27 - The fivefold murder is committed.
 July 27 - Returns to the hotel.
 July 30 - Obtains two more barrels of cement.
 Aug. 1 - Third barrel delivered.
 Aug. 2 - Drives to Runcorn Bridge.
 Aug. 4 - Fourth barrel cement delivered.
 Aug. 4 - The cementing is finished by the man Benson.
 Aug. 15 - Box &c., sent to St. Helen's.
 Aug. 17 - Box &c., arrived at Plymouth.
 Aug. 26 - "Williams" gives the Rainhill banquet.
 Aug. 27 - Leaves Rainhill.
 Sept. 4 - Writes Rainhill from South Place Hotel, Finsbury.
 Sept. 14 - Writes to Mr. James, his father in law, saying he will come shortly and bring his wife, but not the children.
 Sept. 22 - Marries Miss Emily Mather at Rainhill.
 Oct. 6 - The picture "Two Dogs" is received at St. Helen's. labelled "Williams, to be called for."
 Oct. 17 - Sails with his wife from London to Australia.
 Nov. 27 - Miss Mather's last letter posted on the way out, at Colombo.
 Dec. 15 - "Williams" and his wife arrive at Melbourne.
 Dec. 24 - Miss Mather murdered.
 Dec. 18 - "Williams's" last letter to Mrs. Mather at Rainhill.

SWANSTON.

1892 - January - Applied for another life (sic) in a Melbourne Matrimonial Agency. Recognised in Sydney by a publican.
 Proposes to and is accepted by Miss Rouncesvell, at Perth, Western Australia.
 Feb. - Wrote to Miss Matheson, at Beverley, repeating a previously made request that she will rejoin him.
 March 3 - Murder discovered at Melbourne.
 March 8 - Arrested on the eve of his marriage to Miss Rouncesvell.
 March 10 - News of the murder in Windsor, Melbourne, and the finding of Williams' wife buried in cement, cabled to England and inquiries instituted.
 March 13 - Superintendent Keighley, of Widnes, obtains permission to dig up the cement in Dinham Villa.
 March 16 - The five bodies unearthed.
 March 17 - A further search. The coroner, Mr. S. Brighthouse, views the bodies.
 March 18 - Post mortem examination, funeral of the remains, and opening of the inquest.
 March 19 - Frederick Bayley Deeming, alias Lawson, Williams, Swanston etc., charged at Perth with the murder of his wife Emily Mather and remanded.
 March 13 - Committed to Melbourne for trial.
 March 16 - Removed from Perth to Albany, en route for Melbourne.

THE WHITECHAPEL MYSTERIES

London, April 7.

The Globe today says that a dressmaker living in the East End of London has recognised a portrait of Deeming as that of a man who courted her under the name of Lawson in the autumn of 1888. She states that they were walking together on the night of September 29th and parted from each other at eleven o'clock. The following morning the shockingly mutilated bodies of the women Stride and Eddowes were found in the Whitechapel district.

Considerable speculation has been indulged in as to the possibility of Deeming being the notorious Whitechapel Jack the Ripper. The last letter sent by Deeming's Melbourne victim to her mother showed that Deeming was skilled in the use of medicine, and it is believed by many that if occasion arose he would have shown that he was equally skilful in the use of surgical instruments. One of the physicians who conducted the post mortem examination on the bodies of the Rainhill victims said that those murders showed that the person who committed them had a good knowledge of

anatomy, and that the blow that caused death was just sufficient, and no more, to sever the carotid artery. Denials have been made that Deeming was in England at the time of these murders, but as a matter of fact, his whereabouts at exact periods would be a hard question to decide. The ten Whitechapel murders were committed on April 3rd, August 7th, August 31st, September 6th, two on September 30th and November 9, 1888; July 17th and September 10th, 1889, and February 13, 1890.

During the year 1888 Deeming's whereabouts until November were quite unknown. The dressmaker's statements shows that for part of the time at least he was in London, and this again arouses the suspicion that he was there at the times the other murders of that year were committed. There was nothing to prevent him from being there from April to November, 1888, during which time seven of the murders were committed. It is known positively that he arrived in Beverly on February 18, 1890, five days after the last Whitechapel murder.

HE KNEW ALL THE DETAILS

In the statement published in The Globe the dressmaker says that she met Deeming, or Lawson as he was known to her, on the afternoon of September 30. They had a long conversation on the subject of the Whitechapel murders, and Deeming showed that he was conversant with every one of the horrible details.

A remark was made concerning a suggestion in a newspaper that the murders of the night before were committed shortly after midnight. Deeming seemed to forget to whom he was talking and said to the girl:-

"Look at the time. I couldn't have committed the murders."

The girl was very much struck by this uncalled for remark, and she has often since thought of it. Throughout the afternoon Deeming was very much agitated and eagerly read the newspaper comments on the crimes. A few days later he vanished and the girl never saw him again. Though the remark inadvertently dropped by Deeming and his subsequent actions aroused a suspicion in the girl's mind that Deeming perhaps was the murderer, she did not until now communicate her suspicions to the police.

The Globe concludes its article with the statement that the police have been unable to trace Deeming's exact whereabouts at the time these murders were committed in Whitechapel.

It is thought that with the clew furnished them by the girl some startling developments may be looked for, and that the Whitechapel mysteries may at last be solved.

Welcome to Whitechapel.
The year is 1888.

In five days, Jack the Ripper will add to his bloody legacy. But old Jack isn't the only threat in Whitechapel. Fenian anarchists are keen to strike a blow at the Crown. Mysterious shape-shifters walk the streets undetected.

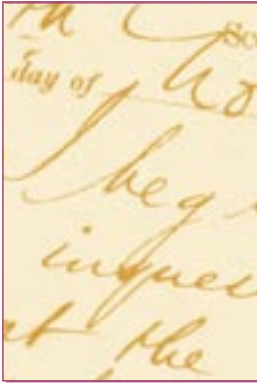
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All the news that's fit to print...

I Beg to Report

UNCLE JACK UNCHALLENGED? On 13 March 2006, the Swansea, South Wales-based *Evening Post* carried a brief article about the book *Uncle Jack* by Tony Williams and Humphrey Price which contained an astonishing claim by Tony Williams that his theory that Sir John Williams was Jack the Ripper remained unassailed, '...so far, no one has come forward to challenge it, not one person.' Now, the fact is that no Ripper authority has supported the theory offered up in *Uncle Jack* and those that have commented on it have panned the book. Moreover, at the Brighton Conference and subsequently in *Ripper Notes*, Jennifer Pegg virtually destroyed it, therefore one can only marvel at Tony Williams's front. On 1 April a letter was published in the *Evening Post* from author Bob Hinton who pointed out that expert opinion is 'unanimous in dismissing the book as nonsense', that on the 'Casebook: Jack the Ripper message' boards 'veritable legions of people' had challenged the theory - a slight exaggeration there, Bob, but the thrust of the point is true - and that 'Tony Williams has not provided one iota of evidence to show any link between Sir John Williams and the Whitechapel murderer other than the fact they were both alive in 1888!' Hell, Bob, don't you hold your punches in future, ya hear?



Tony Williams

LIVERPOOL CRICKET CLUB PLANS TWO-DAY MAYBRICK 'TRIAL' FOR MAY 2007.

It's a long way off - just over a year in fact - but James Maybrick is about to go on trial again as 'Jack' (the last time was for a Channel 4 documentary). It's part of the events commemorating the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Liverpool Cricket and Sporting Club in Aigburth, and apart from the close proximity of the Club to Maybrick's home, Battlecrease House, the Club's archives have revealed that James Maybrick was a member of the club in the 1880s. The Club has organised for Saturday and Sunday, 19-20 May 2007, *The Trial of James Maybrick* to take place in a 1,000-seat marquee in the club grounds. Giving evidence at the trial will be Shirley Harrison, Professor David Canter and Professor William Rubenstein, who are broadly in favour of James Maybrick being Jack the Ripper, and Paul Begg and Donald Rumbelow, defending James Maybrick from the charge of being Jack. Keith Skinner and Vincent Burke, a true crime authority and broadcaster for Radio Merseyside, will be taking a neutral stance and guiding the proceedings. This event will include a guided coach tour of sites associated with Maybrick and his wife on Friday and on Saturday music will be provided by the Pete Best Band (Best was an original member of the Beatles). Tickets will go on sale on 16 April, 2006 and the cost will be £40. Further information can be obtained from Chris Jones, Events Organiser, Liverpool Cricket and Sporting Club, Aigburth Road, Grassendale, Liverpool L19 3QF, UK. liverpoolcricketclub@supanet.com



James Maybrick - soon to be tried

IN THE MAYBRICKS' FOOTSTEPS. For those who can't wait for Jim Maybrick to be slung in the dock next year, Liverpool is introducing a Maybrick trail to go to sites associated with Maybrick and his wife Florie, who was accused of his murder by arsenic poisoning in May 1889 and served fifteen years for the crime. Whether James was our Jack or not, the original Maybrick case is worth a decko and the Maybrick story is part of the history of the city, named European City of Culture 2008.

Catherine Jones in the *Liverpool Echo* states: 'The new Maybrick trail is

led by a qualified guide through the Victorian streets that witnessed this extraordinary tale, taking in sites including St George's Hall [where the sentence was handed down on Florie] and [James's] birthplace in Church Alley, off Whitechapel.' A downtown tour, held Thursdays and Fridays, lasts ninety minutes. A two-hour tour is offered on the first and third Saturday and includes a visit to the Maybrick's Battlecrease House and environs in the southern Liverpool suburbs. Cost is £4.50; to book call 0151-233-2008 to pay by debit or credit card, or drop in to the city's 08 Place at 36-38 Whitechapel. On Thursdays and Fridays, walkers will meet at 1pm at 08 Place, and on the first and third Saturday of each month meet at 1pm at the main entrance to Liverpool Central Station for a train to Cressington Park. The train fare is not included in the price of the walk. Access to the platform and street level of the station is prohibitive to wheelchair users and those with mobility problems.

'Ripping yarns' by Catherine Jones, Liverpool Echo, 7 April 2007.

YORKSHIRE RIPPER DEMANDS APOLOGY FROM HOAXER. From his cell in Broadmoor secure hospital, convicted serial killer Peter Sutcliffe has written to John Humble - the admitted letter and tape hoaxer nicknamed 'Wearside Jack' - to tell him he has 'blood on his hands' for the deaths of his final three victims. Humble, 50, of Flodden Road, Sunderland, was jailed for eight years for the hoax on 21 March at Leeds Crown Court after pleading guilty to perverting the course of justice. Humble admitted to misleading West Yorkshire Police by sending them three taunting letters and a tape in 1978 and 1979 claiming to be behind the Yorkshire Ripper murders. Sutcliffe, of Bradford, West Yorkshire, was questioned by police but freed because his accent did not match the Northeast England accent on the tape. The blunder left him free to continue his murder spree, adding three more victims to the total of thirteen women for whose murders he was convicted in 1981.

Although last month's court proceedings in Leeds did not address the question, it has sometimes been hypothesized that 'Wearside Jack' might be a killer as well as a hoaxer, and specifically that he might have been responsible for the November 1975 murder of Joan Harrison in Preston, Lancashire, whom Sutcliffe has denied killing. Thus, the convicted murderer, now age 59, jibed at Humble: 'You have some sort of fascination with my case. Maybe you are responsible for the other bodies which only a few other people know about. Did you kill them others, John? I must know.'

Sutcliffe has complained about the fresh attention Humble's actions have drawn to his case. He told Humble, 'I have just heard that you got eight years in prison for the crimes you committed. I am not surprised that you got that length of time because what you did was very bad indeed. You have had your 15 minutes of fame and you have reopened old wounds again and put me back in the media spotlight. I do not need this now or ever again. The same thing will happen when you are released. I hope you get some treatment for your problems, John, because you are very ill indeed'.

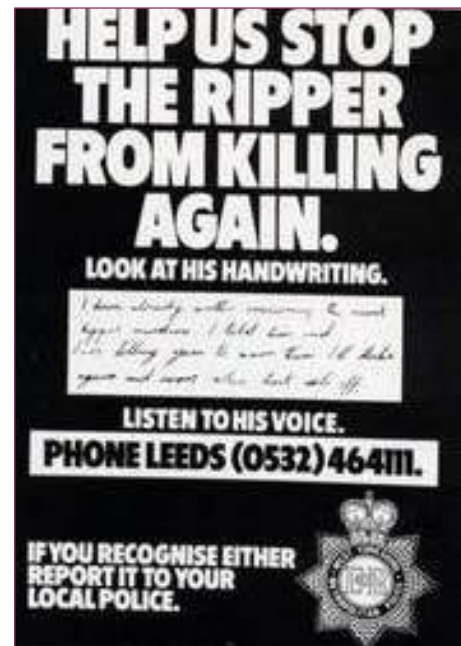
Newcastle Evening Chronicle, 3 April 2006

AUSTRALIAN MURDER SUSPECT ARRESTED NEAR RIPPER HAUNTS. 'The location of Gordon Wood's arrest [on 4 April] has a curious footnote in the annals of crime history. Wood, the former chauffeur and personal assistant to [Sydney stockbroker] Rene Rivkin, was arrested on a provisional murder warrant at his flat in Creechurch Lane in London's financial district and will be extradited to Sydney to stand trial for the murder of his girlfriend Caroline Byrne [at the base of a notorious suicide spot at Watson's Bay eleven years ago]. After murdering his fourth victim, prostitute Catherine Eddowes, on September 29, 1888, in the square off St James Passage, Jack the Ripper walked up Mitre Passage, then Creechurch Lane, before arriving at a stairway past 48 Goulston St, where a piece of Eddowes's apron was found, sticky with her blood, a vital clue showing he was living in the area. Although there were many theories as to the Ripper's identity, he was never caught.'

The Australian, 7 April 2006.

ON THE VIOLENCE OF MEN AGAINST WOMEN. 'If I could see some strands of theme over the plays and poetry, I suppose foremost would be the passing of time, the mutation of memory, the naming of things. I also seem to have a striking number of plays in which a woman is badly maltreated by men, whether it's Mary Queen of Scots, Mary Kelly (who was killed by Jack the Ripper) or the Green Girl in "Wolfpit." But I don't see it's possible to deny that most of the world's heartbreak is caused by the actions of grown men.' Glyn Maxwell, New York University professor of poetry, described by the *Daily Telegraph* as 'the best dramatic poet now at work in English'.

Washington Square News, 6 April 2005.



Police poster from 1976 asking for public assistance based on the hoax letters and tape

THE RIPPER DOES CANDYLAND. 'If it weren't for the pseudo-"Jack the Ripper"-black-Goth setting, I would have thought we were in Candyland.'

Ivan Bellman 'ivanb', *Tryst n' shout*, [culturebot](#), 6 April 2006.

MISS SMITH, YOU'RE UNDER ARREST. 'If they've legally detained the Son of Sam or Jack the Ripper, they're going to act different than if it's Miss Smith here.' Second District Court of Appeals Judge Harmon Drew, gesturing toward Representative Jane Smith, during a debate in the Louisiana House Criminal Justice Committee on a bill empowering law enforcement officers to arrest people suspected of criminal wrongdoing who refuse to give them their names.

The Advocate, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 30 March 2006.



ARE YOU A COMPUTER GEEK OR A SERIAL KILLER? [This website will tell you](#). 'By looking at a picture of a person, you have to decide if he is a computer geek or a serial killer. Decide and click on your choice. There are 10 photos. Your score will be given at the end.' For the record, Rip HQ scored 10 out of 10...

FIRST-CLASS RIPPER. 'My real hobby is writing. Never earned any money from it, though. I did a novel called *Deal the Queen a Jack* that's historical fiction about Jack the Ripper. Notepad and typewriter for me. No computer.'

Retired postal worker and amateur garbage collector Charlie Willis, [Courier & Press](#), Evansville, Indiana, 9 April 2006.

Geek or killer?

RACING RIPPER. 'April 12, 1933 - Jack "The Ripper" Bailey, the all-time leading driver at Vernon Downs, is born in Winston Salem, North Carolina. He wins more than 3,300 career races.'

'This Week In Harness Racing History', [harnesslink.com](#), 11 April 2006.

JACK THE DRIVER. 'Taxis in this town pick up our most vulnerable residents. Seniors, especially, often take taxis. God knows who the driver might be. As it stands, it could be Jack the Ripper.' Riverhead Town Supervisor Phil Cardinale on taxi and livery licensing.

The Independent, East Hampton, The Hamptons, New York, 11 April 2006.

DEMON BARBER JOINS DUNGEON CAST. Sweeney Todd, the demon barber of Fleet Street, is joining the cast at the London Dungeon in Tooley Street to bring even more terror to visitors. Dungeon boss Colin Thomas said many people thought the blood-thirsty barber was a real person. He said: 'The blurring of myth with reality has been so profound we felt Sweeney Todd was now deserving of a dungeon starring role, alongside the likes of Jack the Ripper and dark events like the Great Plague.'

icSouthLondon, 11 April 2006.



Jack "The Ripper" Bailey

AUSSIES GRAPPLE WITH VIOLENCE AGAINST STREET PROSTITUTES. The Victoria State Government faces renewed calls for prostitution tolerance zones and safe houses as a report has shown that street workers regularly face threatening and violent situations. Deputy Chief Magistrate Jelena Popovic said an increasing number of prostitutes had mental health problems, which increased their vulnerability. 'A quarter of the women we see each month present with mental health issues,' Ms Popovic said. 'And we have certainly seen lots of evidence of violence against them.' In 2003, the Melbourne Magistrates Court started special monthly sessions to deal with charges against street sex workers, presided over by Ms Popovic among others. Welfare services were on hand in court to give the street workers extra support, Ms

Popovic said.

Court attendance rates among prostitutes had increased by 300 per cent since the initiative was introduced. They usually faced charges such as street prostitution or use and possession of illegal drugs. RMIT University academic Dr James Rowe's report compiled 14 personal stories of St Kilda sex workers over two years. They included ten women, two men and two transsexuals.

Jem (not her real name) said she had worked on St Kilda's streets for about five years. 'My initial situation was homelessness and heroin,' Jem said. 'And weeks turn into months and months turn into years. The services don't know how to help us get back in touch with the real world.' Jem, 33, said she was regularly robbed of her takings by clients and had suffered several beatings. 'We need a network of safe houses like they have in Sydney,' she said.

The Age, Melbourne, 31 March 2006.

'CHIQAGOLIL' ON SOLVING THE RIPPER CASE. 'While watching the documentary on Jack the Ripper a while back, I came across an interesting name. Anyone who knows me knows that I am a nut for names and their meanings. One of the suspects in the Jack the Ripper Case stood out because he seemed to be too obvious for words. 1. His name was John Thomas Cutbush. John is often called "Jack". 2. He was a baker near the 1300 block where Jack the Ripper's victims were found. 3. Bush, a very common term in the redlight districts, since this is what is for sale. 4. Ripper, a derivative of the word, "cut" was my next clue. 5. 13 victims representing a baker's dozen. Anyone who knows culinary Arts knows this. Now, the only thing left is the Thomas. I guess he decided to spell this out in body organs: Throat Heart Ovaries Mammory [sic] Anus Stomach. The last murders were called the twin murders. The name Thomas means "twins". The killings stopped after the death of the twins. I guess that he just ran out of names.'

RIPPER MAKES ALL-TIME XV. 'Was there humour to be had for English [rugby] fans in Paris? Well, yes, there was in the shape of a local newspaper which drew up two fantasy sides to represent France and England. Among the England XV were Lord Nelson, Winston Churchill, John Lennon - at full-back, imagine - James Bond and, er, Jack the Ripper.'

Len Capeling in the Liverpool Daily Post, 15 March 2006.



Dick Cheney

JACK, LIZZIE, THE TITANIC AND DICK CHENEY? 'Meanwhile, historians have uncovered pictures of Dick Cheney on the Titanic. His photo was found in Lizzie Borden's purse and in Jack the Ripper's backpack. Anthropologists have discovered his likeness on totem polls, and archeologists have unearthed his image in ancient ruins. The bottom line in America today: You don't have to be a Democrat to fear Dick Cheney.'

Gene Stone in Duck! The Dick Cheney Survival Bible (Villard, 2006) excerpted on The Huffington Post, 6 April 2006.

LIVERPOOL SKULLDUGGERY. Councillor Berni Turner, executive member for Liverpool heritage and development, want to see the city do more to promote tours of the city cemeteries. Among the city's famous personages who have passed on are, in Anfield Cemetery: Ripper suspect James Maybrick; sixties singer Michael Holliday (real name Norman Alexander Milne); William

Wallace - 'The Man From The Pru' - who successfully appealed after being found guilty of the murder of his wife; and Michael James Whitty, first head constable of Liverpool police and fire brigade, who went on to found the Liverpool Daily Post. In St James's Cemetery, Sarah Biffin, armless dwarf artist who painted portraits of British monarchs and befriended Charles Dickens, Edward Rushton, blind anti-slavery campaigner who formed the Liverpool School for the Blind; Captain John Oliver, served with Nelson on the Victory at Trafalgar in 1805; and Captain Elisha Lindsay Halsey, who was stabbed to death by his ship's cook, John Kent of Liverpool, who successfully pleaded self-defence.

Cllr Turner said, 'Liverpool has a huge amount of history above and below ground. There are so many fascinating figures from history buried in the



James Maybrick's grave in Anfield Cemetery

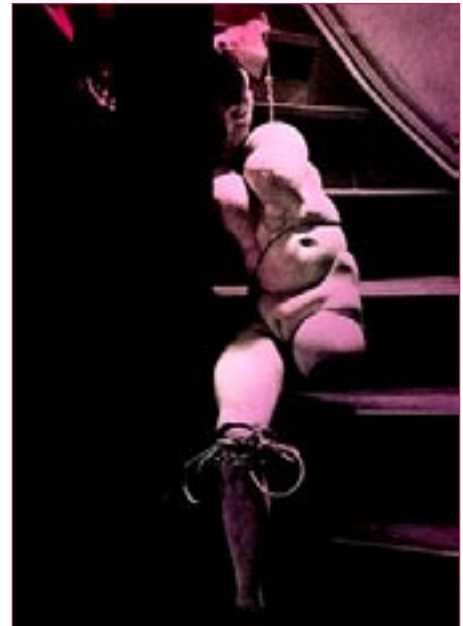
city's cemeteries - from murderers to MPs, right through to painters and popular singers. I think it's so important for the stories of these famous, infamous or just plain unusual people to be told. Although ranger tours of some cemeteries are available, I still feel it's an untapped tourism resource.'

She added, 'It would be wonderful to develop these tours and give more people the opportunity to learn all about the city's "underground" history, particularly with the 800th birthday coming up.' She pointed out that Robert Tressell, author of *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, lies forgotten in a grave with 12 other unfortunates in Walton cemetery. Cllr Turner said: 'I was speaking to Loyd Grossman who said American teenagers all read *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*. It's like a rites-of-passage book. To think the man who wrote that is in a pauper's grave in Walton.'

'Raves from the Graves' by Catherine Jones, Liverpool Echo, 20 March 2006.

THE PRETTIEST DOLL IN THE WORLD. German-born French surrealist artist Hans Bellmer (1902-1975) was obsessed with Jack the Ripper, sadomasochism and the life-sized female dolls that he produced in the mid-1930s and photographed again and again over the next decade. His first doll, begun in 1933, was the image of an adolescent girl, his 15-year-old cousin Ursula, made of papier-mâché and plaster moulded over an armature of wood and metal. The entire body could be assembled and reassembled like a machine. Bellmer called his favourite creation 'artificial girl with multiple anatomic possibilities.' His 1934 book *Die Puppe* (The Doll), produced and published privately in Germany, contained ten black-and-white photographs of his first doll arranged in a series of tableaux vivants. He would go on to make dolls that could have a variety of appendages added to them, or sport two sets of hips or buttocks for breasts, or be missing limbs. They could also, thanks to their ball joints, be twisted into the most unlikely postures. In 1953, Bellmer met German poet Unica Zurn, who became his favourite model. He particularly liked to photograph her in bondage positions. After several stays in mental hospitals, Zurn took her own life.

Hans Bellmer: Anatomie Du Désir: More than 250 objects, photographs, paintings, drawings and sketchbooks are on exhibit at the Centre Pompidou in Paris until 22 May 2006.



*Hans Bellmer: Die Puppe
(Hand-Coloured Photograph, 1935)*



Peter Kuerten

THE EVIL THAT MEN DO. '1931: Düsseldorf "Ripper". DUSSELDORF: "I had to kill. Anybody would do." With this frank confession, Peter Kuerten, Germany's "Jack the Ripper," summed up his career of murder when he stood trial here today [April 13] on nine charges of murder and seven of attempted murder. Never was there a more amazing story told in a German court. Kuerten, looking all of his 48 years, spoke quietly and nonchalantly as he sat in court and related how he killed, when he killed and why he killed. At times he was the only calm man in the room. The audience, mainly composed of court officials and journalists, most of them hardened to stories of vice and crime, were horrified by the relation of Kuerten's crimes. When he described how he murdered two girls on one night, a visible shudder ran through the court. Only the murderer himself remained undisturbed. He leaned forward and finished the recital of one murder with: "And then I cut her throat" - a calm, dispassionate statement more suited to the drawing room than to a criminal court. When the day finished, Kuerten had not completed the recital of his murders and the court adjourned until tomorrow [April 14] when he will continue what is perhaps the strangest story of crime ever told by a man.'

In Our Pages: 100, 75, & 50 years ago, The International Herald Tribune, 14 April 2006.

THE JUDAS GOSPEL. An early Christian manuscript including the only known text of the Gospel of Judas has surfaced after 1,700 years. The 26-page leather-bound papyrus manuscript is said to be a copy, made around AD 300, of the original Gospel of Judas, written in Greek the century before. The copy of the Gospel was written on 13 sheets of papyrus leaf, both front and back, in ancient Egyptian, or Coptic. It was bound as a 66-page book, known as a codex, together with a text known as First Apocalypse of James, a letter by Peter and a text of what scholars are provisionally calling Book of Allogenes.

The Gospel gives new insights into the relationship of Jesus with the most reviled villain in Christian history: the disciple who betrayed him. In this version, Judas is no villain but Jesus' close friend. Indeed, Jesus asks Judas to sell him out to the authorities, telling Judas he will 'exceed' the other disciples by doing so. Though some theologians have formulated this hypothesis, this is the first time an ancient document sustains it. The Gospel ends abruptly. 'They [the arresting party] approached Judas and said to him, 'What are you doing here? You are Jesus' disciple.' Judas answered them as they wished. And he received some money and handed him over to them.'



The Judas Gospel

The most revealing passage in the manuscript begins: 'The secret account of the revelation that Jesus spoke in conversation with Judas Iscariot during a week, three days before he celebrated Passover.' The account goes on to relate that Jesus told Judas he would exceed all the other disciples. 'For you will sacrifice the man that clothes me.' Scholars familiar with Gnostic thinking said Jesus meant that by helping him get rid of his physical flesh, Judas would liberate the true spiritual self or divine being within Jesus.

Unlike the authors of the New Testament Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the anonymous author of the Gospel of Judas believed that Judas Iscariot alone among the 12 disciples understood the meaning of Jesus' teachings and acceded to his will. In the diversity of early Christian thought, a group known as Gnostics believed in a secret knowledge of how people could escape the prisons of their material bodies and return to the spiritual realm from which they came.

The Gospel of Judas is only one of many texts discovered in the last 65 years, including the gospels of Thomas, Mary Magdalene and Philip, believed to be written by Gnostics. Bishops and early church leaders often viewed The Gnostics' beliefs as unorthodox, and frequently denounced them as heretics. Scholars have long been on the lookout for the Gospel of Judas because of a reference to what was probably an early version of it in a text called *Against Heresies*, written by Irenæus, the bishop of Lyons, about A.D. 180. Irenæus was a hunter of heretics, and no friend of the Gnostics. He wrote: 'They produce a fictitious history of this kind, which they style the Gospel of Judas.'

Discovered in the 1970s in a cavern near El Minya, Egypt, the document circulated for years among antiquities dealers in Egypt, Europe and finally the United States. It mouldered in a safe-deposit box at a bank for 16 years before being bought in 2000 by a Zurich dealer, Frieda Nussberger-Tchacos. When attempts to resell the codex failed, she turned it over to the Maecenas Foundation for Ancient Art, in Basel, Switzerland. A team working under the aegis of the National Geographic, the Maecenas Foundation and the Waitt Institute for Historical Discovery reconstructed and translated the manuscript. The National Geographic Society stated that the codex has been authenticated as a genuine work of ancient Christian apocryphal literature on the basis of extensive tests of radiocarbon dating, ink analysis and multi-spectral imaging and studies of the script and linguistic style. The ink, for example, was consistent with ink of that era, and there was no evidence of multiple rewriting. The Gospel of Judas will ultimately be returned to Egypt, where it was discovered, and housed in the Coptic Museum in Cairo.

[New York Times, 6 April 2006](#)

[Washington Post, 7 April 2006](#)

[Seattle Times, 7 April 2006](#)

POLLY NICHOLS DESCENDANT: On 15 April a Canadian lady by the name of Maureen Adamson met with Neal Stubblings and Andy Aliffe in Duward Street. Nothing very unusual in that, you might think, but Maureen is a direct descendant of Polly Nichols, and she had been tracked down by Neal. Interestingly, Maureen had already traced her family tree and was aware of the horrific murder of her ancestor by the Ripper. As well visiting the East End, the trio went to St Bride's Church in Fleet Street (see back page). Neal promises full details soon...



Maureen Adamson in Durward Street

THE JACK THE RIPPER CODE. 'Instead of burning copies of *National Geographic*, start a subscription yourself, then you and your friends can swamp their mailbox with

claims that you've found your own ancient manuscripts revamping the images of classic villains. Two I came up with were "Jack the Ripper: misunderstood champion of public health" and, "Mao Zedong: we didn't really need all those people anyway." Jacob Davis on Easter, the 'Spring Bunny,' the *Da Vinci Code* and the *National Geographic's* discovery of an ancient Gospel of Judas 'that makes him out to not be such a bad guy.'

The Gamecock, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, USA, 18 April 2006.



Manson Family Values

MANSON FAMILY VALUES. As soon as the five-woman cast of *Manson Family Values* touched down in London on 14 April, they shaved their heads as Charles Manson's followers did. 'It just seemed like the right thing to do to announce we have arrived,' said Jadelynn Stahl, the only returning member of the cast that in 2003 created the LIDA Project experimental theatre company's disturbing look into Manson and his murderous 'family'. 'Shaving your head is an intense commitment to make, but the whole process was so beautiful and wonderful the first time,' said Stahl. 'When a piece of art is that inspiring to you, it's a small sacrifice to be a part of creating it again. Your hair is going to grow back.' 'The reason the head-shaving is so important is that it speaks to fanaticism,' said Artistic director Brian Freeland. 'When you saw that in 1970, it was revolutionary. The notion of women shaving their heads and sitting on the corner as devotees of a man? It still makes an impact today, and it's 35 years later.'

Manson Family Values is back for a three-week, 24-performance run opening on 19 April at Camden People's Theatre. But this is not the same show staged here three years ago. 'The show has transformed,' said Freeland. 'We really chose to focus this time on the strong female archetypes.' All male roles have been reduced to physicalized puppets and Manson is represented in pre-recorded video bits.

Though LIDA is unknown in London, the play has generated strong pre-sales, in part because of British continuing fascination with the subject. 'I don't think London would be as interested in a show about Ted Bundy or the Son of Sam,' said Freeland.

'Manson is so interesting to them because he's inextricably tied into the contradiction of American pop culture in the 1970s - a time of peace and love and hippies, set against Vietnam abroad and Charles Manson at home.'

But the situation has changed. 'Cultures judge each other by how violent or tolerant they are, and I think foreigners tend to look at us as a violent population, especially at this point in our history,' said Freeland. 'Worldwide, the messages that come out of our media and hit the world stage tend to say that we as a nation glorify violence.' Yet Britain is a special case. When it comes to mass murderers, Freeland did not detect an elitist, 'look what you created' attitude of condemnation. 'After all, we had Manson,' he said, 'but they had Jack the Ripper.'

Denver Post, Denver, CO, USA, 19 April 2006.

THE UNINVITED GUEST. 'It came to live in our house, eat dinner at our table, sleep in our beds. It trailed me home from school; it lapped at my heels as I walked to Roscoe's. It was an elusive yet inescapable thing skulking through my life, a Jack-the-Ripper presence that hid in alleyways and in the sewers, waiting to get me alone. We could ignore it, but it would not go away. If we managed to shake it, it would track us down, hungry for more. Although there was no way for me, as a child, to understand this presence, I knew, when I saw my father's sadness, that he had never really left Vietnam.' Danielle Trussoni, *Falling Through the Earth: A Memoir*, Henry Holt and Co. (21 February 2006).

PUT A RIPPER IN YOUR TEAM. 'How can this be put nicely? Well, the team has a history of troubled trainers. If the Cubs were a 19th-century soccer team in England, they would employ the royal doctor whom some in Scotland Yard theorized to be Jack the Ripper. Medieval barbers might be the next best option: "If [Chicago Cubs player Derrek] Lee floats, he's a witch and must be burned at the stake! If he sinks and drowns, tape up his wrist and let's play ball!"'

David Brown, Who's on 1st for Cubs? Don't ask, Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Ill., 21 April 2006.

DANIEL OLSSON. As *Ripperologist* readers are well aware, Daniel Olsson is one of Ripperology's most dazzling new stars. In just a handful of articles, Daniel has established himself as the foremost authority in the life and times of his unfortunate compatriot Elisabeth Gustafdotter, better known as Long Liz Stride. His latest endeavour, JACK THE

RIPPER'S SWEDISH VICTIM, a full-length documentary on Elisabeth's life filmed in actual locations and co-directed by Daniel and his friend Wulvarich, is eagerly awaited by Ripperologists round the world. We are so used to receiving good news from Daniel, whether it's new articles or new projects, that we were quite distressed when we learnt that he had recently been diagnosed with a serious illness. It is not clear at present what medical treatment will be advised for him. Daniel is, however, a strong, young man with much to live for, and everything indicates that a full recovery may be expected. He has asked us to inform our readers that he and his team will continue work on the documentary, though his condition might delay slightly its completion. On behalf of our readers, of Ripperologists round the world and of *Ripperologist's* editorial team, we extend to Daniel our wishes for a prompt recovery. If you'd like to express your personal wishes to him, please email him at danidefeis_metal@hotmail.com. Daniel will be glad to hear from you.



Daniel Ollson

THE YOUNGEST RIPPEROLOGIST. Readers of the *Rip* and connoisseurs of crime literature will be pleased to know that our friend and contributor Amanda Howard has temporarily set aside her thoughts of mayhem in unlikely places and her faithful computer to concentrate on bringing her baby daughter into this world. Keira Kate dutifully arrived on 10 April 2006 at 8.44am via c-section. We congratulate Amanda, her husband Steve and their son Trent, who has lent sterling support throughout. Readers who wish to send their congratulations to Amanda may do so [care of Ripperologist](#).

LET THY WORDS BE FEW. 'She seemed such a fragile little waif, but when she performed, there was another dimension to her. We did a production based on Jack the Ripper; she had very little to say, but she was so captivating and amazingly intense.' Joan Illingworth, programme leader for the dance and musical theatre course at The Oldham College, recalling actress Jane Horrocks's school days.

[The Guardian, 18 April 2006](#)

RIPPER PURSUIT. 'The Whitechapel Club in Chicago was named for the London slum in which two years earlier Jack the Ripper had done his killing. A coffin in the center of the room served as a bar. What was the profession of most of the members?'

[Question in Trivia Contest, Stoughton Public Library.](#)
[Stoughton Journal, Stoughton, MA, USA, 21 April 2006.](#)

CUB THE RIPPER. 'How can this be put nicely? Well, the team has a history of troubled trainers. If the Cubs were a 19th-century soccer team in England, they would employ the royal doctor whom some in Scotland Yard theorized to be Jack the Ripper. Medieval barbers might be the next best option: "If Lee floats, he's a witch and must be burned at the stake! If he sinks and drowns, tape up his wrist and let's play ball!" '

[David Brown, Who's on 1st for Cubs? Don't ask, Northwest Herald, Chicago, Ill., 21 April 2006.](#)

IT'S A FULL LIFE, TONY. 'I've stood at ground zero where the world's first atomic bomb was detonated in the New Mexico desert, walked in the footsteps of Jack the Ripper in London's East End, taken a boat trip across Loch Ness in search of the monster and explored abandoned mining towns in Tombstone, Arizona.'

[Tony Hart-Wilden, paranormal investigator and founder of Chasingmidnight.com,](#)
[Would You Spend the Night Alone in a Haunted House?, Send2Press, 25 April 2006.](#)

A RENDEZVOUS WITH DEATH. 'In Australia, they called him Jack the Ripper - but was an Ashby man really responsible for the murders that rocked Victorian society? That is just one of the stories in the Leicestershire Chronicle, the county's new nostalgia and history supplement, on sale in newsagents from Monday [April 2006]. In 1888, five prostitutes were killed in the Whitechapel area of London, horrifically butchered in crimes so gruesome they still fascinate historians and criminologists today. When Ashby-born Frederick Deeming was hanged in Melbourne, Australia, four years later, watched by a cheering 10,000-strong crowd, many were convinced he was Jack. Deeming went to the gallows for killing his wife, Marie, and their four children, but it was alleged he confessed to the Whitechapel murders to fellow inmates while he was in prison. The newspapers called Deeming "the killer of the century", while others said that the sandy-haired charmer must be Jack the Ripper - because only one man could be capable of both terrible crimes. In the end, Deeming took his secrets to the scaffold - but there are still some people today who believe that his hands carried the blood of five more victims.'

[Technology Marketing Corporation, TMCnet.com, 25 April 2006.](#)

AND FINALLY... THE TWILIGHT ZONE. You are travelling through another dimension, a dimension not only of sight and sound but of mind. A journey into a wondrous land whose boundaries are that of imagination. That's the signpost up ahead - your next stop, the Twilight Zone! We wondered if we'd wandered into the Twilight Zone when [a post](#) to the *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* message boards following last month's *Ripperologist* implied that it is acceptable to spread lies and misinformation but correcting them is unprofessional. But it was okay and Rod Serling wasn't about to walk from the mist, it was just a quirky post. Phew! You see, we'd published a short piece about how the *Rip* had been the victim of malicious lies and misinformation posted to the Wikipedia internet encyclopaedia (and elsewhere) and how difficult it is for anyone in our position to gain redress. No sooner did the *Rip* hit your computer than we were accused of 'gutter journalism', 'slinging mud' at a rival publication, 'not asking permission to quote people' and of selectively quoting 'to promote [our] biased point of view'. Of course, outside the *Twilight Zone* it is neither gutter journalism nor unprofessional to correct lies and misinformation, especially when they harm one's reputation (that's why there are libel laws). Correcting them is a right and often a necessity. As for the accusation of selectively quoting, we provided a link to the discussion thread so that readers could read all that was said and form their own opinions, and of course there's no requirement for us or anyone else to ask permission to quote from public message boards. As for promoting a biased point of view, rarely does one encounter such a vivid example of pot calling.

DEAR DIARY: MAY 2006

JACK THE RIPPER MUSICAL. *As the fog thickens in the alleys of the East End, ladies of the night huddle together under the gaslight for protection wondering who might be the next victim of Jack - speculation on whose identity has varied from the Duke of Clarence, grandson of Queen Victoria, the artist Walter Sickert and Montague Druitt, a worker at Toynbee Hall.*

A romp through Victorian London in the company of Jack the Ripper is Radlett Light Opera Society's next production. The show brings together friendship, lust, corruption, a touch of Old Time Music Hall and a dash of cockney humour as well as a host of colourful characters including vivacious ladies of the night, an educated beggar, a well-meaning philanthropist, conniving scoundrels, a pompous chief of police and Queen Victoria herself. The songs are catchy, entertaining and witty, especially the comic numbers, and the society is aiming to offer its audiences an evening of fast-paced and vibrant musical theatre.

Jack the Ripper can be seen at the Radlett Centre from Tuesday, May 9, until Saturday, May 13. Evening performances are at 7.45pm and there is a Saturday matinee at 2.30pm. Tickets range from £9 to £12 with concessions for senior citizens and students on the Tuesday and Wednesday as well as the Saturday matinee performance. They can be booked at the Radlett Centre on 01923 859291. [More information here.](#)

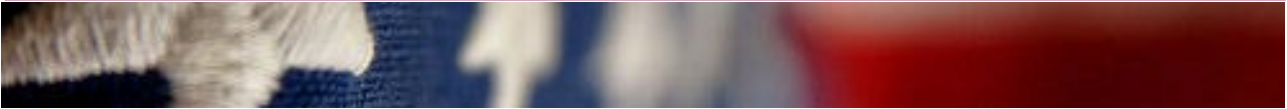


The Radlett Centre



A Step Up... The 2006 RipCon

Report by Howard Brown



Being probably just as nervous or excited as anyone else attending the Baltimore Conference and having assured my daughter for the umpteenth time that like Gen MacArthur, I would return, I headed off for the drive down south towards Washington on Thursday, the day before the Convention started, to pick up fellow Ripper enthusiast, Ms Kelly Robinson, my fellow [JTR Forums.com](http://JTRForums.com) co-reporter, and examine the Phillips Gallery art exhibition of pastels by Degas, Lautrec, and a fellow named Walter Sickert.

Since I am personally somewhat short on insight and understanding regarding the world of art, Kelly tolerated my ignorance and whining about terribly sore feet (you try wearing cowboy boots that have somehow shrunk a size or so in 30 years) and made some notes and observations, which should accompany this brief overview of the Convention.

Thankfully, this has nothing to do with my feet, but everything to do with the wonderful experience of commiserating with like-minded people for 3 (or 4 in my case) days in an environment free of 'real life' responsibilities, rigors and routine. It was probably the most enjoyable and profitable weekend (outside of familial events) I have ever had.

The Phillips Gallery experience:

Blue haired women... and knowing, not just feeling, that I was the ultimate fish out of these waters were not the only highlights of my experience at the exhibit. The fact that I could actually get 'that' close to the paintings of Sickert and look for the signs that Ms Cornwell claims are self evident in his painting (or is it pasteling?) made Kelly's suggestion to go there in the first place well worth it. Despite my limited understanding of art (especially the Impressionists), my understanding of hogwash, hoopla, and hype is somewhat better...

To claim that the Sickert painting *Ennui* displays the 'shadow of a man' ready to pounce upon the apparently bored woman in that portrait and that this 'shadow of a man' represents Sickert-as-Ripper is preposterous and from my point of view perhaps more ridiculous than the notion that a woman committed the Whitechapel murders. I selected this particular painting out of the numerous works of art by Sickert because it was the most explicit example of anyone, not just Ms Cornwell, seeing things that are simply not there.

When we see posts here at the *Rip*, or *Ripper Notes*, *Casebook*, or anywhere as a matter of fact... which contain jpegs of Sickert's paintings and personal assessments of these 'damning' works, we don't really and truly grasp how much Ms Cornwell is grasping and clutching at imaginary straws with her theorization that the art indicts him. It also dawned on me how bizarre it must have been for anyone in her company watching Ms Cornwell rip and render to shreds the work of this man in the search of evidence. I suppose it was like watching me tackle karaoke night singing *Madame Butterfly*. Truly an embarrassing proposition.

It occurred to me, albeit briefly, that I might have wanted to leave my thumb print on one of these artworks, in case Mrs Cornwell got her hands on these untouched-as-yet watercolors. I imagined that Pat Cornwell lifted my print... ran it through APHIS.... the results coming back with a match to me... waking up to a 'three o'clock knock on the door' by Interpol... and being charged with complicity with Sickert... but just briefly. Enough damage has been done by Ms Cornwell to Sickert's reputation as an artist. I also was informed that the Gallery was told they were exhibiting art by 'that Jack the Ripper guy' from an unimpeachable source while in Baltimore.



Scene of the Convention, Comfort Inn

One of the highlights of each day at the Convention was the trip to the pub. It was there that I, along with Kelly, was fortunate to hear numerous Ripper-related stories and bits of useful information from the likes of Andy and Claudia Aliffe, Adam Wood, Alan Sharp, Bob Anderson, Stan Russo and Robin Odell, just to name a few of the many fine people I met. The one feature that stood out from all of the discussions over many pints of ale was the total and complete agreeability of everyone towards each other. I picked up on this point very early on as I am sure others did as well, as the usual bickering which appears on Internet boards over misunderstandings was simply non-existent. It's going to be a fine day indeed when Internet boards are capable of face-to-face online chats... think of the possibilities!

Christopher-Michael DiGrazia was the man behind the microphone for opening ceremonies. CMD handled this task with ease throughout the three-day event. Thanks again for the cigar, CMD! It was top shelf.

Day One's opener was with the very warm and talented lady Jana Oliver, whose book *Sojourn*, a fiction of the Ripper murders, has been received rather well by pre-release reviewers. The official launch of her book, like Mr Robin Odell's *Ripperology*, was done at the Convention. Much success is hoped for Jana in her book sales and in future endeavors. A very genuine lady indeed.

Andy Aliffe provided an excellent 'virtual tour' to the sites throughout the East End entitled *An Indoor Ripper Walking Tour*. Too bad Andy wasn't around to give a 'virtual tour' for me and my poor feet the day before in Washington...

Andy covered all the murder sites, as well as some additional streets and spots of interest, from a 'then and now' perspective.

I found Andy's presentation skills and deep knowledge of the East End a definite asset regarding a topic like this. Big hats off to Andy for an excellent presentation and introduction to the fabled neighborhood for one and all... Andy and I got along as if we had known each other for twenty years. Just a terrific man.

Stephen P Ryder was in charge of the crew who laid out a fantastic spread of Ripper books, magazines, videos, memorabilia, newspapers, posters, handmade goods, and other items of interest to both the collector and researcher alike in the Open Book Room after Andy's talk and before many hit the pub for more revelry. One of the few, if even that, frustrating moments of the Convention was decision-making-time-in-the-book-room... which books to purchase and which books to leave behind? Probably the lone moment in the entire Convention that grieved all.

Sitting and chatting for hours with fellow Ripperologists was such a wonderful experience that I hope it was shared by one and all. I truly enjoyed each person's enthusiasm in Ripperology which each person made clear whether they were discussing Kosminski, the Goulston Street Graffito, or the possibility of John McCarthy knowing more than he let on about the tragedy in Millers Court... There's a lot of passion in this field which came out in an extremely positive way at this Convention.

Day Two, those who made the 9:15am speech by Alan Sharp, author of *JTR and the Irish Press*, were treated to a biographical talk on Sir Robert Anderson entitled *Commissioner Anderson*. Alan shared with the audience many aspects of his research on this important figure in the Whitechapel murders. Drawing no conclusions, Alan provided the information that, for a 5-day stretch in October 1888, Commissioner Anderson was in Ireland for his father's funeral, a fact previously unknown. Mr Sharp's talk comprised a well presented and well received presentation by a talented gentleman.

The next speaker was Dr James J Badal, the only other man wearing cowboy boots and a trademark moustache besides me (and I'd kill for his brand... his moustache too... dammit!!!) and the author of *In The Wake Of The Butcher*, the book that is considered non-pareil among books dealing with the infamous Cleveland Torso Slayer... aka... The Mad Butcher of Kingsbury Run.

Dr Badal can work a crowd. Accompanied by two professionals documenting his presentation for film posterity, Dr Badal pointed out several similarities in the Cleveland crimes (they have a canonical 12 - and we complain!!!) to the Whitechapel Murderer that are noteworthy. He also brought up the subject of his new book which also parallels the WM in several ways. In this 1951 event, the disappearance of a young girl of age 10 in his native Cleveland, Dr Badal showed the impact of the press on how a crime or series of crimes can be perceived by the public at large by the



Jana Oliver and husband Harold



A film crew recorded the event, including speaker Jim Badal

manipulatory techniques of the press, similar to what W T Stead and his *Pall Mall Gazette* (as one example) attempted to do in London. Dr Badal discussed how this child's disappearance is part of the local northern Ohio folk lore even today, some 55 years later.

Dr Badal inferred that while Ripperologists may get testy about how the press in London reacted to the crimes of 1888, we should be somewhat happy that they didn't occur in New York during the tenure of the inventor of yellow journalism himself, the incendiary literary force behind the Spanish-American War, William Randolph Hearst. Just imagine *Citizen Kane* in London in 1888!!! Dr Badal credits the field of Ripperology, dating back to Messrs Odell and Rumbelow among others, for the increasing interest worldwide in 'true crime' research which Kent State University Press has been instrumental in encouraging for aspiring authors. An A+ speech as far as I was concerned.

Then after a couple of Reuben sandwiches for lunch... Donald Rumbelow gave a very interesting speech entitled *I Spy Blue*. Mr Rumbelow, one of the founding fathers of contemporary Ripperology and a man who undertook extraordinary measures to protect and preserve vital materials from police archives and the possible dustbin... including preserving the photographs of victim Mary Jane Kelly in 13 Millers Court... wrote a book in 1971 by the name *I Spy Blue* which achieved, according to Paul Begg, Martin Fido and Keith Skinner's *A to Z* (which I have learned may be revised and updated to everyone's benefit!!!) critical acclaim. Mr Rumbelow outlined the history of the British constabulary with wit, erudition, and ease. More on Mr Rumbelow later... when we cornered him.

Next up was a man who is the absolute epitome of the stereotypical British gentleman in every way possible... another founding father of our field, Mr Robin Odell.

Mr Odell, who came accompanied by his lovely companion, Non, covered the North American connections and interests in the WM, with his excellent speech entitled *JTR, American Connection*. As a North American, I appreciated Mr Odell's mentioning of our interest and sincere dedication to the case. Examples of Mr Odell's American and Canadian 'interested parties' were in abundance, not the least of which were the hard working



Donald Rumbelow

Dan Norder (US) and Wolf Vanderlinden (Canada), the two editors of *Ripper Notes*... I don't think Dan had 15 minutes to sit still during the scheduled events, constantly working cameras and taping this prestigious event for future perusal. Being selected to door-duty as 'bouncer' assigned to redirecting rowdy interloping septuagenarians, lost teenagers, and wayward staff by the Bosslady Herself, Mrs Judy Stock, I can attest to the work Dan did at this event.

Finishing off the second day, Prof J E Starrs, the exhumationist of the victims of Alfred Packer, the infamous Colorado Cannibal, gave an essentially non-Ripper-related speech, but nonetheless fine and filled with reminiscences of many generations of working the dirt. Prof Starrs recalled his years of service to forensic anthropology in the twilight of this second day and focused on the Lizzie Borden affair of 1892. Prof Starrs has a pretty good sense of humor which was helpful in what is essentially a dryer-than-the-dirt-that-he-works-with subject.

Then it was off in search of Don Rumbelow.

Perceiving that he might be in a festive mood, my fellow East Coast comrades in crime, Stan Russo and Bob Anderson, hightailed it up to the 5th Floor for a Rumble With Rumbelow.

We weren't disappointed.



Robin Odell

For over an hour, the great Ripperologist discussed fixed point duty (you should have seen his eyes as he brought up the Annie Chapman murder, where someone approached a fixed point officer and was told to go off and find someone else able to assist, as that PC was unable to move and to investigate Hanbury Street's infamous murder)... his dismissal (Hey! Nobody's perfect...) of the Goulston Street Graffito... his opinion on the re-admission of PC Long to the force after being fired... his opinions of John McCarthy and the possible connection of Ripper victims and the landlord of MJK... the possibility of Timothy Donovan fitting the bill as the Ripper which has come to him over the years from gut feelings (it made him tap his midsection for emphasis)... the unwitting enablement of the Ripper (not Rippers... he isn't keen on the idea of an accomplice) by the prostitutes who knew the police beats... the likelihood of a local man being the Ripper... the awful debasement of women (men too, of course... another set of victims sometimes overshadowed) in this area (a half pound of cheese cost more than a knee trembler)... his personal recollections of police duty...

Furthermore, and in particular for those on the Ripper Internet message boards who presume that Abberline was less than thorough on the matter of George Hutchinson... Mr Rumbelow outlined the way Abberline had to conduct himself based on the disciplines an 83-time honored detective would have had to do. That because there is no further documentation (Andy Aliffe told me that there is the definite possibility that many files may have been put in other individual detectives' files in the PRO, since these other detectives have been known to simply place unrelated files in their own work files...) from Abberline regarding Hutchinson is in no way indicative of the police not scrutinizing Hutchinson in the proper fashion. Even if Andy were incorrect, Mr Rumbelow went into detail from his experiences as a PC and then as a Sergeant on how the 'system worked'. Although speculation is fine and dandy, an 83-time recipient of one award or another over a long career making moves indicative of a rookie at a time like this? Unlikely I think.

The brief time with Mr Rumbelow (and Mrs R as well in the smoke-filled room) was one that will stay with me for many years. In the parlance of the streets, Mr Rumbelow is a righteous dude. Anyone who eats raisins while they drink gin has to be.

And speaking of two other righteous dudes... I wanted to mention, at this point, a fellow Ripperologist... a man named John Malcolm. For those who may be unaware, Mr Malcolm, a New England native, wrote a self-published book entitled *Confessions of a Ripperologist* back in 2005. I purchased a few books at the RipCon which I will certainly get to soon... but Mr Malcolm's book is the one I am reading now. I am somewhat puzzled that more has NOT been mentioned about his very personal experiences in the field and his open assessment of the field in general, not to mention his book.

Mr Malcolm expresses the intensity that Ripperology exacts from many of us. I feel his pain. He says what he feels as well as anyone in this field. In my opinion, he needs to be read and heard by a wider audience. He is a man who feels Ripperology like I do and a person I consider a kindred spirit. When John gave, not sold, his excellent book to me at the Convention, I felt obligated to read some of it asap.... Now I can't put it down. Thanks very much, John. A very kind act on your part.

The second person is Adam Wood, one of the folks here at the *Rip*. A more likeable human being you will seldom find. Let me just say that Adam has an acute awareness of the East End based on his family's hailing from the area going back a few hundred years... notably Brick Lane. This knowledge is manifested in his series on East End life here in *Ripperologist*. Adam helped make everyone around him have a great time...

There was a couple that I sat next to on Sunday that told me that they were very impressed by the presentation of each day's events and the quality of the Convention. They weren't 'site members' yet, but hopefully they will check out a few in the future.

Trivia Time... I gained 8 pounds from Thursday afternoon to Sunday night... and uh, some of it was from food...

Sunday's two scheduled events featured Dr Karen K Teal who, as a college educator, uses the Whitechapel Murders and Victorian period to illustrate the status and struggle of contemporary women in the classroom. Using the Bryant and May match girl strike (I believe Dr Teal might like to discuss the role of Annie Besant in the match girl strike with researcher Louise Raw, who has some different views on the role Besant actually played in that memorable struggle) as well as images of working women in the 1880s, she



Stan Russo

presented a pretty grim picture of life then. It appeared to me that she is concerned with the Hollywood version of Whitechapel and for good reason. Our youth in 2006 'get' a lot of their history from film. After all, film is propaganda in propaganda's most effective medium.

Dr Teal's message was that women may have come a long way baby, but not far enough. The insistence in using attractive women victims in Ripper-based films (as well as in any other 'slasher' type films, to be honest) will, despite Dr Teal's sound reasoning, continue, as historical accuracy has seldom been a hallmark of Tinsel Town. That is, as Dr Teal suggested, unless alternative film sources utilize the awareness of the reality of those times and produce their own films. Would films like these 'sell'? With a Liz Stride with missing teeth portrayed by a less than sultry actress? Probably not.

But what everyone may have overlooked for one reason or the other is that 'cottage industry' films may be used in colleges and universities to truly portray the social conditions, not only of women, but of the debased men, often going barefoot as Catherine Eddowes' mate did the day she died. Someone like Eduardo Zinna or Frogg Moody would make a good advisor for an effort such as this, or the young man from Sweden who did a film on Stride, Daniel Olsson. Hopefully Dr Teal will become active at *Casebook*, for instance, and discuss these matters with like-minded people.

The last event on this day was Under the Microscope, featuring the 3-day event's speakers. It was a terrific exhibition from every person questioned, even, believe it or not, Andy Aliffe. Just for your information, Messrs Odell, Aliffe, and Rumbelow are canonical-5 gents, while Alan Sharp included Tabram and possibly Ada Wilson among the victims.

So, in closing... allow me to suggest strongly that for an experience in Ripperology that you won't soon forget, please consider attending either one of the two Conventions, here in the US or in the UK. I am already storing pennies away for the UK convention next year... and hope to make that event.

One more thing... I used the phrase, 'A Step Up', since in the lodgings where we stayed, there was a sign in the shower that boldly said... 'Step Down'. I almost forgot three times to do so and narrowly avoided winding up on the floor... not that I drank too much... but I was not ready for that step down. Okay, I confess, I did drink too much one night.

Nothing about the Convention was remotely close to being a step down. It was enlightening... entertaining... and a bonding experience for many people that hopefully will last a lifetime. I consider that a 'Step Up'.

Sincere thanks to Alegria Reineke, Stephen Ryder, Judy Stock, and Mr Leroy Stock for their top-shelf efforts.

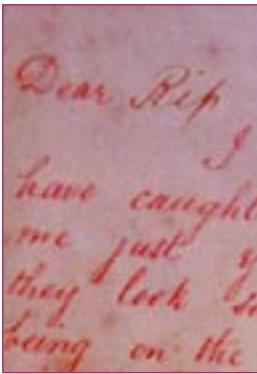
All the Best to All of You That I Met....



Official conference snapper Ally Reineke



Messrs Aliffe, Brown and Russo discuss the weekend's events



Dear Rip

Your Letters and Comments

[CLICK TO EMAIL US](#)

Ripperologist 65 (March 2006) I

Email to Ripperologist, 1 April

Dear Rip

Thank you for printing the story by Ms. Michaela Koristova, which discusses the murder of a seamstress in Bohemia (now the Czech Republic), named Aneszka Hruzova. A Jewish man named Leonard Hilsner was subsequently declared guilty and sentenced to death for the crime. The story is entitled, *A Scandal in Bohemia*.

This 1899 incident has an eerie similarity to the murder of Catherine Eddowes in Mitre Square. As in the murder of Mrs Eddowes, a segment of apparel (of Ms Hruzova's) was taken.

Ms Koristova, a degreed historian (University of Brno, Czech Rep.) states early on in the article that the removed piece of apparel came from a shirt. Later, we read that a piece of apron was integral to the story. In any event, this caused this reader to read the article closely.

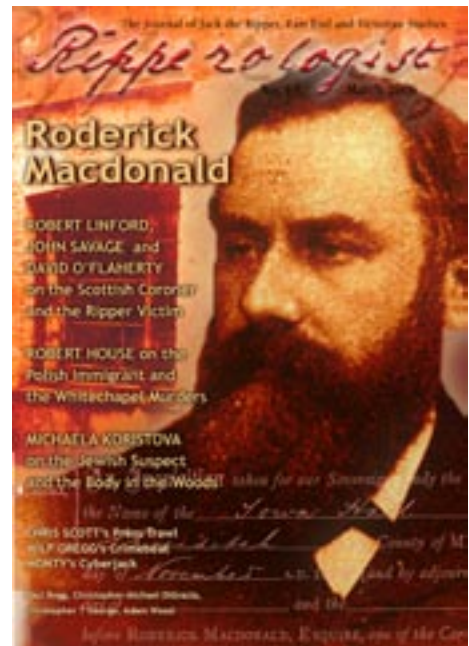
Ms Koristova's premise of this excellent story is that anti-Semitism played a major part in the decision to convict Hilsner, a transient Jew. She concludes that an innocent man was convicted primarily due to the social atmosphere of Bohemia, which at that time was experiencing an upsurge of Nationalism, and to the predetermined mindset of the citizens of the town, who formed mobs and in the time worn tradition of pogrom, attacked innocent Jewish citizens simply because they were... well... Jewish. Half of the Jews of the town were forced from their homes as a result of the arrest of Hilsner. In typical fashion, businesses were vandalized as well.

However, there are some curious points to consider in this case which may have not necessarily found the wrong man caught for this crime. Ms Koristova does not mention what circumstances made the police think he was the killer in the first place. Hopefully, if she reads this, she can elaborate. Possibly, because he was the first available, lamebrained Jew they found (he was, in the words of Ms Koristova, "of low intelligence") ...or hopefully, not because he was the first Jew they found nearby.

First of all, Hilsner had been sentenced to a one day sentence in prison for sending a threatening letter to a former girlfriend. In addition, he had no alibi for his whereabouts that day and may have, as Ms Koristova states, been in the woods near Mala Veznice on the day the victim was killed. His habit of telling lies of in consequence, nevertheless, helped seal his doom as the guilty party. All in all, his trial was an atrocity, since there was only circumstantial evidence (no alibi for the day of the crime) at best. It doesn't mean that he didn't commit the murder. Had an honest, justice seeking jury discounted the theory that a Jewish ritual murderer been at work, Hilsner would have been exonerated without a doubt. If ever there was a modern (only 107 years ago) case of a man being denied justice due to the notion of "blood libel", then this one is it.

A better suspect and one with a degree of tangible evidence attached to that removed garment was the victim's brother, who unlike Hilsner, did have a track record of brutality and violence... even towards his own sister. Ms Koristova points to the traces of lime found on a piece of apron (again, this may be what was referred to as the "shirt" previously) as a link to the victim's brother. Lime is used in making mortar. The victims' brother Jan Hruza was a bricklayer.

Ms Koristova mentions a rumored report in which the victim's brother made a deathbed confession ostensibly because he didn't want to pay for his sister's dowry.



This story made me think of what would have happened in a larger Eastern European city, where anti-Jewish sentiment at the time appeared to come within mother's milk. Imagining a scenario of multiple murders in similar fashion with a lame and low-intelligence suspect such as Hilsner was a frightening thought.

I hope to read more on crimes from the East or other stories of similar relevance as Ms. Koristova's was. Very interesting story from beginning to finish.

I enjoyed reading about the success of Robert House regarding his research into Aaron Kosminski. Mr Chris Phillips, an excellent researcher, who has helped me before with some material on Robert Stephenson, was instrumental to Mr House's findings.

Mr House has now provided proof of the birth certificate of Aaron Kosminski. I anticipate Mr. House will discuss this further down the road, so it would be in that article's best interest if he discussed it. In any event, Mr House went to some length and cost to find what he did and his effort should be praised. A+ work!

Monty is going to get a nice birthday present for his mentioning of *JTRForums* next year... My good friend mentions our site and thankfully appreciated the efforts of Tim Mosley, who not only established our Motive and Reasons sub-forum, but another similarly named sites as well, of which Tim and I were among the first three members (can you guess the third?).

One quick mention that I would like to add is that our site has an expanding list of URLs of hundreds upon hundreds of sites of interest, for casual and serious Ripperologists to peruse. Like the other similarly named site, we do NOT focus upon a specific suspect or theory. Tim Mosley has been working hard (and unpaid by the cheap owner) on this project. Likewise, the Australian wunderkind, Adam Went, has shown amazing maturity in his duties as moderator. Jules Rosenthal has also placed old reprints from his magazine, *Ripperoo*, for all to read or re-read again.

At our site, we encourage everyone who joins to utilize the seven (count 'em) seven Individual Forums for whatever purpose they wish. They don't have to necessarily be Ripper related, as we all have other interests. Our belief is that by sharing other interests on the site, eventually people can work in unison on projects and articles.

In any event, we appreciate Monty not only reviewing, but joining our site. That will earn Monty the distinction of being the only person in all Ripperological message board-history of having his very own thread on THREE sites. Thanks Neil!

Chris Scott covers the Francis Coles murder in his excellent *Press Trawl* this month. It's good to see Chris continue providing these linked articles in one spot to see how investigations, such as Coles in this case, progressed.

In the *I Beg to Report* section, the Poste House is mentioned as possibly being a haunt for Adolf Hitler, while in Liverpool. It intrigued me to check into this further and from the opinion of Professor Sir Ian Kershaw on a BBC related site, it sounds bogus. Hitler's whereabouts can be pinned in 1912-1913 as having been Austria. In addition, I believe that Hitler did not drink alcohol. Nevertheless, an interesting tidbit to ponder.

Last, but not least, the Coroner's series by Robert Linford, John Savage, and David O'Flaherty, continues. I've read it and can only say once more that this is scholarship at its finest. Not necessarily for Ripper-related material, but crucial for the history and circumstances surrounding the job of coroner in Britain. It's among the most detailed literature directly or indirectly related on the case I've seen. It's comparable to the *Ultimate Sourcebook* for its impartiality and scope. What's good about it is that there is more to come.

Another excellent compilation of articles and stories for this reader to learn from.

How Brown
www.jtrforums.com

Ripperologist 65 (March 2006) II

Email to Ripperologist, 8 April

Dear Rip

I should like to offer some clarifications regarding the points raised in Mr Brown's e-mail. The investigations into the murder of Anezka Hruzova started on Easter Monday, 3rd April 1899. Leopold Hilsner was among many inhabitants of Polná questioned about their activities in the late afternoon of the previous Wednesday. Like some of the others, Hilsner did not have a good alibi. He stated he had been walking on the main square with a friend, as they did every day, but his friend denied it. It was, however, his friend's word against his. Hilsner made his situation worse by refusing to admit even the most harmless actions as soon as he thought they could bear any relationship with Březina forest, where Anezka had been found. For instance, instead of admitting frankly that he had said to his friends on Wednesday that he wanted to go to the forest, he denied it. As the blood libel theory gained acceptance during the days following the murder, Hilsner, being a Jew, became a prime suspect. Two detectives from Prague were sent to Polná in late April, when in fact it was too late to conduct any useful investigations. They were convinced Anezka had been killed by a

sexual murderer and looked for somebody in Polná or its surroundings who met their assumptions. But the local people were convinced the murder had been committed for religious reasons. After a few days, the detectives returned to Prague empty-handed.

No conclusive evidence existed against Hilsner:

- * No blood was found on his shirt or clothes.

- * No knife that could have been the murder weapon was found in his possession.

- * Anezka's missing belongings, which had probably been stolen by her murderer, were not found in Hilsner's possession.

No recent abrasions, injuries or scratches that could have been caused by the victim were found on his body.

He was not identified as the unknown young man in a grey suit who had been seen in the forest. Hilsner did not possess any grey suit; he owned only a pair of old light-grey trousers.

Hilsner was an indolent man, a ne'er-do-well who spent his days in useless gossip with his friends, who were exactly as he was and did not want to assume any responsibility. He did not seek excitement and it is hardly conceivable that he would kill just for the experience.

The matter of Hilsner's threatening letter to his former girlfriend, Anna, also needs clarification. Anna broke up with him in late 1898 and soon found another lover. Hilsner tried to win her back in all possible ways. He even worked for two weeks on a railway site to show her he wanted to live a normal life. When this did not work, he wrote her a letter telling her he had enlisted in the army in Prague because of his unrequited love for her and added he had a sword that he could use against her and her new lover. When this letter was read during Hilsner's trial, everybody in the courtroom laughed at how naive Hilsner was. In fact, he was not sentenced to one day in prison because of what he wrote in his letter to Anna, but because he gave a false name to the gendarme who searched him as a result of his letter.

Michaela Kořistová

Ripperologist 65 (March 2006) III

Email to Ripperologist, 15 April

Dear Rip

First, let me sincerely thank you for the kind words you had to say about me and my work in your review of *Ripper Notes* #25. I was quite anxious to read your review and thrilled to see that you had mostly positive things to say. The review challenged some of my conclusions and raised some smart questions, so I thought it only right and with proper respect that I should address these questions/statements in your own pages.

For starters, the review states: *'He convincingly argues that the blood on Stride's hand for which Dr Phillips had difficulty accounting had got there as a consequence of the earlier examination of the body by Dr Johnston, but his contention that the grapes allegedly seen by Diemschutz and others was in fact the blood on her hand is not so persuasive.'* I was quite gratified to see that the reviewer followed and agreed with my argument that Dr Johnston - and not Stride's killer - left the bloodstains on her hand. This is, after all, the most important point, since it allows us to separate another red herring from what was most certainly a compromised crime scene, and brings us that much closer to understanding what really happened to Stride. As for the alleged grapes in her hand, the weight of the evidence makes it quite clear that Stride was not holding grapes but that her hand and wrist were bloodied. Diemschutz recalled seeing grapes in her right hand but *not* blood. This is a significant point in my argument as logic would suggest he mistook one for the other. The review then expands on its argument against this point: *'The problem is that, according to Diemschutz, Stride's hands were 'tightly clenched' and the grapes weren't visible until the hands 'were opened by a doctor', so it follows that whatever stained Stride's hand, be it blood or squashed grapes, must have been there when Stride clenched her hands prior to death. It wasn't put there by Dr Johnston.'* Unless I'm misinterpreting the review, it would appear the critic - who found my argument 'convincing' only a paragraph before, is now disposing with my supposition that Dr Johnston was responsible for the blood stains. I understand the argument being made here, but allow me to say it is wrong. Curl your hand up in a fist and you'll see that your fingers curl up and under, leaving your palm exposed. Now, place your other hand on your wrist as though feeling for a pulse and imagine your fingers have blood on them. When Dr Johnston felt for a pulse, he transferred blood in 'oblong clots' onto her hand and wrist, with three to four such clots occurring in a line under her closed fingers and a blood smudge on the back of the wrist from Johnston's thumb. What Diemschutz saw was a closed hand with something dark in 'oblong clots' that appeared to be coming out of the fist. Given the presence of the cachous in the other hand, he apparently concluded she was holding grapes. He was standing at a distance and it was dark, so this can be understood. I hope this succeeds where my article failed in clarifying my conclusion.

Continuing on, the review states - and quite rightly so - that there were points mentioned in my article that could have used with some clarification. As much as I would have liked to have expanded on much, I was afraid I had already worn my welcome at 24 pages, and in any event plan to publish a much expanded and thoroughly detailed write-up on the Berner Street Mystery in book form (hopefully) next year. Two points mentioned specifically in your review were my suggestion that a press conference of sorts was held at Dutfield's Yard and that witness Joseph Koster was, in fact, Edward Spooner. As the critic was kind enough to read my article with such attention as to notice these little blurbs, the least I can do is address these questions first in the pages of your magazine. Regarding the 'press conference', I should have been more clear in that only some of what appeared in the papers came from such a conference(s). There's no question that press reports were utilized in for much of the detail. However, a study of how certain statements appeared (and just as importantly, did not appear) in the various papers, make it clear that some of the people involved gave interviews at the yard when certain members of the press were present.

As for Joseph Koster, I'll need to address this issue in a little more detail, since the author of the review of my article has made some claims that my research has failed to substantiate. First, let me explain how I concluded that Koster was Edward Spooner. The Koster tale, in its greatest detail, appeared in the Oct. 1st edition of the *Irish Times* and was later repeated in the *Weekly Herald* of Oct. 5th. In this report we're informed that a small boy approached Koster, who was walking across the street from the club, and informed him of the murder. Koster then 'roused the neighbours', borrowed a candle, and upon examination saw that the victims' throat had been cut. *The Times* of Oct. 1st mentions this account in brief and adds an important and very telling detail: *'Conflicting statements are made as to the way in which the body was found, but according to one account a lad first made the discovery and gave information to a man named Costa, who proceeded to the spot, where almost immediately afterwards a constable arrived.'* Comparing these accounts, it occurred to me that Louis Diemschutz and Edward Spooner had somehow been fused into the imaginary Joseph Koster/Costa. Clearly, the events as described of a man rousing neighbours and soliciting a candle pertain only to Diemschutz. Spooner was in fact approached and escorted to the crime scene early on, but only after many others were already there. *The Times* states that a constable arrived '*almost immediately*' after Koster/Costa himself arrived and examined the body. This detail singles out Edward Spooner. Diemschutz himself confirmed this at the inquest when he stated that Morris Eagle returned with PC Lamb "at the very same moment" that Spooner lifted Stride's head to examine her. PC Lamb blew his whistle upon arrival, causing the small group in the yard and street to grow substantially. Many of those arriving at that point might understandably conclude that Spooner had discovered the body. Although I can't say with any certainty, the 'small boy' who allegedly approached Koster may have been a muddled reference to Isaac Kozebrodski, who was only 18 at the time of the murder and may have appeared younger, particularly in an excited state. The name 'Koster' was either derived from the fact that people arriving on the scene were informed that a 'coster' (Diemschutz) had discovered the body, or Spooner himself offer the name to protect his privacy. The fact is that early on, some believed Spooner himself discovered the body while others knew Diemschutz had. Inevitably, the two 'discoveries' become confused and a report combining the two was released, though ignored by most papers, who presumably had confirmed the facts before having a chance to publish the account. Confirming the confusion over the discovery, the well-informed Abraham Ashbrigh (reported variously in the press as Hoshberg, Heshberg & Heahbury) had to set it straight with the *Irish Times* man interviewing him by stating that *'the body was not found by Koster, but by a man whose name I do not know, a man who goes out with a pony and barrow, and lives up the archway where he was going...'* I hope this explains the thought processes behind my conclusion that Joseph Koster did not exist, that he was in fact a muddled fusion of Diemschutz and Spooner, and should no longer be viewed as an independent witness.

There is one more point I must address for the sake of accuracy. In the review of my article, the author stated that *'in one report Diemschutz refers to a man named Koster (or some spelling variant) as having been among those in an upstairs room of the Berner Street club who followed him downstairs to view the body.'* If such a statement were made by Diemschutz and exists in an article known to the reviewer, I'd greatly appreciate the source being made known to me so that I could use it in my work. However, I believe the reviewer is here confusing Diemschutz and Koster with Morris Eagle and the mysterious Mr. Gillemann, who - according to Eagle - ran upstairs to the lecture room and informed those present of the discovery. They then went downstairs. The press reports I've cited make it clear that Joseph Koster - like Spooner - was flagged down on the street and brought to the site. Given what a quagmire the Stride murder is, the reviewer should be forgiven if he has erred in his critique of my article. This only serves to illustrate the need for a thorough study of the Stride murder and everything and every one surrounding it, followed by fresh interpretations of the evidence. My articles in *Ripper Notes* are more or less snippets of my thoughts and findings as I pursue research for my upcoming book on the murder.

Incidentally, my description of Charles Le Grande as a 'scrupulous career criminal', as singled out in the review, was clearly a typo on my part. Obviously, I meant to describe him as 'unscrupulous', which he most certainly was, as no doubt the reviewer meant to write 'Joseph Koster' when he mistakenly penned 'Edward Koster'. (wink, wink)

I apologize for the length of this letter as your readers no doubt have much more interesting things to read in this issue. But let me add that I've been impressed with much of what's been appearing in your pages lately and would like to take a second to extend my appreciation to your writers while drawing particular attention to the ongoing series

by Robert Charles Linford, John Savage and David O'Flaherty. Along with Adam Wood's amazing (still waiting for part 2!) kick-off on coroners with Wynne Baxter, these guys have floored me with their research and writing. Two requests to these authors: 1) Publish a book and give us more! and 2) If you're so inclined, offer a similar series on the doctors - Phillips, in particular. I, for one, would be forever in your debt!

Yours truly, Tom Wescott

I thank Tom Wescott for his long and detailed response to my review of his excellent article in Ripper Notes and appreciate that he has offered expansion or sought clarification. I see no dichotomy between saying that Tom convincingly argued that Dr Johnston deposited the blood on Stride's hand but less persuasively suggested that the grapes seen by Diemschutz was in fact clots of blood. The point made in the review was that Diemschutz implied that the grapes were only visible when Stride's clenched hand was opened, so it follows that if Stride clenched her hand in death whatever it contained, be it grapes or blood, could not have been put there by Dr Johnston. This means that Dr Johnston could not have put blood clots inside Stride's clenched hand, but does not mean that he couldn't have smeared the wrist and back of the hand with blood.

I agree that a clenched hand would leave the lower palm exposed and that Dr Johnston could have deposited blood there, but the testimony only mentions blood on the back of the hand and on the wrist, none was apparently on the palm.

Tom suggests in his email that Diemschutz saw "a closed hand with something dark in 'oblong clots' that appeared to be coming out of the fist", but this is entirely speculative and is also wrong. According to Dr Blackwell, who was responsible for unclenching Stride's left hand which held the cachous, 'THE RIGHT HAND WAS OPEN and on the chest...' (my emphasis). The hand was open, there was nothing dark coming out of the fists.

Also, the hand did not hold grapes. I feel that Tom should have addressed the contradiction between Diemschutz testimony, which implied that the 'grapes' only became visible when Stride's hand was unclenched, and Dr Blackwell's testimony that the blood-stained hand was open on her chest, which, if true, calls Diemschutz whole story into question.

If I may venture a possible solution, what I suspect is that Diemschutz said he watched the doctor open Stride's clenched left hand and remove the cachous and at the same time saw grapes in the right hand, and that he said this in such a way as to imply that both hands were clenched or that implication was a consequence of sloppy reporting. What remains unanswered is what Diemschutz could have seen that looked like grapes. I doubt that clots on the back of Stride's hand would have looked like grapes and in any case the back of the hand had been visible throughout, but if Dr Blackwell lifted Stride's hand and exposed the blood-stained wrist then it's possible that the clots could have looked like grapes. Is this probable though?

Moving on to Spooner/Koster, Tom has shifted ground a little bit between his article and his letter. In his letter he suggests that Spooner and Diemschutz somehow became conflated into an imaginary person named Joseph Koster, whereas the review questioned the claim in Tom's article that Spooner gave the name Joseph Koster to the police. I honestly can't see any reason why Spooner would have done that If I ever find the newspaper reference to Koster being in an upstairs room then I will publish it here, but for the moment I can't find it so let's treat it as a figment of my imagination.

What we know is that Edward Spooner was standing on a nearby corner with his young lady when he was told by Diemschutz and a companion about the discovery of Stride's body. The press states that Joseph Koster was passing opposite the entrance to the Club when he was told about the discovery of Stride by a little boy. The only similarity between these stories is that both men responded to information conveyed to them by someone else. It's possible that these stories are about the same man, but We know that quite a few people were gathered around the body quite early and we don't know the names of all of them, so it is equally possible that Spooner and Koster were different people.

Finally, I took 'scrupulous career criminal' to mean a criminal who was careful or meticulous.

I hope this answers Tom's questions.

Got something to say?

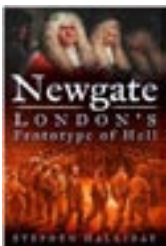
Got comments on a feature in this issue?
Or found new information?

Please send your comments to contact@ripperologist.info



WILF GREGG

On the Crimebeat



Newgate - London's Prototype of Hell

Stephen Halliday

Hardback, 234 pp., Illus., Sutton Publishing, £20.00 [BUY NOW](#)

A comprehensive history of London's most notorious prison. First erected in the twelfth century, it underwent several rebuilds before being finally demolished in 1902. One of the rebuilds was at the behest of Richard Whittington, Lord Mayor of London, and when this was completed it was adorned with a statue of Dick complete with cat!

In its early history it lived up to its often used description of Hell. Poor inmates were treated with sheer brutality whereas an inmate with money could get a private cell, food and even the services of a prostitute if required. Among notable inmates were Casanova and Titus Oates.

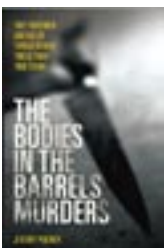
For many years it was the starting point for condemned inmates taken to Tyburn to be turned off. Among these were the murderous Lord Ferrers, forger Dr William Dodd, Jack Sheppard and Jonathan Wild. When Tyburn was abandoned as a place of execution, a special 'drop' was erected outside Newgate for this purpose. Among those executed outside Newgate were Courvoisier, the killer of Lord William Russell, and Fenian Michael Barrett, convicted of the Clerkenwell bombing, who was the last man to be executed outside the jail.

Mr Halliday shows how writers such as Harrison Ainsworth, Thackeray and Dickens featured Newgate in both factual and fictional work. The efforts of prison reformers such as Elizabeth Fry and John Howard are also covered.

Packed with information and very readable, this is a splendid retelling of our black history and is strongly recommended.



Exterior of Newgate prison in 1896



The Bodies in the Barrels Murders

Jeremy Pudney

Softback, 282 pp., Illus., John Blake Publishing, £7.99 [BUY NOW](#)

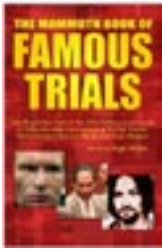
The Snowtown murders, in which twelve bodies (eight of them in barrels in a disused bank) were discovered in a South Australian small town, are to date Australia's worst serial killings and arguably have a case to be included in a list of the world's worst.

Mr Pudney, a journalist who covered the case, recounts the events from the discovery of the bodies through the investigation and the trials in a straightforward, very readable way. The details are at times very grisly, but this is not overplayed. A very good picture emerges of the two main killers, John Justin Bunting and Robert Wagner, who seemingly were motivated by



Wagner and Bunting

their hatred of homosexuals, which they thought gave them licence to kill anyone they considered to be gay, Not a pleasant book but an interesting insight into the minds of serial killers. Recommended.



The Mammoth Book of Famous Trials

Roger Wilkes (Editor)

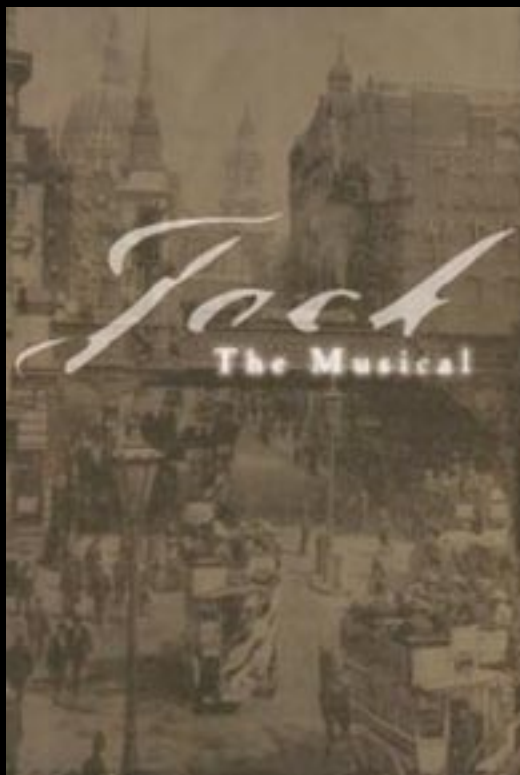
Softback, 544 pp., Robinson, £7.99 [BUY NOW](#)

Thirty edited extracts of some of the most notable trials by many famed writers, including Tennyson Jesse, Truman Capote, Rebecca West and William Cooper, to name but a few. Cases covered include Brady & Hindley, Charles Manson and O.J. Simpson. Add to these an excellent introduction by the editor, who also contributes perceptive comments to the entries, and it all results in the bargain of

the year.

I would particularly mention Tennyson Jesse's introduction to the Trial of Rattenbury and Stoner, which I can still read after many years with a great sense of pleasure. New to me was an interesting piece by novelist A.N. Wilson on Rose West.

Condensed maybe, but still a fine collection of some of the best true crime writing.



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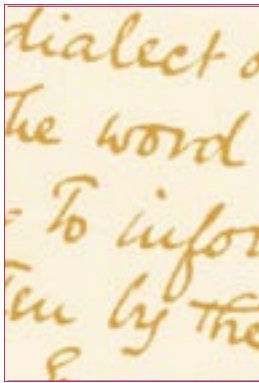
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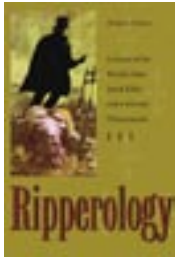
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Reviews



Ripperology: A Study of the World's First Serial Killer and a Literary Phenomenon

Robin Odell

Introduction by Donald Rumbelow

Kent, Ohio: [Kent State University Press](#), 2006

Hardcover, 272 pp, illus; select bibliog.; index

ISBN: 0873388615, \$24.95

As Robin Odell observes in the preface, it is almost impossible to think of an angle that hasn't been written about in the field of Ripperology, so when the distinguished crime historian, writer and book collector Albert Borowitz asked him to write a book about the Ripper (Odell's third venture into the field), he viewed the proposition with some reluctance. Fortunately he realised that the story of Ripperology itself had yet to be told and so it was that *Ripperology* was born.

After a very brief resume of the victims, the book kicks off with an American publication, Richard Kyle Fox's *The History of the Whitechapel Murders*, which was published in 1888 and offered up Nicolai Wassili as the Ripper. Odell moves on to discuss Frances Tumblety and Roslyn Donston Stephenson, who gets an early mention because of his contributions to the *Pall Mall Gazette*. This is one of the very few diversions from the otherwise rigidly enforced distinction that this book is a history of literary Ripperology. This means that there's hardly any mention at all of non-published theorists, which means the omission of Edward Knight Larkins, the 'troublesome "faddist"' who didn't allow the facts to stand in the way of his theory that a Portuguese sailor aboard a cattle boat was the murderer and who surely deserves the distinction of being called the first Ripperologist.

It's worth mentioning here, not as a criticism but an observation, that the book is rather strict in what it embraces. The almost exclusive restriction to professionally published books means that there's no mention at all of the internet websites or the magazines or the conferences, and whether by accident or design Odell also omits a lot of the privately published books and pamphlets - so there's no mention of the likes of William Beadle or Bob Hinton or Neal Shelden (whose determined researches into the lives of the victims has unearthed some good information, including the photograph of Annie Chapman in life), and foreign authors are neglected too, meaning no mention of early writers like Carl Muusmann and Jean Dorsenne or later ones like Katsuo Jinka, Stéphane Bourgoïn and Birgita Leufstadius.

These omissions aside, what Robin Odell has done is to divide the history of literary Ripperology into seven phases and to discuss the landmark texts in each phase. The phases or periods are roughly 1) 1888-1900, being the initial wave of journalism that followed the crimes, 2) 1900-1925, when those involved in the investigations, be they policemen, journalists or other contemporaries, wrote of the crimes, 3) 1925-1949, when sensational and factually shaky book-length 'solutions' were proposed, 4) 1950-1975, the dawn of more responsible study, 5) 1975-1990, when better documented studies began to appear, 6) 1990s, when Odell perceives an explosion of Ripper theories, and 7) the current theories - actually the effective cut off point is 2003.

Odell reviews the key theories offered during these phases, but generally refrains quite cleverly from commenting personally on their worth. Instead he has others do the dirty work for him, so *Jack the Ripper: The Bloody Truth* gets a comment from Christopher Wadsworth of *The Observer* - who I bet didn't write 'highly-colored' that way - and *Portrait of a Killer* gets it in the neck from Caleb Carr, whose remark that it's 'a sloppy book' is at least a succinct choice from a plethora of like criticism. When Odell offers praise, however, it's like receiving an Oscar.

Some of the best bits of the book are where Odell can draw on his own experiences, such as the Our Society meetings and the meeting of a handful of Ripperologists at the Golden Heart in the East End on the 100th anniversary of the murder of Mary Kelly - although I think the tie illustrated in the book had no connection with that gathering but was given to speakers who participated in a Police History Society event that same year. What's so pleasurable about the personal reminiscences is the little bit of illumination they shine on some of the 'names' in the field who having been the victims of sometimes vicious critiques are these days judged rather more harshly than they deserve.

Odell covers most of the recent theories at some length, lingers a little over the Macnaghten suspects, and provides what will be seen as sober assessment from an old hand who has been kicking around this field long enough to easily see the gems. And the joy of the book is that it is easy reading, as ideal for the newcomer to Ripper studies who wants the history of the subject in broad brush strokes, as it is for the old hand who'll find Odell's style and approach a joy.



Uncle Jack

Tony Williams and Humphrey Price

London: Orion, 2006

www.orionbooks.co.uk

(Original Publication: London: Orion, 2005)

Softcover, 227pp, illus.; bibliog.; sources; index

ISBN: 0752876988, £7.99

The publicity leaflet that came with the review copy of the book claims that the paperback edition contains 'additional material', but nothing leaped from the page as being new and I wasn't about to make a detailed comparison with the hardback. This said, there's not a lot more to say about the paperback. Despite the jacket blurb's claim that Williams and Price offer 'a consistent and plausible explanation for every aspect of the case', the book presents a case against Sir John Williams which is extraordinarily weak and which has been strongly criticised by every Ripper authority and most notably at the Brighton Conference and in the pages of *Ripper Notes* by Jennifer Pegg.

The authors contend that Jack the Ripper was the distinguished doctor Sir John Williams, but their evidence is extremely flimsy and basically consists of a document preserved among his papers at the National Library of Wales that records an abortion performed in 1885 on a Mary Anne Nichols whom the authors identify with the Jack the Ripper victim, a letter in the possession of Tony Williams's family dated 23 August 1888 in which Sir John apologises to someone called Morgan that he won't be able to meet him on 8 September, the day Annie Chapman's body was found, because he's attending 'a clinic at Whitechapel', and an empty 1888 diary.

None of this 'evidence' is the least bit convincing. There is absolutely no reason to suppose that Mary Anne Nichols was the same person as the Mary Ann Nichols murdered by Jack the Ripper - the 1881 Census shows that in 1881 there were 22 women named Mary Ann Nichols living in London, and even if she was the same person there is no reason to suppose that an abortion performed in 1885 would have had any bearing on a murder committed in 1888. The letter to Morgan presents numerous problems, not the least being why this letter was among Sir John's papers, which suggests that it wasn't sent, that Sir John in fact met Morgan and accordingly wasn't at a clinic in Whitechapel on 8 September. But apart from this, Annie Chapman's body was discovered in the early hours of the morning on 8 September and the letter to Morgan suggests that Sir John was attending a clinic in Whitechapel during that day and perhaps even that night, so hardly puts Sir John in Whitechapel when the murder was committed or even within hours of its being committed. As for the diary, what the torn out pages contained is pure speculation and it's as likely that Sir John noted marital troubles or the details of an extra-marital affair as it is that he described the murder and mutilation of five Whitechapel prostitutes.

The authors work hard to find a connection between Sir John Williams and clinics in Whitechapel, but fail miserably. They try to suggest that a 'J. Williams' listed under 'invoices' in an accounts books of the Whitechapel Infirmary is Sir John Williams, but Jennifer Pegg has pointed out that the accounts book lists the suppliers of goods under 'invoices' and that Sir John, as a provider of services, would have been listed under 'compensation'. Apart from this, the 'J. Williams' is in fact a 'T. Williams,' and there can be no reasonable doubt about that.

One really needn't go on because when the primary supporting pillars of the theory tumble like a house of cards there is no real point in examining the equally unreliable minutiae, such as the authors' suggesting that George Hutchinson's description of the man he saw with Kelly fitted Sir John Williams (it didn't).

In an interview published in the South Wales Evening Post on 13 March, Tony Williams was reported as saying, 'If they can say that it doesn't add up, or if they can disprove any of the evidence, then that is fine. After all, it would mean that my ancestor was not associated with the Ripper story. But so far, no-one has come forward to challenge it, not one person.' This was part of the hype for the publication of this paperback and one would hardly expect Tony Williams to say anything detrimental about his book, but given that it has been panned by Ripper authorities and publications even before Jennifer Pegg's research pretty much nailed the lid on the theory's coffin, Tony Williams' assertion that no one has challenged his book seems a case of ostrich-like hiding one's head in the sand.

By the way, chief among Jennifer Pegg's criticisms is that the document concerning the abortion performed on Mary Anne Nichols reproduced in the hardback had been doctored. The authors' acknowledged this and apologised 'for the fact that a wrong copy of a document found its way into *Uncle Jack*', but they did not explain how it had happened or why a doctored copy existed in the first place. They promised that the 'correct version' would be published in the paperback edition of their book. It has been.



Ripped From The Headlines: Being the story of Jack the Ripper as Reported in the London Times and the New York Times 1888-1895

Shreveport, LA: Ramble House, 2005

www.ramblehouse.com

Softcover, 98pp, Hardback w/DJ, \$30 + \$3 Shipping,

PB w/DJ, \$25,

PB \$18 + \$3 Shipping

When L. Perry Curtis took a specialist look at the news reporting of the Jack the Ripper murders in his excellent *Jack the Ripper and the London Press* (Yale University Press, 2001) he created a niche market, being followed by *The News From Whitechapel: Jack the Ripper in the Daily Telegraph* by Alexander Chisholm, Christopher-Michael DiGrazia and Dave Yost (McFarland, 2002), and Alan Sharp's *London Correspondence: Jack the Ripper and the Irish Press* (Ashfield Press, 2005), as well as a scattering of smaller publications. *Ripped from the Headlines* is the latest offering in this trend.

It's a semi-serious publication - the reports themselves are genuine enough, but there's a tongue-in-cheek introduction by 'Norbert Tudwallow' about the trials and tribulations of spell-checking the reports: 'Apparently, in 1888, in London, England, the main thing anyone wanted to know about the people they're reading about was their height. Everybody and their dog gets their height in feet and inches listed in the paper... And of course the spell-checker stops at every damn "5ft" and "4in" slowing me down to a crawl.' Well, you learn something all the time.

Although it's interesting to be able to read the newspaper reports consecutively and even to be able to compare how the murders were reported on either side of the Pond, the reports here appear to be lifted straight from the *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* website; a barely veiled admission of this is made by 'Norbert Tudwallow' in his introduction. Most people with free access to the newspaper reports may see little point in buying the book, though those who dislike reading on-screen will no doubt embrace it warmly. How the *Casebook* will feel about it remains to be seen.

Although marred by a rather garish and unpleasant cover and the absence of an index, and whilst it would have benefited from an introduction and notes by someone who knows the subject, overall this is a nicely produced little volume.



The Yellow House: Van Gogh, Gauguin, and Nine Turbulent Weeks in Arles

Martin Gayford

London: Fig Tree, 2006

Hardcover, 368 pp, ISBN: 0670914975

£18.99

[BUY NOW](#)

The tentacles of Jack the Ripper reached out - and still reach out - to touch disturbed minds and cause more sorrow. We have reports of people killing themselves or killing their children as a consequence of reading about the Ripper crimes, while other people appear to have been inspired by reading about the Ripper to commit their own murders and mutilations. We are told that the writer and Russian scholar William Ralston became insane from too close a study of the Ripper murders, and very recently John Humble, who was found guilty of writing the fake Yorkshire Ripper letters, apparently admitted a fascination with Jack the Ripper. To the long list we can now possibly add Vincent van Gogh.

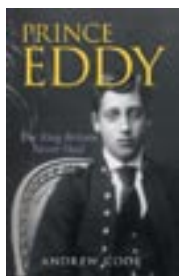
In February 1888, Vincent van Gogh moved from Paris to Arles in the South of France. In October of that year, he invited his friend Paul Gauguin to move in and share his studio in a claustrophobically small four-roomed house, the Yellow House. Gauguin stayed until May 1889, sharing one of van Gogh's most prolific periods and also witnessing his dramatic decline into insanity.

In *The Yellow House*, Martin Gayford explores in almost minute detail the daily life and routine of those nine weeks Van Gogh and Gauguin spent together. They were friends, but the tensions created by living together and their different approaches to their creativity led to arguments and, as Gauguin noted, 'between two such beings as he and I, the one a perfect volcano, the other boiling inwardly, some sort of struggle was preparing.' And it broke out in December when, among other things, Gauguin would awake in the night to find van Gogh standing close to his bed. Gauguin would ask, 'What's the matter with you, Vincent?' and van Gogh would wordlessly return to his own bed. Van Gogh became violent towards Gauguin, at one time hurling a glass at his face. After frightening Gauguin on 23 December into staying at a hotel for the night, Van Gogh returned to the Yellow House and famously sliced off the lower part of his ear, presenting it packaged to a prostitute called Rachel at the local brothel.

Gauguin left for Paris on Christmas Day 1888 and would never see van Gogh again. Van Gogh committed himself to an asylum, in the comparative security of which he would pretty much spend the remaining years of his short life before

shooting himself in a cornfield.

But what caused van Gogh to slice off his ear? Gayford explores numerous possibilities, including the suggestion that Van Gogh was inspired by reports in *Le Figaro* about Jack the Ripper slicing off one of Catherine Eddowes's ears. It's an interesting idea, albeit not a new one; I think it was first expressed by A J Lubin in *Stranger on the Earth: A Psychological Biography of Vincent Van Gogh* (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1972). It's a beguiling theory, the severance of the ear and the involvement of a prostitute in both cases suggesting a intentional coincidence, but there is no empirical evidence that Van Gogh ever read the accounts of the Ripper crimes in the newspapers - only two of fifteen reports published actually mentioning the ear-cutting - or that he particularly noted the ear-cutting or was in any way influenced by it. However, since we don't know what influenced Van Gogh, every suggestion is largely hypothetical.



Prince Eddy: The King Britain Never Had

Andrew Cook

Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus Publishing Ltd, 2006

www.tempus-publishing.com

Hardcover, 319pp, illus; appendices; notes; index

ISBN: 0752434101

£20

[BUY NOW](#)

Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence and Avondale (1864-92), known throughout his life as Eddy, was the eldest son of Edward VII and grandson of Queen Victoria. He was heir presumptive to the throne, and had he not suddenly and unexpectedly died in 1892 he would have been crowned Edward VIII in 1911. Fortunately, he did die early and so the nation was saved a king who was apathetic, dull, disliked by his grandmother and a disappointment to his father, who was a notorious homosexual who frequented homosexual brothels, who was very likely Jack the Ripper, and who may have been murdered or secretly imprisoned to prevent him from succeeding to the throne.

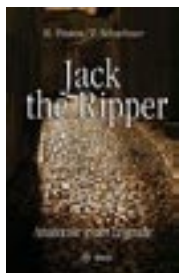
That is the received opinion. But Andrew Cook - whose *M: MI5's First Spymaster* (Tempus Publishing Limited, 2004) we found underwhelming, or at least that part of it that concerned the Ripper - is of the opinion that Eddy has received a bad press. According to Cook, Eddy was a favourite of Queen Victoria, as popular and charismatic in his day as Princess Diana was a century later, was wholly innocent of the Ripper murders, wasn't homosexual or a visitor to homosexual brothels, and would have taken the monarchy in a completely different direction had he succeeded to the throne instead of his rather cold younger brother, who succeeded as George V.

Cook's conclusion that the monarchy would have taken a different road under Eddy is questionable. Eddy was probably more socially adept than George V, but as heir presumptive he had received rather more experience in that direction, but he was no more or less aware and intelligent than George V, whose official biographer acknowledged was distinguished by no 'social gifts, by no personal magnetism, by no intellectual powers. He was neither a wit nor a brilliant raconteur, neither well-read nor well-educated, and he made no great contribution to enlightened social converse. He lacked intellectual curiosity and only late in life acquired some measure of artistic taste.' The fact that George V was as intelligent (or dim) as Eddy makes a mockery of the claims that Eddy was murdered to prevent his succession, but also suggests that Eddy might have caved in to the same pressures and made the same decisions as George V, in which case the direction of the monarchy probably wouldn't have been any different.

That Eddy was Jack the Ripper is now generally acknowledged to be utter rubbish. It can be shown that Eddy wasn't in London at the time of any of the murders and it has been satisfactorily demonstrated that the story can be traced to Dr Thomas Stowell, who evolved the theory sometime before 1960, when he's known to have discussed it with Colin Wilson and others, and eventually made it public in an article 'Jack the Ripper -- A Solution?' in the November 1970 edition of *The Criminologist*. Stowell didn't name Eddy in that article, although it's clear that Eddy was who he meant, and apparently horrified by the extraordinary publicity his article received he wrote a letter to *The Times*: 'Sir, I have at no time associated His Royal Highness, the late Duke of Clarence, with the Whitechapel murderer or suggested that the murderer was of Royal blood. It remains my opinion that he was a scion of a noble family.' What remains intriguing and is a mystery we may never be able to answer is why Stowell ever imagined that Eddy - or who ever else his suspect may have been - could have been Jack the Ripper. It appears to have been based on something he read, was shown or heard from the daughter of Sir William Gull, but what was it?

As far as Eddy's involvement with the homosexual brothel at 19 Cleveland Street is concerned, Cook says that Eddy was neither homosexual nor bisexual and that there is absolutely no evidence that he ever visited the establishment. Cook's theory is that Eddy's alleged involvement was a sham story created by a solicitor named Arthur Newton who was acting on behalf of Lord Arthur Somerset, who had visited the brothel and had fled the country when the scandal broke. Newton, who in later years would be disbarred, hinted that Lord Arthur had fled so that he would not have to reveal the names of more distinguished denizens of 19 Cleveland Street as he would surely have to do if arrested and brought to trial. All in all a subtle blackmail.

Overall Cook makes a valiant attempt to rehabilitate Prince Albert Edward Victor and deservedly so, and his book is highly readable, even when not discussing the Ripper and Cleveland Street.



Jack the Ripper: Anatomie einer Legende

Hendrik Püstow and Thomas Schachner

Leipzig, Militzke Verlag, 2006

Hardback, 256 pages, ISBN: 3861897539,

€18.

[BUY NOW](#)

So far, whoever was interested in Jack the Ripper and came from Germany had to read books translated into German or choose from among the many books published in English. Two young researchers, Hendrik Püstow and Thomas Schachner, have decided to take this situation in hand. A few weeks ago, they published the first book on Jack the Ripper written by Germans in German. The result of their efforts is a very readable, no-nonsense book whose nearly 300 pages are chockfull with facts.

Anatomie einer Legende is divided into two main parts introduced by a chapter describing everyday life in Whitechapel. The first part of the book deals with the victims - from Marta Tabram to Mary Kelly. It also contains information on the human torsos found in London between 1887 and 1889 and the notorious Jack the Ripper letters. The second part of the book deals with suspects. The authors have chosen 14 of them and presented them in alphabetic order - from Joseph Barnett to Dr Francis Tumblety. Each article on a suspect lists the pros and cons, making the text very well-arranged and systematic. It would be interesting to know which one of the suspects is the authors' favourite, but they do not pronounce themselves and one can only guess. Püstow and Schachner's aim is to present an integrated story on each victim or suspect rather than include all the available information on the subject. This may be due to the size of the book, which does not allow covering all the known details.

The main sources used are archive documents and contemporary press reports, including German and American newspapers. Although articles from German newspapers may hardly be considered as direct information sources, it is always worth finding out more about the reaction to the Ripper murders abroad. The book contains some rarely- or never-seen-before photographs and illustrations. The bibliography covers publications up to 2005; obviously, the authors have done their best to provide readers with up-to-date information on Jack the Ripper research.

To whom can *Jack the Ripper: Anatomie einer Legende* be recommended? To every German-speaking reader who wants to venture deeper into the case and needs a comprehensive source for his further studies, or to any connoisseur interested in Jack the Ripper books and resources from non-English-speaking countries.

MICHAELA KOŘISTOVÁ



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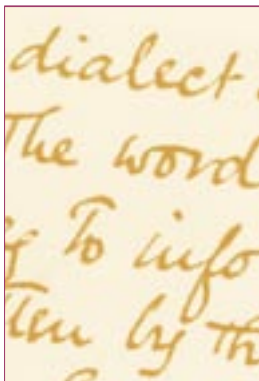
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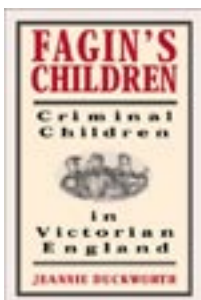


Ripping Yarns

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OLDIES BUT GOODIES

NON-FICTION



FAGIN'S CHILDREN: CRIMINAL CHILDREN IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND (Hardcover, 258 pages, Hambledon Continuum, ISBN: 1852853913, £19.99) by Jeannie Duckworth, 'is an account of the reality of child crime in 19th-century England and the reaction of the authorities to it. It reveals the poverty and misery of many children's lives in the growing industrial cities of Britain and explores the changing attitudes of the authorities towards the problem.' See also *Consider Yourself at Home: Ikey Solomon and the Real Artful Dodgers*, by Stephen Long, in this issue of *Ripperologist*.

JACK THE RIPPER. MIT CD. PRE-INTERMEDIATE. STEP 4. 9./10. KLASSE (LERNMATERIALIEN), by Peter Foreman. Perfect (2006/01) Langensch. Schulb., Mchn. This book, which comes with a CD and internet exercises, is used as a Pre-Intermediate, Step 4.9. /10 teaching English, history and research skills. At the end of each chapter there are several sections of questions and before each chapter the reader is asked to listen to the relevant section on the CD and answer questions. 'Overall, this was an impressive little book, good for students as well as teachers.' *Ripperologist*.

LONDON VON SCOTLAND YARD BIS JACK THE RIPPER (Hardback, 240 pp., Eulen Verlag, ISBN: 3891024495) by [Gerald Hagemann](#), is a German-language guide to 350 London crime sites frequented by the likes of Mary Pearcey, the Ripper and Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street.

MARY JANE KELLY: LA DERNIÈRE VICTIME (Paperback, 90 pages, L'Harmattan, Collection: Graveurs de mémoire, ISBN: 2747525244, €9,50) by [Didier Chauvet](#), is a French-language book described as the first biography of Mary Jane Kelly, the last victim of Jack the Ripper.

SLUMMING: SEXUAL AND SOCIAL POLITICS IN VICTORIAN LONDON (Cloth, 368 pages, illust. 28 halftones, 1 map, Princeton University Press, \$29.95 / £18.95, ISBN: 0-691-11592-3), by Seth Koven, is an account of prominent 19th century Britons who visited, lived, or worked in the London slums in order to see for themselves how the poor lived and acquire the first-hand experience essential for all who claimed to speak authoritatively about social problems. Slumming also allowed many to act on their irresistible 'attraction of repulsion' for the poor and permitted them, with society's approval, to get dirty and express their own 'dirty' desires for intimacy with slum dwellers and, sometimes, with one another.



THE FIRST FAGIN: THE TRUE STORY OF IKEY SOLOMON (Paperback, 192 pp. Illustrated, Acland Press, ISBN 09585576 2 4, \$A27.50) by Judith Sackville O'Donnell, is a biography of Ikey Solomon, the notorious Jewish receiver whose arrest and trial formed the basis for Oliver Twist's Fagin. Solomon, who was reputedly worth £30,000 at the height of his criminal success, escaped custody in broad daylight after his arrest and fled to New York. After learning of his wife's transportation, travelled to Van Diemen's Land, today Tasmania, where he was eventually arrested, returned to London for trial and transported once more to Van Diemen's Land, where he died in 1850. See also *Consider Yourself at Home: Ikey Solomon and the Real Artful Dodgers*, by Stephen Long, in this issue of *Ripperologist*.

FICTION



FAGIN THE JEW (Paperback, 128 pages, Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group Inc, ISBN: 0385510098, \$ 15.95) by Will Eisner, is a graphic novel retelling the story of Fagin, the villainous character in Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, seen in a sympathetic light. See also *Consider Yourself at Home: Ikey Solomon and the Real Artful Dodgers*, by Stephen Long, in this issue of *Ripperologist*.

MY GRANDFATHER JACK THE RIPPER (Hardcover, 208 pages, Herodias, ISBN: 1928746160) by [Claudio Apone](#), was widely acclaimed in its original Italian as an atmospheric thriller aimed at a young adult readership.

Young EastEnder Andy Dobson uses his psychic powers to travel to the past and witness Jack the Ripper's grisly murders as well as to detect a modern-day killer. Be warned that a stilted, uncredited translation is often unintentionally hilarious and militates against the author's attempts to build up suspense.



DAS PHANTOM VON LONDON. EINE GESCHICHTE UM JACK THE RIPPER - SCHAUSPIEL (Paperback, 97 pp., Mosenstein und Vannerdat, ISBN: 3865821502, €15) by [Mathias Schwappach](#), is a German-language play based on the Whitechapel Murders.

DEATH AT WHITECHAPEL (Paperback, 288 pages, Berkley, ISBN: 0425173410, \$6.99), by [Robin Paige](#), the pseudonym of a husband-and-wife writing team, deals with a husband-and-wife detective team on the trail of Jack the Ripper. We might not be giving too much away by revealing that the authors have embraced the Masonic conspiracy theory that supposedly reached to the highest levels of the British government.

LE RETOUR DE JACK L'EVENTREUR (Paperback, 253 pages, Malko - Gérard de Villiers, Collection: Les Dossiers de Scotland Yard, ISBN : 2738601952, €5,20), by J B Livingstone, is a French-language thriller where Jack the Ripper returns 50 years after the Whitechapel murders.

THE POTATO FACTORY (Paperback, 852 pages, Penguin Books Australia Ltd., ISBN: 0140273654, £7.99) by Bryce Courtenay, in the first of a trilogy of novels about early settlers in Australia. The main character of the novel is notorious fence and child gang leader Ikey Solomon, Dickens's inspiration for Fagin in *Oliver Twist*. See also *Consider Yourself at Home: Ikey Solomon and the Real Artful Dodgers*, by Stephen Long, in this issue of *Ripperologist*.

THE WHITECHAPEL CONSPIRACY, (Paperback, 352 pages, Ballantine Books, \$6.99, ISBN: 0449006565), by Anne Perry, is an intricate, fast-paced, atmospheric Victorian mystery cum political thriller featuring Inspector Thomas Pitt and his wife, Charlotte. Pitt annoys the powerful Inner Circle and, as a consequence, loses his command of the Bow Street station and must go undercover in the East End slums chasing anarchists. Who says East End, Whitechapel and conspiracy, says Jack the Ripper. Does Miss Perry reveal the Ripper's identity? You'll have to read the book to find out.

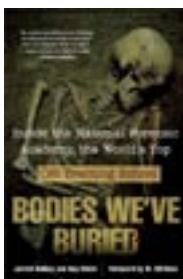
RECENTLY PUBLISHED

NON-FICTION



ANTI-SEMITISM AND BRITISH GOTHIC LITERATURE, (Hardcover, 256 pages, Palgrave Macmillan, ISBN: 0333929519, £47.50), by Carol Margaret Davison, 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), assesses the Count as a crypto-Jew and discusses immigration, syphilis, Jack the Ripper, corporate capitalism and the New Woman as *fin-de-siècle* concerns connected with the assimilation of the Jews.

BLACK BARTY: THE REAL PIRATE OF THE CARIBBEAN (Paperback, 320 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750943122, £8.99) by Aubrey Burl, is the story of Bartholomew Roberts, Black Bart, a tall, good-looking, teetotal and always well dressed pirate who is believed to have been the first to fly the skull and crossbones.



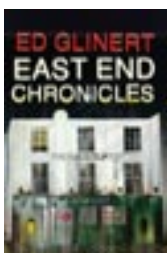
BODIES WE'VE BURIED: INSIDE THE NATIONAL FORENSIC ACADEMY, THE WORLD'S TOP CSI TRAINING SCHOOL, (Hardcover, 286 pages, Berkley Publishing Group, ISBN: 425207528) by Bill Bass (Foreword), *et al.* 'This wonderful book will take you on a fascinating journey through the real world of crime scene investigation and the real people in it... original, informative and delightfully readable.' Patricia Cornwell.

BRITISH OUTLAW TRADITIONS, (Hardcover, University of Wales Press, ISBN: 0708319858, £47) by Helen Phillips (Editor), offers research and critical interpretations about British outlaw traditions and the way they have been imagined and presented in the Middle Ages and the centuries since.

This volume focuses on the ways in which rogue-heroes have been used in literature, film and other areas of popular culture and imagination.

BY EAR AND EYES: THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS, JACK THE RIPPER AND THE MURDER OF MARY JANE KELLY (Paperback, 320 pages, Longshot Publishing, ISBN: 0955024005, £12.99), by Karyo Magellan. 'If there's any justice at all in our little square-mile corner of historical study, Magellan's book will emerge as the most controversial, if not the most important, book of 2005.' *Ripperologist*.

DEBUNKING HISTORY: 152 POPULAR MYTHS EXPLODED (Paperback, 348 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750941510, £8.99), by Ed Rayner and Ron Stapley, presents some of the most popular and enduring myths, legends, fables, folklore, misinformation and misconceptions from the American and French Revolutions to the two world wars and beyond. Arranged within well-defined geographical or thematic sections, and through a mix of short and long entries, each topic is clearly explained and the myth, error or controversy exposed.



EAST END CHRONICLES (Hardcover, 320 pages, Allen Lane/Penguin, ISBN: 0713997745, £20) by [Ed Glinert](#), covers the Silk Weavers of Spitalfields, Docks, Dockers and River Pirates, Murder and Mayhem on the Ratcliffe Highway, Mystics and Myth-Makers, The Blitz and Bombs, The Jewish Ghetto and others. Glinert discerns the influence of 'esoteric measurements' in the location of the Ripper's killings and the murder in 1974 of Alfie Cohen, the owner of a tobacco kiosk in Commercial Road, which were linked by traces of Masonic ritual.

EAST END MEMORIES (Hardcover, 352 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750939966, £14, 99) by Jennie Hawthorne, is an account of the author's early life in the heart of the East End told with passion and humour - even though her drunken father struggles from crisis to crisis and illness and crime are part of everyday life. Her captivating anecdotes, poignant and entertaining, are suffused by the sights, sounds and smells of the East End in the 1920s and 30s.

EYE ON LONDON, (Paperback, 160 pages, Capita Publications, ISBN: 0954868102, £9.99) by Colin Kendell, who chose Jack the Ripper as his specialist subject when he appeared on the BBC programme *Mastermind* ten years ago, deals with famous London landmarks and characters, such as the Tower of London, the Albert Hall, Kensington Palace and - of course - Jack the Ripper.

JACK THE RIPPER - ANATOMIE EINER LEGENDE (Hardcover, 256 Pages, Illust., Militzke Verlag, €18, ISBN: 3861897539) by Hendrik Püstow and Thomas Schachner, is the first original German-language book on the Ripper. Reviewed in this issue.

JACK THE RIPPER COMPREHENSIVE A-Z (Hardcover, 499 pages, Castle Books, ISBN: 078581616X , £19.98) edited by [Maxim Jakubowski](#) and [Nathan Braund](#), is a re-issue of the *Mammoth Book of Jack the Ripper* first published in paperback in 1999.

NEWGATE: LONDON'S PROTOTYPE OF HELL (Hardcover, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750938951, £20), by Stephen Halliday, relates the story of the largest and most notorious prison in London. Built during the twelfth century, Newgate held at various times Dick Turpin, Titus Oates, Jack Sheppard, Casanova, Daniel Defoe - and Defoe's fictional heroine Moll Flanders. Reviewed in *Crimebeat* this issue.



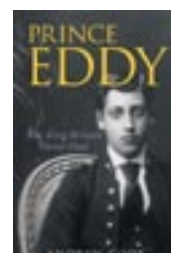
OXFORD: CRIME, DEATH AND DEBAUCHERY (Paperback, 192 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 075093820X, £16.99) by Giles Brindley, explores a side of Oxford's past populated with footpads and prostitutes, murderers and conmen, thieves and philanderers. Crime stories based on contemporary court records and newspaper accounts dating from 1750 to 1920 include infamous murders, hangings and dying confessions, grand and daring thefts, escapes from the county gaol, suicide in the name of love and great drinking deaths.

PLAYERS: THE MYSTERIOUS IDENTITY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (Hardcover, 320 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750943742, £20), by Bertram Fields, questions William Shakespeare of Stratford's authorship of the plays and poems that bear his name. Fields proposes instead 'a magnificent collaboration between two men, a partnership protected for centuries by the greatest conspiracy in literary history.'



PORTRAIT OF A KILLER: JACK THE RIPPER - CASE CLOSED (Paperback, 400 pp., Penguin Group (USA), ISBN: 0425205479, \$15.), by Patricia Cornwell, is 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.

PRINCE EDDY: THE KING BRITAIN NEVER HAD (Hardcover, 272 pages, Tempus Publishing Ltd, ISBN: 0752434101, £20) by prolific author [Andrew Cook](#), is a revisionist account of Eddy's life. Reviewed in this issue.



PUBLIC REACTIONS TO JACK THE RIPPER: LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: AUGUST - DECEMBER 1888, Softcover, ca. 250pp. Illustrated with extensive annotations. Index, \$ 23.99), edited by Casebook: Jack the Ripper Founder and Administrator Stephen P Ryder, is a collection of more than 200 Letters to the Editor published in the Victorian press, presented chronologically, extensively annotated and indexed both by author and subject. Anyone interested can [email Stephen](#) to be placed on the list for a signed copy. All proceeds from the sale of the book will directly benefit the *Casebook Press Project*.



RIPPED FROM THE HEADLINES: BEING THE STORY OF JACK THE RIPPER AS REPORTED IN THE LONDON AND NEW YORK TIMES (Paperback, 139 pages, cover illustration by Gavin L O'Keefe, Ramble House, \$12) is a collection of news items published in *The Times* and the *New York Times* in chronological order (1885-1895). Reviewed in this issue.

RIPPEROLOGY: A STUDY OF THE WORLD'S FIRST SERIAL KILLER AND A LITERARY PHENOMENON (Hardcover, 288 pages, Kent State University Press, US\$24.95/£20.50, ISBN: 0-87338-861-5/978-0-87338-861-0), by veteran Ripper author Robin Odell, with an introduction by Donald Rumbelow, was launched by the Kent State University Press at the Jack the Ripper Conference in Baltimore, Maryland. *Ripperology* is described by its publishers as 'An impressive contribution to Jack the Ripper studies. This is the first study to present a sequential history of Jack the Ripper's crimes, telling the story of the extraordinary literary efforts directed at solving the mystery. In the process, while there are no formal conclusions, exaggerated claims are debunked and misconceived ideas are dispelled.' Reviewed in this issue.

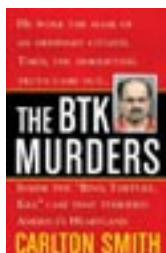
ROYAL BLOOD: KING RICHARD III AND THE MYSTERY OF THE PRINCES (Paperback, 352 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750943904, £9.99), by Bertram Fields, attempts to answer the intriguing questions inherent in the drama of Richard III, history's most infamous royal villain, and his nephews, the princes in the tower. The book ends re-envisioning British history: what if Richard had never accepted the Crown? What if he had instead insisted his young nephew reign as Edward V? How would our lives be changed?



SPARTACUS: THE MYTH AND THE MAN (Hardcover, 256 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750939079, £20), by Ripper author M J Trow, traces the story of Spartacus, through slavery in Rome and training as a gladiator, to the slave rebellion which pitted an army of 3,000 men against the might of Rome and ended with the survivors of Spartacus's defeated army either crucified or returned to slavery.

THE AMERICAN MURDERS OF JACK THE RIPPER: TANTALIZING EVIDENCE OF THE GRUESOME AMERICAN INTERLUDE OF THE PRIME RIPPER SUSPECT (Paperback, 240 pages, The Lyons Press, ISBN: 1592286755, illus., \$ 14.95) by R Michael Gordon, posits Severin Klosowski, *aka* George Chapman, as the Ripper and explores his responsibility for a number of murders committed in the United States.

THE BLACK DAHLIA FILES: THE MOB, THE MOGUL AND THE MURDER THAT TRANSFIXED LOS ANGELES (Hardcover, 416 pages, Regan Books, ISBN: 0060582499, \$26.99), by Donald H. Wolfe. The mob is Benjamin 'Bugsy' Siegel, the mogul is Norman Chandler, the publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*, and the murder that transfixed Los Angeles is the killing of Elizabeth Short, the 'Black Dahlia'.

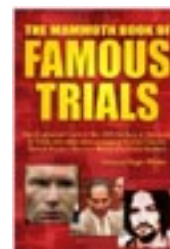


THE BTK MURDERS: INSIDE THE 'BIND TORTURE KILL' CASE THAT TERRIFIED AMERICA'S HEARTLAND (Mass Market Paperback, 352 pages, St. Martin's True Crime Classics, \$6.99, ISBN: 0312939051), by Carlton Smith, is an account of the criminal career of the recently captured serial killer.

THE COCK LANE GHOST: MURDER, SEX AND HAUNTING IN DR. JOHNSON'S LONDON (Hardcover, 224 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750938692, £14.99), by Paul Chambers, is the true story of William Kent's elopement with Frances Lynes to lodgings in Cock Lane, London, Frances's mysterious death and her alleged return from beyond the grave. The story of the Cock Lane Ghost had such effect on society that the term Cock Lane was still synonymous with folly, superstition and corruption 150 years later.

THE HUMAN PREDATOR: A HISTORICAL CHRONICLE OF SERIAL MURDER AND FORENSIC INVESTIGATION (Hardcover, 320 pages, Berkley, ISBN: 042520765X, \$24.95) by [Dr Katherine Ramsland PhD](#), is a detailed and comprehensive anthology of multiple murder events and serial killers from the Dark Ages to the new millennium. Dr Ramsland shows that the darkness that exists in human nature is not the product of modern society.

THE MAMMOTH BOOK OF FAMOUS TRIALS (Paperback, 550 pages, Constable and Robinson, ISBN: 1845293045, £7.99), edited by Roger Wilkes, features 35 famous trials, including Bianchi and Buono, the Hillside Stranglers, the Moors murderers Brady and Hindley, O.J. Simpson, Bruno Hauptmann, eleven-year-old Mary Bell, Oscar Wilde and Charles Manson. Reviewed in *Crimebeat* in this issue.



THE NEW ANNOTATED SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE NOVELS (A STUDY IN SCARLET, THE SIGN OF FOUR, THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, THE VALLEY OF FEAR) (Hardcover, 992 pages, illust., W. W. Norton, Slipcase edition, ISBN: 039305800X, \$49.95) by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Leslie S Klinger (Editor), is the third book in a series begun in 2004. 'A must-have for any serious mystery fan, this edition will stand as the benchmark for generations to come.' *Publishers' Weekly*.

THE SCIENCE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: FROM BASKERVILLE HALL TO THE VALLEY OF FEAR. THE REAL FORENSICS BEHIND THE GREAT DETECTIVE'S GREATEST CASES (Hardcover, 256 pages, Wiley, ISBN: 471648795, \$24.95. Also available in digital format.) by E J Wagner. 'By using the immortal and well-known Sherlock Holmes stories as her starting point, [forensic expert] Wagner blends familiar examples from Doyle's accounts into a history of the growth of forensic science, pointing out where fiction strayed from fact... While some of the speculations are thin (including a passing suggestion about a new Ripper suspect), Wagner presents a balanced view of the history of forensic science that should appeal to a wide audience.' *Publishers' Weekly*. 'Her accounts of Victorian crimes make Watson's tales pale!' Leslie S. Klinger, Editor, *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes*.

THE THEFT OF THE IRISH CROWN JEWELS: THE UNSOLVED MYSTERY (MOMENTS OF HISTORY S.) (Paperback; 272 pages, ISBN: 1843810077, £11.99), by Tim Coates, investigates the mysterious disappearance from Dublin Castle in July 1907 of the Irish Crown Jewels - the regalia or insignia of the Order of St Patrick - which have never been found.

THE TRIAL OF JACK THE RIPPER: THE CASE OF WILLIAM BURY (1859-89) (Paperback, 192 pages, Mainstream Publishing, ISBN: 1845960114, £9.99) by Euan Macpherson, 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, Macpherson's book is a damn good read and a penetrating analysis of a nasty murder by an equally nasty little man.' *Ripperologist*.

THE YELLOW HOUSE: VAN GOGH, GAUGUIN, AND NINE TURBULENT WEEKS IN ARLES (Hardcover, 368 pages, Fig Tree, ISBN: 0670914975, £18.99) by Martin Gayford. Reviewed in this issue.

TO KILL RASPUTIN: THE LIFE AND DEATH OF GREGORI RASPUTIN (Hardcover, 288 pages, Tempus Publishing Ltd, ISBN: 0752434098, £ 20), by [Andrew Cook](#), is a re-investigation of Rasputin's death which reveals for the first time the real masterminds behind the murder of the 'mad monk' who journalist William Le Queux claimed knew the true identity of Jack the Ripper.

UNCLE JACK, (Paperback, Orion) by Humphrey Price and Tony Williams, is the paperback edition of the controversial book proposing the candidacy of Royal obstetrician Sir John Williams as Jack the Ripper. Reviewed in this issue.

WILL THE REAL MARY KELLY...? (Paperback, 154 pages, Christopher Scott, ISBN: 1905277059, £10.99) by *Ripperologist's* contributing editor Chris Scott, is a definitive take on the Miller's Court victim. 'Without question *Will the Real Mary Kelly* will become a "must-have" resource for any serious Ripperologist.' Stephen P. Ryder, Exec. Editor, *Casebook: Jack the Ripper*. 'Highly recommended.' Antonio Sironi. 'Best Book of 2005.' Karyo Magellan, *Ripperologist*.

KIDNAPPING RONNIE!: ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR CAPERS IN BRITISH CRIMINAL HISTORY (Hardcover, 288 pages, Allison & Busby, ISBN: 0749082976), Patrick King & Tudor Gates, recounts the story behind of the abduction of Great Train Robber Ronnie Biggs in Brazil in 1981.

MURDER IN HOLLYWOOD: SOLVING A SILENT SCREEN MYSTERY (Hardcover, 208 pages, The University of Wisconsin Press, ISBN: 0299203603), by Charles Higham, scrutinizes the unsolved murder of William Desmond Taylor, a leading silent film director, and the massive cover-up that protected the famous star responsible for Taylor's death. According to the publishers, 'The result is a compelling answer to a long-standing mystery and a fascinating study of a place, and an industry, that let people reinvent themselves.'

RIPPER SUSPECT: THE SECRET LIVES OF MONTAGUE DRUITT (Hardcover, 224 pages, Sutton Publishing, £18.99, ISBN: 0750943297) by D.J. Leighton, explores the life of Montague John Drutt, barrister, schoolmaster, cricketer, suicide and prime suspect in the Whitechapel murders case, with special emphasis on his intriguing links with Prince Eddy, the Cambridge Apostles, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Virginia Woolf and the cricketing legend Prince Kumar Ranjitsinhji.

UNHOLY MESSENGER: THE LIFE AND CRIMES OF THE BTK SERIAL KILLER (US List Price Hardcover, 304 pages, Scribner Book Company, ISBN: 0743291247, \$23.00), Stephen Singular.

WHO KILLED KING TUT? USING MODERN FORENSICS TO SOLVE A 3,300-YEAR-OLD MYSTERY (Hardcover, 258 pp, Illustrations, Appendices, Index, Prometheus Books, ISBN: 1-59102-183-9, \$25), by Detectives Michael R. King and Gregory M. Cooper, investigates the circumstances of Egyptian Pharaoh Tutankhamen's premature death. Speculation on the cause of his untimely demise has ranged from an infected mosquito bite to a bash on the head, either intentionally inflicted or the result of a fatal chariot accident. After considering natural causes, accident, and suicide, the authors, who are law enforcement specialists in forensics and the psychology of criminal behaviour, come to the conclusion that Tutankhamen was murdered and identify the most probable suspect.

FICTION

AN ACRE OF BARREN GROUND (Paperback, 352 pages, Scribner, ISBN: 0743259726 , £7.99) by [Jeremy Gavron](#), is a novel of Brick Lane, Spitalfields, from prehistory to the present. It is divided into some 40 chapters named after the buildings that line Brick Lane and told in different styles. The chapter about Inspector Abberline's hunt for Jack the Ripper reads like a police procedural, Gunther von Hagens's 2002 exhibition of plastinated cadavers at the Old Truman Brewery is evoked through newspaper coverage and a story about hard-edged, hyped-up dotcom entrepreneurs setting up business in the area their grandparents once struggled to leave is told as a graphic novel. In every chapter, real and imaginary characters rub shoulders together and the blurred line between historical record and fiction sometimes makes the latter seem more real. The 'short stories are filled with memories of homelands and dreams for the future, and they pulse with the busy rhythm of everyday London living.' *The Independent*, 12 March 2006.

BLACK BY GASLIGHT (Paperback, 342 pages, Cavalier Press, ISBN: 0974621064, \$ 17.95), by Nene Adams, opens in August 1888 as consulting detective Lady Evangeline St Claire rescues prostitute Rhiannon Moore from the clutches of Jack the Ripper. The two women embark upon an investigation that soon becomes a race against a killer whose only motive is madness and, while trying to save themselves, fall desperately in love.

BLOOD AND FIRE: THE DUKE OF WINDSOR AND THE STRANGE MURDER OF SIR HARRY OAKES (Paperback, 252 pages, LMH Books, ISBN: 9768184957), by John Marquis, is a semi-fictional retelling of the facts and conjectures concerning the death in 1943 of Sir Harry Oakes, who was found, a hole in his head and burnt to death, at his home in Nassau, Bahamas. Although foul play was never proved, suspicions surrounded the circumstances of his death, with speculation that the Duke and Duchess of Windsor were in some way involved.



DEVIL GODDESS: A SUPERNATURAL MYSTERY (Paperback, 484 pages, iUniverse, Inc, ISBN: 0595380670, \$25.95 - also available as a printable e-book in Adobe Reader format from Amazon for \$6), by Robert Amsel, is a thriller concerning a modern-day young schoolteacher living in Manhattan who fears she's being haunted by the ghost of Jack the Ripper. It has been described as a solid mystery unfolding against a background combining the Ripper murders, supernatural phenomena and an ancient cult from India. 'Whoever the real Jack the Ripper was, Ripperologists will whistle at the author's cleverness in making connections between the Ripper's signature crimes and earlier, until now unrelated horrors. This intricately structured horror novel unfolds like a well-layered mystery in which the hapless heroine must fight for both her sanity and her life.' Perry Brass.

JACK THE RIPPER: A CONFESSION (Paperback, 257 pages, ripperArt, ISBN: 0954660331, £9.99) by Geoff Cooper and Gordon Punter, is (according to the publishers) 'the chilling account on why the murders occurred and why they ceased so abruptly. It also reveals the identity of the man, known as Jack the Ripper, who, towards the end of the nineteenth century, held the entire district of Whitechapel, London, England, in a grip of unparalleled terror.'



JACK THE RIPPER: END OF A LEGEND (Paperback, 316 pages, Athena Press Pub, ISBN: 1844014843, \$15.95) by Calum Reuben Knight, argues that Jack the Ripper wasn't one person but three, including a French woman who successfully masqueraded as the final victim - Mary Jane Kelly. 'The book... does not acknowledge being fiction, which makes it a little difficult to review. As fiction it is everything *The Shroud of the Thwacker* should have been - by which I mean that it isn't brilliant fiction, but that it's a clever, well-written and commendable spoof. If by some bizarre chance it is meant to be fact, the book is a pretty dismal affair that doesn't exactly make *Portrait of a Killer* and *Uncle Jack* look good by comparison but comes pretty close.' *Ripperologist*.

SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE BIOGRAPHY (Hardback, 240 pp., Atlantic, ISBN: 1843542749, £ 14.99) by Nick Rennison, ventures beyond Holmes's published cases to recount how the great detective prevented Fenian attacks, advised Oscar Wilde to scarp, helped Conan Doyle to solve the Edalji case and almost caught Jack the Ripper. But why wasn't the Ripper case recorded by Watson? As the Ripper skulked about Whitechapel, Mary Morstan, Watson's future wife, made her appearance in the good doctor's life. Watson set forth her story as *The Sign of Four*, but did not think the Ripper case worth chronicling.

THE SEDUCTION OF MARY KELLY: FINAL VICTIM OF JACK THE RIPPER (Hardback, 591 pp, Coulsdon, Surry: D'Arcy Collection, 2005, ISBN: 0954977009, £17.95) by William J Perring, is 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*. The *Rip* also told its readers: 'You should like this book and it'll keep you occupied and out of trouble for a while.'



BROKEN (Paperback, 480 pages, Spectra (Random House Inc), ISBN: 0553588184, \$6.99), by Kelley Armstrong, combines fantasy and suspense as werewolf Elena Michaels, the heroine of the same author's novels *Bitten* and *Stolen* (Viking US), discovers she's pregnant. Elena has never heard of another living female werewolf, let alone one who's given birth. At this point, a playful demon prevails upon her to retrieve a stolen letter allegedly written by Jack the Ripper. As a distraction, the job seems simple enough, but the letter contains a portal to Victorian London's underworld which Elena inadvertently triggers unleashing a vicious killer and a pair of zombie thugs. Now Elena must find a way to seal the portal before the unwelcome visitors get what they're looking for: Elena herself.

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

SPRING 2006

NON-FICTION

JACK OF JUMPS (Hardcover, 400 pages, Granta Books, ISBN: 1862077703, £18.99), by David Seabrook, is an account of the murders of eight prostitutes in West London between 1959 and 1965 by a serial killer known as Jack the Stripper. In 1970, the detective who had led the enquiry announced that the police had vowed never to reveal the identity of the killer, who had committed suicide as the net closed round him. Seabrook questions the police's assertion and conjures up the disturbing possibility that the killer may still be at large.

JACK THE RIPPER (Paperback, 160 pages, Pocket Essentials, ISBN: 1904048692, £4.99), by Mark Whitehead and Miriam Rivett, is described as the Essential Guide to 'Jack the Ripper', contains an introductory essay and considers many of the Ripper's proposed identities, a summary of his crimes, victims and the ill-fated investigation, plus a guide to the Ripper's many fictional outings, from Hitchcock's *The Lodger* to Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's *From Hell*.

REVELATIONS OF THE TRUE RIPPER (Ivory Moon), by Vanessa A Hayes, presents a new suspect who, according to the publishers: is 'a fully plausible suspect, non-related to the Author or Royalty'. They add: 'As with all NEW suspects you will ask when, where and how does Vanessa believe that this person committed these crimes. Her "Jack the Ripper" had motive, causation, drive and passion. So who was he?'

SUMMER 2006

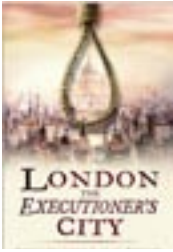
NON-FICTION

ASSASSINS IN THE PARK: MURDER, BETRAYAL AND RETRIBUTION (Paperback, 192 pages, Mercier Press, ISBN: 185635511X), by Senan Molony, deals with the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Thomas Burke in Phoenix Park in May 1882 by men wielding surgical knives, the police investigation and the attempts to infiltrate the Fenians.

BLACK DAHLIA AVENGER: A GENIUS FOR MURDER (Revised edition) (Paperback, 624 pages, Harper Paperbacks, ISBN: 0061139610, \$15.95), by Steve Hodel, identifies the mysterious killer of Elizabeth Short, the Black Dahlia, as the author's own father, Dr George Hodel.

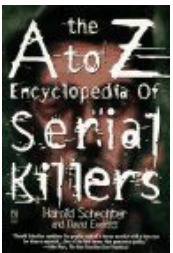
JACK THE RIPPER: THE FACTS (Paperback, 560 pages, Robson Books Ltd, ISBN: 1861058705, £8.99) by *Ripperologist's* Executive Editor Paul Begg, is simply one of the most complete and authoritative books on the subject. A must-have.

JACK THE RIPPER (Hardback, 160 pp, Pocket Essentials, ISBN: 1904048692, EAN: 9781904048695, 13 Digit ISBN: 978-1-904048-69-5, £ 9.99) by Mark Whitehead and Miriam Rivett, is a revised edition of the *Pocket Essentials Jack the Ripper*. According to the publishers, this edition covers all the major (and many minor) suspects put forward since the murders commenced. They also recall that: 'Patricia Cornwell's *Portrait of a Killer: Jack the Ripper - Case Closed* and *Uncle Jack* by Tony Williams and Humphrey Price have both attracted much publicity and criticism for their "solutions"; Jack the Ripper's reign of terror is now coming increasingly under academic scrutiny, with the crimes examined in relation to media representation, sociology and Victorian studies; UK and US universities now have classes which examine the Ripper through a variety of disciplines, making *Pocket Essentials Jack the Ripper* an ideal introductory text for students'. To the question of who was Jack the Ripper they reply: 'No-one in the annals of crime is capable of arousing such passionate debate as the perpetrator of the Whitechapel Murders in 1888. Was he a demented Royal, a Masonic assassin, a sexually-frustrated artist, a member of the Czarist secret police, a crazed reformist or even an escaped gorilla? More than a century has passed since this unknown killer murdered East End prostitutes under the very noses of the police and yet we seem no closer to uncovering the Ripper's identity. Countless volumes have been written by warring researchers, seemingly unable to agree even on the number of his victims. Is it possible that we will ever know the truth or is the Ripper destined to remain an enigma, his place in history secured as both an English-heritage crime icon and a universal bogeyman? This revised and updated edition contains a summary of Jack's crimes, victims and the ill-fated police investigation. It considers many of the Ripper's proposed identities, bringing you up to date with the latest suspects and includes a guide to the Ripper's many fictional outings, from *The Lodger* to *From Hell*.' Might as well give it a try.



LONDON: THE EXECUTIONER'S CITY (Hardcover 256 pages Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750940239 £18.99), by David Brandon and Alan Brooke, is described by its publishers as 'a vivid picture of capital punishment in a capital that seems to have thrived on executions.' The book 'reveals the capital as a place where the bodies of criminals defined the boundaries of the city and heads on poles greeted patrons on London Bridge.'

SUPPER WITH THE CRIPPENS (Paperback, 352 pages, Orion (an Imprint of The Orion Publishing Group Ltd) ISBN: 0752877720, £7.99), by David James Smith, looks again into the case of American Dr Hawley Harvey Crippen, his wife, a music-hall artiste who called herself Belle Elmore, and his mistress, Ethel le Neve, against the background of Edwardian England. Crippen murdered his wife, buried her remains in the cellar and escaped to Canada in an ocean liner with Ethel disguised as a boy. They were arrested on arrival by Inspector Walter Dew, of Whitechapel fame, thanks to the wireless telegraph newly installed on the ship. The lovers went on trial for murder. Ethel was acquitted but Crippen was convicted and hanged.



THE A-Z ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SERIAL KILLERS (Paperback, 341 pages, Pocket Books, ISBN: 0671537911), by Harold Schechter, consists of brief articles examining serial killers, their crimes and victims, and the methods they used to kill people and dispose of their bodies.

THE CAMDEN TOWN MURDER: WALTER RICHARD SICKERT, ROBERT WOOD, EMILY DIMMOCK: ARTISTS, MURDERER AND VICTIM IN ANOTHER NOTORIOUS 'RIPPER' CRIME (Paperback, 250 pages, Mandrake of Oxford, ISBN: 1869928148), John Barber. 'I know the book will be of interest.' Karyo Magellan, *Ripperologist*.

THE FATHER OF FORENSICS: THE GROUNDBREAKING CASES OF SIR BERNARD SPILSBURY AND THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN CSI (Paperback 336 pages Berkley Publishing Group, ISBN: 0425210073, \$14), Colin Evans.

THE MAMMOTH BOOK OF PIRATES (Paperback, 512 pages, Constable and Robinson, ISBN: 1845291158, £7.99) Jon E. Lewis (Editor), contains 28 first-hand memoirs and contemporary reports of such pirates as Blackbeard, Captain Kidd, 'Calico Jack' Rackham, Alexander Exquemelin, Frances Drake, Anne Bonney, Jean Lafitte and the Joassamee Pirates. Tales retold include Francis 'Scourge of Spain' Drake's audacious night treasure raid on Nombre de Dios; the capture of Panama by Henry Morgan; the life of Louis 'Half-Arse' Le Golif, whose buttock was shot away by cannon fire; and Henry Avery's seizure of the Moghul of India's treasure ship.

FICTION

FRANKENSTEIN: THE SHADOW OF FRANKENSTEIN VOLUME 1 (THE SHADOW OF FRANKENSTEIN) (Paperback, 275 pages, DH Press, ISBN: 1-59582-037-X, \$6.99), by Stefan Petrucha. [Frankenstein meets Jack the Ripper](#). 'Following his lab's explosion, Henry and Elizabeth Frankenstein head to London for a rest (and to avoid possible criminal charges). The monster, still alive, follows, but winds up in the Whitechapel district. There, he's mistaken for a disfigured, mentally disabled man and befriended by local prostitutes. When one of the streetwalkers is horribly murdered, the creature roams the area, hoping to protect the survivors. This brings him in contact with the real killer—Jack the Ripper. After 47 years, he's back in action. The Ripper's string of brutal killings in 1887 [sic] were actually sacrifices, dark rituals that extended his life. Now he's aging again and desperate to remain alive, and sees in the reanimated corpse of the Frankenstein monster a possible new way to live forever. Henry, the monster and Jack the Ripper's fates become entwined as Jack the Ripper hatches a plan to frame the monster for the killings, to force Henry to reveal his secrets of life and death.' DH Press. Frankenstein, the Ripper, London. What could go wrong?

SOJOURN (Dragon Moon Press), by Jana G Oliver, combines science fiction, fantasy and history as Jacynda Lassiter struggles arrives in Victorian London to find an overdue 'tourist' and return him to 2057 before he alters history. As the Whitechapel murders have the city in an uproar, the shape shifters are fretting the hard-to-catch killer might be one of their own. To prevail, Jacynda and Dr Alastair Montrose, a shape shifter who is denying his heritage, must outwit a madman whose legacy will endure for centuries.

SEPTEMBER 2006

NON-FICTION

JACK THE RIPPER: REVEALED AND REVISITED (Hardcover, 224 pages, Express Newspapers Plc, ISBN: 0850793238, £14.99) by John Wilding, is an extensively revised and updated version of the author's 1993 *Jack the Ripper: Revealed*.

PORTRAIT OF A KILLER: JACK THE RIPPER - CASE CLOSED (Paperback, 416 pages, Time Warner Paperbacks, ISBN: 0751537225, £8.99), by Patricia Cornwell, will be the British edition of her revised book.

OCTOBER 2006

NON-FICTION

JACK THE RIPPER: SCOTLAND YARD INVESTIGATES. (Hardback, 320 pp., Sutton Publishing. ISBN: 0750942282. £20), by Stewart P Evans and Donald Rumbelow. The publishers say: 'Drawing on their unparalleled knowledge of the Jack the Ripper murders and their professional experience as police officers, the two doyens of serious Ripper writing join forces for the first time to write the definitive book on the case from the perspective of the police investigation.' On they go: 'The authors re-open every aspect of the case and offer a balanced account that does not favour any one suspect or motive. By viewing the case through the lens of police procedure, they have uncovered clues and links that have remained undetected for over a hundred years. Evans and Rumbelow also extend the investigation beyond the "canonical" five victims and add other murders investigated at the same time that bring the total to twelve.' In case that were not enough, the publishers underline that Stewart and Don's new opus 'strips away much of the nonsense that has accumulated since 1888 and draws the reader into the world of police investigation in Victorian London, reopening files on a case that will perhaps never be solved, but will always fascinate.' Unquestionably, this is one to buy and treasure.

LATE 2006

THE QUEST FOR JACK THE RIPPER: A LITERARY HISTORY 1888-2000 by Richard Whittington-Egan, has been eagerly expected for quite some time now. *Ripperologist* has been told that the delay has been partly due to the scrupulous checking of all the facts by Mr Whittington-Egan's editor, Tom Kelly, and the minute attention and meticulous research which he 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.

UNCOVERING JACK THE RIPPER'S LONDON, by [Richard Jones](#). Mr Jones's documentary, *On the Trail of Jack the Ripper*, was described by *Ripperologist* as 'Perhaps the best documentary to have been produced in recent years.'

AND DON'T FORGET...

CUATRO MIRADAS SOBRE JACK EL DESTRIPIADOR, a still unscheduled Spanish-language collection of original essays on the Ripper by Juan-Jacobo Bajaría, Juan José Delaney, Christopher-Michael DiGrazia and Eduardo Zinna to be published in Buenos Aires... SHADOW PASTS, a look at Ripperologists and other 'amateur' historians by Professor William D Rubinstein... THE ROYAL LEGACY OF HATE, a further volume of revelations concerning the regal ancestry of Joseph Sickert, who died on 9 January 2003... and journalist Tom Slemen's long-awaited book on Charles Reignier Conder, reportedly finished and being edited prior to its release. You'll know more about these as soon as we know more.

FEATURE FILMS

BLACK DAHLIA (USA, 2005) Written, produced and directed by Ramzi Abed, starring Kristen Kerr as Lisa Small/Beth Short, Lizzy Strain as the Black Dahlia/Elizabeth Short and Khrist Kaneff as Fatty Arbuckle. The tagline is: 'One woman, two lives. One knife, two halves. The eternal murder mystery...' That's what we call cutting-edge copy. According to [Mr Abed's website](#), *Black Dahlia* is still in post-production.



ROHTENBURG (Germany, 2006). Also Known As Butterfly: A Grimm Love Story. Directed by Martin Weisz, written by T.S. Faull, starring Thomas Kretschmann, Angelika Bartsch and Thomas Huber, is inspired by the real-life story of cannibal killer Armin Meiwes and might, as a result, never come to a screen near you, since Meiwes has sued successfully to prevent the release of this film in Germany.

THE BLACK DAHLIA (USA, Universal Pictures, 2006). Directed by Brian De Palma, based on the novel by James Ellroy, with a screenplay by Josh Friedman, stars Josh Hartnett as Officer Dwight 'Bucky' Bleichert, Scarlett Johansson as Kay Lake, Hilary Swank as Madeleine Sprague, Aaron Eckhart as Sgt.

Leland 'Lee' Blanchard and Mia Kirshner as Elizabeth Short. The Black Dahlia is about two L.A. police officers in the 1940s who investigate the brutal murder of aspiring film actress Elizabeth Short, known as the Black Dahlia. Officer 'Bucky' soon realizes that his girlfriend Kay had ties to the deceased, and soon after that, he begins uncovering corruption and conspiracy within the police department. Universal has announced that *The Black Dahlia* will open in cinemas in the United States on 13 October 2006 - a Friday. Rumour has it, however, that the film might make its debut at the Cannes Film Festival in May.



TORSO (USA, Paramount, 2007). Following Zodiac, David Fincher will direct Torso, a thriller based on a graphic novel written by Brian Michael Bendis and Marc Andreyko, for Paramount. Ehren Kruger is writing the adaptation, which will be produced by Pandemonium's Bill Mechanic, Angry Films' Don Murphy and comic artist Todd McFarlane. Fincher is expected to start work on Torso once he wraps production on Paramount's Benjamin Button adaptation. Torso will tell the true but relatively unknown story of Treasury Department agent Eliot Ness after his Al Capone days, when he became Cleveland's director of public safety in 1934. He launched a successful campaign against crime and corruption, but his record was marred by a series of gruesome, motiveless murders. The 'Torso Murderer' was responsible for at least 13 victims, all decapitated and dismembered. Ten of them were never identified. Ness, who had no experience in police work, put together a team of ex-officers to apprehend the serial murderer. Despite their efforts, the killer was never found.

[Dark Horizons, 12 January 2006](#)

[The Hollywood Reporter, 17 January 2006](#)



V FOR VENDETTA (USA, Warner Brothers, 2005). Directed by James McTeigue, based on the graphic novels by Alan Moore and David Lloyd, written by the Wachowski Brothers. The inspiration for this film was a graphic novel written in the 1980s by Alan Moore of From Hell fame in response to Thatcherism. A few years into the future, Britain is ruled by an evil dictator who tramples on individual liberties with the help of the media and a brutal secret police. Under pretence that the country is under attack, religious, cultural and social diversity is suppressed through the incarceration and execution of innocent civilians. In reaction to this oppression, a Shakespeare-quoting caped crusader in a Guy Fawkes mask calls upon citizens to join him in blowing up the Houses of Parliament on 5th November, the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot. His sidekick is Evey, a young girl whom he rescued from a gang

of yobs. Some consider V as merely an action film while others believe that it asks pertinent questions about the power of governments and the right of the people to rebel in defence of their freedom through any means available. Natalie Portman plays Evey, Hugo Weaving the masked avenger, John Hurt the evil dictator, Stephen Rea a secret policeman and Stephen Fry a closet homosexual who falls foul of the government.

ZODIAC (USA, Paramount, Warner, 2006). Directed by David Fincher, based on the Robert Graysmith books, with a screenplay by James Vanderbilt, stars Robert Downey Jr. as Paul Avery, Jake Gyllenhaal as Robert Graysmith, Mark Ruffalo as Dave Toschi, Anthony Edwards as Armstrong and Gary Oldman as attorney Melvin Belli. The film deals with the real-life serial killer Zodiac, who terrorized San Francisco with a string of seemingly random murders during the 1960s and 1970s. Its release has been announced for autumn 2006.

DOCUMENTARIES

JACK THE RIPPER'S SWEDISH VICTIM is a documentary by Daniel Olsson and Wulvarich shot on location in Store Tumlehed, Gothenburg and other places frequented by young Elisabeth Gustafsdotter, better known as Long Liz Stride. It will consist of the following sections: 1. THE LONDON MURDERS, 1888: General Information on the Whitechapel Murders and Jack the Ripper; 2. LIZ: CHILDHOOD AND TEENAGE YEARS: History of Torslanda and Tumlehed. The God Thor and the Cult of Thor. Liz's Birth. Important Events in Sweden, 1843. Liz's Baptism. Connections between the Torslanda Church and the God Thor. Liz's Upbringing. Her Brothers. Ordinary Daily Life in Sweden. Liz's Confirmation. 3. LIZ'S MOVE TO GOTHENBURG. General Information about Gothenburg. King Gustav II Adolf and the Mystic Events which Led to the

Birth of the City. Elizabeth Settles in 'Majorna'. Allmänna Vägen: the Name and the Prostitutes. How Liz Learned English in Majorna. Brothels in Allmänna Vägen. 4. PROSTITUTION AND THE 'REGISTERS OF SHAME.' Liz Settles in Gothenburg. Prostitution. Sillgatan Street. Liz's Registration. Pilgatan Street - Where Liz Probably Learned Yiddish. Kurhuset. How Liz Got struck off the Register. 5. LIZ'S MOVE TO LONDON. The Journey. Weather Conditions. 6. LIZ'S MURDER. 7 THEORIES ABOUT JACK THE RIPPER. The original plans for the release of the Swedish and English-language versions of VICTIM have been affected by the health problems currently experienced by its co-director, *Ripperologist's* friend and contributor, Daniel Olsson. As more information becomes available it will be reported in this column.

TELEVISION

LONGFORD, Channel 4 - One-off drama starring Jim Broadbent as the title character battling to win parole for Moors murderess Myra Hindley (played by Samantha Morton). With Andy Serkis as Ian Brady and Lindsay Duncan as Elizabeth Longford. *Longford* is an HBO Films presentation in association with Channel 4 produced by Granada. Directed by Tom Hooper (*Prime Suspect 6*, HBO's upcoming miniseries *Elizabeth I*), written by Peter Morgan (whose credits include *The Deal*, *The Queen*, *Henry VIII*). Andy Harries (*The Queen*, *Prime Suspect 6*) and Peter Morgan produce. The film's original soundtrack will be composed by Rolfe Kent (*About Schmidt*, *Sideways*).

DVD

THE MONSTER OF LONDON CITY/SECRET OF THE RED ORCHID (Image Entertainment, Germany, 1964, Black and White, Full Screen, Unrated, \$ 19.95). The first in this double-feature disk is an English-dubbed version of *Das Ungeheuer von London City*, a German film produced by Artur Branek, directed by Edwin Zbonek, starring Hansjörg Felmy, Marianne Koch, [Dietmar Schönherr](#), [Hans Nielsen](#) and [Chariklia Baxevanos](#) as the wonderfully named Betty Ball. *Monster* was scripted by Robert A. Stemmle and Bryan Edgar Wallace, the son of crime-thriller novelist Edgar Wallace. In *Monster*, 'the spirit of Jack the Ripper seems to be very much alive in 1960s London as a series of brutal slayings by the Monster of London City has Scotland Yard baffled. In a macabre coincidence, a new play about the famous murderer is about to become a major West End hit... and the leading man is rapidly becoming the prime suspect!' Shades of Richard Mansfield... Cindy Collins-Smith's *Hollywood Ripper* website adds: '*The Monster of London City* is perhaps more interesting for its "ahead-of-the-curve" use of drug addiction and syphilis as plot elements than for its rather derivative Ripper plot.' The second feature in the DVD, *Secret of the Red Orchid*, stars Christopher Lee as an FBI Captain and Klaus Kinski as an American gangster.

COMPACT DISCS

JACK THE RIPPER, DIE GESCHICHTE EINES MÖRDERS, (Audio-CD, Luebbe Verlagsgruppe, ISBN: 3785711999), by [Frank Gustavus](#), [Dietmar Mues](#), [Dagmar Puchalla](#) and [Heinz Lieven](#), is a German-language account of the murders.

JACK THE RIPPER'S REIGN OF TERROR is a London Audio Walk tour of the murder sites recorded on MP3 or Audio CD which sells for £5.99. The 3-mile (4 km) walk covers from Whitechapel Underground Station to Aldgate, visiting the five murder sites with a stop at the Ten Bells in Commercial Street. Sights include Spitalfields Market and Brick Lane. The full audio lasts 50 minutes and the walk usually takes round 1.5 - 2 hours. Best time to go, anytime, although Spitalfields Market is only open 11- 3 on Sundays whereas it is open 9 - 6 the rest of the week. The tour may be ordered on CD. MP3-player owners may download it straight away from the Internet. The downloads consist of between 17Mb and 18Mb, which should take around five minutes to download on a broadband connection. Those on a slower connection are advised to order the CD instead. For more information visit the [Bluebrolly website](#).

MILLER'S COURT, a two-person drama by James Jeffrey Paul about the Ripper's encounter with his last victim, is available on CD from Actors Scene Unseen, a Live Internet Radio Theatre company broadcasting live from Charlotte, NC, USA. 'The play's dialogue is convincingly written, Mary coming across as a hardened woman of the streets who has a gentle centre - yes, I know that sounds that the cliché-ridden "tart with a golden heart" but author James Jeffrey Paul manages to get round it. The only complaint one really has is Mary's strong Irish accent, which sounds fake to me, and which it's doubtful she would have had if, as she claimed, she'd moved from Ireland to Wales when a child.' *Ripperologist* No. 65 (March 2006). Also available from Actors Scene Unseen is *Saucy Jack*, an original radio drama by James Vita focusing on the Ripper murders originally broadcast on 19 June 2004. To find information on programmes and schedules, to listen to live broadcasts or to buy the CDs, go to the [Actors Scene Unseen website](#).



CHRISTOPHER-
MICHAEL DIGRAZIA

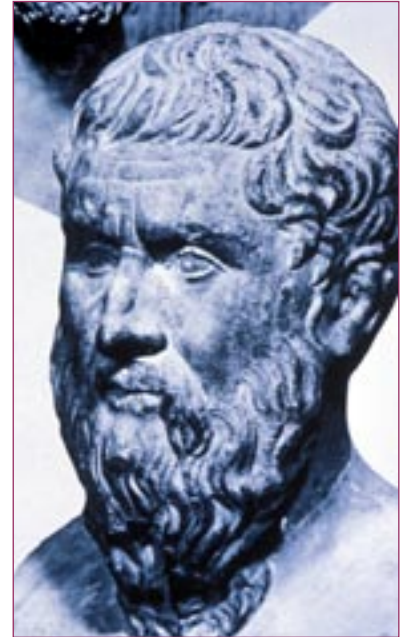
The Last Word

If you knew that the world would end in a year... what would you do?

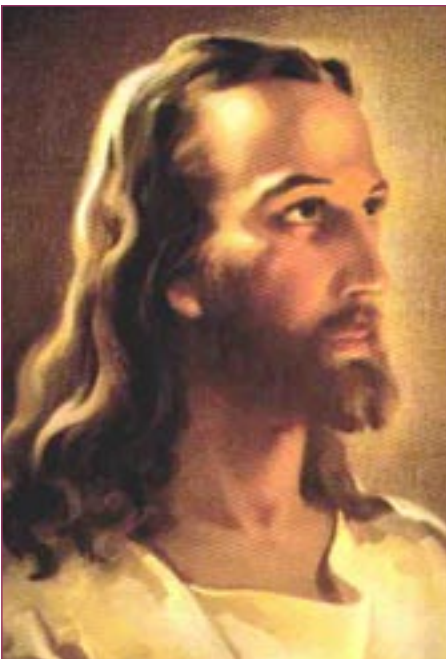
That's the basic premise of Domenic Smith's novel *The Mercury Visions of Louis Daguerre*, set in the France of 1847. His mind poisoned by a decade of working with mercury as a photographic fixative, Daguerre is convinced that the world will end in a year. And so, with the help of his friend, the poet Charles Baudelaire, he creates a 'Doomsday List' - ten items that he must photograph before the final day, storing them in the basement of the Paris Observatory in the hope a new world will find them and see, in their smoky, misty beauty, a small bit of the wonder and glory of the nineteenth century.

The concept of eschatology, or 'end times,' is at least as old as the Persians, with Herodotus mentioning the belief in a catastrophic final judgement and rebirth of a new perfect world - whether terrestrial or celestial - in the 5th century BC. The Christian concepts of heaven and hell - in other words, what will happen after we die? - were, research has determined, influenced by ancient Greek speculation about the soul's future. But the need for those concepts was, oddly enough, because of an end time that didn't happen.

Because of dispersal and slavery 'by the waters of Babylon,' Israelite belief in the end of the world was, naturally enough, influenced by Babylonian thought. Ordinary Jews seem to have believed that a messiah would arrive from the tribe of David to lead Israel into a time of glory, while prophets such as Isaiah believed the triumph of Assyria meant the end of Israel. The longing for a messiah did, as we know, lead both to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.



Herodotus



Jesus

Early Christians, of course, believed in the imminent return of Jesus, though as the years went by without a Second Coming, many different ideas flourished as to when we might expect the end of the world, and what the souls of the departed did while waiting for Christ's return. Some believed the end could be predicted if you could correctly interpret the signs around you - which is a strain of thought running through the Book of Revelation, and continues today with the popularity of the 'Bible Code' books and the umpteenth reprinting of the prophecies of Nostradamus.

Others believed in a numerical milestone, again mirrored in Revelation, where Satan is 'chained... for a thousand years.' So, at the close of the first millennium, the world held its breath and expected the end. When nothing happened, of course, recalculations were necessary, as Robert Lacey and Danny Danziger tell us in 'The Year 1000:'

'Strictly speaking, the reign of Christ on earth did not begin until the death and resurrection of the Saviour, which occurred, according to the New Testament, when Jesus was thirty-three years old. So might 1033 prove to be the year when the dire predictions of the *Book of Revelation* would be fulfilled?'

Of course, the world didn't end in 1033. Neither did it end in 1923, the year predicted by American religious fanatic Glenn Voliva (a story which I'll tell you about next month). Will it end in 2061, the year predicted by



Mother Shipton

Mother Shipton, the 'White Witch of Yorkshire?' Or will it end in 2012, the year predicted by the Mayan Long Count Calendar? Well, Jesus said 'no man knows the date or hour,' and that's good enough for me.

But is it good enough for Jack the Ripper (aha! I bet you wondered how I'd get to him, didn't you?)? I opened with Louis Daguerre to make a point: the photographer is convinced the world will end, and wants to leave behind a record of what his world was like, thereby gaining himself some small portion of immortality. What he doesn't do is settle his accounts - he doesn't make his peace with God, nor atone for all the wrongs he might have done to others - in fact, the only part of his past he attempts to address is to find the woman he has loved and lost in order to photograph her.

Imagine the Ripper under a millennial delusion, convinced that Polly Nichols and her scarlet sisters had to be murdered in order to hasten - or forestall - the end of the world. That brings us pretty close to Roslyn D'Onston territory, and one wonders what the energetic Ivor Edwards might make of such a motive. It's certainly an avenue to investigate, but I sincerely doubt any good would come of it.

Perhaps the Whitechapel Murders were committed by an already-dying Ripper wanting to experience the 'ultimate thrill' of killing before his death? I vaguely recall the theory being proposed, but, with old age and quarts of Glenfiddich having taken their toll, I can no longer remember

who offered such a solution to the murders, nor whether it was made seriously or in jest.

Or was Jack the Ripper a 'publicity hound,' to use a gross modern term? We're familiar today with the spectacle of the serial killer seeking media fame - California's Zodiac killer comes instantly to mind, as does, more recently, the killer known by his chosen alias of 'BTK,' peevishly asking how many more people he has to kill to get his name in the papers. If we believed the 'Dear Boss' letter to be authentic, I'd certainly be willing to see the Ripper as a thwarted, warped aspirant to celebrity, and, unlike the two motives given above, I wouldn't rule out fame as a prod to the Ripper's knife. But does it explain the first Whitechapel Murder, or only the latter, ballyhooed slaughters?

Let us return to the question at hand. If you knew the world was coming to an end, what would you do? Run up a never-to-be-paid bill at Fortnum & Mason? Take the company credit card and jet off to a remote spot in the Greek isles to wallow in pleasures of the flesh? Cleanse your soul and spend the last days in chaste contemplation?

Of course, like its sister 'what's your perfect death?', the question can't be answered seriously. It's difficult for us to contemplate our own end, let alone that of the universe, and so when we do wonder about the last days, we instinctively reach for the safely familiar - a good meal, a last goodbye with the family - or the exotically extravagant - the Greek isles, the sybaritic indulgence at table. But death will come to all of us, and so the last word in this case ought to go to the anonymous humourist who said, 'live every day like it's your last. Because some day, you'll be right.'

In Future Issues...

Future issues of *Ripperologist* will feature...

Cindy Collins Smith on the *Curse upon Mitre Square*, Simon D Wood on *Return to Millers Court*, Robert Linford, David O'Flaherty and John Savage on the further career of Coroner Samuel Langham, Antonio Sironi and Jane Coram on the Murder of Mary Jane Kelly, Claudia Aliffe on the *Wicked Women of Britain*, Robert McLaughlin on *Vacher l'Eventreur*, Jeffrey Bloomfield on the Bravo murder case, Zoraida Dunne on William Palmer, Christopher T George on Neil Cream, Eduardo Zinna on Buck Ruxton, Leslie A Klinger on *Jack the Ripper and Sherlock Holmes*, Stanley Dean Reid on the *Most Wanted Criminals in World History*, John Ruffels on *The East End Murderer - I Knew Him*, John Crawford on Algernon Haskett-Smith, Stepan Poberowski on Russian perceptions of Jack the Ripper...

The Last Word by Christopher-Michael DiGrazia, *Crimebeat* by Wilf Gregg, *Cyberjack* by Monty, *Press Trawl* by Chris Scott, *East End Life* by Adam Wood, *Ripper Fiction*, *In Brief*, *I Beg to Report*, *Dear Rip*, *Ripping Yarns* and more, much more... can you afford to miss out on any of it?

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Maureen Adamson
outside St Brides Church
in Fleet Street,
where her ancestor
Polly Nichols married