

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

Ripperologist

No.83

September 2007

Sex or No Sex?

AMANDA HOWARD explores
the mind of the Ripper

The Wages of Sin

JANE CORAM looks at life
for a prostitute in the 1880s

GAVIN BROMLEY updates his
Batty Street Lodger theory

EDUARDO ZINNA on opium dens

Sherlock Holmes and the Ripper

RIPPEROLOGIST MAGAZINE

Issue 83, September 2007

QUOTE FOR SEPTEMBER:

"Every age has the crime story to reflect its fears and desires. It is no accident that Sherlock Holmes, working independently, should have emerged at a time when the professional police force had failed, under the full glare of public interest, to solve another horrible mystery: the Jack the Ripper case."

Ben Macintyre, *There is a Miss Marple inside all of us. The McCann case brings out our sleuthing instinct*, *The Times*, London, UK, 14 September 2007.

Features

Editorial:

Don Souden on Mama Bears and Ripper Theorists

Sex or No Sex:

The Mind of Jack the Ripper
By Amanda Howard

The Wages of Sin: Prostitution in Victorian London

What was life really like for the prostitute in the 1880's?
By Jane Coram

Is there an Echo in here?

Gavin Bromley gives us an update on his Batty Street Lodger Story.

Opium Dens and Other Victorian Delights

Eduardo Zinna takes us into the smokey corners of the Victorian Opium Den

Sherlock Holmes and Jack The Ripper

An exciting tale of the World's Favourite Detective as he faces his greatest challenge . . . tracking down the Whitechapel Murderer

Regulars

Press Trawl

Chris Scott returns with more from the news from the 19th century

News and Views

I Beg to Report

"From Britney Spears in wax to Walter Sickert in oils, if it happened, you'll find it here"

Letters to the Editor

Books

On the Crimebeat

Wilf Gregg reviews the latest additions to the True Crime bookshelf.

We would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance given by the following people in the production of this issue of Ripperologist: Maggie Bird, Stephen Ryder, Keith Skinner, Thomas Schachner and Eduardo Zinna. Thank you!

The views, conclusions and opinions expressed in signed articles, essays, letters and other items published in Ripperologist are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views, conclusions and opinions of Ripperologist or its editors. The views, conclusions and opinions expressed in unsigned articles, essays, news reports, reviews and other items published in Ripperologist are the responsibility of Ripperologist and its editorial team.

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

The contents of Ripperologist No. 83 September 2007, including the compilation of all materials and the unsigned articles, essays, news reports, reviews and other items are copyright © 2007 Ripperologist. The authors of signed articles, essays, letters, news reports, reviews and other items retain the copyright of their respective contributions. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted or otherwise circulated in any form or by any means, including digital, electronic, printed, mechanical, photocopying, recording or any other, without the prior permission in writing of Ripperologist. The unauthorised reproduction or circulation of this publication or any part thereof, whether for monetary gain or not, is strictly prohibited and may constitute copyright infringement as defined in domestic laws and international agreements and give rise to civil liability and criminal prosecution.

RIPPEROLOGIST MAGAZINE

PO Box 735, Maidstone, Kent, UK ME17 1JF. contact@ripperologist.info

Editorial Team

Editor in Chief
Paul Begg

Editors

Christopher T George; Don Souden

Editors-at-Large

Adam Wood; Eduardo Zinna; Jane Coram

Contributing Editors

Wilf Gregg; Chris Scott

Consultants

Stewart P. Evans; Loretta Lay
Donald Rumbelow; Stephen P Ryder

Subscriptions

Ripperologist is published monthly in electronic format. The cost is £12.00 for six issues. Cheques can only be accepted in £sterling, made payable to Ripperologist and sent to the address above. The simplest and easiest way to subscribe is via PayPal - send to paypal@ripperologist.info

Back issues

Single PDF files of issue 62 onwards are available at £2 each.

Advertising

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

Submissions

We welcome articles on any topic related to Jack the Ripper, the East End of London or Victoriana. Please send your submissions to contact@ripperologist.info. Thank you!



Mama Bears and Ripper Theorists

By Don Souden

On the eve of the Jack the Ripper Conference 2007 in Wolverhampton, England, next month it might be worthwhile to ponder the levels of collegiality that exist within the field. A few months ago, Jennifer Pegg and I revealed the results of a survey we had taken among a select segment of Ripperologists (*Ripperologist* 80 June 2007). Not unexpectedly, the question that proved most contentious was that which asked how much cooperation/non-cooperation respondents had experienced within the field. A mere six percent felt there was a real spirit of cooperation, 26 percent felt there was no cooperation at all, while 65 percent reported having met with varying levels of helpfulness and the opposite.

Studying the answers a bit more, however, it became apparent that there was, perhaps, an error in the way the question was presented or that the majority of respondents had misread it. That is, there was confusion between what constitutes non-cooperation and what might be more aptly called personal enmity. The two are not the same, but the distinction can become blurred in the heat of an argument.

Certainly, as Jennifer and I made clear, we encountered extraordinary cooperation from those to whom we blindly sent our initial questionnaire. The response rate was very gratifying and we received only a single flat refusal to participate. And it must be admitted that over the years Jennifer and I have been involved in more than our share of acrimonious controversies. Yet, the survey was embraced with enthusiasm by a diverse population of the Ripper community.

In the same way, it has been my experience that genuine requests for help have almost always been successful, even when dealing with some few people who ordinarily would not give me the time of day (or if they did would make sure their answer was so erroneous that I would be late for any appointments I had to keep). Moreover, I have heard the same from many other researchers. In general, then, a spirit of cooperation is alive and well within the field.

In contrast—and what the survey respondents overwhelmingly lamented—there are often vicious personal attacks, especially on message boards, that roil on forever. These “flame wars” leave the participants looking like fools and innocent onlookers wondering if perhaps model railroading or learning to play the ukulele might not be a less stressful and more rewarding hobby than Ripperology.

In some cases gratuitous political references are the source of the problem (all political considerations post-1890 would seem to have little or no application to the field anyway) and in other instances the individuals involved simply react to each other like two strange pit bulls (each with a serious case of the mange as well). In all likelihood these sad characters would strike similar sparks were they discussing model railroads or ukulele strumming techniques. In the vast majority of instances, however, the vendettas stem from one or another party deigning to find fault in the Ripperological reasoning of the other.

A mother bear is no more protective of her cubs than, it seems, is a Ripperologist of his home-grown hypotheses and woe is he (or she) who trifles with another's theories. Silly as that may seem on one level (does it really matter in the greater scheme of the universe whether Mary Jane Kelly was a victim of Jack the Ripper?), from another, more personal, perspective it is perfectly understandable. After all, very few in the field ever get so much as a bent farthing for their efforts and yet the labor they put in is often exhaustive. In our recent survey, a full 80 percent of respondents had been studying the Ripper for at least ten years and yet about the only reward they can expect is the satisfaction of advancing a theory that—for them at least—does for Ripperology what the elusive Grand Unified Theory would do for the world of physics.

When you also factor in that most Ripperologists are well-read and well-educated (not to mention those within the group with egos so inflated that they must buy an extra ticket for that ego when travelling by air) it ought come as no surprise that there is all too often a plague of postings that feature intemperate invective and outright calumny that only hurts everyone in the end. It is hoped that at Wolverhampton, at least, only the oft under-appreciated spirit of collegiality and cooperation that also marks the field will be on display.



Sex or No Sex:

The Mind of Jack the Ripper

By Amanda Howard

The argument rages on regarding the Ripper's motive for killing his victims. Was he a sexual deviant set on raping and pillaging who committed murder to escape detection? Was he a doctor who sought to remove the female sexual organs for scientific research at the dawn of the modern medical age? Or was he a cold and callous madman who took pleasure in murdering the unfortunates who walked the cobblestoned streets of London's East End?

Many Ripperologists tend to dismiss the possibility of the Ripper being a sexually motivated serial killer. Some state, inconclusively, that the victims were not sexually assaulted. But - given the extent of the victims' injuries and the absence of forensic testing for such a crime - I must ask: How did doctors in Victorian England's prudish times know that the women were not raped? After all, we are talking about women who worked as prostitutes and were not renowned for bathing, particularly between customers.

The murders committed by Jack the Ripper were not the first of their kind. Similar crimes had occurred across the Continent as well as in America. The motives of Jack's contemporaries' murders were often sexual in nature. During 1806-1809, Bavarian Andreas Bichel raped, tortured and murdered the young women he enticed to his home promising to tell their fortunes. Like Jack, Bichel sliced open the women's abdomens and removed their organs. Unlike Jack, he preferred his victims alive when he began the dissections and later masturbated over their writhing bodies.

In 1871, Eusebius Pieydagnelle, a Ripper-type killer from France, claimed he mutilated and murdered his victims to achieve intense orgasms. In 1874, in America, fifteen-year-old child-killer Jesse Pomeroy also claimed to climax when beating, mutilating and murdering the children he abducted.

Though we are unable to question Jack about his crimes, or to know for certain his exact motives, the posing and mutilations of his victims point directly to the crimes being sexual in nature.

According to former Bronx Police Commander Vernon Geberth, M.S., M.P.S, an expert in sex crimes, lust murders can be defined as:

'... homicides in which the offender stabs, cuts, pierces or mutilates the sexual regions or organs of the victim's body. The sexual mutilation of the victim may include evisceration, piquerism, displacement of the genitalia in both males and females and the removal of the breasts in a female victim (defeminization). It also includes activities such as "posing" and "propping" of the body...'

You could say that this definition for a sexual (lust) motive was written specifically for the Ripper murders. Using the above definition and a break-down of the five murders may provide a glimpse into the sexual nature of the crimes and the possibility that Jack was a rapist as well as a murderer.

Mary Ann 'Polly' Nichols

The most amazing aspect of the Nichols murder, the first recognised victim of Jack the Ripper, was the initial assessment by Dr Rees Ralph Llewellyn, who failed to notice the victim's extensive abdominal injuries. It was only after the woman had been moved to the mortuary and her skirt lifted that a workman made the discovery.

Evidence of the state of cleanliness of the body also differs from Llewellyn's description to that made by the scene-of-the-crime officer. At the Inquest into the woman's murder, Inspector John Spratling of J Division noted that 'the skin presented the appearance of not having been washed for some time previous to the murder.' Dr Llewellyn's notes,

however, state her thighs were clean. Some may say that this comment may be the doctor's polite way of suggesting a lack of evidence of sexual contact, but the woman's movements in the final hours preceding her death prove that she had made some money from soliciting and it was unlikely she had washed thoroughly enough that a lack of intimacy in the hours preceding her murder could be inferred.

We remember from the records that Polly had been evicted from the doss-house owing to a lack of money; yet she had purchased a new bonnet that day from her earnings. She was also very much the worse for drink when last seen by Emily Holland an hour before her death. Nichols had no other source of income except prostitution, and had made enough money for alcohol and a hat during that fateful day. Since there is little doubt that Polly had had sexual relations prior to meeting Jack the Ripper, how can anyone be certain that he did not have sexual contact with her as well?

The period between the last eye-witness's sighting of Nichols and her body being discovered was approximately half an hour. This afforded plenty of time for the killer to attempt sexual intercourse with the victim, possibly as he inflicted the knife wound to her throat or even as a ruse to get her into a position where she could not fight her killer.

Annie Chapman

John Evans, the night watchman at Crossingham's lodging house, watched Annie Chapman walk along Little Paternoster Row in the direction of Brushfield Street and head towards the Spitalfields Market at about 1.50 am on Friday 7 September 1888. Annie's last words to the man were to ensure that her bed at the lodgings would not be rented, as she set out, much the worse for drink, to ply her trade to earn eight-pence to pay for her bed.

The next possible sighting of the woman was about 5 am. Some say that at that time she was already dead and secreted

Newspaper sketch of the back yard of 29 Hanbury Street



into the darkness at the feet of John Richardson as he cut an offending piece of leather from his boot whilst sitting on the steps of the backyard at 29 Hanbury Street. Others believe she was last seen at 5.30 am talking with a man outside the house at that address. Elizabeth Long said she heard Annie answer 'Yes' to a man's ambiguous question: 'Will you?' Within a few minutes of that possible eye-witness account, another man, Albert Cadosch, claimed he heard a scuffle and the word 'No!'

Annie's body was found at approximately 5.55 am, some twenty-five minutes after she had probably last been seen alive. According to Dr George Bagster Phillips, who was on the scene within half an hour of the body's discovery, Annie had been dead more than two hours, as made evident, he claimed, by the onset of *rigor mortis*.

Eyewitness accounts are, at best, unreliable, and using the initial signs of *rigor mortis* to establish a time of death in modern society would be naïve. As stated in the *Daily News*, ten days after Annie's death, 'Very grave doubt now exists as to the exact time when the woman Chapman was murdered.'¹ We can assume that she died between 1.40 and 5.55 am - an extensive four-hour-plus time frame.

At any rate, the woman was attacked at some-time during the night. As James Kent stated after seeing the body, it appeared that Annie '[was] on her back and fought with her hands to free herself [from her attacker]'.² Annie was alive and conscious and aware of the malicious intent from her killer when the attack

began. She had suffered what would now be referred to as defensive wounds: 'The face and hands were besmeared with blood, as if she had struggled.'³

She was found with her bare legs apart and covered with blood, frozen in a final degraded pose as she struggled against her attacker. This position suggests that Annie's killer had knelt between her legs, a common attack stance taken by rapists and sexual serial killers.

1 *Daily News*, 17 September 1888

2 *Daily Telegraph*, Thursday, 13 September 1888, Page 3

3 *Ibid.*

At the inquest into her death, John Davies, one of the lodgers at 29 Hanbury Street, described the area in which Annie was found:

*'There was a little recess on the left. From the steps to the fence is about 3 ft. There are three stone steps, unprotected, leading from the door to the yard, which is at a lower level than that of the passage. Directly I opened the door I saw a woman lying down in the left-hand recess, between the stone steps and the fence. She was on her back, with her head towards the house and her legs towards the wood shed.'*⁴

From the steps to the fence there were only 3 feet (91 centimetres), leaving little room for Annie to be lying on the ground with the killer kneeling beside her as is commonly believed. Jack the Ripper probably knelt between her legs as he killed and mutilated the woman. This position would have allowed the killer better access for penetration or masturbation over the body.

Such information would surely have been left out of Victorian newspapers. Research to find any specific details of a rape or other violent sexual crime in the 1800s has led to nought. No such information is detailed in media archives from the era of Jack the Ripper.

But one must look at it logically. Annie had gone out into the night to earn money for a bed at Crossingham's lodging house. She had plied her trade for possibly two to four hours before her demise. It can be assumed she must have met with at least one client during that time to leave enough evidence that any sexual interference by Jack the Ripper would be impossible to discern.

Elizabeth Stride

Elizabeth Stride was the lucky one, if anyone is ever lucky who is brutally murdered. Unlike the other victims, she was neither mutilated nor had body parts removed following her death.

Whether it was because the killer was disturbed or had other plans, we will never know for sure. Nonetheless, her crime was more than likely part of the series and within a short period of time the killer set upon his next victim to satisfy his lust.

Catherine Eddowes

At the inquest into Catherine Eddowes's death, the 'experts' of the time finally discussed the possibility of sexual intercourse. Dr Frederick Gordon Brown stated that there had been 'no indication of coitus'. This was the only time that the question was answered, though what 'indication' Dr Brown was looking for remains unknown. For the moment we will assume that he meant that no seminal fluid was found.

For most of the evening prior to her death, Catherine Eddowes had been incarcerated for being drunk. In *Autumn of Terror*, Tom Cullen added that she was impersonating a fire engine - an assertion otherwise undocumented. Did he mean that she was making wailing sounds as she ran around the streets or perhaps that she simulated a fire-hose and was caught urinating in public? The exact nature of the charges is unknown. Be it as it may, until forty-five minutes before her death Catherine was in the drunk tank at Bishopsgate Police Station and unable to ply her trade.

The back steps of 29 Hanbury Street



Catherine was released from police custody at 1 am on 30 September 1888, at the same time as Elizabeth Stride was being murdered at Dutfield's Yard. The woman decided to take a long walk home and, unbeknownst to her, headed towards her death.

The last eyewitness accounts place her in the arms of a man ten minutes prior to the discovery of her body. This gave the killer at least 10 minutes to kill and mutilate his victim, or, if the eyewitnesses were wrong, up to 45 minutes to inflict the injuries.

After such an unsuccessful evening, the Ripper wanted blood and possibly sex. He had not completed the job with Elizabeth Stride, who was neither mutilated nor sexually assaulted. She was murdered and dumped in Dutfield's Yard, where she was chanced upon almost instantly. The killer fled the scene, only narrowly escaping detection.

⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, Tuesday, 11 September 1888, Page 3

So, in search of another victim, the Ripper found Catherine Eddowes, still under the influence of alcohol, stumbling home through an extended route.

Serial killers who murder at least two or three victims usually follow a pattern. As the number of murders grows, they occur more frequently. The killers will hone their skills and become more adaptable to the situation. The double event shows that this is true of Jack. Since he could not 'complete' the murder of Elizabeth Stride, he sought out a new victim.

A serial killer will often inflict more and more mutilation injuries or use over-kill on a victim. These are cases where any of a number of injuries could have caused death, such as stabbing, shooting and strangling the same victim, and this

happens particularly when a failure occurs. The mutilations committed by Jack were about to increase exponentially with the penultimate victim and explode, almost literally, with the final one.

Catherine's wounds were far greater than those inflicted on the previous victims, Annie and Polly. Jack not only mutilated Catherine's abdominal region, but also sliced her face, a common escalation in serial-killer murders.

Yet the wounds were not frenzied, as many would expect, but slow, deliberate slices. Jack carved tiny triangular flaps into Catherine's cheeks and nicked her eyelids.

Let's now examine Dr Brown's initial assessment of the crime so as to ascertain any possible sexual contact or sexually motivated injuries.

As mentioned earlier, Dr Brown stated that there was 'no secretion of any kind on the thighs',⁵ further

saying that there were 'no traces of recent connexion' and concluding that Catherine had not had sexual intercourse before her death. But, given the significant injuries that had occurred in the genital and anal regions, how could he be so sure?

In his reports, Dr Brown discussed the long cut that had originated at her breastbone and continued down her body, round her navel and 'down the right side of the vagina and rectum for half an inch behind the rectum. There was a stab of about an inch on the left groin. This was done by a pointed instrument. Below this was a cut of three inches going through all tissues making a wound of the peritoneum about the same extent.'⁶

The blood loss, even when the circulatory system was no longer working, would have been significant. Finding approximately 15 mls of seminal fluid amongst the mutilations and blood would have been nigh on impossible.

There is also the possibility that the killer did not concentrate his emissions on the woman's genital region. Today, at crime scenes, investigators look beyond the immediate area where the body lies. Bodily fluids including semen, vomit and excrement may be found nearby, though not actually with the body. The killer may have moved out of the blood and ejaculated nearby, if he so desired.

Nonetheless, the absence of seminal fluid on the thighs of the victim does not prove convincingly that the killer murdered the woman without sexually motivated intent.

Mary Jane Kelly

Jack the Ripper had many hours to inflict his basest desires upon Mary Jane Kelly, producing one of the most horrific murders in the annals of crime. Her body was mutilated almost beyond recognition and some of her injuries uncovered her bones. How could doctors in 1888 know whether the victim was assaulted, prior, during or after her death and mutilation?

If a case like this occurred today, sexual-assault swabs would be used to detect seminal fluid round the regions that would have once been Mary Jane's orifices: her vagina, anus and mouth, and even her ears and eyes. In the presence of such a mutilation, these areas, although they no longer resembled their living anatomy, would still warrant checking, as would the stab wounds.

⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, Tuesday, 11 September 1888, Page 3

⁶ *Ibid.*

A killer intent on rage alone would not require the time that Jack needed to murder and mutilate his victim. Jack the Ripper had a plan for Mary Jane Kelly; he was methodical though maniacal in her mutilations. He defaced and defiled her entire body, leaving very little evidence of the woman that was. What Jack the Ripper left behind after so many hours alone with his victim was nothing less than horrific.

But could Jack have spent so long with a prostitute without sexual satisfaction?

Mary Kelly was heard singing at 1 am by a neighbour, Mary Ann Cox, who was going out on the streets to ply her trade. Earlier, Mrs Cox had seen Mary enter her tiny bed-sit with a man with a carrotty moustache. Later Kelly was seen in the company of a man of a foreign or Jewish appearance whom Kelly befriended and with whom she walked back towards her room. The man was heard saying to Mary 'You will be alright for what I have told you.' The man's arm was round her shoulders and together they entered Mary's residence. Had the man just convinced the woman that he was not the Ripper?

According to Mary Ann Cox, when she returned home at 3 am, Mary's room was in darkness, though other witnesses claim to have seen Mary later that morning.

Regardless of the precise time of Mary's murder, her killer had plenty of time to spend mutilating and murdering the woman as well as indulging any other desire he may have needed to satisfy.

Without going into the minute details of the well-documented knife wounds inflicted on Mary, it suffices to say that the attack did not show the speed that the Ripper had displayed in the other murders. He took his time, wielding his knife as he chose, without fear of interruption.

Mary Kelly was naked. When police opened the door to her bed-sit, she was only wearing a flimsy chemise - a garment resembling a vest or a singlet. The rest of her clothes were found neatly folded on a chair. Other clothes in the room were used as fuel for a fire to light the room and were found in the ashes of the cooling fireplace.

In previous murders, the killer had pushed up the skirts and underclothes of the victims in order to inflict the wounds. He had also disfigured the faces of the later victims. This time the killer had his victim undress, so he had a completely blank canvass to inflict his handiwork upon.

Unlike the others, Mary's dead body was moved from one side of the bed to the side where the killer was standing or perhaps sitting, so he could gain better access to her and work on her further.

In the post-mortem no mention is made of any sexual contact with the victim. Yet we are aware that she had been seen in the company of two men in her room in the hours preceding her death and we can assume sexual relations had occurred with at least one of these men. Such evidence, however, has not been noted anywhere in the subsequent notes. The Ripper also eliminated any visible signs of sexual contact when he removed Mary's outer vaginal area with the large slice that denuded her right thigh, pubis and buttock.

Further evidence of sexual contact was impossible to find with the vagina and uterus removed and found drenched in blood, along with one of Mary's breasts, under the pillow upon which her mutilated face rested.

The chance of finding any seminal fluid in the bloodbath that was Mary's room would have been nigh on impossible in 1888. Today, tests could be conducted to prove such motivation conclusively.

*Mary Kelly being propositioned by the man in the Astrakhan Coat
as described in George Hutchinson's testimony*



Then and Now

Today, a simple rape kit swabbed over the relevant areas of a victim allows investigators to search for a likely suspect. Swabs are taken of the victim's genital area, anus, mouth, eyes and ears, as well as of the orifices made by the killer.

Rapists and sexually motivated killers do not just concentrate on the 'usual areas' for penetration. Some have been known to use knives to 'make' their own orifices, through which they would then penetrate their victims, often leaving an ejaculation behind.

A forensic technician these days would have difficulty pin-pointing visually areas

of semen on a body so brutally destroyed as Mary's, but even the smallest amount could be easily found using rape kits and testing. Yet, given the savagery that befell Mary, we cannot expect a doctor in Victorian England to be able to find the evidence needed to ascertain whether she had or had not been sexually assaulted.

More than a century has now passed since the crimes occurred and we have learned much about sexually-motivated crimes and how to detect them. Rape kits are the standard form of evidence collecting, but we have many other ways to prove such acts have been perpetrated, such as 'alternate light sources'. We've also spent the past 100 years or so interviewing serial killers, rapists and their ilk and learning more about them and about the why and how of victimology.

Prostitutes are often the victims of serial killers who consider them as easy targets or invoke the religious and social stigma associated with them as justification for their murder.⁷ Jack the Ripper was no different. Though his motives remain unclear, victimology provides evidence that he did not want to spend time looking for a more suitable victim, choosing convenience over the search for 'the right victim' - unless you subscribe to the theory that the Ripper's victims were killed because they were a 'blackmailing circle of friends.'

I have believed that Jack the Ripper was a sexually-motivated killer from the very beginning of my research. The mutilations were mainly concentrated on the areas that define a woman: the genital regions, breasts and face. The killer took great pains to remove the wombs of several of the women; thus, in a simplistic sense, eradicating what made them women.

Was the killer perhaps attempting to eliminate the evidence he had left behind? Although, in Victorian England, a killer could not be identified from semen, he could eliminate the idea that he had raped his victims, or perhaps, knowing them to be prostitutes, he may have cut out their wombs to provide a cleaner albeit bloody orifice for him to satisfy his lust?

Though these thoughts may be repulsive to some, the situation they describe is not uncommon. Semen has been found in knife wounds in rape and murder victims and the killer's motivation has been to inflict as much pain and degradation on the victims as possible. I believe that Jack was a subscriber to this school of sadistic murder.

All in all, Jack the Ripper has provided us with a blue-print for sexually motivated murder. Whether he raped his victims or not can never be conclusively proved. But the wounds and mutilations he inflicted on his victims supply links to modern-day rapists and killers, who - we know and can prove - have performed similar injuries for sexual stimulation and release and perhaps reflect back onto Jack as one of the forefathers of violent deviant sexual murder.

⁷ See Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prostitution#Violence_against_prostitutes

Sources:

Daily News, London, UK, (1888)

Daily Telegraph, London, UK, (1888)

Geberth, Vernon J, *Anatomy of a Lust Murder* Geberth, (1998), www.serve.com/PHIHOME/articles/lustmurder.htm

Krafft-Ebing, Richard von, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, (1906)

The 26 Stages of Death, www.anomalies-unlimited.com/Death/Stages.html (2006)

Wikipedia, Wikipedia.com (2006)

Got something to say?

Got comments on a feature in this issue?

Or found new information?

Please send your comments to contact@ripperologist.info



The Wages of Sin:

Prostitution in Victorian London

By JANE CORAM

Most who have studied the case of Jack the Ripper in any detail will have a picture in their mind of what life was like for the generic, lower class prostitute in and around Whitechapel and Spitalfields in 1888. The image of Polly Nichols staggering along drunk, wearing and carrying all of her worldly possessions, is an easy one to picture. The stereotypical harlot portrayed in the media, with gaudily painted face, wafting feathers and wayward curls, might have been the order of the day in certain strata of the profession, but for the lowest of the low, the truly destitute amongst them, nothing could have been further from the truth. Most of the victims of Jack the Ripper were overweight and bloated from malnourishment, dressed in their filthy everyday - and indeed only - clothes, and probably stinking to high Heaven of gin and stale sweat. For Polly Nichols, Annie Chapman and Catherine Eddowes, their lives changed dramatically after the breakdown of their marriages, when they were left to fend for themselves for the most part. Their only recourse was prostitution to avoid starvation. For Mary Kelly and Elizabeth Stride, prostitution was a way of life from an early age, although not as early as for some at the time.

Children from poorer families were considered economic commodities, to be used in any and every way to gain a much-needed boost to the paltry family income; age seemed irrelevant. Most people are aware of child slave labour in Victorian England from writers like Dickens and Kingsley, but even they did not convey the full horror of the life of a working child in those times. The portrayal of small boys and girls working down the coal mines, harnessed like pit ponies, pulling coal trucks and working in sweat shops and factories in hideous and dangerous conditions are familiar to all. The sheer desperation of surviving day-to-day forced parents to send children out to earn money in any way they could, by begging, working, stealing or by prostituting themselves. It's possibly hard to imagine how these children accepted their fates so readily, but they knew that this was how life was and what they had to do to keep from starvation.

To satisfy the high demand, there were brothels that contained only children, which was quite common and presumably made shopping easier for the wealthy gentlemen intent on finding a virgin. The official age of consent was 12 until 1875, and then it was raised to a much more respectable 13. However, in 1885 a series of publications came out which uncovered the whole hideous business. William Stead, the editor of *The Pall Mall Gazette*, made a private and rather dubious investigation into child prostitution and then published his findings under the title 'The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon'. It was a small step towards uncovering the real depth of the problem, but it was a start. There was a public outcry. The incensed British public demanded action, and action they got. There were massive demonstrations demanding an increase in the age of consent and that something be done. On August 14th, 1885, the Criminal Law Amendment Act was passed, raising the age of consent to 16; it was still hard to protect children, but it was at least a move in the right direction. Societies were formed to protect children from such dreadful abuse, and these societies would go to great lengths to secure convictions against men and women using children in their brothels - and seemed to have enjoyed some success in prosecution due to their diligence and concern.

Virgins were, of course, highly prized, and could fetch anywhere between £5 and £20, a fortune in those days. The average wage for a working man in the East End was £1.11s a week, so it would be a vast amount of extra income for a starving family. The reason that virgins were so prized, apart from fulfilling the sexual fantasies of the client, was that there was less chance of catching a sexually transmitted disease - which in those days, without reasonable medical treatment, was a serious consideration. Of course, the children themselves often fell victim to the diseases long before they reached the age of consent and even died from them before they had reached adulthood, but for a wealthy man, who could afford to pleasure himself on virgins and nothing else, it was the ideal situation.

Procuring these children did not seem to present too much of a problem to would-be brothel keepers. Young girls



Children like this would be prime targets for the brothel keepers to lure into prostitution

could be lured away from home with a few promises and kind words. The girls themselves, for the most part, got nothing from it other than a roof over their heads and food, often not much of it, and if they tried to escape then they were seriously dealt with in the harshest fashion. Even if they did escape, they couldn't go back to their families and would end up on the streets in a worse position than they were in already a lot of the time. So many of them just stayed until they were all used up and of no further use, when they were thrown out anyway. Once they were on the streets, they rapidly ended up in a spiral of decay, leading to the situation that most of the victims of Jack the Ripper found themselves in; living either in doss houses or the casual ward, struggling for pennies every day to pay their rent and get a few pennies for food or gin with which to drown their sorrows. Thus, most of the prostitutes of the time were of the lower classes, no matter how they started out.

At the upper end of the spectrum were those pretty young things that were kept as mistresses by the richer men. Many happily married men would think it quite acceptable to either keep a mistress or visit a better -class prostitute to satisfy their sexual needs, as their wives were not quite as accomodating as they could be, and indeed were not expected to be by the standards of the day.

Respectable women were conditioned to believe that sex with their husbands was a duty, and it was literally a case of lie back and think of England or how best to cook the pot roast the following day, with the sheet drawn up around their neck and hoping it would be over quickly. Married women who wanted to bear children had to experience 'the thrill', in other words an orgasm, in order to conceive - if they didn't they were considered frigid or barren, so it doesn't take much guessing as to how many of them became good actresses in order to avoid the blame for infertility.

Prostitutes, on the other hand, were supposed to be nymphomaniacs that chose their profession because they couldn't get enough sex and the

only way to satisfy their unnatural lust was to become ladies of the night. Needless to say, neither picture was that accurate.

The truth was, of course, that most prostitutes did not take up the profession because they were nymphomaniacs, but because it was the only way they could survive. The only way a woman in those days could maintain any semblance of a life was to marry and become a home maker, although this was still fraught with danger. If a husband died or they separated then prostitution was often the only recourse, and even within marriage life could be less than idyllic, as domestic violence was rife and often accepted as 'normal'. The alternative for single women or widows was to work in a sweat shop or a factory, go into service as a domestic, or go into the streets and sell themselves for the highest price they could get, which often was only the price of a couple of gins or a night's bed and board in a cheap doss house.

Once a young woman became a prostitute she was usually alienated from her family, if they were just ordinary working folks, although many wives would turn the odd trick when times were hard to keep their family from starving. A husband would then turn a blind eye, even if he knew where the money had come from, if it meant the family didn't starve. The unfortunate choice was to watch his wife and children starve to death, or have a selective memory about what his wife did when she went out for a few hours in the evening on the pretext of cleaning someone's house for them or going to visit relatives. The reason that Catherine Eddowes gave to John Kelly for disappearing on the day of her murder was that she was going to see if she could get some money from relatives; but it might well have only been an excuse to get some time away from him to look for customers, without him having to face the unpleasant truth that Catherine was a part-time, albeit reluctant, prostitute. Such was the desperation of these unfortunate women.

For the young and most beautiful at the top of their profession, though, life was fairly palatable, at least until they were too jaded to demand the highest fees. Mary Kelly told her lover, Joseph Barnett, that she had at one time worked in a fashionable brothel in the West End of London. Whether this is true or not is debatable, but certainly for those with the skills and beauty, there was ample opportunity to live very well, at least for a time.

The principal dancing rooms of London were the Argyll Rooms and the Holborn. These were large salons, where the fashionable young men could gather and enjoy the company of prostitutes if they grew bored with their Gentleman's clubs. They were actually very strictly run, and decorum and etiquette was rigidly observed there, although what went on behind the scenes was perhaps another story.

They were open for music and dancing every evening, except Sunday, from half-past eight until midnight. The rooms

themselves were very spacious and the fittings quite lavish, with fairly spectacular gas lighting reflected by numerous mirrors. Contemporary reports describe the whole atmosphere being rather like some fairy-tale setting, which does give an idea of their attractions. All of the women there were prostitutes - respectable young women would never set foot there under any circumstances - but they were, for the most part, the best of their profession, wearing expensive but generally very tasteful dresses, and well made-up and coiffured. It is interesting that social observers at the time comment that 'few of these women, probably, could write a decent letter, though some might be able to play a little on the piano, or to sing a simple song'. Literacy did not seem to be high on the list of priorities for a good prostitute in those days.

These women could expect to earn quite large sums of money, for the time. They could receive between two or three sovereigns for their favours, or about twenty minutes of their time, on a one-to-one basis. The highest paid of them could earn £25 for one liason, which was something like four months' wages for the average working man.

The dance-halls, music-halls, and similar places closed at midnight, although it was unlikely anything to do with glass slippers or pumpkin coaches - more for the sake of the prostitutes and their clients going onto other venues for more varied forms of entertainment. Small drinking clubs along the Haymarket would become busy from then on, where more intimacy could take place. These places were for the most part small, ill-ventilated rooms, at which wine and other liquor flowed fairly freely, and there was a much more relaxed atmosphere than in the highly-disciplined and very strict dance-halls. There were no supplied amusements in these drinking clubs, such as the music provided in the dance-halls, but presumably by that point in the evening music was not highest on the clients' list of 'must haves' for the night. There was still, though, a certain amount of decorum, and any girl who got drunk or lifted her skirts too high to show an ankle would be thrown out immediately and only let back in after a period of penance and a great deal of begging and grovelling on her part.

Lower down the ladder from the sophisticated dancing-halls were the prostitutes who worked from the pubs and music-halls, of which there were many in the East End. Brothels were often located behind them and were invariably pick-up points for prostitutes. Some of these women would have their own rooms or would work from the brothels there. Life for them was much harder than for their more desirable sisters, who worked the dance-halls in the West End. Many of the women that ended up in these brothels had once worked from the prestigious dance halls, but as their looks and health declined they were forced to set their sights lower, and lower. Most of the pubs in the Whitechapel and Spitalfields area were used by the prostitutes to pick up clients, and at night the alleys and back lanes around the

*The better class prostitutes could expect to make a good living in one of the West End dance halls, whilst their looks lasted.
The Haymarket 1857*



area would be literally full of prostitutes with their clients. Many of these women could not afford a room of their own and would just use any doorway to service their clients, as quickly and efficiently as possible, so they could get back to the pub for another drink and another pick-up. Martha Tabram and Pearly Poll favoured this arrangement on the night that Martha was murdered, using the nearest back alley or stairwell that afforded some cover to get the affair over and done with as quickly as they could, then back to the pub for more drinks and hopefully another pick-up.

To say that the pubs in the area at the time were rowdy, noisy, smelly and often violent places is certainly an understatement, but this was where many of the prostitutes in the area picked up their clients and indeed spent much of their lives. Most of them were living in common lodging-houses, or even sleeping rough, so would spend as many hours of the day as they could in the pub to avoid the vagaries of the British weather and to earn the pennies they needed for their doss, as well as fuelling their constant need for alcohol, of course. For the most part the entire clientele was very drunk most of the time, and fighting broke out frequently between both men and women. Most of the fighting would take place on the pavement outside, to be fair, because as soon as the fight broke out the offenders would be jettisoned onto the

Fights in the streets between prostitutes were a common sight, especially outside the local public houses.



pavement outside where the fight could continue without any interference from outsiders. The interior of the pubs would be packed to capacity much of the time, with local prostitutes, working men and criminals all trying to drown their many sorrows in a glass of gin or a beer. For many it was the only way to relieve the misery of their day-to-day lives and forget, just for a little while, how wretched their existence was. The worst houses were patronised by pimps, prostitutes, pickpockets, cardsharps and illegal bookmakers, as well as the ordinary working man out for a drink after a hard day's work.

In 1888, there were six pubs on Commercial Street just between the corners of Wentworth Street and Hanbury Street, a distance of just a few hundred yards, all catering for prostitutes.

Pub landlords were very cautious of allowing the prostitutes to use their premises to pick-up clients, although it seems they mostly did, and acquired selective blindness and amnesia as the need arose. If a prostitute was arrested and convicted of soliciting in any pub, then the landlord could lose his licence. Because there were so many prostitutes operating in the area, though, it seems that the police largely looked the other way as well. They only arrested the prostitutes if they were causing an affray or very drunk, as they did with Catherine Eddowes, but would allow them to go again in many instances - when they had sobered up - without charging them. It was certain that if they couldn't afford fourpence for a bed for the night, they would hardly be able to afford the 40 shillings fine for being drunk and disorderly.

Most prostitutes would wait outside the pubs and get customers as they were leaving, but this, too, presented a problem. Soliciting itself was not illegal, but they could be arrested for causing an obstruction, so they had to keep on the move. As long as they were walking they couldn't be arrested, unless they were being a nuisance. Because of this prostitutes developed beats

of their own, walking the same streets all night long and just going in and out of the pubs for a drink and to see if they could pick anyone up. Hence the nickname of 'street walkers' adopted by prostitutes.

The area of Aldgate, and particularly around St Botolph's Church in Aldgate, was used habitually by street prostitutes looking for a pick-up. Indeed, St Botolph's, Aldgate, was known as 'The Prostitutes' Church'. To avoid arrest on a charge of obstruction, the hapless ladies would be forced to continuously walk around the church, without stopping, until a client came to pick them up. Coffee stalls would set up for the night-trade in the city, and the approaches to the bridges over the Thames, Cheapside, Aldgate, Bishopsgate and Fleet street, specifically to cater for the prostitutes. The most profitable trade was done between midnight and two in the morning at those venues, when most of the prostitutes went elsewhere if they hadn't found a customer. Aldgate High Street, particularly, would be very busy late at night and into the early hours of the morning. A break at the coffee stall would be a welcome way to get a sit down for a few minutes without being arrested, and they could perch along any nearby wall and chat for a while, as well as get warm. For most, it was the only time they could get a bit of a rest. The stall-holders would often let the girls hang around the stall to keep warm as long as they bought a cup of coffee now and then.

There were charitable institutions that would try and help women who wanted to avoid prostitution, and the dubious charms of the workhouse were always on offer - which many of them did resort to, or they would end up yo-yoing between the casual ward, the doss house and sleeping rough. The Metropolitan Police in October 1888 estimated that

there were around 1,200 prostitutes in Whitechapel, and over 60 brothels, which gives an idea of the extent of the trade in the area. This doesn't include the majority that worked either on the streets themselves, servicing their clients in back alleys or doorways, or from home when their partners were out.

During the 19th Century, sexually-transmitted diseases were rampant because of the amount of prostitution and the lack of decent treatment. Syphilis and gonorrhea were spread back and forth between client and prostitute, and also to the wives and children of clients. Venereal disease accounted for 500 deaths yearly in London, and there were almost certainly far more than that which were not recorded.

Syphilis was known to be an infectious disease, but it was not well understood at the time. It could even affect the unborn child when a mother contracted it. Most babies did not survive birth or infancy. If we can believe the reports made by doctors at the time, death from syphilis was actually very rare, although it's more probable that they just didn't recognise the cause of death and attributed it to something else.

Gonorrhoea was often misdiagnosed and was not considered as serious as it really was. The doctors saw the outward symptoms and thought that was the extent of the damage, but it could lead to sterility and severe pelvic inflammation if not treated. Sexually-transmitted diseases had become so prevalent in 1864 that the Contagious Diseases Act was passed. This allowed prostitutes to be arrested and a forced medical examination and treatment administered at certified hospitals. If they were found to be infected they were detained for up to three months and treated. The clients were not examined, which of course did not help to control the disease, as clients just re-infected the prostitutes over and over again. It was really quite certain that all low-class prostitutes would contract something at some time or other. At one time in the latter half of the 19th Century about 50% of outpatients who came to public hospitals were suffering from venereal diseases. The ladies seem to have no qualms about giving their profession at the hospital, and Pearly Poll, one of the friends of Martha Tabram (who was murdered in Whitechapel in 1888), is shown on the record below as having given her profession as 'prostitute.'

Certified hospitals that dealt with these diseases were St Bartholomews, Guy's, Middlesex, Royal Free and the Lock. Prostitutes who refused to go in for treatment could be liable to imprisonment, so most if not all agreed to treatment as it was preferable to prison.

At the Lock hospital the ladies were housed in a new wing and the wards were clean and spacious. The beds had three blankets and an extra blanket in winter. They were given their own eating utensils and cutlery, but conditions were not too bad in comparison to the outside world. The patients were aged between 17 and 25 and were for the most part strong and healthy, well-fed and in good condition, if reports at the time are to be believed, although it seems unreasonable when considering the conditions they lived in as a rule that this was entirely true. It seems unlikely that they were not suffering from the conditions and diseases prevalent amongst the working classes at the time.

The canonical five victims of Jack the Ripper would seem to have covered the whole gamut of types of prostitution at that time. We have Polly, Annie and Catherine, all middle-aged and the victims of alcohol abuse, broken marriages and poverty, forced into prostitution because there was no other choice. There was Elizabeth, who was a prostitute from an early age and who was certainly a professional, registered by the police as such, and Mary Kelly, perhaps the highest flyer of the group if we are to believe her story; a well favoured prostitute in a West End Brothel at one time, fallen on hard and then even harder times, until her death.

Between them, they form a snap shot of life in the Late Victorian period, although ultimately all ending up tragically equal.



Women outside a doss house in Flower and Dean Street, whose residents were mainly prostitutes.

William Acton, Prostitution, considered in its Moral, Social, and Sanitary Aspects 2nd edition 1870

The Seven Curses of London, by James Greenwood, 1869

The Night Side of London, by J. Ewing Ritchie, 1858

London Labour and the London Poor By Henry Mayhew. 1862

Is there an *Echo* around here?

An Addendum to ‘Mrs Kuer’s Lodger’

BY GAVIN BROMLEY

The “Lodger’s” Arrest

It pays to read the right newspapers. This was as true in the 1880s as it is today. Regarding the Batty Street Lodger story it’s a case of ‘No *Echo*, no comment’. And I’m not referring to Mrs. Kuer’s reticence.

More press reports from the *Echo* newspaper were made available recently by Stephen Ryder and his team for Casebook Press Reports ¹. They include some very interesting reports on the Batty Street Lodger story that were not available when Mrs. Kuer’s Lodger ² was written. These give us some more answers regarding this intriguing incident.

The lodger story was actually first published in that paper on Monday, 15 October, 1888, the day before the reports appeared in other newspapers. This was due to the *Echo* being an evening newspaper and so getting the details in time for publication that evening.

Looking back at the other reports detailed in *Mrs. Kuer’s Lodger* on the 17 October the *Evening News* had said:

On Monday afternoon the truth of the statement was given an unqualified denial by the detective officers immediately after its publication and this presumably because they were anxious to avoid a premature disclosure of facts of which they had been for some time cognisant.

The reference to the story being published on Monday afternoon I took at the time to simply mean ‘being known’ to members of the press. It appears to have been meant literally, being a reference to the *Echo*.

The first part of the report that appeared in the *Echo* was the standard report that all the papers published the following morning. This contained the information seen elsewhere that a lodger had returned in the early hours and disturbed the landlady, afterwards leaving a shirt that the landlady later found to have wet blood on the wristbands and sleeves.³ The only notable difference is that in the *Echo* report it was the landlady who gave the details of the police waiting in the house, whereas other reports say this detail came from neighbours.

But of much more interest is the second part of the *Echo* report.

GERMAN ARRESTED AND DISCHARGED.

A strange and suspicious incident in connection with the Whitechapel murders has just been explained by the arrest, late on Saturday, of a German whom the police had every reason to suspect as being connected with the murder of Elizabeth Stride, at Berner street. The affair has until now been kept a profound secret; but the matter was, it is asserted, regarded at first as of such importance that Inspector Reid, Inspector Abberline, and the other officers engaged in the case, believed that a clue of a highly important character had been obtained. It appears that Detective Sergeants W. Thicke (sic) “a bloodstained shirt with a laundress at 22 Batley (sic) street - a few yards from the seat of the tragedy - and remarking, “I shall call in two or three days,” departed in a hurried manner. His conduct

¹ www.casebook.org/press_reports

² *Ripperologist* 81 (July 2007)

³ For example, *Daily News*, 16 October 1888

*was deemed highly suspicious. Detectives Thicke (sic) and White, who probably know more of the East end criminals than any other officers, arrested the man suspected on Saturday night. He was conveyed to Leman street Station, and inquiries were immediately set on foot. These resulted in the man's release this morning. Our representative made an inquiry respecting the above incident this afternoon, and ascertained that the shirt had a quantity of blood on the front and on both sleeves.*⁴

This second part was repeated in the *Echo* on the 16th. The *Echo* was concurrently running the same reports as the other papers, which continued over the next couple of days, even though these seem to have been based on less information than the exclusive reports to which the *Echo* had access. That they were using the syndicated reports would explain why there were differences in the accounts that appeared in the *Echo* reports.

The exclusive part of their report on the 15th contains some very interesting information. That it named the address at this early stage (albeit spelling the street name incorrectly)⁵ is perhaps an indication of special information as the address was not published in other newspapers until the 17th, although the reporter who produced the syndicated report had spoken with Mrs. Kuer and therefore would have known the address. But more impressive is the early reference to Mrs. Kuer as a laundress, although, at this stage, it didn't name her. This detail did not appear until the 18th in other newspapers. This second part of the report gives the impression that the man had left the clothes rather than being a lodger as explicitly stated in the first syndicated part.

The man is also described as a German. No other newspapers contained a reference to his specific nationality. Only the *Daily News* described him as 'apparently a foreigner'⁶. The *Evening News* added the detail that he was a ladies tailor from the West End.⁷

The report also confirms the detail we had already seen in the *Daily News* and *Evening News* (18 October) that the arrest occurred on Saturday, 13 October. The man would have been held for about 36 hours, being released 'this morning' (15 October). This means that not only was it considered an important lead, the man was also thoroughly interrogated and the circumstances surrounding the blood on the shirt extensively investigated.

The report also only mentions the man being suspected in the case of the Elizabeth Stride murder. However, that may be simply because the Metropolitan Police were involved in the investigation of just that murder and not that of Catherine Eddowes.

The naming of specific police officers (such as Reid and Abberline) may have been for effect by the newspaper but it could be an indication of special information from a police source. That Sergeants Thick and White were named as the detectives who had conducted the house-to-house enquiry, received the information about the shirt and arrested the German again indicates special information.

It could be that the *Echo* genuinely had inside information which dismayed police officials who then took measures to ensure no further details got out and in fact attempted to make it look like the details already published were incorrect by issuing denials about an arrest, though these denials had apparently started at the weekend (13th and 14th)⁸. However more details would be published in the *Echo* the following day.

One thing that is strange is that none of the details in the second part of the *Echo* report made it into the other newspapers. An argument could be made to suggest that the 'highly suspicious [conduct]' of the man ties in with the lodger moving about in the early hours and having changed some of his clothes which appeared in other reports. However, the second part of the *Echo* report implies the man was not a lodger at the house and this is confirmed in later reports.

That Mrs. Kuer was German raises the possibility that the nationality of the man was confused with hers. However, this does not appear to be the case as the report on the 17th (shown below) refers to a German leaving the shirt with Mrs. Kuer, 'also a German'. Mrs. Kuer is also named in this report for the first time.

4 *Echo*, 15 October 1888

5 That the address was spelt incorrectly is possibly an indication that the address had just been heard and wrongly transcribed by the *Echo* reporter and he had not actually been to the street where he could verify the spelling. This may suggest therefore that his source was not Mrs. Kuer.

6 *Daily News*, 18 October 1888

7 *Evening News*, 18 October 1888

8 *Evening News*, 17 October 1888

THE BLOOD-STAINED SHIRT

The laundress at 22, Batty-street, where a German left a blood-stained shirt, is Mrs. Kuer, also a German. The man, who was arrested, as already stated, and liberated, explained the blood-stains by the fact that he was with a friend who was cutting his corn, when the knife slipped and inflicted a wound, when the injured man stanchd the cut by using the sleeves of his companion's shirt. There were, however, extensive stains upon the front of it as well, and this the man asserts was done by the blood spurt-ing on to it. Mrs. Kuer denied that she gave information to the police, who were told of the circumstances by a neighbour. Mrs. Kuer says the man had occasionally called with a shirt to be washed. She feels certain she says that the man is entirely innocent of any such offence as was at first suggested by the police. Inspector Reid, Inspector Helson, and other detective officers are pursuing their investi-gation.

A man was arrested and taken to Commercial-street Police-station last night, but was released shortly afterwards.⁹

The reference at the end to an arrest the previous night in the report shown may not have been related to the incident. However, there is an indication in the report that the investigation was continuing despite the release of the German.

Again the syndicated report that appeared in other newspapers on the 17th was included in the *Echo* (not included in the above excerpt), which has different details to the *Echo*'s exclusive reports. The syndicated account made much of the proximity of the house in Batty Street to the scene of the murder in Berner Street and also of the various passages nearby which allowed different points of entry. This obviously suggested that the house was used as a hideout or lodgings by the killer rather than simply being used as a laundry service.

Tying this in with the other accounts, it appears the German returned to 22 Batty Street on Saturday the 13th and was promptly taken by waiting detectives (Thick and White) to the station for questioning. He was seemingly held for two nights until the morning of Monday the 15th of October when he was released. It also provides a third source for the story as told by Carl Noun in his letter and Mrs. Kuer in her interview.¹⁰

While this account provides more details of the story given by Mrs. Kuer in her interview, one aspect of Mrs. Kuer's explanation of events is still puzzling.

She denied that the man for whom the police were searching was one of her lodgers, and asserted that he simply had his washing done at the house. He was a ladies tailor, working for a West-end house, and did not reside in the Leman-street district. She explained the presence of blood on the shirt by saying that it was owing to an accident that occurred to a man (other than the one taken into custody) who was living on the premises, and that the police would have known nothing of it but for her having indiscreetly shown it to a neighbour. The woman denies that the detectives are still in possession of her house.¹¹

The question asked was why the German customer was arrested if he hadn't got the blood on the shirts. Mrs. Kuer's interview implies the man who got the blood on the shirt lived (or had lived) on *her* premises. If he was still living at the house during the police surveillance, then surely the story about how the blood got on the shirt would have been explained long before the man was arrested, unless this explanation was a lie conceived later to protect the German. Even if the police still wanted to take the German in for routine questioning, it would not be required to detain him for about 36 hours. Mrs. Kuer's comment that the police would not have known about it but for her having shown the shirt to a neighbour implies that she may already have known about the origins of the blood before the police were involved and that she would not have said anything to them at all had it not been for the neighbour. This report in the *Echo* confirms that the details were given to the police by the neighbour and not by Mrs. Kuer. However, if she had known about the origins of the blood then surely she would have told the police.

According to Mrs. Kuer, the person who actually got the blood on the shirt 'was living on the premises',¹² which may imply that the friend had formerly lived at 22 Batty Street.

⁹ *Echo*, 17 October 1888

¹⁰ *Evening News*, 18 October 1888

¹¹ *ibid*

¹² *ibid*

If the friend was no longer living at Mrs. Kuer's this would explain why the reason subsequently given for the blood being on the shirt was not known until the arrest and questioning.

It also could still be the case that the friend had been a temporary lodger of Mrs. Kuer while Carl Noun was away and had left during the week (or earlier) before Noun returned on 6 October.¹³

As this person would have known Mrs. Kuer if he was living or had lived there, he would probably have told his German friend about her laundry service, which was why the man (a tailor who worked in the West End and who did not live in the district¹⁴) had then used her to clean his laundry a few times.

On the other hand, it could be that this person had never lived at Mrs. Kuer's. The report of Mrs. Kuer's interview said that the accident had '*occurred to a man (other than the one taken into custody) who was living on the premises*'. The 'premises' may not have been a reference to Mrs. Kuer's house, but to the premises where the accident took place (the workplace or actual lodgings of the German and his friend). Language or translation problems may have resulted in a misleading statement. In this case, Mrs. Kuer would probably not have known about how the blood got on the shirt before the arrest.

Of course, a question still remains as to why it took the German so long to return for his shirts. If he left them on 30 September (or 1 October at the latest) then it was 12 or 13 days before he returned to pick them up after having said he would return in two or three days. It may be that he had heard about the police interest in his shirt and had decided to keep a low profile fearing that it would look bad even if he were innocent.

Another question would be in regard to the circumstances of the blood getting on the shirt. However, the story—as available to us—is so condensed that too much analysis into the exact way the accident had happened and how the blood had got onto the shirt would be pointless. The police would have looked into the full circumstances anyway. That Abberline considered the matter of such importance would have meant he was probably directly involved in the questioning of the German and probably also of his friend in order to confirm the arrested man's story.

Since it appears that neither the German nor his friend lived at 22 Batty Street, no link can be made to anyone leaving their lodgings in that area on that night.

Tying the reports with Carl Noun's letter and Mrs. Kuer's interview as published in the *Evening News* and *Daily News* of 18 October, the events now seem clearer.

The German left some shirts with Mrs. Kuer on 30 September or possibly 1 October (whichever was considered 'the day after' the murders, committed in the very early hours of 30 September). She found blood on one of them and, initially suspicious, had shown it to a neighbour, only to obviously later regret her action. Mrs. Kuer felt that the man would not be guilty of the murders and would have preferred to drop the matter. However, during the house-to-house enquiries the neighbour who had been shown the shirt told Detective Sergeants Thick and White about it. The police then called on Mrs. Kuer and took possession of the shirt and set up surveillance on the house for when the man returned. The matter was considered of considerable importance by Inspector Reid, Inspector Abberline and other senior officers.

The man returned on Saturday, 13 October, and was promptly taken into custody where he was held for about 36 hours until the morning of the 15th. The blood was explained by a friend had who got it on the shirt while cutting his corn. It obviously took quite a while to satisfy the police, but eventually they believed the incident had an innocent explanation. However, the report in the *Echo* on 17 October suggests that the investigation was continuing despite the innocent explanation given and the release of the German.

So the lodger does not appear to have existed as such. The customer story is confirmed by three different sources (Mrs. Kuer, Carl Noun and the *Echo* reporter's source—possibly someone from the police)¹⁵. By the time the story was first heard on Monday the 15th (or possibly the day before) the full details were possibly already being corrupted. The detail about someone who apparently lived at Mrs. Kuer's getting blood on the shirt may have been confused and this was the reason the man being searched for was thought to be a lodger of Mrs. Kuer's. The detail about the landlady being disturbed in the early hours could simply be a distortion of the German appearing early (though not in the early hours) on Sunday morning with the shirts. That he was supposed to have changed his clothes could be a corruption of him handing over his shirts.

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ *ibid*

¹⁵ Carl Noun would only have known from Mrs. Kuer how the shirts came to be left as he was away until 6 October. However, he would likely have been in the house when the German was arrested so would have written from his own experience of that. The details of the first *Echo* report on the 15th suggest a police source, though the details published on the 17th regarding how blood got on the shirt could have come from Mrs. Kuer since they had obviously spoken to her (as had other reporters that day for her interview published on the 18th) as she stated she had not informed the police about the shirt and that she did not believe the man was guilty of the crimes.

Matthew Packer also seems to have played his part in the misreporting of the story. Boy does that man have a lot to answer for!

*An Echo reporter called yesterday afternoon upon Mr. Packer, the Berner-street fruiterer, where the murderer bought the grapes for Elizabeth Stride. It now appears that the man was known by Mr. Packer, who positively asserted, "I had seen him in this district several times before, and if you ask me where he lives I can tell you within a little. He lodges not a great way from the house where Lipski, who was hanged for poisoning a woman, lived." "How many times have you seen him?" was asked Mr. Packer. "About twenty; and I have not seen him since the murder."*¹⁶

Packer may have been the source of the detail that the lodger had been seen by others in the vicinity ('numbers of people have seen the same man about the neighbourhood'¹⁷). Although this detail had been reported two days before the Packer interview, it could be that Packer had already spoken to another reporter. Reference to 'numbers of people' could simply have been an exaggeration, or a confusion of Packer's claim to have seen the man a number of *times* (about twenty in fact!). Packer even said the man he had seen with Elizabeth Stride lived not far from where Lipski had lived at No. 16 Batty Street perhaps to deliberately link his story with that of the 'Batty Street Lodger'. Alternatively it could be that Packer's story had helped to create the mistaken belief that the man *lived* at Mrs. Kuer's rather than merely leaving his shirts there to be cleaned.

A further report appeared on the 18th regarding a suspect in the area.

THE SUPPOSED CLUE

*The supposed clue on which the police are now working is said to relate to a man living in the locality, but not to the visitor to Batty-street. The inquiries are not sufficiently advanced to enable them to make an arrest, even should their suspicions ultimately prove to be well-founded.*¹⁸

The argument could still be that the police invented the 'customer' story to put the press off-track and Mrs. Kuer repeated it in less detail for her interview. However the part about the man's corn seems unnecessarily detailed for this purpose. Just saying that someone else had accidentally cut themselves and used the shirt to stem the blood would be sufficient. That the source - if it was someone from the police - appeared to also give information about the investigation continuing would also point against the police instigating this false story in order to end press interest, although this may have been a detail unrelated to the 'lodger' story or may not have been from the same source. However, other than the *Echo* report all other indications are that the police were simply denying the story, even denying that a man had been arrested, suggesting that the details in the *Echo* were not invented by them for the purpose of covering up the true story.

There are also still indications in the reports that the arrest and release did not end the matter. The reports speak of continuing investigations and a further arrest. The further 'arrest' may however simply have been related to the friend being taken in for questioning or these details could have been unrelated to the so-called 'Lodger' incident, but related to the investigations into the murders as a whole.

A couple of questions can still be asked but it appears the Batty Street Laundry Customer is not connected to any of the murders.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Stephen Ryder and to Coral Kelly, Chris Scott and Spiro for the reports. Thanks also to Debra Arif, Neil Bell, How & Nina Brown, Jane Coram and Don Souden.

¹⁶ *Echo*, 18 October 1888

¹⁷ *Daily News*, 16 October 1888

¹⁸ *Echo*, 18 October 1888.

Postscript

Another suspect of the Whitechapel murders was arrested in November:

Shortly before Mr. Bushby left the bench at the close of the day's business at Workshop-street [sic - Worship Street] Police Court on Saturday a Swede, named Nikaner A. Benelius, 27 years of age, and described as a traveller, living in Great Eastern-street, Shoreditch, was placed in the dock charged with entering a dwelling-house in Buxton-street, Mile End, for an unlawful purpose, and with refusing to give any account of himself. Detective Sergeant Dew attended from Commercial-street station, and stated that the prisoner had been arrested that morning under circumstances which rendered it desirable to have the fullest inquiries made as to him. Prior to the last murder (of Mary Kelly, in Miller's Court) the prisoner had been arrested by the police and detained in connection with the Berner-street murder; but was eventually released. He had, however, remained about the neighbourhood, lodging in a German lodging-house, but having, the officer said, no apparent means of subsistence.¹

Nikaner Benelius was arrested for alarming Harriet Rowe by just walking into her house and grinning at her when she asked him what he wanted. He had then left and she followed. He stopped to ask a policeman a question and Harriet Rowe informed the constable, PC Imhoff 221H about the incident whereupon Benelius was taken in. He claimed to have gone into the house to ask for directions.²

That he was said to have been detained in connection with the Berner Street murder is reminiscent of the early *Echo* report referring to Mrs. Kuer's customer being questioned in connection with the murder of Elizabeth Stride (though obviously there would have been quite a few questioned for that murder and it has already been noted why that would be stated in connection with the investigation by the Metropolitan Police). But the story also makes reference to a *German* lodging house. This may be a reference to Great Eastern Street³ rather than Mrs. Kuer's, but it could be, if he lived at a German lodging house, that was how he got to hear about Mrs. Kuer's laundry service. Benelius was said to be Swedish whereas the man who left the shirts was said to be German, but confusion over the German lodging-house and the fact that Mrs. Kuer was German could account for this detail. Also he was said to be a traveller whereas Mrs. Kuer's customer was said to be a ladies' tailor.

There's nothing to show any definite link but could it be that Benelius was the man who left the blood-stained shirt at Mrs. Kuer's?

1 *Manchester Guardian*, 19 November 1888

2 *Morning Advertiser*, 19 November 1888

3 No. 90 according to *The Star*, 19 November 1888

Got something to say?

**Got comments on a feature
in this issue?**

**Or found new information?
Please send your comments
to contact@ripperologist.info**



Opium Dens and Other Victorian Delights

An Anthology compiled by Eduardo Zinna

John Brown Praises Opium

It banishes melancholy, begets confidence, converts fear into boldness, makes the coward eloquent, and dastards brave. Nobody, in desperate circumstances, and smiling under a disrelish for life, ever laid violent hands on himself after taking a dose of opium, or ever will.

John Brown
Elementis Medicinae, 1780

Dorian Gray Visits an Opium Den

A cold rain began to fall, and the blurred street-lamps looked ghastly in the dripping mist. The public-houses were just closing, and dim men and women were clustering in broken groups round their doors. From some of the bars came the sound of horrible laughter. In others, drunkards brawled and screamed.

Lying back in the hansom, with his hat pulled over his forehead, Dorian Gray watched with listless eyes the sordid shame of the great city, and now and then he repeated to himself the words that Lord Henry had said to him on the first day they had met, 'To cure the soul by means of the senses, and the senses by means of the soul.' Yes, that was the secret. He had often tried it, and would try it again now. There were opium dens where one could buy oblivion, dens of horror where the memory of old sins could be destroyed by the madness of sins that were new.

The moon hung low in the sky like a yellow skull. From time to time a huge misshapen cloud stretched a long arm across and hid it. The gas-lamps grew fewer, and the streets more narrow and gloomy. Once the man lost his way and had to drive back half a mile. A steam rose from the horse as it splashed up the puddles. The sidewindows of the hansom were clogged with a grey-flannel mist.

On and on plodded the hansom, going slower, it seemed to him, at each step. He thrust up the trap and called to the man to drive faster. The hideous hunger for opium began to gnaw at him. His throat burned and his delicate hands twitched nervously together. He struck at the horse madly with his stick. The driver laughed and whipped up. He laughed in answer, and the man was silent.

The way seemed interminable, and the streets like the black web of some sprawling spider. The monotony became unbearable, and as the mist thickened, he felt afraid.

Then they passed by lonely brickfields. The fog was lighter here, and he could see the strange, bottle-shaped kilns with their orange, fanlike tongues of fire. A dog barked as they went by, and far away in the darkness some wandering sea-gull screamed. The horse stumbled in a rut, then swerved aside and broke into a gallop.

After some time they left the clay road and rattled again over rough-paven streets. Most of the windows were dark, but now and then fantastic shadows were silhouetted against some lamplit blind. He watched them curiously. They moved like monstrous marionettes and made gestures like live things. He hated them. A dull rage was in his heart. As they turned a corner, a woman yelled something at them from an open door, and two men ran after the hansom for about a hundred yards. The driver beat at them with his whip.

Suddenly the man drew up with a jerk at the top of a dark lane. Over the low roofs and jagged chimney-stacks of the houses rose the black masts of ships. Wreaths of white mist clung like ghostly sails to the yards.

'Somewhere about here, sir, ain't it?' he asked huskily through the trap.

Dorian started and peered round. 'This will do,' he answered, and having got out hastily and given the driver the extra fare he had promised him, he walked quickly in the direction of the quay. Here and there a lantern gleamed at the stern of some huge merchantman. The light shook and splintered in the puddles. A red glare came from an outward-bound steamer that was coaling. The slimy pavement looked like a wet mackintosh.

He hurried on towards the left, glancing back now and then to see if he was being followed. In about seven or eight minutes he reached a small shabby house that was wedged in between two gaunt factories. In one of the top-windows stood a lamp. He stopped and gave a peculiar knock.

After a little time he heard steps in the passage and the chain being unhooked. The door opened quietly, and he went in without saying a word to the squat misshapen figure that flattened itself into the shadow as he passed. At the end of the hall hung a tattered green curtain that swayed and shook in the gusty wind which had followed him in from the street. He dragged it aside and entered a long low room which looked as if it had once been a third-rate dancing-saloon. Shrill flaring gas-jets, dulled and distorted in the fly-blown mirrors that faced them, were ranged round the walls. Greasy reflectors of ribbed tin backed them, making quivering disks of light. The floor was covered with ochre-coloured sawdust, trampled here and there into mud, and stained with dark rings of spilled liquor. Some Malays were crouching by a little charcoal stove, playing with bone counters and showing their white teeth as they chattered. In one corner, with his head buried in his arms, a sailor sprawled over a table, and by the tawdrily painted bar that ran across one complete side stood two haggard women, mocking an old man who was brushing the sleeves of his coat with an expression of disgust.

'He thinks he's got red ants on him,' laughed one of them, as Dorian passed by. The man looked at her in terror and began to whimper.

At the end of the room there was a little staircase, leading to a darkened chamber. As Dorian hurried up its three rickety steps, the heavy odour of opium met him. He heaved a deep breath, and his nostrils quivered with pleasure.

Oscar Wilde

From *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Chapter 16, 1890

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Examines Opium-smoking Throughout the World

This is chiefly practised by the inhabitants of China and the islands of the Indian Archipelago, and in countries where Chinese are largely employed. Opium-smoking began in China in the 17th century. Foreign opium was first imported by the Portuguese (early 18th century). In 1906 it was estimated 27% of Chinese adult males smoked opium.

For smoking the Chinese use an extract of opium known as prepared opium or chandoo, and a cheaper preparation is made from 60% used opium known as 'opium dross' and 40% native opium. This latter is chiefly used by the poorer classes.

The process of preparation is thus described by Hugh M'Callum, government analyst at Hong-Kong: 'The opium is removed from its covering of leaves, &c., moistened with a little water, and allowed to stand for about fourteen hours; it is then divided into pans, 22 balls of opium and about two pints of water going to each pan; it is now boiled and stirred occasionally until a uniform mixture having the consistence of a thin paste is obtained. This operation takes from five to six hours. The paste is at once transferred to a larger pan and cold water added to about 3 gallons, covered and allowed to stand for from fourteen to fifteen hours. A bunch of *tang sani* (lamp-wick, the pith of *Eriocaulon* or *Scirpus*) is then inserted well into the mass, and the pan slightly canted, when a rich, clear, brown fluid is thus drawn off, and filtered through *chi mui* (paper made from bamboo fibre). The residue is removed to a calico filter and thoroughly washed with boiling water, the wash water being reboiled and used time after time. The last washing is done with pure water; these washings are used in the next day's boiling.

'The residues on the calico filters are transferred to a large one of the same material and well pressed. This insoluble residue, called *nai chai* (opium dirt), is the perquisite of the head boiling coolie, who finds a ready market for it in Canton, where it is used for adulterating, or rather in manufacturing, the moist inferior kinds of prepared opium. The filtrate or opium solution is concentrated by evaporation at the boiling point, with occasional stirring until of a proper consistence, the time required being from three to four hours; it is then removed from the fire and stirred with

great vigour till cold, the cooling being accelerated by coolies with large fans. When quite cold it is taken to the *hong* and kept there for some months before it is considered in prime condition for smoking. As thus prepared it has the consistence of a thin treacly extract, and is called boiled or prepared opium. In this state it is largely exported from China to America, Australia, &c., being carefully sealed up in small pots having the name of the maker (i.e. *hong*) on each.

'The Chinese recognize the following grades of opium: (1) "raw opium," as imported from India; (2) "prepared opium" opium made as above; (3) "opium dross," the scrapings from the opium pipe; this is reboiled and manufactured as a second-class prepared opium;



a Chinese doctor stated lately at a coroner's inquest on a case of poisoning that it was more poisonous than the ordinary prepared opium; (4) "*nai chai*" (opium dirt), the insoluble residue left on exhausting the raw opium thoroughly with water. The opium is sent every day from the *hong* (i.e. shop or firm) to the boiling-house, the previous day's boiling being then returned to the *hong*. The average quantity boiled each day is from six to eight chests of Patna opium, this being the only kind used.'

By this process of preparation a considerable portion of the narcotine, caoutchouc, resin, oil or fatty and insoluble matters are removed, and the prolonged boiling, evaporating and baking over a naked fire tend to lessen the amount of alkaloids present in the extract. The only alkaloids likely to remain in the prepared opium, and capable of producing well-marked physiological results, are morphine, codeine and narceine. Morphine, in the pure state, can be sublimed, but codeine and narceine are said not to give a sublimate. Even if sublimed in smoking opium, morphine would, in M'Callum's opinion, probably be deposited in the pipe before it reached the mouth of the smoker. The bitter taste of morphine is not noticeable when smoking opium, and it is therefore possible that the pleasure derived from smoking the drug is due to some product formed during combustion. This supposition is rendered probable by the fact that the opiums most prized by smokers are not those containing most morphine, and that the quality is judged by the amount of soluble matter in the opium, by its tenacity or 'touch,' and by peculiarities of aroma - the Indian opium, especially the Patna kind, bearing much the same relation to the Chinese and Persian drug that champagne does to *vin ordinaire*.

Opium smoking is thus described by Theo. Sampson of Canton: 'The smoker, lying on his side, with his face towards the tray and his head resting on a high hard pillow (sometimes made of earthenware, but more frequently of bamboo covered with leather), takes the pipe in his hand; with the other hand he takes a dipper and puts the *sharp* end of it into the opium, which is of a treacly consistency. Twisting it round and round he gets a large drop of the fluid to adhere to the dipper; still twisting it round to prevent it falling he brings the drop over the flame of the lamp, and twirling it round and round he roasts it; all this is done with acquired dexterity. The opium must not be burnt or made too dry, but roasted gently till it looks like burnt worsted; every now and then he takes it away from the flame and rolls it (still on the end of the dipper) on the flat surface of the bowl. When it is roasted and rolled to his satisfaction he gently heats the centre of the bowl, where there is a small orifice; then he quickly thrusts the end of the dipper into the orifice, twirls it round smartly and withdraws it; if this is properly done, the opium (now about the size of a grain of hemp-seed or a little larger) is left adhering to the bowl immediately over the orifice. It is now ready for smoking.

'The smoker assumes a comfortable attitude (lying down of course) at a proper distance from the lamp. He now puts the stem to his lips, and holds the bowl over the lamp. The heat causes the opium to frizzle, and the smoker takes three or four long inhalations, all the time using the dipper to bring every particle of the opium to the orifice as it burns away, but not taking his lips from the end of the stem, or the opium pellet from the lamp till all is finished. Then he uses the flattened end of the dipper to scrape away any little residue there may be left around the orifice, and proceeds to prepare another pipe. The preparations occupy from five to ten minutes, and the actual smoking about thirty seconds. The smoke is swallowed, and is exhaled through both the mouth and the nose.'

So far as can be gathered from the conflicting statements published on the subject, opium-smoking may be regarded much in the same light as the use of alcoholic stimulants. To the great majority of smokers who use it moderately it appears to act as a stimulant, and to enable them to undergo great fatigue and to go for a considerable time with little or no food. According to the reports on the subject, when the smoker has plenty of active work it appears to be no more



injurious than smoking tobacco. When carried to excess it becomes an inveterate habit; but this happens chiefly in individuals of weak will-power, who would just as easily become the victims of intoxicating drinks, and who are practically moral imbeciles, often addicted also to other forms of depravity. The effect in bad cases is to cause loss of appetite, a leaden pallor of the skin, and a degree of leanness so excessive as to make its victims appear like living skeletons. All inclination for exertion becomes gradually lost, business is neglected, and certain ruin to the smoker follows. There can be no doubt that the use of the drug is opposed by all thinking Chinese who are not pecuniarily interested in the opium trade or cultivation, for several reasons, among which may be mentioned the drain of bullion from the country, the decrease of population, the liability to famine through the cultivation of opium where cereals should be grown, and the corruption of state officials.

From *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1911

Dr Watson Visits an Opium Den

Upper Swandam Lane is a vile alley lurking behind the high wharves which line the north side of the river to the east of London Bridge.

Between a slop-shop and a gin-shop, approached by a steep flight of steps leading down to a black gap like the mouth of a cave, I found the den of which I was in search. Ordering my cab to wait, I passed down the steps, worn hollow in the centre by the ceaseless tread of drunken feet; and by the light of a flickering oil-lamp above the door I found the latch and made my way into a long, low room, thick and heavy with the brown opium smoke, and terraced with wooden berths, like the forecabin of an emigrant ship.

Through the gloom one could dimly catch a glimpse of bodies lying in strange fantastic poses, bowed shoulders, bent knees, heads thrown back, and chins pointing upward, with here and there a dark, lack-lustre eye turned upon the newcomer. Out of the black shadows there glimmered little red circles of light, now bright, now faint, as the burning poison waxed or waned in the bowls of the metal pipes. The most lay silent, but some muttered to themselves, and others talked together in a strange, low, monotonous voice, their conversation coming in gushes, and then suddenly tailing off into silence, each mumbling out his own thoughts and paying little heed to the words of his neighbour. At the farther end was a small brazier of burning charcoal, beside which on a three-legged wooden stool there sat a tall, thin old man, with his jaw resting upon his two fists, and his elbows upon his knees, staring into the fire.

As I entered, a sallow Malay attendant had hurried up with a pipe for me and a supply of the drug, beckoning me to an empty berth.

'Thank you. I have not come to stay,' said I. 'There is a friend of mine here, Mr Isa Whitney, and I wish to speak with him.'

There was a movement and an exclamation from my right, and peering through the gloom, I saw Whitney, pale, haggard, and unkempt, staring out at me.

'My God! It's Watson,' said he. He was in a pitiable state of reaction, with every nerve in a twitter. 'I say, Watson, what o'clock is it?'

'Nearly eleven.'

'Of what day?'

'Of Friday, June 19th.'

'Good heavens! I thought it was Wednesday. It is Wednesday. What d'you want to frighten a chap for?' He sank his face onto his arms and began to sob in a high treble key.

'I tell you that it is Friday, man. Your wife has been waiting this two days for you. You should be ashamed of yourself!'

'So I am. But you've got mixed, Watson, for I have only been here a few hours, three pipes, four pipes - I forget how many. But I'll go home with you. I wouldn't frighten Kate - poor little Kate. Give me your hand! Have you a cab?'



'Yes, I have one waiting.'

'Then I shall go in it. But I must owe something. Find what I owe, Watson. I am all off colour. I can do nothing for myself.'

I walked down the narrow passage between the double row of sleepers, holding my breath to keep out the vile, stupefying fumes of the drug, and looking about for the manager. As I passed the tall man who sat by the brazier I felt a sudden pluck at my skirt, and a low voice whispered, 'Walk past me, and then look back at me.' The words fell quite distinctly upon my ear. I glanced down. They could only have come from the old man at my side, and yet he sat now as absorbed as ever, very thin, very wrinkled, bent with age, an opium pipe dangling down from between his knees, as though it had dropped in sheer lassitude from his fingers. I took two steps forward and looked back. It took all my self-control to prevent me from breaking out into a cry of astonishment. He had turned his back so that none could see him but I. His form had filled out, his wrinkles were gone, the dull eyes had regained their fire, and there, sitting by the fire and grinning at my surprise, was none other than Sherlock Holmes.

Arthur Conan Doyle

From *The Man with the Twisted Lip*, 1891

An Anonymous Journalist Visits an Opium Den in the East End

Of all carnal delights that over which opium rules as the presiding genius is most shrouded in mystery. It is invested with a weird and fantastic interest (for which its Oriental origin is doubtless in some degree accountable), and there hovers about it a vague fascination, such as is felt towards ghostly legend and the lore of fairy land. There exists a strange yearning to make more intimate acquaintance with the miraculous drug concerning which there is so much whispering, and at the same time a superstitious dread of approaching it, such as, when it comes to the pinch, possesses the rustic believer in the efficacy of repeating a prayer backwards as a means of raising the devil. It is the vulgar supposition that the one occupation of the lives of eastern grandees is to recline on soft cushions and indulge in the charming narcotic; that the thousand and one seductive stories contained in the 'Arabian Nights' were composed by writers whose senses were steeped in it, and that our Poet Laureate and his brethren constantly draw inspiration from it, either through a pipe-stem or by means of mastication. Furthermore, it is largely believed that any man might become a poet, or at least a writer of flowing and flowery prose, if he only possessed courage sufficient to avail himself of this convenient picklock of the gates of paradise.

And who shall tell of the multitude of youthful aspirants for poetic fame who have daringly grasped the magic key and essayed to apply it? Also, and alas! who shall make known to an unkind world the many who have bungled over the gentle burglary, who have failed at the gate, and come away with no more delightful sensation than that which might arise through butting their unlucky heads against the bars of it? That is the most tantalising part of the business. Opium may be procured - any chemist will sell you an ounce of it for eighteen pence - but possessed of it and not of the secret of its use, the novice is no better off than he would be if he set up as a painter on the strength of a colour-box and a few brushes. It is this secret that constitutes the rarity of the luxury. To be enjoyed, the opium must be prepared by a competent hand. There are few such in London, few, that is, who are willing to receive pupils and give lessons. How limited their number is determined by the fact that when an 'opium master' is discovered, even though his den is situated in, without exception, the most vile and villainous part of the metropolis, he is regarded as a person worth visiting by lords and dukes and even princes and kings. The writer hereof, taking it for granted that a sight that could

draw earls and princes to Bluegate Fields could not be otherwise than highly curious and interesting, ventured a journey thither recently.

Only such of the public as are accustomed to read the police news in the daily papers can form any idea as to the kind of place Bluegate Fields is. Commonly it is known as 'Tiger Bay'; on account of the number of ferocious she-creatures in petticoats that lurk and lair there. It is a narrow lane opening on to High Street, Shadwell, at one end, and St. George's Street at the other. To the left and right of the narrow lane are many villainous courts and alleys, consisting of one-story high hovels, each one accommodating as many lodgers as might reasonably occupy an eight-roomed house. The inhabitants of Bluegate Fields are the worst in England, consisting of man-trappers for the shipping lying in the river just below, and the tigresses before mentioned, who inveigle tipsy sailors from the many surrounding abominable dens 'licensed for dancing and music,' and drug them and strip and rob and ill use them, and pickpockets and coiners and robbers of every degree. The mere blacking of an eye or extraction of human hair by the violent process of dragging it from the head is not regarded in the light of an assault in Bluegate Fields but rather as a pleasant pastime to beguile the lazy hours of daylight. Judging from the reports of the Thames Police Court, nothing of less importance than the biting off of a nose or an ear, or the fracture of a skull with a poker, calls for the interference of the police. It is a fact that while I was inquiring at a public-house for the address of Chi Ki, the Chinaman, I overheard two women at the bar discussing a murderous assault that had happened in the 'Fields' that morning. 'What I say is,' remarked the elder woman of the two, who was a fat woman with a horribly dirty face and a blue seam across her nose that was curiously suggestive of the rim of a pewter pot, 'what I say is, if I wants it, punch me. Punch me in the face and black my eyes, or punch me about the head. Kick me if you like; I don't so much mind that; but when it comes to pokers and shovels, it's a little *too* hot.'

I was lucky in calling at the public-house where the two women were, since on inquiry I discovered that it was to this place that Chi Ki had directed all letters from his numerous friends. I was glad to find that the barmaid spoke of the opium master in a very respectful manner, calling him Mr Chi Ki. She happened to know, moreover, that the distinguished Chinaman was from home; so I left with her a message for him to the effect that if it accorded with Mr Chi Ki's convenience, a gentleman would be glad to meet him on business at that hostelry at six o'clock the following evening.

He was punctual. Precisely as the clock marked six he put his head in at the door. 'Mr Chi Ki, here's your gentleman,' called out the obliging barmaid, and the Chinaman's body followed his head, and he came towards me bowing low and rubbing his hands. I must confess that I was disappointed at Chi Ki's appearance. Being so celebrated a character, with lords and marquises for his patrons and customers, I expected to see a man able and willing to demonstrate in his attire his native ideas of splendour. It would not have surprised me if so exalted a personage as an opium master had appeared dressed in gown of gold-embroidered crimson silk, and with a sash and curly-toed slippers; but poor Chi Ki was very poorly clad indeed. He is a man of ostlerish cut, wearing a long jacket and a comforter wisped round his neck, and tight trousers, and an old cloth cap on his head. He is lame of a leg, too, as many ostlers are. In a few words I explained my business, and without betraying the least astonishment at its nature he expressed his readiness to conduct me to his house there and then.

We went a little way into Bluegate Fields and then turned into the arched way of an alley, a trifle higher, may be, but not nearly so wide as an ordinary coal-cellar doorway. It was as dark as any coal-cellar. 'Come along, sir,' said Chi Ki encouragingly, in his pigeon English. 'It is down at the bottom and turn round the corner; come along.'

We arrived at the bottom, and came on a tiny square of ill-looking little houses and an appalling odour of bad drainage, and Chi Ki guided me to a house in a corner as his. It was no larger than the rest and scarcely as good looking, on account of its many fractured window-panes and the rough-and-ready measures that had been resorted to block out the wind. Pushing open the outer door, Chi Ki called at the foot of the stairs for a light. While we waited for it I peeped into the parlour, which was dark except for a little blinking fire in an iron skillet, crouching over which was a Chinaman, looking the picture of despair, with his knees supporting his arms and his head resting on his hands, and his pigtail slewed to the fore and projecting over his forehead as a unicorn wears his horn. I observed, too, that there was in the room a large bedstead, with a bed made the wrong way on it.

It was an English voice that responded to Chi Ki's demand for a light; and presently a youngish woman, very thin and pale-looking, and scarcely as tidy as she might have been, made her appearance above with a tallow candle in her hand, and politely invited me to walk up. We walked up, and at once came in full view of the renowned opium master's public smoking-room, which served likewise for his private sitting-room and his private bedroom, and, judging from the handle of a saucepan and a suspicion of dirty plates under the bed, for his kitchen as well.

It was an extremely mean and miserable little room. The fireplace was very narrow, and the stove of the ancient narrow-waisted pattern. There was no fender. In the centre of the room was a small round table, and there were three wooden chairs. The chief and most conspicuous article of furniture the room contained was a large four-post bedstead, and a bed like the one downstairs. The bed was not arranged according to the English fashion. It was rolled up bolster-

wise all along the length of the bedstead, leaving the mattress bare except for a large mat of Chinese grass. The bed-hangings were of some light Chinese gauze, but very dirty, and hitched up slatternly on the hanging-rails. The walls of the room were hung with a few tawdry pictures highly coloured, and contrasting grimly with the blackened walls, all stained above with rain-leakage, and below with the filthy saliva with which the smokers had besprinkled them. The ceiling was as black as the walls, and just over the window there had been an extensive fall of plaster, showing the laths, like grinning teeth in an ugly mouth.

There was a customer waiting, which at once gave Chi Ki an opportunity for displaying the mysteries of his craft. The preparations for enjoying the luxury of opium smoking were curious enough. Chi Ki's first move was to spread a piece of cloth on the mat that covered the mattress. Then he brought out a small common oil lamp and lit it and placed it in the centre of the piece of cloth. Next he produced a small box containing his smoking tools, and finally a little gallipot and an instrument like a flute, with a wooden cup with a lid to it screwed on at a distance of about three inches from the end. It was not a flute, however, but a pipe, - *the* pipe. As the customer caught sight of the odd-looking implement (he was quite a young man and more respectable - looking than Chi Ki himself) he licked his lips, and his eyes glistened like those of the domestic feline creature when it hears the welcome cry that announces its dinner. I asked permission to examine the pipe. It was simply an eighteen - inch length of yellow bamboo with the cup of dark-coloured baked clay before mentioned fitted into a sort of spigot hole near the end. Had I been asked to appraise its value, I could not conscientiously have gone beyond fourpence.

'He's been offered five pound for that pipe,' remarked English Mrs Chi Ki, who appeared to be almost as proud of it as was her husband. 'A gentleman offered him five pound for it last autumn.'

'Why didn't he sell it, and buy another?' was my natural question; but at this old Chi Ki chuckled, and hugging the pipe chafed its bowl tenderly with his jacket cuff.

'It's worth ten pounds,' said his wife; 'it has had nothing but the best opium smoked in it these fourteen years.'

And she then went on further to enumerate the many excellences of the pipe; from which I gathered that its value was not after all so fanciful as at first appeared: since half a given quantity of opium would yield more satisfaction when smoked in a ripe, well-saturated old pipe than the whole quantity in a comparatively new one.

Chi Ki, having made all necessary preparations, got up on to the mattress on the bed, and, reclining at his ease, proceeded to load the pipe for his customer. I was curious to see how this was managed. The stuff in the gallipot looked exactly like thin treacle, and smelt like burnt sugar and laudanum. Decidedly it seemed queer stuff to load a pipe with. But it had yet to be cooked - grilled. Taking an iron bodkin from his little tool-chest, Chi Ki dipped the tip of it into the semi-liquid stuff, and withdrawing a little drop of it, held it in the flame of the lamp until it hardened somewhat. Keeping this still on the point of the bodkin, he dipped it again into the gallipot and again held it in the lamp flame, and repeated the process until a piece of the size of a large pea was accumulated and properly toasted. This was placed in the pipe-bowl, and the hungry customer sprang up on to the bed to enjoy it.

It was lit at the little lamp, and then the young Chinaman reclining at his ease, laid his head comfortably on the dirty counterpane that covered the rolled-up bed, and took the pipe-stem in his mouth. There is no mouthpiece to the pipe; the stem is cut sheer off, leaving something as thick as an office ruler to suck at. And suck the Chinaman did. He took the bamboo fairly into his mouth, and there was at once emitted from the pipe a gurgling sound— the spirits of ten thousand previously smoked pipe-loads stirred to life. As the smoker heard the delicious sound, the lids of his elongated eyes quivered in ecstasy, and he sucked harder, swallowing all the black smoke except just so little as he was bound to waste in the process of breathing. He was as economical as could be, however, and expelled but the merest thread of the precious smoke through his nostrils and none by means of his mouth. If his sensations induced by the indulgence were heavenly, his countenance grossly belied them. Gradually, as he sucked and swallowed, the veins of his forehead thickened, his cheeks flushed, and his half-closed eyes gleamed like those of a satisfied pig. Still he sucked, and the nostril wreaths came quicker and finer, and he grew more and more like an enraptured hog, when suddenly the gurgling in the throat of the pipe-stein terminated in 'a brief rattle, and, all was over. While the opium in the pipe was waning to extremity, Chi Ki had busied himself in the manufacture of a little cigarette composed of paper and common tobacco, and as the pipe-stem dropped from the mouth of the young Chinaman, Chi Ki promptly handed him the cigarette, which he proceeded to light and consume, with a languid relish edifying to behold. I inquired why this was, but beyond the assertion that it was always done, Chi Ki had no explanation to offer.

'Was the lingering flavour of opium in the mouth objectionable?' I asked.

'No, indeed,' replied Chi Ki, with a grin; 'oh, no, no; it's always done; I don't know why, not in the least, but they will have the cigar afterwards.'

I can't help thinking, however, that this taking tobacco after opium must be something more than a meaningless 'custom.' Perhaps an abrupt and sudden descent from paradise to earth would be too much for a Chinaman's nerves,



and so he applies himself to the milder narcotic by way of a gentle letting down.

What chiefly surprised me was the short time it took to consume the charging of a pipe. From the time of the young Chinaman's taking the stem in his mouth till the opium was exhausted, not more than a minute and a half was occupied. In five minutes the cigarette was smoked and the customer took his departure. He paid no money, so I suppose he went 'tick' with Chi Ki; but as far as I could make out, his treat would cost about three halfpence. Evidently opium smoking is a more expensive enjoyment than dram drinking. Chi Ki showed me his 'measures.' They were three little ivory cups, the smallest the size of a lady's thimble. For this full of the treacle-like opium, four-pence was charged; the next-sized cup was sixpence, and the largest a shilling. This, it seemed, included the loan of Chi Ki's pipe as well as of the bed to lie on and the cigarette for after smoking, and the trouble of frizzling and preparing the drug.

Chi Ki keeps open house for opium smokers, and his chief customers are the sailors who arrive at the London ports. Sometimes, I was informed, trade was so slack that not more than two or three customers would apply all day long; while at other times it was as much as Chi Ki could do, distilling and frizzling and frying, to keep the smokers going. The opium has to be put through a peculiar process before it is reduced to the semi-liquid state. It has to be cooked. Chi Ki was good enough to crawl under the bedstead and produce therefrom, for my inspection, his implements of cookery, and to explain their use. I should hardly advise an amateur to essay opium brewing on the strength of my directions; but it seemed to me that the opium of the druggist is shredded into little slices, which are laid on a piece of stout coarse canvas, which is suspended in a small iron pot partly filled with water. In the process of boiling the essence of the opium drains through the canvas and forms a sediment at the bottom of the pot, leaving on the canvas the refuse, looking not unlike tea-leaves.

The cookery was performed at the miserable little fireplace before mentioned. Poor English Mrs Chi Ki looks as though she is being gradually smoke-dried, and by and by will present the appearance of an Egyptian mummy.

'I can stand a good deal of it,' said she, 'but sometimes it's awful. Sometimes two or three ships come in at once, and then we have a houseful. Upstairs as well as down. We've had as many as fourteen smoking in this room at one time, and them that couldn't find room on the bed lay all about the floor. There are only two pipes, one for the parlour, and one for the best room, - this room. It is hot work I assure you when we are busy. As soon as one has smoked out, another is ready to snatch at it; and it is in lighting the opium that the smoke is wasted so. They are awful hungry after it sometimes when they've gone a long while without and got their pay. They'll smoke as much as a shilling's worth out in half an hour, and there they'll lay like logs. It don't often make me ill; it makes me silly. I am ill sometimes, though. I was ill a-bed when the Prince of Wales and the other gentlemen came up here to see the smokers. There were only three or four of them, and they were friends like. I was sorry that the place was in such a muddle; but the Prince didn't seem to mind.'

'Yas,' observed Chi Ki, suddenly lighting up; 'the Prince, he say, 'Come smokee pipe wi' me, and bring you' lady, whens conwenience.'

'Ah, yes; but I don't believe he meant it,' said Mrs Chi Ki, dubiously.

But the lame old Chinaman grinned and winked to himself knowingly; so that I should not be in the least surprised if, one of these fine days, the porter at Marlborough House is startled by a Celestial apparition.

Anonymous

East London Opium Smokers

London Society, July 1868.

Thomas de Quincey Enjoys His Opium

Opium! dread agent of unimaginable pleasure and pain! I had heard of it as I had heard of manna or of Ambrosia, but no further; how unmeaning a sound was it at that time! what solemn chords does it now strike upon my heart! what heart-quaking vibrations of sad and happy remembrances!

Reverting for a moment to these, I feel a mystic importance attached to the minutest circumstances connected with the place, and the time, and the man (if man he was), that first laid open to me the paradise of opium-eaters. It was a Sunday afternoon, wet and cheerless; and a duller spectacle this earth of ours has not to show than a rainy Sunday in London. My road homewards lay through Oxford Street; and near 'the *stately* Pantheon,' (as Mr Wordsworth has obligingly called it) I saw a druggist's shop. The druggist (unconscious minister of celestial pleasures!), as if in sympathy with the rainy Sunday, looked dull and stupid, just as any mortal druggist might be expected to look on a Sunday; and when I asked for the tincture of opium, he gave it to me as any other man might do! and, furthermore, out of my shilling returned me



what seemed to be a real copper halfpenny, taken out of a real wooden drawer. Nevertheless, in spite of such indications of humanity, he has ever since existed in my mind as the beatific vision of an immortal druggist sent down to earth on a special mission to myself.

The reader may choose to think of him as, possibly, no more than a sublunary druggist: it may be so, but my faith is better: I believe him to have evanesced, or evaporated. So unwillingly would I connect any mortal remembrances with that hour, and place, and creature, that first brought me acquainted with the celestial drug.

Arrived at my lodgings, it may be supposed that I lost not a moment in taking the quantity prescribed. I was necessarily ignorant of the whole art and mystery of opium-taking; and what I took, I took under every disadvantage. But I took it; and in an hour, — oh heavens! what a revulsion! what an upheaving, from its lowest depths, of the inner spirit! what an apocalypse of the world within me! That my pains had vanished, was now a trifle in my eyes; this negative effect was swallowed up in the immensity of those positive effects which had opened before me, in the abyss of divine enjoyment thus suddenly revealed. Here was a panacea, a *pharmakon nepenthes*, for all human woes; here was the secret of happiness, about which philosophers had disputed for so many ages, at once discovered; happiness might now be bought for a penny, and carried in the waistcoat pocket; portable ecstasies might be had corked up in a pint bottle; and peace of mind could be sent down in gallons by the mail-coach.

And, first, one word with respect to its bodily effects; for upon all that has been hitherto written on the subject of opium, whether by travellers in Turkey (who may plead their privilege of lying as an old immemorial right) or by professors of medicine, writing *ex cathedra*, I have but one emphatic criticism to pronounce: Lies! lies! lies! I remember once, in passing a book-stall, to have caught these words from a page of some satiric author: 'By this time I became convinced that the London newspapers spoke truth at least twice a week, namely, on Tuesday and Saturday, and might safely be depended upon for - the list of bankrupts.'

In like manner, I do by no means deny that some truths have been delivered to the world in regard to opium; thus, it has been repeatedly affirmed, by the learned, that opium is a dusky brown in colour - and this, take notice, I grant - secondly, that it is rather dear, which also I grant - for, in my time, East India opium has been three guineas a pound,

and Turkey, eight; and, thirdly, that if you eat a good deal of it most probably you must do what is particularly disagreeable to any man of regular habits, namely, die. These weighty propositions are, all and singular, true; I cannot gainsay them; and truth ever was, and will be, commendable. But, in these three theorems, I believe we have exhausted the stock of knowledge as yet accumulated by man on the subject of opium. And, therefore, worthy doctors, as there seems to be room for further discoveries, stand aside, and allow me to come forward and lecture on this matter.

First, then, it is not so much affirmed as taken for granted, by all who ever mention opium, formally or incidentally, that it does or can produce intoxication. Now, reader, assure yourself, *meo periculo*, that no quantity of opium ever did, or could, intoxicate. As to the tincture of opium (commonly called laudanum) *that* might certainly intoxicate, if a man could bear to take enough of it; but why? because it contains so much proof spirit, and not because it contains so much opium. But crude opium, I affirm peremptorily, is incapable of producing any state of body at all resembling that which is produced by alcohol; and not in *degree* only incapable, but even in *kind*; it is not in the quantity of its effects merely, but in the quality, that it differs altogether.

The pleasure given by wine is always mounting, and tending to a crisis, after which it declines; that from opium, when once generated, is stationary for eight or ten hours: the first, to borrow a technical distinction from medicine, is a case of acute, the second of chronic, pleasure; the one is a flame, the other a steady and equable glow. But the main distinction lies in this, that whereas wine disorders the mental faculties, opium, on the contrary (if taken in a proper manner), introduces amongst them the most exquisite order, legislation, and harmony.

Wine robs a man of his self-possession; opium greatly invigorates it. Wine unsettles and clouds the judgment, and gives a preternatural brightness, and a vivid exaltation to the contempts and the admirations, to the loves and the hatreds, of the drinker; opium, on the contrary, communicates serenity and equipoise to all the faculties, active or passive; and with respect to the temper and moral feelings in general, it gives simply that sort of vital warmth which is approved by the judgment, and which would probably always accompany a bodily constitution of primeval or antediluvian health.

Thus, for instance, opium, like wine, gives an expansion to the heart and the benevolent affections; but then, with this remarkable difference, that in the sudden development of kind-heartedness which accompanies inebriation, there is always more or less of a maudlin character which exposes it to the contempt of the bystander. Men shake hands, swear eternal friendship, and shed tears - no mortal knows why; and the sensual creature is clearly uppermost. But the expansion of the benigner feelings, incident to opium, is no febrile access, but a healthy restoration to that state which the mind would naturally recover upon the removal of any deep-seated irritation of pain that had disturbed and quarrelled with the impulses of a heart originally just and good.

True it is, that even wine, up to a certain point, and with certain men, rather tends to exalt and to steady the intellect; I myself, who have never been a great wine-drinker, used to find that half-a-dozen glasses of wine advantageously affected the faculties, brightened and intensified the consciousness, and gave to the mind a feeling of being *ponderibus librata suis*; and certainly it is most absurdly said, in popular language, of any man, that he is *disguised* in liquor; for, on the contrary, most men are disguised by sobriety; and it is when they are drinking (as some old gentleman says in Athenæus), that men display themselves in their true complexion of character; which surely is not disguising themselves. But still, wine constantly leads a man to the brink of absurdity and extravagance; and, beyond a certain point, it is sure to volatilize and to disperse the intellectual energies; whereas opium always seems to compose what had been agitated, and to concentrate what had been distracted.

In short, to sum up all in one word, a man who is inebriated, or tending to inebriation, is, and feels that he is, in a condition which calls up into supremacy the merely human, too often the brutal, part of his nature; but the opium-eater (I speak of him who is not suffering from any disease, or other remote effects of opium) feels that the diviner part of his nature is paramount; that is, the moral affections are in a state of cloudless serenity; and over all is the great light of the majestic intellect.

Having dwelt so much on this first and leading error in respect to opium, I shall notice very briefly a second and a third; which are, that the elevation of spirits produced by opium is necessarily followed by a proportionate depression, and that the natural and even immediate consequence of opium is torpor and stagnation, animal and mental. The first of these errors I shall content myself with simply denying; assuring my reader, that for ten years, during which I took opium at intervals, the day succeeding to that on which I allowed myself this luxury was always a day of unusually good spirits.

With respect to the torpor supposed to follow, or rather (if we were to credit the numerous pictures of Turkish opium-eaters) to accompany the practice of opium-eating, I deny that also. Certainly, opium is classed under the head of narcotics,

and some such effect it may produce in the end; but the primary effects of opium are always, and in the highest degree, to excite and stimulate the system; this first stage of its action always lasted with me, during my novitiate, for upwards of eight hours; so that it must be the fault of the opium-eater himself, if he does not so time his exhibition of the dose (to speak medically) as that the whole weight of its narcotic influence may descend upon his sleep.

O just, subtle, and mighty opium! that to the hearts of poor and rich alike, for the wounds that will never heal, and for 'the pangs that tempt the spirit to rebel,' bringest an assuaging balm; eloquent opium! that with thy potent rhetoric stealest away the purposes of wrath, and, to the guilty man, for one night givest back the hopes of his youth, and hands washed pure from blood; and, to the proud man, a brief oblivion for

Wrongs unredressed, and insults unavenged

that summonest to the chancery of dreams, for the triumphs of suffering innocence, false witnesses, and confoundest perjury, and dost reverse the sentences of unrighteous judges; thou buildest upon the bosom of darkness, out of the fantastic imagery of the brain, cities and temples, beyond the art of Phidias and Praxiteles, beyond the splendour of Babylon and Hekatompylos; and, 'from the anarchy of dreaming sleep,' callest into sunny light the faces of long-buried beauties, and the blessed household countenances, cleansed from the 'dishonours of the grave.' Thou only givest these gifts to man; and thou hast the keys of Paradise, oh just, subtle, and mighty opium!

Thomas de Quincey

From *Confessions of an Opium-Eater: The Pleasures of Opium*, 1821

James Greenwood Visits an Opium Den in the East End

The person who would enjoy the inexpressible treat attendant on the smoking of a genuine and unadulterated pipe of opium must make a pilgrimage for it. He must, for the time divest himself of all genteel scruples and every shade of civilized fastidiousness, and approach the mystic shrine unobtrusive among the humblest of the throng of opium worshippers. The main difficulty is to discover the whereabouts of the shrine. 'It is the only establishment of the sort,' a friend informed me; 'there is scarcely a sailor hailing from the East who does not, so soon as he touches at a Thames port, hasten there at once to gratify his pent-up hunger for opium. The place is patronised, besides, by many distinguished members of the nobility and aristocracy of Great Britain and it is rumoured even that Royalty itself has condescended to visit the opium-master in his modest retreat.'

Hearing this, and learning that Shadwell was the region honoured by the residence of so famous a personage, I had no doubt that I should be able to find him easily enough but my friend deemed it prudent to give me a few more explicit directions: 'There are two ways of arriving at the opium-master's house,' he said. 'One is to make for High Street, Shadwell, and keep along till you spy a tavern, the sign of which is the 'Hoop and Grapes;' next to it is another tavern, the 'Gunboat,' and opposite is another, the 'Golden Eagle;' while within range of a pea-shooter are three other taverns, the 'Home of Friendship,' the 'Lord Lovat,' and the 'Baltic' - and the last-mentioned is at the corner of the very street. Or you may go another way, down Cable Street, till you arrive at a not particularly inviting-looking thoroughfare, on a corner of which is inscribed 'To Rehoboth Chapel.' From the end of this street you make out a dingy-looking little public house, called the 'Coal Whipper's Arms.' The opium master's house is just handy - up a court.'

Tiger Bay - or, more properly speaking, Blue Gate fields - has been so often described that it will be needless here to say more respecting it than that it is as tigerish as ever; that the dens to which, every night of the year, drunken sailors are betrayed, swarm and flourish openly and defiantly in spite of the police. I discovered that my friend, in describing the street that rejoined in a Rehoboth Chapel and a 'Coal Whipper's Arms' as 'not particularly inviting,' had done it, no injustice. It is in the very heart of the Bay, and from end to end it presents an unbroken scene of vice and depravity of the most hideous sort. Almost every house is one of 'ill fame.' It was not quite late enough for the tigresses to make themselves sleek and trim, preparatory to going on their customary prow through their hunting ground; and there they sat, or lolled, or squatted at their doors, bleary-eyed and tousle-haired from last night's debauch. There, too, lounged, and smoked short pipes, and drank out of tavern measures the convenient, resting-place of which was the window sills, the males of the tribe - the thieves and bullies, who, quiet enough now, would be wide awake and ready

to show their quality when dark came, and the tavern gas was flaring. It was somewhat discouraging to find the mystic tree of celestial solace planted in such unpromising soil; but I comforted myself with the reflection that doubtless the eastern splendour of the opium-master's abode would shine the more brilliantly for the shabby setting. I entered the little public house, and, inquiring of the barmaid - who, all among the pots and glasses, and in fair view of several customers, was 'changing her frock' as coolly as if she were in her private chamber - I was at once directed to the court where the opium-master resided. An awful little court it was, with a narrow arched entry, and pregnant with the peculiar odour of neglected gutters. The houses of the court were of three rooms and a washhouse order; and, as directed, I applied at the third house of the left hand row.

There was no one at home but the opium-master's wife; but as she is English, I experienced no difficulty in making known to her my desire. She exhibited not the least amazement that one of her own countrymen should have a craving after the celestial luxury.

'I 'spect it won't be long before he's back,' said she; 'will you call again in a little while, or will you come up?'

'I will stay till he comes in, if you have no objection,' said I; whereupon she shut the outer door, and toiled slowly, like a person who is very ill, up the narrow filthy little staircase. I followed her. There were not many stairs, but she mounted them so slowly that I had ample opportunity, ere we reached the mystic chamber, of making myself acquainted with the smell of that which, if all went well, I should presently enjoy the felicity of tasting.

I cannot say that the odour was appetizing. The filthy little house seemed full of some subtle sickening essence lurking on the stairs and under the stairs, and ascending in invisible vapours through the many chinks and holes in the rotten woodwork. It seemed likewise to lie on the handrail in the form of a fine dust that instantly melted to some loathsome moisture the moment the hand was laid on it. There was a window, either open or broken, somewhere over head, as I could tell by the downward draught; but this was not an unmitigated advantage, for it stirred the dull leaden-looking hair on the woman's head, and the sickening odour was instantly and unmistakably increased. I have been since endeavouring to decide to what other familiar smell or mingling of smells the odour in question might best be likened, but not yet successfully. Treacle melted with glue over an open fire, and flavoured with singeing horse-hoof in a farrier's, might be something like it; but after all the comparison is feeble. Arrived at a landing, the opium-master's wife pushed open a door. 'Come in and take a cheer, sir,' she said, politely.

I went in, and unless I outlive memory I shall never forget the strange spectacle that was revealed. The room, at a rough guess, may have been eleven feet long and nine wide. An awfully dilapidated little den, the much-begrimed ceiling patched with rain leakage, and broken here and there, so that the laths were visible; the walls black with smoke and grease; the shattered upper panes of the foul little window plastered with brown paper. There was a bedstead in the room - a bedstead so large that there was left but a yard or so of space between it and the fire-place - a 'four-poster,' amply hung about with some kind of flimsy material, the original colour of which it is impossible to guess. But the bedding was more remarkable than the bedstead; for the bed was 'made' the wrong way - across the length of the bedstead instead of its width, with a long bolster; and it was covered, instead of a counterpane, with a huge breadth of fine Chinese matting. A table and three chairs, if I remember rightly, constituted the remainder of the furniture in the opium-master's smoking-saloon, with a few gaudy prints on the walls, and the mantelshelf crowded with ornaments, evidently of Oriental origin.

Having surveyed the furniture, I was at liberty to contemplate the opium-master's wife. I have said that she was English, but it was only by her speech that her nationality could be so readily decided. A small lean woman, with such a marvellous grafting of Chinese about her, that her cotton gown of English cut seemed to hang quite awkwardly on her sharp shoulders. Her skin was dusky yellow, and tightly drawn at the nostrils and the cheek bones; and evidently she had, since her marriage, taken such a thoroughly Chinese view of life, that her organs of vision were fast losing their European shape, and assuming that which coincided with her adopted nature. She was very ill, poor woman. It was killing her, she said, this constant breathing of the fumes of the subtle drug her husband dealt in. She didn't mind it, she had grown used to it, but it 'told on her,' and lodged in her chest, and gave her a cough.

'You mean that it is the smoke from your customers' pipes that affects you,' I remarked.

'There is no smoke from the pipes, it's too precious for that,' replied the woman. 'Nobody ought to smoke opium - nobody knows how to smoke opium - who is as wasteful as that.' And she accompanied the severe observation with a shake of her head, and a glance that betokened her fathomless pity for a person in my benighted condition.

'Then how do the fumes, or the smoke, or whatever it is, get into your throat, ma'am?' I enquired, humbly.

'It's the preparing of it chiefly,' said she, 'which I'd better be doing now, if you have no objection.'

On the contrary, I was but too grateful for the opportunity of witnessing such a mystery. I was presently amazed, too, as well as thankful; for, dropping on her hands and knees, she crawled a little way under the bedstead, and again

emerged with a saucepan - a common iron saucepan, capable of holding perhaps two quarts. This was a painful stab at my reverence for opium. Had I seen a vessel of ancient porcelain, or even a brazen pipkin, it would not have been so shocking; but a vulgar, smutty pot, such as potatoes are boiled in! I began to have doubts lest, after all, I had come to the wrong shop; but a searching question soon drew out clear evidence that I had been preceded in my visit by the illustrious travellers of whom I had heard. The woman placed the saucepan with the water in it on the fire, and then proceeded to fix on the mouth of it a sort of little sieve, the finely-woven meshes of which hung into the water. Then she shredded some cake opium, as sailors shred Cavendish for smoking, placed it on the sieve, and put on the brew to simmer.

I made no remark, for fear lest a further exposure of my ignorance might turn pity to downright contempt; but a light dawned on me. *This* was the secret of my failures with the opium pipe! I had procured the very best sort from the druggists, and filled with it the most freely-drawing of meerschaums, but nausea had been the only result. I had been guilty of the gross barbarism of taking my opium *raw*! It should be cooked - stewed in the manner that I have described; then the essence filters through the sieve, and falls to the bottom of the pot in the form of thinnish treacle, while what remains in the sieve is of no more account than common tea-leaves. The brew required some care, however; and, as I contemplated the poor woman with her head over the pot stirring and kneading, I could understand how it happened that so much of the noxious fume got into her hair as well as her chest.

After a while the sound of ascending footsteps was heard on the stairs, and the next moment the door was opened. 'Here he is! I thought he wouldn't be long,' said the woman. It was the opium-master; and he has brought home with him two customers of his own nation. Once again was I doomed to disappointment. I had pictured to myself an individual of commanding aspect, richly costumed as a mandarin; but here came a shabby, shambling, middle-aged Chinaman into whose apparel, if I mistake not, vulgar corduroy entered, and who wore his pigtail over a sort of stableman's smock. He had on Chinese boots, however, and a Chinese cap, which, on seeing me, he removed, bowing with great cordiality and politeness, as gracefully as his lame leg would permit. He looked at his wife inquiringly, and uttered the word 'Smoke?' and, on her nodding affirmatively, he again bowed and rubbed his dirty hands, and turned with what I knew from its tone to be a whisper of apology to his two friends.

It was plain that he was explaining to them that probably I had been waiting some time, and it would be no more than courteous to let me have my pipe at once. But they were of no mind to be put off. They were dirty, savage-looking villains, evidently fresh from ship-board, and sorely itching for an 'opium drunk.' They wore knives at their waistbands, and their very pigtails seemed to stiffen in anger as they scowled on me. I hastened at once to declare that I was not in the least hurry, and would give up my turn quite cheerfully. They knew nothing of English, but the master did, and in his quaint clipped lingo thanked me, at the same time explaining that he possessed but two opium pipes, else we could all have been served at one and the same time. This little difficulty smoothed, the two dirty Chinamen, restored to good-humour, flung off their caps and leaped upon the bed with the agility and eagerness of cats bent on stealing fish from a dresser. They curled down on the mat counterpane, about three feet apart, and mowed and grinned at each other as they wriggled into a perfectly comfortable position, with their heads on the bolster.

Then, with much gravity, the opium-master commenced operations. Out, of a cupboard he produced his tools - the two pipes, a sort of a tinder-box of the old-fashioned pattern, a slender iron bodkin fixed in a little handle, and a small brass lamp. The pipes were not a bit like ordinary tobacco pipes. Let the reader imagine a sixteen inch length of dark-coloured bamboo, as thick as a man's forefinger, hollow, and open at one end. There was no 'mouth-piece,' except the wide, open bore: while, at the closed end, an inch or so from the extremity, was a screw hole. Into this was screwed the tiny bowl, made, I think of iron, and shaped like a pigeon's egg. The opium-master lit the little brass lamp, and stepping up on the bed, squatted tailorwise between his customers, with his tools ready at hand. The thing like a tinder box contained the opium, but it was not, even after the stewing it had undergone, as yet ready for smoking; it had to be frizzled. It seemed to be about the consistency of treacle, and dipping in the tip of the bodkin, he twaddled it round till he had secured a piece as large as a common grey pea. This he held in the flame of the lamp till it was done to his liking.

Then he clapped the precious morsel into the pipe that one of the Chinamen was already greedily sucking, and, to all appearance, the ugly fellow was at once translated from earth to heaven. As the woman had previously informed me, the smoke that was drawn up through the stem was not blown out from the mouth - it was swallowed or otherwise disposed of by internal machinery. Nothing but what seemed to be the thinnest possible thread of purple vapour escaped from the pipe-bowl; and as the awful-looking being on the bed rapturously sucked and sucked, the thread became thinner, his face lit up with a strange light, and his pig-like eyes closed till but two mere streaks parted the lids - two streaks that glowed as though his eyes had turned to opals. While he was thus tasting felicity, the other

villain was served, and presently there was a pretty pair. I never should have supposed the human countenance capable of wearing an expression so sensuous, so bestial and revolting. Faintly and more faintly still they sucked, till a gurgling sound in the pipe-stems announced that the opium in the bowl was spent; then the pipes fell from their lips, and they lay still as dead men. I couldn't bear to look at them. I felt as though I were assisting at some sacrifice with a strong flavour of brimstone about it; and felt quite relieved when I turned my eyes towards the fireplace, to observe the woman engaged in nothing more supernatural than gutting a haddock for her husband's supper.

In about ten or twelve minutes the hideous figures on the bed evinced signs of revival. Observing this, the opium-master, who was still squatted on the bed, hastened to roll up a couple of cigarettes of common tobacco, and lit them by taking a whiff at each, after which he handed them to the Chinamen, who rose from the couch yawning, and, like men only half awake, staggered towards the fire, and sat regarding it in silence. They were not going yet; they had come for a 'drunk,' and would probably indulge in half-a-dozen more pipes before the evening was over.

Now the opium-master was at my service. I would have given more money than I had about me to have postponed my initiation in the art of opium smoking; but the demon on the bed was politely beckoning me, and I dared not say him nay. With a tremulous heart I mounted the mattress, but was firm in my resolve to take my pipe sitting, and not reclining. Direful qualms beset me in a rapidly rising tide; but I was an Englishman, and the eyes of at least one of the sleepy barbarians by the fire were blinking on me. The dose was toasted, and I took the great clumsy pipe-stem between my jaws, and sucked as I had observed the Chinamen suck. I swallowed what I sucked, or desperately endeavoured to do so, and the result was precisely what might have been expected. Without doubt I was stupefied, or I never should have ventured on another pull. That did it! Before I ventured on my perilous expedition I had a vivid recollection of what came of smoking my first cigar; but that dismal remembrance is now quite eclipsed by one a hundred times more dreadful. 'Sispince, please!' said the still polite opium-master, extending his hand; but I hastily pressed on his acceptance the whole of the half-crown I had brought for the purpose, and was glad enough to find myself once more breathing the free and delicious air of Shadwell.

James Greenwood

An opium smoke in Tiger Bay

From *In strange company: being the experiences of a roving correspondent*, 1883.

Douglas Jerrold Visits An Opium Den

We threaded an extraordinary tangle of dark alleys where two men could just walk abreast, under the flickering lamps jutting from the ebon walls, to mark the corners. We were on our way to the dreadful paved court, flanked with tumble-down one storied houses, in which our old friend the Lascar opium smoker rolled upon his mattress, stirring his stifling narcotic over a lamp, and keeping his eyes — bright as burning coals — upon his match... As for our friend the Lascar, whose portrait we had taken on a previous visit — we shouldn't see him to-night: he was 'in quod for a month: begging.' So we went to a neighbour and rival of his, and were introduced to the room in which *Edwin Drood* opens. Upon the wreck of a four-post bedstead (the posts of which almost met overhead, and from which depended bundles of shapeless rags), upon a mattress heaped with indescribable clothes, lay, sprawling, a Lascar, dead-drunk with opium; and at the foot of the bed a woman, with a little brass lamp among the rags covering her, stirring the opium over the tiny flame. She only turned her head dreamily as we entered. She shivered under the gust of night air we had brought in, and went on warming the black mixture. It was difficult to see any humanity in that face, as the enormous grey dry lips lapped about the rough wood pipe and drew in the poison. The man looked dead. She said he had been out since four in the morning trying to get a job in the docks — and had failed.

Douglas Jerrold

From *London: A Pilgrimage*, 1872

John Jasper Wakes Up - at an Opium Den

An ancient English Cathedral Tower? How can the ancient English Cathedral tower be here! The well-known massive grey square tower of its old Cathedral? How can that be here! There is no spike of rusty iron in the air, between the eye and it, from any point of the real prospect. What is the spike that intervenes, and who has set it up? Maybe it is set up by the Sultan's orders for the impaling of a horde of Turkish robbers, one by one. It is so, for cymbals clash, and the Sultan goes by to his palace in long procession. Ten thousand scimitars flash in the sunlight, and thrice ten thousand dancing-girls strew flowers. Then, follow white elephants caparisoned in countless gorgeous colours, and infinite in number and attendants. Still the Cathedral Tower rises in the background, where it cannot be, and still no writhing figure is on the grim spike. Stay! Is the spike so low a thing as the rusty spike on the top of a post of an old bedstead that has tumbled all awry? Some vague period of drowsy laughter must be devoted to the consideration of this possibility.

Shaking from head to foot, the man whose scattered consciousness has thus fantastically pieced itself together, at length rises, supports his trembling frame upon his arms, and looks around. He is in the meanest and closest of small rooms. Through the ragged window-curtain, the light of early day steals in from a miserable court. He lies, dressed, across a large unseemly bed, upon a bedstead that has indeed given way under the weight upon it. Lying, also dressed and also across the bed, not longwise, are a Chinaman, a Lascar, and a haggard woman. The two first are in a sleep or stupor; the last is blowing at a kind of pipe, to kindle it. And as she blows, and shading it with her lean hand, concentrates its red spark of light, it serves in the dim morning as a lamp to show him what he sees of her.

'Another?' says this woman, in a querulous, rattling whisper. 'Have another?'

He looks about him, with his hand to his forehead.

'Ye've smoked as many as five since ye come in at midnight,' the woman goes on, as she chronically complains. 'Poor me, poor me, my head is so bad. Them two come in after ye. Ah, poor me, the business is slack, is slack! Few Chinamen about the Docks, and fewer Lascars, and no ships coming in, these say! Here's another ready for ye, deary. Ye'll remember like a good soul, won't ye, that the market price is dreffle high just now? More nor three shillings and sixpence for a thimbleful! And ye'll remember that nobody but me (and Jack Chinaman t'other side the court; but he can't do it as well as me) has the true secret of mixing it? Ye'll pay up accordingly, deary, won't ye?'

She blows at the pipe as she speaks, and, occasionally bubbling at it, inhales much of its contents.

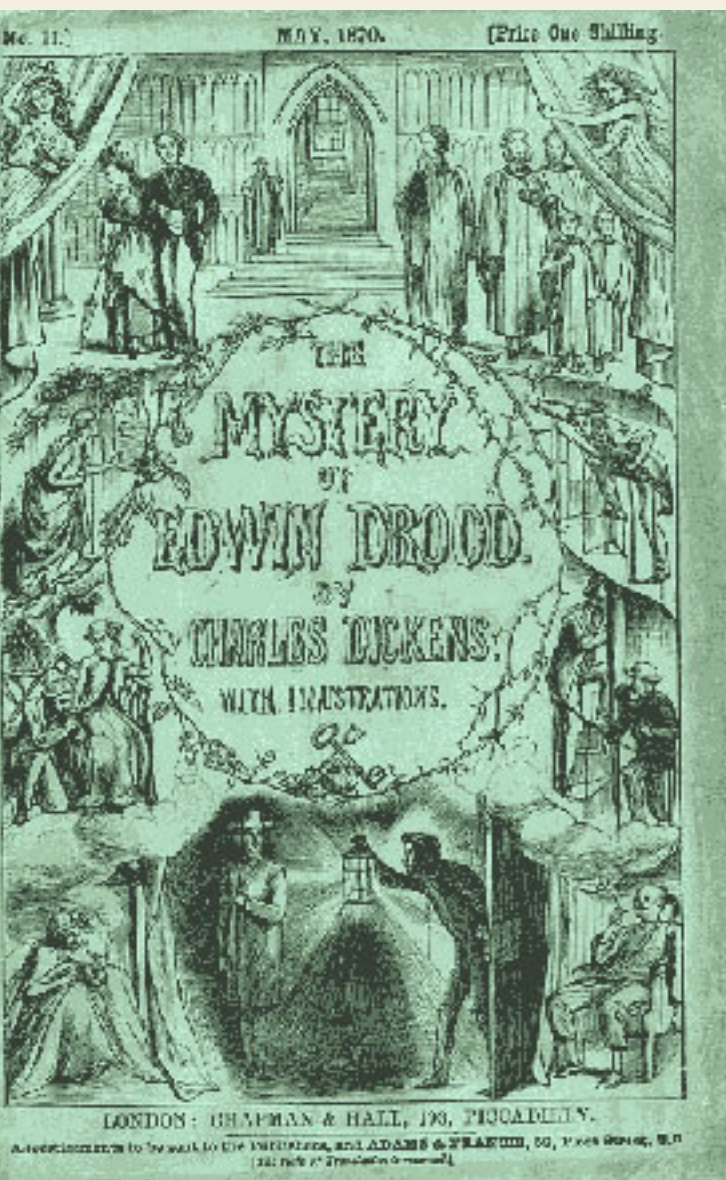
'O me, O me, my lungs is weak, my lungs is bad! It's nearly ready for ye, deary. Ah, poor me, poor me, my poor hand shakes like to drop off! I see ye coming-to, and I ses to my poor self, 'I'll have another ready for him, and he'll bear in mind the market price of opium, and pay according.' O my poor head! I makes my pipes of old penny ink-bottles, ye see, deary—this is one—and I fits-in a mouthpiece, this way, and I takes my mixer out of this thimble with this little horn spoon; and so I fills, deary. Ah, my poor nerves! I got Heavens-hard drunk for sixteen year afore I took to this; but this don't hurt me, not to speak of. And it takes away the hunger as well as wittles, deary.'

She hands him the nearly-emptied pipe, and sinks back, turning over on her face.

He rises unsteadily from the bed, lays the pipe upon the hearth-stone, draws back the ragged curtain, and looks with repugnance at his three companions. He notices that the woman has opium-smoked herself into a strange likeness of the Chinaman. His form of cheek, eye, and temple, and his colour, are repeated in her. Said Chinaman convulsively wrestles with one of his many Gods or Devils, perhaps, and snarls horribly. The Lascar laughs and dribbles at the mouth. The hostess is still.

'What visions can SHE have?' the waking man muses, as he turns her face towards him, and stands looking down at it.





flung into the air, it has had no sense or sequence. Wherefore 'unintelligible!' is again the comment of the watcher, made with some reassured nodding of his head, and a gloomy smile. He then lays certain silver money on the table, finds his hat, gropes his way down the broken stairs, gives a good morning to some rat-ridden doorkeeper, in bed in a black hutch beneath the stairs, and passes out.

Charles Dickens

From *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, Chapter I: *The Dawn*, 1870

'Visions of many butchers' shops, and public-houses, and much credit? Of an increase of hideous customers, and this horrible bedstead set upright again, and this horrible court swept clean? What can she rise to, under any quantity of opium, higher than that!—Eh?'

He bends down his ear, to listen to her mutterings.

'Unintelligible!'

As he watches the spasmodic shoots and darts that break out of her face and limbs, like fitful lightning out of a dark sky, some contagion in them seizes upon him: insomuch that he has to withdraw himself to a lean arm-chair by the hearth—placed there, perhaps, for such emergencies—and to sit in it, holding tight, until he has got the better of this unclean spirit of imitation.

Then he comes back, pounces on the Chinaman, and seizing him with both hands by the throat, turns him violently on the bed. The Chinaman clutches the aggressive hands, resists, gasps, and protests.

'What do you say?'

A watchful pause.

'Unintelligible!'

Slowly loosening his grasp as he listens to the incoherent jargon with an attentive frown, he turns to the Lascar and fairly drags him forth upon the floor. As he falls, the Lascar starts into a half-risen attitude, glares with his eyes, lashes about him fiercely with his arms, and draws a phantom knife. It then becomes apparent that the woman has taken possession of this knife, for safety's sake; for, she too starting up, and restraining and expostulating with him, the knife is visible in her dress, not in his, when they drowsily drop back, side by side.

There has been chattering and clattering enough between them, but to no purpose. When any distinct word has been

JACK THE RIPPER

From The Private Memoirs of
Sherlock Holmes

Kurt Matull and Theo von Blankensee

Introduction by Leslie S Klinger
English Version, Preface and Notes
by Eduardo Zinna
Illustrations by Jane Coram

In This Issue:

- I. A detectives' wager.
- II. The undertaker.
- III. At the opium den.

Coming in October and November Issues:

- IV. A moving train.
- V. A cold-hearted father.
- VI. A word too many.
- VII. An unhappy marriage.
- VIII. An obliging gentleman
- IX. Sherlock Holmes wins the wager



Introduction

Leslie S Klinger

It was inevitable that in the spring of 1888, Sherlock Holmes, the greatest detective in England and perhaps in the world, would be consulted in connection with the series of murders known as the work of a serial killer popularly named 'Jack the Ripper'. As early as 1881, in the case published as *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), Holmes told his new flat mate, Dr. Watson: 'Here in London we have lots of Government detectives and lots of private ones. When these fellows are at fault they come to me, and I manage to put them on the right scent.' So when the Metropolitan Police were unable to apprehend the killer whose activities had so inflamed the public, they turned to the world's first consulting detective, the man whom many regard as the finest detective of all time.

For reasons unknown, neither Holmes nor his 'Boswell', Dr Watson, ever made public any record of Holmes's involvement in the case. Therefore, the field has been left wide open for speculation, and there has been much of it. While the story which follows this introduction is the earliest publication of a possible connection, over 50 articles and narrative works have been published in the succeeding years, by mainstream presses as well as specialized journals and pamphlets devoted to the study of Sherlock Holmes or criminology. In the course of these studies, the Ripper has been definitively identified as Montague Druitt, the Duke of Clarence, Inspector Athelney Jones (of *The Sign of Four*), Horace Harker (a pressman who appears in *The Six Napoleons*), Professor James Moriarty (the Napoleon of crime), Irene Adler ('To Sherlock Holmes, she was always the woman', as reported in *A Scandal in Bohemia*), and numerous other figures, some drawn from the Sherlockian Canon, some from the annals of crime.

John H Watson himself has been accused of the murders in too many articles and books to mention. In the 4 July 1894 issue of the *Portsmouth Evening News*, Arthur Conan Doyle contemplated how Holmes might have tracked the murderer on the basis of the handwriting in the Ripper's famous 28 September 1888 letter. Holmes's plan, he wrote, would have been to reproduce the letters in facsimile, along with notes indicating the peculiarities of the handwriting, and to publish the facsimiles in leading newspapers. By doing so, he would, Conan Doyle suggested, 'have enlisted millions of people as detectives in the case'. However, Conan Doyle's public curiosity has not stopped a number of Sherlockian scholars from asserting that Doyle himself was the Ripper!

Most infamously, there have been some who have propounded theories concluding that the murders were committed by Holmes himself. These so-called scholars examine Holmes's reported cases and demonstrate that the dates of the Ripper murders do not coincide with other investigations. As evidence, they point out Holmes's well-known antipathy towards women ('Women are never to be entirely trusted, Watson, not the best of them.') as well as his powers of disguise and elusiveness and his evident bi-polarity.

No rational person can accept the notion that the most heinous murders in history were committed by the man whom John H. Watson termed the 'best and the wisest... whom I have ever known.' After eliminating this impossibility, whatever remains, namely, that Holmes apprehended the murderer, must be true. Until Dr Watson's tin dispatch box is ultimately discovered, we must be satisfied with speculation as to the details. While *Jack el Destripador* – Jack the Ripper – may have been a despicable piracy of the works of a great author (see Eduardo Zinna's fine Preface on its provenance), it is nonetheless noteworthy for its place at the head of the long line of such speculations.



Leslie S Klinger is the Editor of *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Short Stories* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes: The Novels* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005) and *The New Annotated Dracula* (to be published, New York: W. W. Norton, 2008). www.annotatedsherlockholmes.com

Preface

Eduardo Zinna

In late 1887 – only a few months before a brutal killer started stalking prostitutes in the slums of London – *Beeton's Christmas Annual* published a short novel called *A Study in Scarlet*. Its author was an underemployed Scottish physician, Arthur Conan Doyle, and its protagonist the world's first consulting detective, Mr Sherlock Holmes of 221B Baker Street. Despite his strong personality and analytical skills, Holmes was not an overnight success. Nothing was heard from him for two years. In 1890, he returned in a second short novel, *The Sign of Four*, published in *Lippincott's Magazine* in America and in book form in Britain.¹ But it was not until 1891, when his adventures started appearing regularly in the *Strand*, that Holmes – the moody, remote, unemotional, eccentric, hawk-eyed, woman-hating, drug-taking, violin-playing master of deduction and disguise – found his natural place in popular literature to become the beloved character that seemed more real than most fictional creations and than quite a few real people as well.

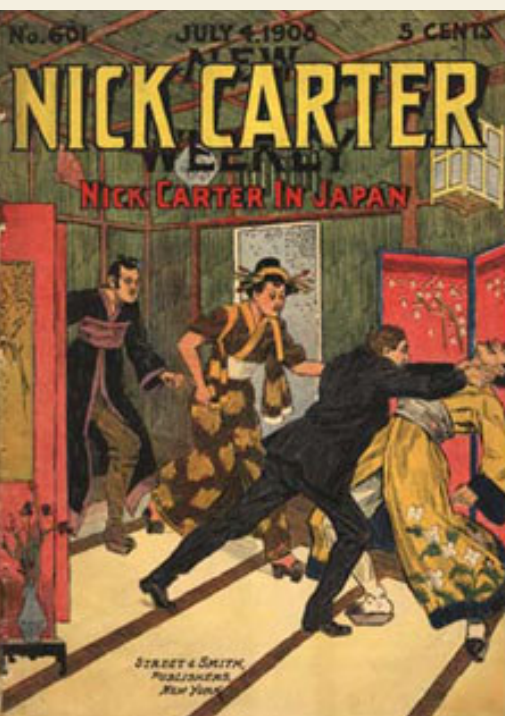
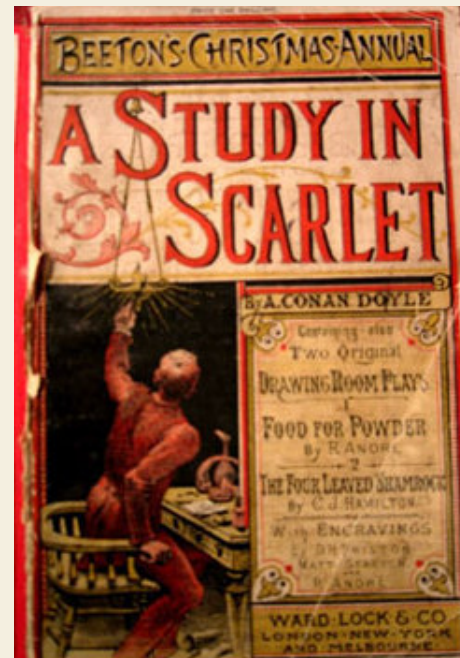
In one of his bleakest fairy-tales, Hans Christian Andersen wrote about a scholar who releases his shadow only to see it go on to far greater achievement than himself and ends hiring out as shadow to his own shadow. Like Andersen's scholar, Doyle resented his creation, Holmes, who kept him from writing the historical novels he considered his best work. At the end of the second series of Holmes stories, Doyle killed him off by pushing him over the Reichenbach Falls. For the next eight years Doyle received letters from readers and offers from publishers imploring him to bring Holmes back. He relented briefly in 1902 with a pre-Reichenbach novel, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and gave in completely one year later. In October 1903 Holmes returned to the *Strand* with *The Empty House*, the first story in a new series.

While Holmes rested at the bottom of the Reichenbach Falls, rivals emerged and, in some cases, blossomed. Some of them were the work of able writers; some, of hopeless hacks. Holmes's own *Strand* welcomed into its pages Arthur Morrison's Martin Hewitt, Investigator, and Grant Allen's Miss Cayle. Arnold Bennett penned narratives of Cecil Thorold; George R Sims's, of Dorcas Dene; the Baroness Orczy's, of the Old Man in the Corner. Having recounted the exploits of Romney Pringle under a pseudonym, Clifford Ashdown, R Austin Freeman wrote Dr Thorndyke stories under his own name. Doyle's brother-in-law, Ernest William Hornung, created Raffles, the Amateur Cracksman, gentleman, cricketer and thief.

Alongside the high-minded practitioners of the detection arts prospered the rougher, livelier pulp heroes. New York journalist John Russell Coryell and his collaborators continued to churn out innumerable Nick Carter adventures while the otherwise unremarkable Hal Meredith (real name Harry Blyth) and his collaborators kept Sexton Blake alive for decades to come. Across the world, adults and children alike devoured dime novels, penny-dreadfuls, *fascicules* and *Groschenromane*, large-circulation pulp magazines featuring sensational text, lurid illustrations and vividly coloured covers. In 1905, Alwin Eichler, an enterprising publisher from Dresden, Germany, bought the rights to publish in Europe the American dime novels *Buffalo Bill Stories* as *Buffalo Bill, der Held des Wilden Westens* (Buffalo Bill, the Hero of the Wild West) and *Nick Carter Weekly* as *Nick Carter, Amerika's Grösster Detectiv* (Nick Carter, America's Greatest Detective). Eichler had these stories translated into French, Dutch, Italian and Spanish, printed in Dresden and distributed through his subsidiaries in a world-wide publishing empire which flourished until the advent of the First World War.²

1 In fact, Holmes's second adventure was entitled *The Sign of the Four* when it appeared in *Lippincott's*. Its title was changed to *The Sign of Four* upon publication in Britain.

2 One of the most intriguing characters appearing in Eichler's publications was supernatural detective Sâr Dubnotal, the creation of French author Norbert Sévestre. Issue 10 of Sâr Dubnotal, le grand psychagogue (Editions Eichler, France, 1909) was entitled Jack l'éventreur – Jack the Ripper.



Eichler's success did not go unnoticed. Soon other publishers challenged his supremacy, flooding the market with magazines featuring the exploits of master detectives, western heroes and gentlemen adventurers often bearing American or British-sounding names like Nat Pinkerton (*Nat Pinkerton, der König der Detectivs* (Nat Pinkerton, the King of Detectives)), Jack Franklin (*Jack Franklin, der Meisterdetektiv* (Jack Franklin, the Master Detective)) and Bill Cannon (*Bill Cannon, Amerikas Berühmtester Kriminalkommissar* (Bill Cannon, America's Most Famous Police Chief)) – although they were written by mostly anonymous German hacks.

The most resolute of Eichler's competitors was the Berlin-based *Verlagshaus für Volksliteratur und Kunst* (VVK), which specialised in royal and religious prints as well as *Groschenromane*, so called from their price: 10 Pfennig, one Groschen. The VVK published, among others, *Texas Jack*, *Sitting Bull*, *Der Letzte Hauptling Der Sioux-Indianer* (Sitting Bull, the Last Chief of the Sioux Indians), *Berühmte Indianerhäuptlinge* (The Famous Indian Chiefs) and *Lord Lister*. Translations of the VVK series appeared in many places round the world, including France, Portugal, Sweden, Spain, Argentina and Mexico.

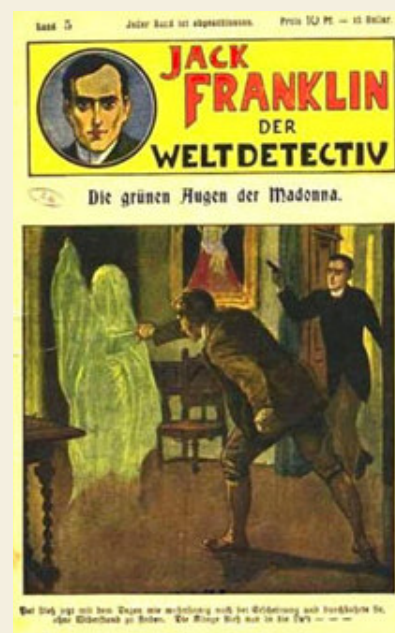
The *Lord Lister* series exemplifies best the VVK's methods. The creation of journeyman writers Karl Matull and Theo von Blankensee, it appeared first in 1908 in German magazines as *Lord Lister, genannt Raffles, des Meisterdieb* (Lord Lister, known as Raffles, the Master Thief) and then in French magazines as *Lord Lister, dit Raffles, le Grand Inconnu* (Lord Lister, known as Raffles, the Great Unknown). Lord Lister began as an unauthorised use of E W Hornung's character *Raffles the Amateur Cracksman*, here pursued by Inspector Baxter instead of Inspector Mackenzie and aided and abetted by Charley Brand instead of Bunny Manders. But he soon acquired a different name - John C Sinclair – and became *a Raffles*, i.e. a gentleman thief, rather than *the Raffles*.³ Thus purged of his spurious origins, Lord Lister went on to a long and successful career. The last pulp novel bearing his name (No. 3687) was published in Dutch in 1967.

In the early years of the twentieth century, Sherlock Holmes was by far the most famous and popular detective in the world and his original adventures were best-sellers in Germany. This could hardly escape the attention of the always vigilant VVK. On 17 January 1907, without much regard for copyright, it launched a new weekly, quarto-sized, 32-pages-per-issue series: *Detectiv Sherlock Holmes und seine weltberühmten abenteuer* (Detective Sherlock Holmes and His World-Famous Adventures). The first issue was called *Das Geheimnis der Jungen Witve* (The Young Widow's Secret). Though their name did not appear on the publications, the authors of the series were Karl Matull and Theo von Blankensee, who had also cloned Raffles to give life to Lord Lister. The covers were the work of Alfred Roloff, a member of the Berlin Academy.

Following protests from *Doyle's German publishers*, the series was re-titled *Aus dem Geheimakten des Welt-detektivs* (From the Secret Files of the World-Detective) starting with issue 11, *Blackwell, der Themse-Pirat* (Blackwell, the Thames Pirate). Holmes, however, was still the main character inside the magazine.

In these adventures, Sherlock Holmes was not assisted by Dr Watson but by an earnest young man named Harry Taxon, and his landlady was not the redoubtable Mrs Hudson but the equally impressive Mrs Bonnet. Unlike Mrs Hudson, Mrs Bonnet did not answer the door; Holmes had equipped his rooms with a variety of instruments, including an 'electric mirror apparatus,' which let him see who was at the door. The series went on for a total of 230 issues until 8 June 1911.

³ In 1971, Colin Watson recalled that 'forty years ago [the name of Raffles] was being used as part of the language. Any especially ingenious or lucky thief was likely to earn the epithet "a real-life Raffles".' *Snobbery with Violence*, Methuen, London, 1971.





These apocryphal exploits of Sherlock Holmes were published in many languages round the world, including Danish: *Detektivkongen Sherlock Holmes. Forbrydernes Skræk* (Sherlock Holmes King of Detectives. The Terror of Criminals) and *Opdagernes Konge Sherlock Holmes* (The King of Detectives Sherlock Holmes); Dutch: *De Detective Sherlock Holmes En Zune Wereldberoemde Avonturen* (Detective Sherlock Holmes and his World-Famous Adventures); Hungarian: *Szemelvenjek egy Sherlock Holmes vilag-detektiv titkos aktaibol* (A Selection from the Secret Files of Sherlock Holmes, World-Class Detective); Norwegian: *Sherlock Holmes. Storforbrydernes Skræk* (Sherlock Holmes. The Terror of the Arch-Criminals) and *Verdensdetektiven* (The World Detective); Polish: *Szerlok Holmes słynny agent śledczy* (Sherlock Holmes, World Detective); Portuguese: *Aventuras Extraordinarias de Sherlock Holmes* (Extraordinary Adventures of Sherlock Holmes) and *Aventuras extraordinarias d'um policia secreta* (Extraordinary Adventures of a Secret Policeman); Serbo-Croatian: *Detektiv Sherlock Kholmes: cuveni dogadaji iz njegova zivota* (Detective Sherlock Holmes: Famous Events in His Life) and *Detektiv Sherlock Holmes i njegovi znameniti doziwljaji* (Detective Sherlock Holmes and his Famous Adventures); Swedish: *Sherlock Holmes Detektiv-Historier* (Sherlock Holmes Detective Stories); Turkish: *Shauluq Hulms Kayzly Dousiehlary* (The Secret Files of Sherlock Holmes) and most certainly in another two dozen languages or more.

Fernand Laven translated sixteen issues of the German series into French for the magazine *La Nouvelle Populaire*. Starting on 15 October 1907, Laven published them under the generic title *Les Dossiers Secrets de Sherlock Holmes* (Sherlock Holmes' Secret Files), with the original Alfred Roloff covers. Once again, Doyle's publishers intervened and the title of the series was changed, beginning with issue 2, to *Les Dossiers Secrets du Roi des Détectives* (The Secret Files of the King of Detectives). Yet, once again, Sherlock Holmes remained the main character inside the magazine. In Spain, the series first appeared as *Memorias intimas de Sherlock Holmes* (Private Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes) in Madrid in 1908. In subsequent years, the publishing companies Atlante and F Granada y Cía. of Barcelona, both separately and jointly, published the pastiches as *Memorias intimas del Rey de los Detectives* (Private Memoirs of the King of Detectives) or *Memorias Íntimas de Sherlock Holmes*, both as fascicles and as compilations of three of four fascicles in one volume. The series was also published in Argentina and Mexico, sometimes credited to Conan Doyle himself.

Imbued with growing nationalism, the Italians went their own way. In 1909, they launched the series *Giuseppe Petrosino. Il Sherlock Holmes d'Italia* (Giuseppe Petrosino, the Italian Sherlock Holmes). Petrosino was an Italian-American police officer who had fought the Black Hand in New York and travelled back to Italy in 1900 to carry the fight to the Mafia, the Black Hand and the Camorra on their home ground. The stories, however, were Italian translations of the original German series and the covers featured Alfred Roloff's illustrations reworked by Italian artist Tancredi Scarpelli.

Belgium saw the strangest reincarnation of the Holmes pastiches. In December 1927, the Dutch-Flemish publisher Roman-Boek-en-Kunsthandel launched a Dutch translation of the original German series, this time entitled *Harry Dickson de Amerikaansche Sherlock Holmes* (Harry Dickson, the American Sherlock Holmes). In 1928, Belgian publisher Hip Janssens



Aus den Geheimakten des Welt-Detektivs

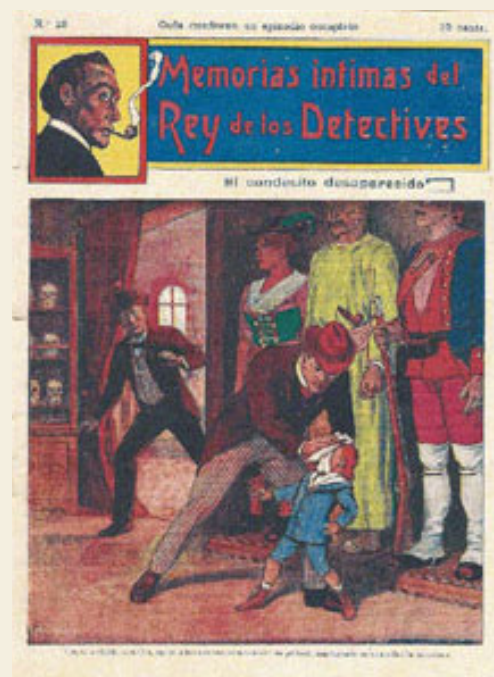
assigned Jean-Raymond Marie de Kremer – an occasional contributor to the American magazine *Weird Tales* better known under the pseudonyms of [Jean Ray](#) and John Flanders – to translate the Dutch series into French. Eventually, Jean Ray tired of translating the uninspiring original stories and, using the titles and the covers from the original German series as starting points, began to write his own stories. The French-language edition, *Harry Dickson, le Sherlock Holmes Américain*, began in January 1929 and went on for 178 issues, until April 1938.

Reality and fiction often feed off each other. Although they were both born in the space of a few months, Sherlock Holmes and Jack the Ripper never met in real life. Not in the Ripper's real life – the life of a vicious killer adrift in the slums of London's East End. Not in Holmes's real life – the life Conan Doyle breathed into him in his novels and stories. But as the fictional detective whom many thought real and the real killer who most resembled a terrifying creature of fiction became each an archetype of his kind, many wished that these two natural enemies had met and wondered about the outcome of such an encounter.

In the original German series, Sherlock Holmes confronted the counterfeiters of London, the smuggler king of Andorra, the poisoner of Castle Rock, the ragman of Paris, the horror of Baltimore, the bull-fighter from Granada and the white-slaver from Constantinople. In issue 18, entitled *Wie Jack, der Aufschlitzer, gefasst wurde* (How Jack the Ripper was caught), Holmes faced, for the first time in history, the killer from Whitechapel. In France, this story appeared on 6 February 1908 as *Jack l'Eventreur* (Jack the Ripper) in the 16th and last issue of *Les Dossiers Secrets de Sherlock Holmes*. In Sweden, it appeared as *Huru Jack Uppskäraren blev tillfångatagen* in issue 18 of the series *Sherlock Holmes Detektiv-Historier*, published during 1908–1909. This text was the basis for a Finnish translation, *Kuinka Jack-halkaisija saatiin kiinni*, serialised in a newspaper in 1910. The title of the story in issue 3 of the Norwegian-language series, *Sherlock Holmes. Storforbrydernes Skræk*, was *Hvorledes Jack the Ripper blev grebet*. In Portugal, the story appeared in 1909 as *Jack, o estripador* in issue 19 of *Aventuras extraordinarias d'um policia secreta*. In Spain, Editorial Atlante, issued a number of books comprising several fascicles translated from the original German stories under the generic title *Memorias íntimas de Sherlock Holmes*. Volume 5, *Jack, el destripador*, included, besides its title story, *En la tumba, junto a la máquina infernal*, *Muerto resucitado*, and *El trapero de París*. (In the Tomb next to the Infernal Machine, The Resurrected Corpse and The Ragman of Paris).⁴

In 1945, Anthony Boucher summarised the Spanish version – accompanied by some mordant comments – in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* under the title *Jack El Destripador*. His article was later included in Allan Barnard's 1953 anthology, *The Harlot Killer*. Boucher's summary has been until now the best known account of this Holmes pastiche in English and has thus bestowed pre-eminence on the Spanish version.

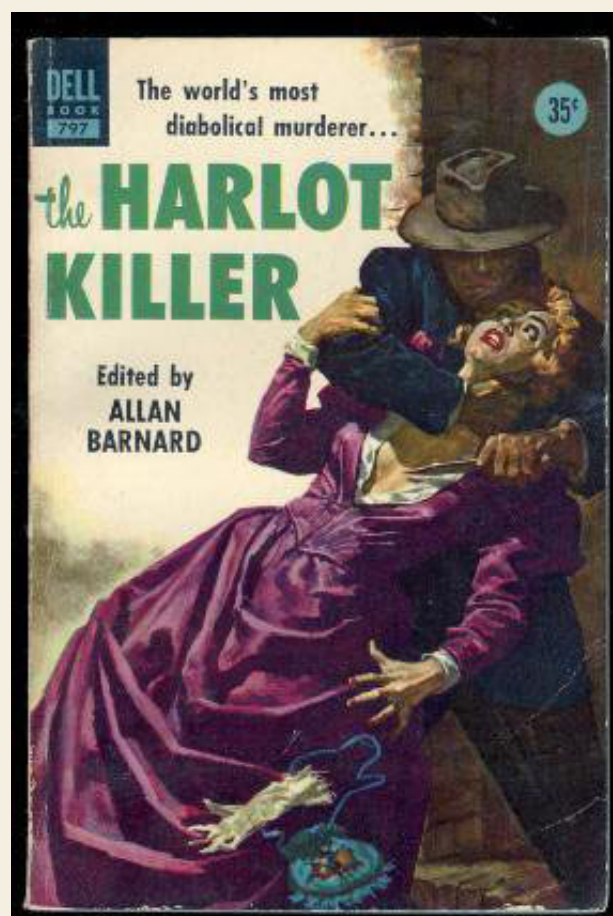
⁴ Spanish versions of issues 18, *Wie Jack, der Aufschlitzer, gefasst wurde*, 24, *Im Sarge neben der Höl- lenmaschine*, 25, *Der wiedererstandene Tote* and 26, *Der Lumpensammler von Paris*, of the German series *Aus Den Geheimakten Des Welt-Detektivs*.



In the present translation I've used, first, the Spanish version, made available by Stephen P Ryder, the administrator of the *Casebook Jack the Ripper*. Faced with a number of inconsistencies, I had recourse to the French version, included by Stéphane Bourgoïn in *Le Livre rouge de Jack l'Éventreur* (Bernard Grasset, Paris, 2003), which often differs, sometimes substantially, from its Spanish counterpart. I revised substantially my first draft in the light of the French version, though in a few cases I found the Spanish text to be more complete. I have also paid homage to Anthony Boucher by using some wordings from his *Jack El Destripador*. The best solution would be, of course, to refer to the original German text. So far, however, efforts to locate a copy of *Wie Jack, der Aufschlitzer, gefasst wurde* have failed, though Thomas Schachner of the German-language Jack the Ripper website is gallantly trying.

George Borrow has written that 'Translation is at best an echo.' The Italians are not so kind. 'Traduttore, traditore,' they say; and through the substitution of one letter for another they pithily convey the long held conviction that every translation betrays the original. The truth lies somewhere in between. Contrary to popular belief, virtually everything can be translated, with the possible exception of some puns and instances of wordplay, a great deal of modern poetry and James Joyce's *Ulysses* – though some have tried. The translation of prose into prose is the easiest and most faithful form of translation – although a muddled original will not beget a lucid translation and a lustreless original will not spawn a graceful translation.

The text you have before you, *Jack the Ripper*, could hardly be called a masterpiece. I have followed the original texts – themselves translations – as closely as possible while trying to reach beyond them for the spirit of the tale. I have taken some liberties – duly noted in footnotes to the text – and made some inevitable choices. The result is undoubtedly a hybrid – neither a true Holmes story nor a real Ripper narrative. But it moves fast, seldom sags, is often hilarious, always dramatic, has historical and entertainment value, offers variant portraits of Holmes and the Ripper, contains unexpected moral reflections and boasts of at least two unforgettable *tours de force*. So, sit back comfortably, suspend your disbelief, travel back in time to Victorian London and enjoy this tale of the first, deadly confrontation between the Great Detective and the most brutal killer of them all.



Jack the Ripper

Part I

I. A detectives' wager.

'This matter is of great concern to me, Mr Holmes, and I appeal to you as a last resort. I see no other way of resolving this enigma that becomes more distressing every day.' With these words Sir Charles Warren, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, London,¹ greeted the famous detective as he entered his office.

'I've just returned from Italy,' said Sherlock Holmes, 'where I was fortunate enough to handle successfully a delicate matter. I found your letter, I saw you had something urgent to tell me, and here I am.'

The two men shook hands. Then they sat comfortably on leather armchairs next to a small table.

'Were you long in Italy?' asked the Commissioner.

'About three months.'

'Despite that, you must have heard of the scourge that has descended over London. You must have read in the newspapers that in the police we feel as though we were lying on burning coals.'

'Ah! You must be talking about Jack the Ripper!'

'Naturally; and everybody in London, Europe, the whole world, is talking about this subject same as I am. I can assure you, Mr Holmes, that there hasn't been for centuries an enigma comparable to that posed by this mysterious individual. I swear, Mr Holmes, there are moments when I seriously consider placing my resignation in the hands of Her Most Gracious Majesty so that someone younger may take over my position, as long as I don't have to face again this apparition from beyond the grave.'

'From beyond the grave?' said the detective with a smile. 'I'm convinced we are dealing with a mere flesh-and-blood villain, and I don't see why it should be too difficult to bring to an end that gentleman's exploits.'

'What a relief to hear such words from your mouth, Mr Holmes,' said Sir Charles delightedly. 'Take a cigar and light it; our meeting will be long and I have left instructions we are not to be disturbed under any pretext.'

¹ I have taken what I consider a justifiable liberty in naming this character Sir Charles Warren and giving him the title of Commissioner, Metropolitan Police. In the French text, he is called simply Mr Warren and his position is that of chief of police or *préfet de police* – a title normally given to the head of the Paris police. In the Spanish text the name of the character is, consistently but puzzlingly, given as Warrn [sic] and his title is chief of police. In both cases, Sir Charles Warren is obviously implied. In practical terms, the change to Sir Charles Warren in the English version has necessitated substituting 'Sir Charles' for 'Mr Warren' or 'Warren' on several occasions.



'The public have given the murderer a name.
They call him Jack the Ripper.'

The Commissioner offered to the detective a small ivory box full of excellent cigars. Sherlock Holmes took one, cut off its tip and lit it. The Commissioner followed suit. Aromatic blue smoke filled the room where these two men, true criminological luminaries, would decide the fate of London.

'You have read everything about Jack the Ripper in the newspapers. I will therefore be brief and address only the basic facts. Three months ago a crime was reported to Scotland Yard which did not worry us excessively.² The incident had taken place in Whitechapel, in Gloucester Street - one of the worst streets in that district - at a carriage entrance. A young woman - a prostitute, as it transpired later - was found horribly mutilated, her abdomen slit open.

'Mr Hunter, Special Chief Inspector for Whitechapel, was called. He concluded it had been a crime of passion. As you well know, there are criminals who kill the woman they have just possessed. It's a warped passion, it's madness, if you wish, and falls within the purview of an institution for the care of the insane rather than that of Scotland Yard.

'Bravo! I share your fair and humane views, Sir Charles,' said Sherlock Holmes.

'The Gloucester Street crime was so mystifying that all investigations produced the same paltry result: "Some people thought they had seen a suspicious man in the street." As for his description, no one could come up with one. According to some, he wore a yellow overcoat; according to others, he wore no overcoat. A sailor swore by all the saints in heaven that the man had a full beard. By contrast, the landlady of a bar next to the carriage entrance insisted doggedly that he was clean shaven.

'The young woman was buried. The case was filed away. Three days later, there was a similar murder in the Greenwich Road.

'This time the victim was the wife of a seaman. Her husband was at the end of the world, in the East Indies. A young, beautiful woman, upon my word! She stayed too late at the home of a woman friend. She was murdered in the same way as the other.'

'It confirms the theory of the repetition of facts,' said Holmes with a smile. 'As you know, we criminologists accept, like doctors, that a certain remarkable event may be repeated the same day, or shortly afterwards, in identical circumstances.'

'The theory was amply confirmed,' continued Sir Charles. 'Crime followed upon crime. In one week, eight women became victims of the mysterious murderer. Always in the same way. The victims were either attacked and murdered in the street or dragged to a carriage entrance, a stable or a shed, in short, to a place where the killer was pretty sure he could... *work* undisturbed for a few minutes. Then, with a knife that must have been very sharp, he slit open their abdomen, in my view with great skill, so that death followed quickly.

'None of these hapless women said anything before dying?'

'None. In every case death occurred before the arrival of the police or members of the public.

'Soon it was obvious the wretch was not content with the prostitutes or loose women he could find not only in Whitechapel but also in the red-light district.³ Several women and girls of excellent families have fallen prey to him. But I must draw to your attention that, according to my best detectives, every single one of these women led secretly a dissolute life. Remember this, Mr Holmes; it's important.'

'That is also my opinion,' rejoined the detective. 'And how many cases have there been altogether?'

'So far, in a three-month period, thirty-seven women or girls have been murdered in this way.⁴ The entire city is in the grip of fear. No woman, no girl, dares go out at night, not even accompanied.

'The public have given the murderer a name. They call him Jack the Ripper.'

'As for us, we haven't been spared criticism. The newspapers have turned against us and call upon us daily to bring this state of affairs to an end. My superiors have ordered me formally to find and arrest Jack the Ripper. Yet I don't know how to achieve that.'

2 Both the French and Spanish versions refer to the 'central police station'. Since there was no central police station in London, I have used instead the name by which the headquarters of the Metropolitan Police were, and are, better known: Scotland Yard.

3 The French version calls it 'the zone reserved for public women'.

4 This is one of the most glaring inaccuracies in a text that is often surprisingly accurate. The number of Ripper victims is generally accepted to have been between as few as three and as many as six; the 'canonical' victims are five. It may be just a coincidence that Joseph Vacher, known as *Vacher l'éventreur* or the French Jack the Ripper, was charged in 1898 with having killed 38 persons over a period of three years. Cf. *He Killed Thirty Eight. A Peasant Jack The Ripper Did Murder For The Love Of It*, Trenton Evening Times, Trenton, NJ, USA, 28 January 1898. Vacher admitted to eleven murders, was found guilty and executed on 31 December 1898. As will be seen, this is not the only similarity between Vacher and the Ripper to be found in the present text.

'Tell me, Mr Holmes, you, who are the world's foremost specialist in this field, could you catch a man who lurks in the shadows like a ghost, who carries out his crimes in a few minutes and then vanishes without a trace, a man who always works in the same way yet constantly reappears in a different part of town - and seems to have made a pact with the Devil?

'No one has ever arrived in time to hear the victim cry out or see the murderer leave.'

Sherlock Holmes rubbed his closely shaven chin against his hand.

'May I ask you a few questions, Sir Charles?'

'What, Mr Holmes? By all means! I'll answer as best I can.'

The detective dragged deeply on his cigar and immediately blew the smoke back into the air in the form of smoke-rings. He looked thoughtfully at the rings. The spectacle seemed to please him a great deal.

'You were saying a few moments ago,' he remarked abruptly, 'that the murderer's procedure was always the same. Have the physicians confirmed that the murderer "worked" always with the same instrument, the same knife, for instance?'

'I can respond categorically in the affirmative. We have consulted the best physicians in London, who have tackled the case most willingly. Some of them maintain that the murderer can be only a butcher or a butcher boy. Others say it might be a physician. The abdomen is cut open as though it were a laparotomy.'⁵

'Are the bodies missing any parts or are they complete?'

'They are complete. In a number of cases the intestines have been pulled out.'

'Has theft accompanied murder in at least one case?'

'Never. Most recently, the wife of a wealthy merchant was murdered in Montgomery Street. She had in her possession a purse containing 20,000 pounds.⁶ Not even one bank-note was missing. All her jewellery was accounted for.'

'Naturally, you have raised an army of detectives to catch Jack the Ripper red-handed.'

'It goes without saying. As you can imagine, Mr Holmes, my subordinates are all anxious to distinguish themselves in an affair of this kind. They have spent whole nights on watch. An entire service has been organised. A system of signals has been agreed upon. I have gone further; I have given every street-walker in London a whistle that produces a very distinctive sound. All they have to do if attacked is use it.'

'And have they used it?'

'Never!' answered Sir Charles. 'Even though some of them carried the whistle in their pockets or wore it hanging over their chest.'

'I've done more. I have promised a reward to whoever catches Jack the Ripper. A substantial reward: one thousand pounds sterling.'

'I hoped to find a traitor, someone with knowledge of the crimes who wanted that blood-money. So far no one has come forward with accurate information.'

At that point there was a knock at the door of the elegantly furnished Scotland Yard office where this meeting was taking place.

'Who disturbs us?' demanded the Commissioner, obviously annoyed. 'Didn't I say clearly I didn't want to see anybody while Mr Holmes was here?'

The high official rose, turned the key in the lock and opened the door. A thin, pale, clean-shaven man walked in. He bowed respectfully to the Commissioner.

'Ah, it's you, Murphy,' said Sir Charles in softer tones. 'No doubt you bring some important news. When the chief of detectives comes in person it must be because of something important.'

'But, if it's Mr Holmes, the famous detective,' said Murphy with a touch of irony in his voice. 'Allow me to shake your hand, my dear sir.'

5 'Laparotomy: Surgical incision through abdominal walls into abdominal cavity.' *Oxford English Dictionary*.

6 This is the figure given in both the French and Spanish versions. Yet it is such a disproportionately large figure that it's hard not to think that it must be a mistake - as indeed appears to be the case with many other figures given in the story. In effect, it has been estimated that the equivalent of £20,000 in 1888 would be £1,531,589.24 in 2006 money using the retail price index. Lawrence H Officer, *Purchasing Power of British Pounds from 1264 to 2006*, MeasuringWorth.com, 2007. All information on the 2006 worth of 1888 monetary values is taken from this source.

‘No need for us to stand on ceremony, Murphy,’ said Sherlock Holmes. ‘You well know how we both feel. You hinder me in everything I do. As for me, I must admit it: I consider you a bungler.’

Murphy forced a laugh. ‘Ha ha! What a fine joke! Mr Holmes, no doubt you’ve done well today, since you are in such a good mood.’

‘I was,’ rejoined Holmes sharply. ‘But now that I’ve run into you my mood is spoiled for the rest of the day.’

‘The two rivals,’ said Sir Charles. ‘London’s chief of detectives and Sherlock Holmes, who has so often been of help and is our refuge when our skills fail us. Don’t take it badly, Murphy. I’m afraid it’s true. And, incidentally, what news do you bring?’

‘Bad news. The thirty-eight murder.’

‘What? Still Jack the Ripper?’

Murphy bent his head low and, casting a glance at Sherlock Holmes, said: ‘Yes, it’s a hard nut. But we’ve got what to crack it with. Have you got strong teeth, Mr Holmes? Give us a hand then. You might catch the Ripper.’

‘I’ll do my best,’ replied Sherlock Holmes. ‘But tell us what you know. Commissioner, may I be present at your meeting with Mr Murphy?’

‘Of course,’ said Sir Charles. ‘Thirty-eight, eh? So, another murder.’

‘Still the same method,’ replied the policeman, ‘except that this time the victim is well known, and this crime will provoke a great scandal in London. The singer Lillian Bell was murdered tonight.’⁷

‘Lillian Bell!’ echoed the Commissioner. ‘The famous singer! The celebrated beauty that was so admired and revered in Her Majesty’s court! It’s not possible! So this dreadful fate can befall even such a lionized and fêted *prima donna*.’

‘Unfortunately, Sir Charles, such is the case,’ replied Murphy. ‘And these are the circumstances of her death: she had sung at Drury Lane the previous evening with her usual success.⁸ She changed in her dressing-room and left the theatre with her maid on her way to the carriage that waited, like every night, to take her to her residence in Oxford Street.⁹ Normally her maid accompanied her to the carriage. It has been ascertained, however, that Miss Lillian left her at the theatre door for some reason and walked over to the carriage on her own.

‘When the coachman arrived at Lillian’s home, he was surprised that the singer did not open the door and step out. At last he jumped down from his seat, opened the carriage door and leapt back, horror-struck. Lillian was lying across the silk cushions, savagely mutilated. The police came at once. It was another murder by the mysterious Jack the Ripper.

‘Very distressing,’ said Sir Charles, running his hands through his grey hair. ‘This will have a wonderful effect, and we can expect a pretty press campaign! And I am convinced we’ll be groping in the dark again, since this murder seems even more baffling than the thirty-seven that preceded it.’

‘That’s right,’ said Sherlock Holmes, slowly returning from a corner of the room to which he had earlier withdrawn.

‘That’s right; very baffling and very complicated. But Mr Murphy won’t fail to shed light on it. I wish him luck.’

‘Don’t joke, Mr Holmes,’ said Murphy bitterly. ‘Try to capture the invisible Jack the Ripper yourself. Go ahead, look for him among the five million inhabitants of London and find the real culprit!’¹⁰

‘I will, my dear fellow, I will,’ rejoined Sherlock Holmes, ‘and I’d like to challenge you to a little competition, Mr Murphy, if you dare.’

‘Dare? I dare go to hell itself, if need be.’

‘All right then,’ said Sherlock Holmes, stretching out his hand. ‘You have so often claimed that my learning was nothing and that I found clues only by chance that I am not displeased that we are working on the same case. We’ll see which one of us succeeds.’

7 In both the French and the Spanish versions her name is spelt Lillian. I have anglicised this as well as several other names in the present version.

8 The Drury Lane Theatre, which was at the time the largest in London, was not in Drury Lane but in St Catharine Street. The only theatre in Drury Lane was the Olympia. Cf *Dickens’s Dictionary of 1888*.

9 Oxford Street has long been London’s main shopping street. *Dickens’s Dictionary of London for 1888* considered that it ‘ought to be the finest thoroughfare in the world’ – but wasn’t, since it still contained ‘many houses which even in a third-rate street would be considered mean.’

10 According to the Salvation Army, the population of the greater London area in 1888 was 5.6 million.

'A detectives' match?'¹¹ remarked the Commissioner, rubbing his hands with delight. 'Gentlemen, I take note of this wager and am prepared to contribute to its stakes twenty-five bottles of champagne we shall drink together the day Jack the Ripper is behind bars. I should derive at least some benefit from the wager that pits the two greatest detectives in England against each other in friendly competition to deliver London from this scourge.'

'I accept the wager,' exclaimed Murphy, 'and I bet one thousand pounds sterling I'll win.'

'One thousand sterling?' asked Holmes. '*All right*, Murphy.'¹² This very day I shall deposit one thousand pounds in the Bank of England and expect you will do the same. To the winner, the money and the champagne.'

The two detectives shook hands, perhaps for the first time in their lives.

'And now, gentlemen,' said Holmes. 'I have the honour to bid you farewell. I don't want to waste even one minute if that might affect my chances of success. Mr Murphy, my respects. I'm off to search for Jack the Ripper.'

II. The undertaker.

The body of beautiful singer Lillian Bell had not been taken to the mortuary. Out of consideration for the well-known and esteemed personality of the deceased, it had been taken to her residence.

She lay across a large bed completely covered with flowers. At the head of the bed burned two candles between which stood a large cross.

That bed displayed a sad spectacle. It was the flower of youth that insatiable Death had cut down.

Two people stood at the foot of the bed discussing in hushed tones that dreadful tragedy. One of them was a young man, slim and blond, quite handsome, with the appearance of a rake. His lethargic features bore witness to sleepless nights spent in all kinds of excesses. He was dressed smartly but somewhat unconventionally.

The other was a pretty girl about 23 years old, Lillian Bell's maid, Miss Harriette Blunt.¹³ She belonged to a good family and was, in a way, the singer's right-hand person.

'What an appalling tragedy,' said the young man, inspecting the seam of his gloves. 'I still feel the terror I experienced when I heard about it. I was having lunch at my club but rushed to take a cab to come here. My poor sister! Who could have dreamt she would come to such an awful end?'

A torrent of tears flowed from Miss Harriette's eyes. 'I'm still in a terrible state,' said the young woman. 'Ah! If at least I had been with her! This dreadful tragedy wouldn't have happened! But I had asked Miss Lillian's permission to absent myself for one hour. I needed to attend to a most pressing personal matter. She was so kind she agreed at once.'

'Perhaps your presence wouldn't have made any difference,' rejoined the young artist's brother. 'Rather congratulate yourself on not having been in the carriage, since that brute they call Jack the Ripper might have murdered you.'

Miss Harriette shuddered.

'A word between us, my dear Harriette. You were not merely my sister's maid but also her companion and her closest friend. Has my sister left a substantial fortune? A conservative estimate would put it, in my opinion, at about 100,000 pounds.'¹⁴ She earned large sums of money. My calculation is quite accurate. I know the sum has been deposited in the Bank of England. Naturally my sister has left a testament. Am I her universal heir? I am her only relative... We were estranged for a while, but at the end of the day we understood one another and I know for a fact she was very fond of me.'

'You've guessed right, Mr Bell. But you gave her many reasons to be displeased.'

'What do you expect? Lillian was a bizarre character. She must have her freedom but expected me to live like a shop-keeper.'

11 In English in the Spanish version.

12 These words are in English in the French version. They are missing from the Spanish version.

13 I have not anglicised this name, spelt Harriette in both the French and Spanish versions, because the name had existed in England before. Harriette Wilson, the notorious courtesan, capped a successful career by suggesting to her ex-lovers that a generous sum might ensure their absence from her memoirs. It is said that the Duke of Wellington refused to be intimidated and told her to 'Publish and be damned!' She did, and her portrait of the Duke was quite unflattering.

14 Ms Lillian Bell had therefore amassed the equivalent of at least £7,657,946.21 in 2006 monetary values.



'Come out, my man; don't try to hide any more; you've been caught.'

'Who is there?' cried Harriette at that moment, rushing to the door. 'Nobody may come in. Good Lord! What is that? Who is that black ghost?'

'There's nothing to fear, Miss Harriette,' said Grover Bell, walking towards the young woman. 'Ghosts don't exist - and that man clad in black will kindly explain to us in a few words the reason for his visit.'

A tall man in black stood at the door's threshold. Everything about him was black: the narrow trousers that constricted his legs, the high-collared frock-coat which, buttoned up to his chin, let no part of his shirt show, the mourning-band round his right arm, the top hat he carried in his hand and, finally, the pointy boots he wore in his large feet. The man also had an uncommonly pale face, a sharp nose and black hair glued to his skull. He wore black gloves in his hands.

'Excuse me,' said the gaunt personage. 'My name is Josiah Wakefield¹⁵ and I represent "Requiescat in Pace", Funeral Directors. We have been deeply moved by the news about the passing of the eminent artist Miss Lillian Bell, and I've come on behalf of our firm to convey our sincere sympathy. At the same time, I take the liberty of presenting you with our prospectus. You will see that we handle first, second and third-class burials - the most elaborate as well as the most modest - and that our terms are most reasonable. If you would honour us with your choice, you will have nothing to worry about. From death-bed to grave - we take care of everything.'

'My dear sir,' replied Grover Bell to that lengthy speech, 'I can't make any promises regarding my sister's funeral until the law has pronounced itself on the matter. No doubt the body will be examined, there might be an autopsy and who knows what the *coroner* might decide.'¹⁶

'That's what I thought myself,' rejoined Josiah Wakefield. 'But I'm sure you won't mind if I take some measurements for the coffin. You may go ahead with other arrangements in the knowledge that I shan't inconvenience you again.'

'I see no difficulty,' answered Grover Bell. 'We'll need a coffin in any case. Let's go to the next room, Miss Harriette. The gentleman will soon be done and in the meantime we can continue our conversation.'

15 In both the French and Spanish versions the name of this character is spelt Josias Wakfield.

16 The Spanish version contains the following footnote at this point: [*Coroner*] 'Official equivalent to an investigating magistrate.'

'It will be a matter of a few minutes,' replied Josiah Wakefield pulling a tape-measure from his pocket. 'Please don't go to any trouble on my account. You may wish to look at our prospectus while you wait. "Requiescat in Pace" is, pray note, the most important funeral company in London.'

As Harriette and her companion withdrew, Josiah started to take the necessary measurements and jot them down in an old notebook he had pulled out of his pocket and left at hand. Suddenly he raised his head, cast a glance at the door through which the two young people had left the room and lifted the sheet that covered the corpse. The mutilated body of the ill-fated woman was revealed.

The man looked with a knowledgeable eye at the wound, a deep gash that bisected the white abdomen. Then, covering again the lower part of the body, he held up the singer's hands. They were as white as wax, almost diaphanous. The rings with which the young woman had adorned them the evening before her death were still in place. They were very valuable jewels. But they did not interest the 'Requiescat in Pace' employee. Instead he examined thoroughly the well-manicured, rosy and highly polished fingernails, muttering to himself:

'Not one broken, not one even ruined! There was therefore no struggle between murderer and victim. In cases like this, women and girls who are attacked always use their nails.

'Must we conclude that Lillian Bell knew the murderer and invited him willingly into her carriage, not expecting him to attack her?

'But, what have we got here?' wondered the eccentric representative of the 'Requiescat in Pace' firm. 'What's this under her fingernail? A head or beard hair? Quick, my magnifying glass!'

Josiah Wakefield swiftly produced a magnifying glass, laid the hair on his notebook and examined it attentively through the powerful tool.

'Not a real hair,' he said, 'but a hair from a wig or a false beard. It's easy to see this is not a human hair but a false one. We have taken a first step. Jack the Ripper wears a wig and a false beard when he strikes. So, he is not uneducated, as his atrocious speciality might lead one to believe. He is not a brute, a primitive being, a killer from the lower strata of society. No, he is an intelligent man - and a degenerate.'

The undertakers' employee turned away from the deathbed but a sudden thought made him bend again over the corpse. He must have seen something that had awakened his interest. He opened the dead woman's mouth and examined her teeth with great interest. They were beautiful white teeth, quite famous in England. When Lillian Bell sang, it was not so much the wonderful sounds that came from her throat which were admired but her teeth. What's more, they were fully deserving of such admiration.

The undertakers' employee made a discovery that, if disclosed, would have thrown all England into turmoil. Lillian Bell had a false tooth. It was secured with a small rubber plate. In those times the art of implanting teeth and making crowns and bridges was not known at dentists' offices. Besides, that tooth was so well made that no one could have told it from the pearls that filled her jaw. Perhaps not even the singer's maid was aware of it.

Josiah introduced carefully his fingers in the singer's mouth and extracted the rubber plate that supported the tooth. He gazed at it studiously and then used again the magnifying lens to examine it.

'Could I be wrong?' wondered the clerk. 'But no, I couldn't be wrong about this... This small gold ring round the rubber plate proves it. I'm positive. Miss Lillian was an opium smoker. Many crimes originate at the opium dens frequented by the poor wretches who yield to this terrible vice. This is, besides, the only way in which a great artist like Miss Lillian could have established contacts with criminals. I will make good use of this information. I'm extremely pleased with my discovery.'

The 'Requiescat in Pace' representative replaced the tooth in its position. No one could have told it from the pearls that adorned the singer's lovely mouth. Then, with a faint smile, he turned away from the bed. But at that moment the magnifying lens slipped out of his fingers and fell to the floor.

'Clumsy!' exclaimed the clerk. 'My lens has rolled under the bed. I'll pick it up before the singer's brother and her maid return.'

He stooped down and stretched forward his long, lean body to look under the bed. Suddenly he started back; and then said in a low voice:

'Come out, my man; don't try to hide any more; you've been caught.'

From under the bed where the artist's body lay came a muffled mumbling. But the undertakers' clerk leaned over, grabbed a human leg and pulled; a body followed. It was a man hiding under the bed.

It was a filthy, wretched prowler, with ginger hair clipped short and a thick reddish beard. He didn't try to escape. When Josiah released him, he rose to his feet and said in a hushed voice: 'I don't want any trouble, friend. I'm not here to steal

but for another reason. I can say no more. Take this bank-note and forget about me.'

'My dear fellow,' rejoined the clerk. 'Who do you think I am? Do you think you can buy me for one pound? I'll raise hell unless you give me nine more.'

'You scamp!' said the prowler. 'How you take advantage of the situation! But I must go along since I badly want to stay here. Here you are, you scoundrel. Here's your ten pounds. And now, get out.'

The clerk coolly took the ten bank-notes, pulled an envelope from his pocket and placed them inside it. Then he wrote a few words on the envelope with a pencil.

'What are you doing? What are you writing on that envelope?' inquired the ginger-haired man.

'I'll be delighted to show you,' returned the other. 'Look: "Ten pounds sterling for the London poor from Chief Inspector Murphy".'

'*Goddamn*,¹⁷ so you know me!' growled Murphy - for it was him - startled and furious at the same time. Involuntarily, he touched his wig and his false beard as though seeking reassurance they were still in place. 'Tell me, man, what makes you believe -'

'There, there, don't worry, my dear Murphy; the moment I had you by the foot under the bed I knew it was you I was addressing and none other. I noticed a long time ago that you have a large corn under the little toe of your left foot which shows under the sole of your shoe. Now I wish you luck in your further investigations. I leave the field to you. Make yourself comfortable, hide again under the bed, take a nap; in short, do as you please. I shan't disturb you any longer. I congratulate myself on having earned in this manner ten pounds for the London poor.'

Murphy was literally foaming at the mouth with rage. He clenched his fists and hissed through pursed lips: 'Man, or rather, fiend; I know you. You are - you are -'

'Sherlock Holmes, detective, at your service,' said the other, laughing. And vanished.

III. At the opium den.

The use of opium is strictly regulated in all civilised countries. It is well known that opium is one of the most active medicinal drugs. What is not so well known is that this substance is a terrible poison, whose use has already cost great number of human lives.

The production of opium is limited to countries with predominantly dry climates, particularly Persia, China and, to some extent, Egypt. For centuries opium has been used as a powerful narcotic that induces the pleasantest dreams. Abuse of this drug is common mainly in China, Turkey and Java, and, in a lesser scale, in North America and England. In Turkey opium eaters are honoured.

You must see these people to have an idea of the overwhelming power of this poison and of the ravages it can cause in the human body. Opium smokers are pale. They are human shadows, their eyes dull, their faces deeply lined; they are, briefly, walking corpses.

In China and Java opium is not eaten but smoked, and that vice has taken root in America and Europe, mainly in England. Opium was introduced in England in 1840. Since then there have existed, mostly in London, a large number of opium dens frequented by the upper classes. This vice is despised by the other strata of society. Among the upper classes, however, it is readily embraced.

Society men and women that have fallen prey to the demon opium slip furtively, sometimes without even a disguise, into those dens. There they spend the whole night in ecstatic dreams, amid the mirages the 'divine smoke' creates and which transport them far away; but the following morning their awakening is awful.

As soon as Sherlock Holmes had ascertained that Lillian Bell smoked opium he returned home to change his disguise. He discarded the black costume of the undertakers' clerk for the smart clothes of the *gentleman*.¹⁸ He covered his hair with a black wig, put on a false moustache and applied white make-up to his face. Thus he acquired a sickly countenance that he enhanced by dabbing some bistre under his eyes with a brush. But that was not all.

17 In English in both the French and Spanish versions.

18 In English in both the French and Spanish versions.



'You wish to speak to me?' said Mrs Cajana in heavily accented English. 'What do you want?'

From a box he always kept under lock and key the detective took a phial and dropped some of its contents into his eyes. He performed this operation with prudence, using only a small quantity. It was belladonna, which might blind him were he not cautious. His eyes, carefully sprayed with that liquor, acquired a particular gleam, the singular glow that only fever can give.

'By Jove, Mr Holmes!' said Harry Taxon,¹⁹ who had just come in, seeing his mentor in that guise. 'You look like a walking corpse, or rather like a man suddenly taken with a high fever.'

'Thanks for telling me that, boy,' laughed the celebrated detective. 'That's precisely what I want. Look at me closely; you will learn something. The aspect you notice in me is common to opium smokers - those who have long been prey to this abject vice. Their cheeks look withered and wrinkled; their eyes have a natural gleam, an extraordinary fire that devours them: those are the clear symptoms of opium intoxication.'

'And where are you going in that disguise?'

'I might not return home tonight,' said Sherlock Holmes, putting a revolver and a dagger into his pockets. 'You're not coming with me, Harry; but wait for me here all night - until tomorrow morning. You may sleep. If I need you I'll wake you up.'

Sherlock Holmes shook hands with his young disciple and left quickly, because he didn't want Mrs Bonnet to see him in that costume.²⁰ The good lady worried when her master spent the night away from home. She grew especially anxious when he assumed an elaborate disguise, since she then knew he was going on a dangerous expedition.

With long strides Sherlock Holmes walked towards the Thames, crossed the bridge near Southwark Street and entered Tooley Street. It was a narrow lane, where some old dwellings still remained here and there. On one side the houses opened their windows on the Thames; on the other, on the South-Eastern Railway line.²¹

19 There is no Dr Watson in this series of Sherlock Holmes pastiches. Young Harry Taxon has taken the good doctor's place as Holmes's sidekick.

20 Mrs Bonnet replaces Mrs Hudson in these stories.

21 Wildly inaccurate as this story may on occasion be, it is quite accurate when it comes to the geographical location of some landmarks. Several bridges connect East London with Southwark: the Blackfriars, Southwark and London Bridges. While all are close to Southwark Street, the bridge in the story is most probably London Bridge. Tooley Street starts near the foot of London Bridge, adjoins London Bridge Station - the oldest railway station in London still in service - and runs parallel to the South-Eastern Railway line for part of its length. In Sherlock Holmes's time, the Thames might have flown much closer to the street on the other side.

Completely unfazed by the rabble that crossed his path and thronged the streets, he calmly reached a two-storey house in Tooley Street. It was undoubtedly one of the oldest in the street. It must have been there since the time when Cromwell had the King of England beheaded.

Along the front façade of the house ran, at the height of the first floor, a wooden balcony supported by columns. Sherlock Holmes walked over to the door and knocked; it opened at once. A Negro dressed in an elaborate livery stepped forth and asked him what he wanted.

‘I’d like to speak to Mrs Cajana,’ replied Sherlock Holmes.

Without further questions, the Negro showed him into a ground-floor room furnished with fading elegance. The soft light of an electric bulb hanging from the ceiling fell over antique furniture upholstered in costly yellow damask.

Sherlock Holmes was not long on his own. A small door opened and a woman in her thirties entered the room. She wore European clothes, but it was obvious she had not been born under English skies. Her complexion was the colour of bronze and her jet-black hair was greying at the temples.

‘You wish to speak to me?’ said Mrs Cajana in heavily accented English.²² ‘What do you want?’

‘To smoke opium...’

‘Ah! Who told you one can smoke opium at my house?’ retorted Mrs Cajana, adroitly simulating astonishment. ‘No, sir, they’ve mocked you. Be on your way.’

‘Madam, they have not mocked me,’ rejoined Sherlock Holmes. ‘If you entertain any doubts, if you don’t believe I am an inveterate smoker, look at me. Your knowledgeable eyes will undoubtedly discern traces of my prolonged use of the “good drug”.’

Mrs Cajana pulled on a golden chain and the electric bulb slid down from the ceiling; she removed its shade. The light fell fully on the detective’s face. She studied her visitor for a moment and then said in a low voice:

‘It is true, sir. You show all the symptoms. You definitely belong to our sect. But you know we must be prudent. In London the existence of opium dens is strictly forbidden. I am in excellent terms with the police in my district, but Scotland Yard watches me and I’m always afraid a detective will show up at my door.’

‘Ah madam,’ replied Sherlock Holmes. ‘I wish it were so. I mean, I wish I were not a smoker. I suffer terribly. I’d give anything to get over this vice. Nothing works. I can’t overcome it. I need opium, do you hear me, madam? I need opium. I want it at once, at once. Take me to one of your rooms. Give me the “good drug” or I’ll go mad!’

‘By Brahma!’ said sharply Mrs Cajana, who was of Indian extraction. ‘Can’t you wait? Well, calm down a little, sir. In my house you’ll find everything you need. Do you eat opium or do you smoke it?’

‘I smoke it. Oh, to smoke! Tell me quickly, madam, how much do I owe you?’

‘Five pounds sterling,’ said the proprietress of the opium den.²³ Sherlock Holmes took out his wallet and handed over the sum requested. Once those formalities were completed, the woman beckoned him to follow her.

They left the room. Following a long, dimly lit corridor, they reached the back of the house. They entered a sort of hall on which ten doors opened. Mrs Cajana opened one of the doors and motioned to his guest to enter. It was a long, narrow room. During the day its only source of light was a window whose blinds were drawn tightly.

In a corner stood a large sofa, obviously designed for smokers to lie on comfortably. Next to the sofa was a small table on which were placed all the paraphernalia that were needed to smoke.

‘Can you attend to it yourself,’ asked Mrs Cajana, lighting a small alcohol lamp, ‘or would you prefer I stay to load your pipe?’

‘I’d prefer that,’ replied Sherlock Holmes. ‘At the beginning I experience a strong emotion and don’t like to be alone.’

‘Nothing could be simpler,’ said Mrs Cajana, as though she had not heard her customer’s words.²⁴ ‘As soon as the water is boiling, throw the opium into it so as to dilute it. Next place the mixture in this apparatus to filter and dry it. Lay your head on this cushion and pick up an opium ball with the tip of this needle. Put it in the pipe’s bowl. Then toast it in the flame and inhale the smoke in one or two drags. If you need a stronger dose, repeat the operation several times.’

‘But I already know all that, madam,’ said the detective, crossing to the door so as to cut the woman’s retreat. ‘I haven’t come here to learn how to prepare or smoke opium, but to obtain from you information about certain matters.’

22 Both the French and Spanish versions describe Mrs Cajana’s English as ‘bad’. Taken literally, this would be unfair to the character, since nothing she says in the story is ungrammatical or inaccurate. I have therefore substituted ‘heavily accented’ English, an option that the text allows.

23 In 2006, the sum of £5 from 1888 was worth £382.90 using the retail price index.

24 In the French version this sentence ends with the words ‘Mrs Cajana’.

Startled, Mrs Cajana turned round. Her visitor had spoken in a totally different voice - and a suspicion arose in her mind. 'Don't move, madam,' said the detective firmly. 'If you cry out or call your servants, you're lost. I'll have you arrested at once. Reply to my questions with all truthfulness and I promise I shan't betray your secret. I am Sherlock Holmes, the detective.'

Mrs Cajana reeled and slumped on to the sofa, trembling with fright.

'I'll say it once again, madam,' added Sherlock Holmes, edging closer. 'You have nothing to fear; but don't try to deceive me.'

'What do you want to know then?' the wretched woman finally asked, terrified. 'I beg of you; don't torment me. All my fortune is on this house. I'll be ruined if...'

'You may proceed in peace with your pretty trade. What good would it do to close down your place? Ten opium dens would sprout to replace it, like so many mushrooms out of manure.'

'Tell me, did the artist Lillian Bell come to your house?'

'My God, what are you asking? You must know the first duty of the proprietor of an opium den is not to betray his customers.'

'I'll ask you again. Did Lillian Bell come to your house? Did she smoke opium?' continued Sherlock Holmes sternly.

'She was becoming a serious smoker. That I know; I have evidence.'

'Had she gone very far?'

'No, sir, I swear. I have only known her for a few months.'

'Who sent her to your house?'

'She was recommended by a man whom I respect highly. I repeat once again I don't admit just anybody. You have seen how I distrusted you.'



'There, on the sofa - that beautiful girl - murdered - her abdomen ripped open - Jack the Ripper was here!' cried the detective.

'She was recommended by a man whom I respect highly. I repeat once again I don't admit just anybody. You have seen how I distrusted you.'

'That's right. I deduce from this that the singer came strongly recommended. I am interested in Miss Bell's contacts. You've read in the newspapers that the poor woman has been murdered. I must know who put her in touch with you.' Mrs Cajana wrung her hands. 'I see you are going to wrest all my secrets from me,' she cried, 'and make my situation impossible, Mr Holmes. I beg of you... Do you want money? Five hundred pounds?'²⁵

'It's no use to talk to me about money. Do you think you can buy Sherlock Holmes? If I accepted payment for my silence I would now be one of the richest men in England. But nobody can boast of having shut my mouth with a thousand-pound note.'

'I'll repeat it once more: tell me the full, complete truth. You'll be able to continue your trade without hindrance, at least from me.'

'Ask then,' sighed the Indian woman. 'What do you want to know?'

'I'll say it again. Who recommended Lillian Bell to you? Who told her about your establishment?'

'It was the Indian doctor.'

'The Indian doctor? And who is this Indian doctor? A countryman of yours?'

Mrs Cajana shook her head. 'No, he was not born in India, but has long lived there. He speaks the language of the country better than I do.'

'So he is a white man?'

'Yes, a white man, a very learned physician. He has already sent me many clients.'

'An odd physician indeed,' exclaimed Sherlock Holmes, 'who prescribes opium as his colleagues prescribe some medicine against bellyache! Do you know his name?'

'I don't know his name, Mr Holmes, I swear. I have never heard him called by any other name than the Indian doctor. Besides, he seldom comes here; and when he does, he doesn't smoke, he doesn't eat; he observes. He is allowed to enter any room, because he is a very influential man who has rendered me some exceptional services. And if I told you that -'

Mrs Cajana stopped halfway through her sentence. An odd sound had pierced the walls of the room where they were and reached their ears. Holmes knew that sound. It was a stifled sigh, such as a woman under the influence of opium lets escape, a sigh revealing all the beatitude of the divine smoke...

'Who's next door?' asked Sherlock Holmes. 'Is it a woman?'

'Yes, but I don't know her name. Believe me, Mr Holmes, I don't ask the name of the persons who come here.'

'Perhaps!' retorted the detective. 'But I am sure that every woman who leaves your house at dawn is followed by a spy charged with finding out her identity. The game is known. Your trade is complemented by a profitable blackmail business.'

'How can you say that, Mr Holmes? I conduct my business honestly and honourably. I have never blackmailed anyone - God almighty! What's that? Have you heard, Mr Holmes? An appalling scream - and now -'

'A death-rattle!' cried the detective. 'The last sigh of a dying person! Mrs Cajana, something is happening behind that wall - something ghastly. Quick, follow me! Let me in. Ah, another scream - and now -'

They heard the crash of a broken window, an odd brushing sound - and then everything was silent. Holmes opened the door of the room and, hurrying into the hall, rushed towards the door behind which such terrible scene was taking place and tried to open it.

'The door is locked. Quick, Mrs Cajana, open it!'

The opium-den proprietress picked up a bunch of keys and started going through them. But Sherlock Holmes felt she was taking too long. With all his might he threw himself against the door, which he split literally in two. He crossed the threshold and let out a scream.

'There, on the sofa - that beautiful girl - murdered - her abdomen ripped open - Jack the Ripper was here!' cried the detective.

²⁵ In 2006, £500 from 1888 was worth £38,289.73 using the retail price index.

CHRIS SCOTT'S

Press Trawl

Deseret News (US)

23 August 1889

WHITECHAPEL.

A Cable dispatch to the *Boston Herald* contains a detailed and graphic account of the latest Whitechapel murder, together with a general description of the locality and its surroundings. If that which is horrible, disgusting, repulsive, can be called interesting, then the story may be classed among those which are of absorbing interest. The correspondent says Whitechapel is quiet, there being no outward visible signs at the East End that last year's series of fiendish outrages has been renewed. This is the seventh transaction of the kind in Whitechapel, presumably by the same person; and a diagram, with a cross where each murder took place, and numbered in its order, accompanies the sketch and lends a little additional ghastliness to the situation.

The scene of murder No. 7 is a sort of court, not very wide, and approached from the Whitechapel road by a covered passage, so narrow that it is with some difficulty that two persons can pass each other in it. The further end is approached through a narrow lane just wide enough to admit of a small wagon passing through it. Policemen were hovering about the scene at the time the correspondent wrote - the morning after the tragedy - who were in a kind of listless condition and not even trying to keep spectators away. Has it come to such a pass that they have become indifferent through familiarity?

The fact that the victims of "Jack the Ripper" were fallen and depraved does not greatly mitigate the horrors of the case. If such a condition could be because of such premises the Whitechapel fiend might in one sense be considered as only a scavenger and not a bloodthirsty wretch, for the murdered creatures and the class to which they belonged are described as being offensive to every sense. They are hopelessly abandoned. They are not only desperately poor, but they are desperately wretched in habit, language, and surroundings. Most of them are homeless, friendless, absolute outcasts, living in whatever shelter they can find, and when temporarily well to do, spending sixpence or eight pence for a bed at a registered lodging house. Their idea of luxury is a squalid room, for which they pay six shillings a week. They are frequently intoxicated. Some of them, like the last victim, smoke pipes and all array themselves in "flimsy gauds, soon tattered and disheartening to look upon."

The name of the woman murdered last week was Mary Mackenzie. She was 40 years old. But for the manner of her taking off, it would be a pleasing reflection, for her sake and the world's, that she no longer lives. Some years ago she left her husband and children in a northern town and came to London. She earned something as charwoman. For the last six or seven years she lived with a laborer named McCormack. When intoxicated, as was not infrequently the case, she was no more faithful to him than she had been to her husband. She and McCormack was so poor that, when they could not raise eightpence to pay for a night's accommodation at one of the registered lodging houses common in the East End, they had to spend the night in the streets, but she often spent in drink what would have procured a day's comfortable shelter. Hundreds and perhaps thousands of East End women are like her in this.

"It is difficult," says the writer, "to devise an effective plan for stopping these crimes and catching the criminal. Whitechapel is one of the most dismal spots on the earth, and the most dismal part of the vast East End. The East End is separated from Greater London by the old city, the business quarter of the metropolis. Greater London has almost no knowledge of this remote, yet teeming, section, in which 1,000,000 people struggle for daily bread. Of this 1,000,000 more than 100,000 are the very poor, who have never enough to eat or wear, who rarely touch money and scarcely know the meaning of the word 'home.' Two hundred thousand are classed as poor, their incomes seldom being more than \$5 a week, their rent being one fourth or one third of that sum. These wage earners are worse clad and worse fed than convicts or workhouse inmates. Above them in the scale are something less than 400,000 artisans and small shopkeepers

and 20,000 clerks. The rest of the million are at the very bottom of the middle class, and, like all the rest, have to pinch ceaselessly to make both ends meet.

In the midst of all this, the correspondent finds some satisfaction in the deduction that "Jack the Ripper" is doing one good thing for Whitechapel; he is drawing England's attention to this realm of woe. Millions of England's wealth is annually sent over the seas to the complacent heathen, but wretched Whitechapel, at the very doors of London's cathedrals, of her Parliament and royal palaces and mighty banks, exists in worse than savagery, and a worse than savage, undetected, slays her hopeless, helpless creatures who parade in the garbled shape of women. Christianity is mocked and civilization is mocked by the horrible and indescribable crimes that make the place abhorred.

Thus does Whitechapel add infamy to infamy, crime to crime and sin to sin until it must long since have transcended the record of Gomorrah and reached the summit of iniquity in its career of darkness and death.

Frederick News
31 December 1888

ANOTHER HORROR.
An Eight Year Old Boy Murdered
and Frightfully Mutilated.
"RIPPER JACK'S" IMITATOR.
The Victim's Legs Cut Off and Tied to His Body -
His Heart Cut Out and Thrown Upon the Ground - A Suspect Arrested.

London, Dec. 31.

After nearly two months' immunity from Whitechapel murders England has been startled by the announcement of a crime committed in Bradford, Yorkshire, which, in its horrible details, fully equals the atrocious work with which the east end of London has become familiar. The methods of the Bradford murderer are strikingly similar to those employed in London, but, instead of a woman, the victim is a little boy, who seems to have been lured from his home, murdered and cut up as thoroughly as any of "Jack the Ripper's" prey. Little Johnny Gill was playing in the streets on Thursday morning. He was last seen alive in the afternoon taking a ride in a milk van. The driver of the van has been arrested, but it is pretty certain he had nothing to do with the crime. He says he set the boy down in the most fashionable part of Bradford.

Johnny Gill did not come home on Thursday evening, and his parents, alarmed for his safety, advertised the fact of his disappearance in the local newspapers. On Friday the police took the matter in hand, but no news was obtained until the poor boy's body was found indescribably mutilated in an outhouse a mile or so away from where he was last seen alive. The body was perfectly naked, and was laid on the boy's vest and trousers, his jacket being thrown over his face. Strange to say, there was little if any blood on the clothing, and this, with other indications, makes it probable that the crime was perpetrated at leisure inside a house and the mutilated corpse afterward removed to the spot where it was found.

A comfortable theory which the local police profess to entertain is that the fiendish murder is the work of drunken lads whose imaginations have been influenced by the grewsome accounts of Whitechapel atrocities; but it is incredible that any one but a string nerved man could have mutilated the poor little corpse in the bestial fashion in which the work was actually done. Both arms and legs had been roughly chopped off and tied to the body by means of the suspenders worn by the child. The face and body generally were hacked as if in wanton brutality.

The body, moreover, had been disembowelled in the manner made shockingly familiar to us by the Whitechapel fiend. The heart had been torn out entirely and hung upon the throat, and both boots had been taken off the lad's feet and thrust into the gaping body. There were other mutilations which cannot be described here. Over the whole disfigured mass, which bore little likeness to humanity, was thrown a sack on which were the words: "W. Mason, Derby road, Liverpool."

Upon this sack the Bradford police practically base all their hope of tracking the murderer, for they have absolutely failed to obtain the slightest information of Johnny Gill's movements after Thursday afternoon. His playmates saw nothing of him after he went off in the milkman's cart, and the milkman can only say where he left him. The popular mind is, of course, inclined to place this murder to the credit of "Jack the Ripper," but it is more likely the work of some insane or morbid imitator. Experts, too, have more respect for the Whitechapel murderer than to suppose that he would voluntarily abandon the safe east area of London to resume his work among strangers.

Long lost evidence from Jack the Ripper case found.

by Maggie Jackson
Associated Press Writer.

London.

Police said they recovered long lost photographs and documents from the Jack the Ripper file, but the evidence still doesn't allow authorities to identify the man who terrorized London a century ago.

Nevertheless, the documents released Thursday have helped fill in historical gaps and included a chilling letter, written in neat script and red ink, said to be from the Ripper, according to police.

The Ripper's five victims, all prostitutes, fell prey to the murderer's knife in the seamy East End of London during a nine week period beginning Aug. 31, 1888. Most were disemboweled and mutilated.

"We're quite pleased that they are in our possession now," Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner John Dellow said of the photos and documents. "We can't say at this stage where or how they became detached or where they've been since, but they are of some interest to us.

"They fill in the historical jigsaw of the Ripper murders and one or two other things," Dellow told reporters at New Scotland Yard police headquarters. But he did not think it brought anyone closer to knowing who the Ripper was.

The yellowed Ripper letter taunts the police for failing to catch him.

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

"Grand work the last job was. I gave the lady no time to squeal. How can they catch me I love my work and want to again. You will soon hear of me with my funny little games."

Dellow said part of the evidence, a set of post mortem photographs of the Ripper's victims, was given to police last year by the family of a deceased policeman. It was not known how they came into his possession, he said.

The second set of evidence appeared more mysteriously, in a plain brown envelope mailed to police earlier this year.

Besides the Ripper letter, whose contents have been known, the envelope contained the announcement of a pardon for anyone with knowledge of the Ripper, original post mortem notes on the last victim, Mary Kelly, and documents about an 1889 crime thought possibly to have been the work of the Ripper.

Dellow said, "There's been a considerable amount of time spent on this to try and identify where documents might have been in the last few years," but it remains a mystery.

Donald Rumbelow, who has written two books on Ripper crimes, told the Associated Press the recovery of evidence was "important in the sense that... a lot of police papers were scattered, thrown away, destroyed... so anything which plugs gaps is actually doing us all a great service."

He said the documents would be given to the Public Records Office, where other police files were sent in 1951.

British Broadcasting Corp. television previewed a TV documentary Thursday that will be shown in September titled "Shadow of the Ripper," which examines social and historical reasons why the spate of crimes became so legendary.

The program is one of several by British and US television producers planned to coincide with the centenary. Other Ripper inspired entertainment includes walking tours of London, video games and T shirts.

Is He Jack the Ripper?

Melbourne, March 28th.

Considerable excitement was caused here today 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 and in England that Deeming is none other than the notorious "Jack the Ripper," the slayer of the Whitechapel, London, outcasts, and the 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 of his alleged confession.

The Argus is a reliable newspaper and there is no reason to doubt the truthfulness of the statement it makes today, that Deeming has acknowledged that he killed his wife and four children at Dinham Villa at Rainhill, Liverpool, and that he murdered and mutilated the last two victims whose bodies were found in the purlieu of Whitechapel.

NOT ALL THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS.

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 the Whitechapel victims, and removing certain of the organs.

The case is a most peculiar one in all its aspects and the public curiosity here is excited to the highest pitch to learn all the details of Deeming's many crimes.

CONFESSED TO A PERTH OFFICIAL.

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 this city and yesterday he started in custody of 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.

Daily Gleaner (Jamaica)
25 August 1891

Jack the Ripper Again.

London, August 7.

Much excitement was occasioned in the Whitechapel district this morning when a rumor was rapidly passed from mouth to mouth that the dreaded "Jack the Ripper" had again appeared and committed one of the butcheries that has made his name a household word in this most ill favored portion of London. At an early hour this morning as one of the denizens of Whitechapel, an old woman named Woofe, was passing through one of the numerous dark alleys with which the region abounds, she was set upon by an unknown man armed with a sharp knife. The place where the assault was made was a dark and dismal one, and as the hour was early the usual prowlers had sought refuge in doorways or under arches where they lay in drunken slumber. As rows are of nightly, almost hourly, occurrence in Whitechapel, no attention was paid, if indeed, any noise was heard, to what was, of course, taken for one of the usual drunken scuffles. But for the old woman, it was a scuffle for life.

THE BRUTAL ATTACK.

From what can be learned of the circumstances surrounding the attack it appears that the man, whom the people of Whitechapel are firmly convinced was the famous "Ripper," used his knife with fiendish ferocity. He grasped the woman by the head and drawing her backward, he, with one hand across her mouth, silenced the cries she would naturally have tried to make, while with the other hand he drew the keen bladed knife across her tightly drawn throat, inflicting a terrible wound. Then, using the knife as a dagger, he plunged it into her body again and again. There is a deep wound on the woman's arm which it is believed was received while she was attempting to ward off the ferocious blows aimed at her body. When released from the grasp of her assailant the woman dropped to the ground with the blood pouring from her wounds, and when, shortly afterward, she was discovered by a passing policeman she was unconscious and in a dying condition. She is seventy years old. The police are as usual hunting for some clue that will lead to the identification of the murderer, but as in all the other Whitechapel crimes the assassin has disappeared, leaving no trace save his mutilated victim.

The woman was taken to a hospital, and after a time she recovered sufficiently to tell of the attack made upon her. She is a German, and, unlike the other women murdered and mutilated in Whitechapel, she was not in the company of the man who attacked her, but was passing along the street when, without warning, the assassin sprang upon her. She saw the glitter of the upraised steel blade, but was unable to escape from the grasp of her assailant. She raised her arm to defend her throat from the sweeping blow aimed at it, and it was through this movement that the wound in her arm was received. When her assailant released her from his grasp she fell upon a doorstep. Despite her terrible injuries she still retained possession of her senses, and though the wound in her throat was bleeding profusely she was able to articulate, the weapon not having reached the windpipe.

Several persons passed while she was lying on the doorstep, and though they endeavoured to ascertain what the trouble was she could not speak English sufficiently well to make them understand that an attempt had been made to murder her.

THE CRIMINAL ESCAPED.

It is understood that the police found a razor covered with blood near the scene of the crime. The wound in the woman's throat could have been caused by a razor, as could also the deep cut in her arm, but from the nature of the other wounds it is believed that they were caused by either a knife or a dagger, as they appear to be stab wounds and not such as would be made with a razor. One man has been taken into custody on suspicion of being the assassin, but the evidence against him is very weak and no importance is attached to the arrest. The murder occurred in Cable street, Whitechapel.

Herald Dispatch
8 August 1891

A SCOUNDREL DYING.

The Scapegoat of the Cleveland Street Scandal.

Seattle, Wash., Aug. 6.

Charles P. Hammond, made notorious because of his operations in Cleveland street, London, is thought to be dying. Eight months ago he was committed to the city jail for grand larceny, and was afterward sentenced to two years in the penitentiary, but the case is now on appeal. He claims that the principal witness against him is Detective Todhunter, of the Scotland Yard. Hammond is suffering with pneumonia, and is also afflicted with a complication of diseases.

Hammond's approaching end will be comforting news to many people who bear honorable names in England. The details of the Cleveland street scandal kept the ocean cable busy for weeks some two years ago. Hammond was the keeper of a notorious house in Cleveland street, London, said to be frequented by members of parliament and scions of the nobility. Indeed, royalty itself was smirched by some of the accounts published at the time. Hammond fled to America and the popular belief is that he was aided in his escape from the law by people holding high places in the British government. Though offered strong inducements to talk, Hammond refuses to disclose what occurred in his Cleveland street house, or make public the names of those who frequented it.

Morning Freeman (Canada)
5 July 1860

The Indian Herb Doctor From Canada

Has arrived and may be consulted, free of charge, at his rooms in the American House, King Street. The Doctor will describe disease and tell his patients the nature of their complaints or illness without receiving any information from them. Sworn before His Worship Geo. Hall, Esq., Mayor of Quebec.

Quebec, June 13 1857.

This is to certify that I have been blind for ten years of my right eye, and for the last ten months my left eye became similarly diseased. Four weeks ago I was led by three members of the St. Patrick's Society into Dr. Tumblety's office almost blind; The Dr., after examining me, said he could cure me in a short time - notwithstanding most of the Doctors in town gave me up as incurable, namely: Dr. Landry and Dr. Fremont of the Nunnery Hospital; they gave me up after thirteen weeks treatment, and my wife led me home blind from the Institution. Then I commenced trying mostly all the Doctors of Quebec without the slightest particle of relief. I have been to work for the last eight or ten days, at my usual occupation, that of a mariner on the St. Lawrence, and thanks to the Almighty God that he has sent me the illustrious Dr. Tumblety to cure me. May God bless him.

William Smith, Citizen of Quebec, C.S.

Sworn to and acknowledged by the above mentioned William Smith, who has read aloud in my presence a printed document which he had never seen before.

July 2.

George Hall, Acting Mayor of Quebec.

The following certificate was sworn to before His Honor Henry Starnes, Mayor of Montreal, on December 8th, 1857:-

This is to certify that during four weeks I suffered from a Typhoid Fever. Having been rendered to the most feeble condition, I began to discover in myself alarming symptoms of approaching death, and the physicians told me they could do nothing for me. Some friends advised me to send and find Dr. Tumblety. I did so, and the good effect of his medicines on my constitution was magical. I quickly recovered hood health, which I had not known for two years before, and returned to my workshop at the Foundry of M. Bush, King Street, Griffintown, three weeks ago.

August Neaser.

Sworn before me this 8th day of Dec., 1857.

Henry Starnes, Mayor.
July 2.

El Municipio Libre (Mexico)
19 July 1889
(Translation)

London, July 18.

Two days ago, at two o'clock in the morning, in the lower part of the Whitechapel district, in the spot known as Castle Street, there was carried out a new murder of a woman, attended by equally revolting circumstances as those which some months ago alarmed and excited this city so much.

At the site of the crime where the body was discovered, signs of a terrible struggle were noticed.

The victim was about forty years of age.

This murder has quickly brought out alarm in society, because it shows that Jack the Ripper is about to resume his deeds.

Hagerstown Morning Herald (US)
24 February 1972

Doctor suggested as possible Jack the Ripper.

London (UPI).

A British civil servant has added yet another name to the list of those who might have been Jack the Ripper, a 19th. century murderer who stalked London's streets and was never caught.

Brian Reilly, in an article in the City of London Police magazine, suggested the man whose pseudonym became a synonym for a brutal killer, could have been a Dr. Merchant, a tubercular physician who lies buried in a pauper's grave.

The true identity of Jack the Ripper has fascinated criminologists and the general public since his first victim, a London prostitute named Mary Ann (Polly) Nicholls, was found dead Aug. 31, 1888.

Like three other prostitutes who died in the East End slums in the following months, her throat was slashed and she was disemboweled. In all, police attribute at least five and as many as 15 murders to the man who wrote them maniacal, gloating letters about the victims he claimed and signed then "Jack the Ripper."

In the years since then, various police officials, amateur criminologists and crime authors have offered their suspects for the Ripper.

Last year British newspapers, developing a theory offered by Dr. Thomas Stowell in the police journal, *The Criminologist*, speculated Jack the Ripper might have been no less a personage than Prince Albert Victor Christian Edward, Duke of Clarence and Queen Victoria's grandson, who died in 1892.

Reilly, who has a civil service job, advances circumstantial evidence to support his candidate for Jack the Ripper, Dr. Merchant.

According to his article, police constable Robert Spicer arrested the doctor in the heart of the Ripper's hunting ground soon after two prostitutes were murdered within half an hour on Sept. 30, 1888.

The smartly dressed doctor was sitting with another prostitute named Rosie in an alleyway. But at the police station Merchant said he was doing social work among prostitutes, and senior officers did not share Spicer's suspicions. They let Merchant go without even opening the valise he carried.

Reilly says Merchant had a possible reason for daring to take the "bold" risk of the Ripper. He was suffering from a tubercular disease that took him to a pauper's grave in December, 1888, a few weeks after the Ripper's last murder.

Merchant was 37, Reilly said; most witnesses described the Ripper as about 35.

Reilly said he began checking Merchant when he found the doctor had a professional connection with Liverpool. At least one of the Ripper's challenges to police to catch him was mailed from Liverpool.

Ogden Standard
2 October 1888

More Mysterious Murders In London.
TWO RECENT VICTIMS.
Within An Hour and in the Same District.
BOTH BRUTALLY HACKED.

London, Sept. 30.

This morning the whole city was again startled by the news that two murders had been added to the list of mysterious crimes that have recently been committed in Whitechapel. At an early hour it was known that another woman had been murdered and the report was that there was still another victim. The two victims as in the former cases were dissolute women of the poor class and that the motive of the murderer was not robbery is shown by the fact that no attempt was made to despoil the bodies. The first murder occurred in a narrow street at an early hour this morning, beneath the windows of a foreigners' Socialist club. A concert was in progress and many members of the club were present but no sound was heard. The same process had been followed as in the other cases. A club man on entering the court stumbled over the body which was lying only two yards from the street and a stream of blood was flowing from the body. The murderer had evidently been disturbed before he had time to mutilate his victim.

The second murder was committed three quarters of an hour later in Mitre Square. Policemen patrol the square every ten minutes yet the body of the unfortunate had been disemboweled, the throat cut and the nose severed. The heart and lungs had been thrown aside and the entrails were twisted in the gaping wound around the neck. The incisions show a rough dexterity and the work of dissection was evidently done with utmost haste. The doctors after a hasty examination of the body said they thought it must have taken about five minutes to complete the work of the murderer, who then had plenty of time to escape the patrol.

Mitre Square, the scene of the second murder, is a thoroughfare. many people pass through the square early on Sunday morning on their way to prepare for the market in the notorious Petticoat Lane. The publicity of the place adds to the daringness of the crime.

The police who have been severely criticised in connection with the Whitechapel murders, are paralyzed by these latest crimes. As soon as the news was received at police headquarters, a messenger was despatched for Sir Charles Warren, chief commissioner of police. He was called out of bed and at once visited the scene of the murders. The inhabitants of Whitechapel are dismayed. The vigilance committees which were formed after the first crimes were committed had relaxed their efforts to capture the murderer. At several meetings held in Whitechapel tonight it was resolved it was resolved to resume the work of patrolling the streets in the district in which the murders have occurred.

Dr. Blackwell, who was called to view the remains of the Berners Street victim, gave as his opinion that the same man, evidently a maniac, had committed both murders. The Berner Street victim had evidently been dragged back by a handkerchief worn around her throat. The inquest will be held at 11 o'clock Monday morning. The inquest on the Mitre Square victim will probably be held on Tuesday.

The Berners Street victim was Elizabeth Stride, a native of Stockholm, who resided in a common lodging house. The name of the other victim is not known.

In consequence of the refusal of Home Secretary Matthews to offer a reward for the arrest of the Whitechapel murderer, the people of the East End on Saturday petitioned the Queen herself to authorize the offering of a reward.

London, Oct. 1.

Several persons have been arrested on suspicion of being the Whitechapel murderers. The Financial News has offered a reward of £300 for the capture of the murderer. There is talk on the stock exchange of offering a further reward. The mayor has offered a reward of £500.

Ogden Standard
25 April 1895

The discovery of the original and only "Jack the Ripper" will set at rest the manifold theories as to the murderer and the cause. It is highly probable that a great many of the sensational crimes that have been chronicled as mysteries, may have been committed by such persons as the London maniac, and under like circumstances.

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

I Beg to Report



SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES. No singing! No dancing! No whistling! No kazoo playing! The Rumpus Theatre Company presents, for its Autumn 2007 Tour, *The Ripper Files!* - a brand-new Ripper play without any songs. Not even one. Now that's original. Rumpus describe the play as a 'spine-tingling new whodunnit based on the world's most famous case.' We can live with that. 'Inspector Lestrangle' - we think we know where he got his name - 'is up to his neck in evidence...but there's one fact only the Ripper himself will know...' You may imagine a few sinister chords coming up right here. Add Rumpus: 'Inspired by the ghoulish events in Victorian Whitechapel which have been a source of universal fascination since the 1880's...' - they're telling us? - 'and with a deliciously wicked sting in the tail...*The Ripper Files!* is a worthy successor to a long line of Rumpus chillers.' Rumpus go on: '*The Ripper Files!* offers further proof that Rumpus are "masters of the high audience appeal production" (*Times*).' And conclude: 'Jack's back...and he just can't wait to play!' Hear, hear, say we. And there is no need for you Brits out there to budge. The Ripper is coming to a theatre near you. From 24 Sep-

tember to 24 November 2007, Rumpus will stage *Files!* all over England and beyond. For dates and venues, go to <http://www.rumpustheatrecompany.co.uk/future.htm>. Tell them *Ripperologist* sent you.

A VERY SIMPLE GENTLEMAN. 'His head appears to be screwed on right. That was the only question as the pre-draft hype turned him into Jack the Ripper, as often happens. So far he appears to be a courteous young man who can rip off 43-yard runs. That's a good mix.' **Mike Garafolo** on Giants player Ahmad Bradshaw.

Fans' best wishes for Jennings and a look back, Star-Ledger, Newark, NJ, USA, 20 August 2007

http://blog.nj.com/ledgergiants/2007/08/fans_best_wishes_for_jennings.html

AN UNLESSONED GIRL, UNSCHOOLED, UNPRACTISED. 'My daughter has the good fortune to go to a state grammar school, but even here the illogical syllabus intrudes. Two years ago her class did excellent work on the rise of Hitler. At parents' night I asked the history teacher how they'd be tackling the Second World War, the League of Nations, and the division of Palestine. "Oh we won't," came the reply. "Next term we're doing Jack the Ripper."'

Shyama Perera, Scratch 'n' sniff GCSEs end in tears, Daily Telegraph, London, UK, 24 August 2007

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion/main.jhtml?xml=/opinion/2007/08/24/do2403.xml>

WILD AND WHIRLING WORDS. 'Statistical arbitrage, equity market neutral, global macro, equity hedge, managed futures, relative value arbitrage and global tactical asset allocation all suffered carnage in through mid-August, sources said. Even then, there was wide variation in returns. And playing the part of Jack the Ripper: leverage.'

Christine Williamson, A season of slaughter for quant shops. Subprime mortgage woes tear gaping holes in managers' leveraged strategies, Pensions and Investments Online, 20 August 2007.

<http://www.pionline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070820/PRINTSUB/70817032/1009>



I'LL QUEEN IT NO INCH FURTHER. 'Waxworks traditionally include a chamber of horrors, even this one, which is more haunted by the personas of J Lo and Britney than anybody resembling Jack the Ripper.' Edward Rothstein on Ripley's Odditorium on West 42nd Street, New York.

O, Believers, Prepare to Be Amazed! *New York Times*, New York, NY, USA, 24 August 2007

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/24/arts/design/24ripl.html?php>

A PIPE FOR FORTUNE'S FINGER. 'To call *Strawberry Jam* the Collective's poppiest album is a misnomer: Just because there's an onslaught of verbiage and weird noises (like most pop these days) does not a pop album make. It is their most oxymoronic, though. Recorded entirely on analog tape out in the desert, the songs are weirdly digital, squiggly, and processed. *Unsolved Mysteries* is dizzying, both claustrophobic and stroboscopic, full of flanged guitar, bubbles bursting, and a wheeling calliope while Avey sings about Jack the Ripper. But while didactically dense throughout, the band sounds strangely threadbare sonically.' Andy Beta on the band *Animal Collective*'s latest album: *Strawberry Jam*.

Lost in the Bewilderness: Animal Collective's latest mixes dizzying highs with frustrating dog-paddles, *Village Voice*, New York, NY, USA, 11 September 2007.

<http://www.villagevoice.com/music/0737,beta,77761,22.html>

SPEAK NO MORE. 'Hartson's got more previous than Jack the Ripper!' Harry Redknapp on ex-West Ham forward John Hartson.

Mark Gilbert, *Football's best ever quotes*, *The Sun*, London, UK, 18 September 2007.

<http://www.thesun.co.uk/article/0,,2002390000-2007430349,00.html>

ROSEMARY FOR REMEMBRANCE. 'As soon as we landed, something strong and peculiar hit me. I felt I had come home. Whether it was metaphysics or too many James Bond movies, every street I walked on seemed familiar, every building housed an undefined memory. When I stood in a room where Shakespeare's company had acted centuries before, I felt I had seen them do it. When I walked the paths of Jack the Ripper, my inner Victorian resurfaced. When I meandered across Abbey Road, I swore I heard *Old Brown Shoe* playing live. It kind of freaked me out, and yet it felt oddly comforting.' Lon Bumgarner, Faculty member at UNC Charlotte and Film Actors' Studio and freelance film and theatre artist, on a visit to London.

A Summer of Breakneck Theater, *Charlotte Observer*, Charlotte, NC, USA, 24 August 2007.

<http://www.charlotte.com/505/story/249608.html>

A KING AND OFFICERS OF SORTS. 'Let's take a look at today's reality. Our congress, as compliant, spineless and corruptible as ever, is so afraid of taking a real stance, that it is highly unlikely that even a Chertoff, an Addington, or even a Libby or Fielding would be opposed by them. The longer that the Democratic-led congress remains clueless and impotent, the more breathing room the president has. The odds are good, given past behavior, that the Senate would eventually cave in to the president's wishes, even if Jack the Ripper, Richard Speck, or Mr. Bean was nominated.' Blogger Rob Kezelis on the resignation and future replacement of former US Attorney General Alberto Gonzales.

Gonzales' Replacement - There Won't Be Any Nominee, *Capital Hill Blue*, USA, 27 August 2007.

<http://readerrant.capitolhillblue.com/ubbthreads.php?ubb=showflat&Number=28062>

NIGHT'S BLACK AGENTS. 'As homicidal Victorian ghouls go, Jack the Ripper had nothing on Dr Thomas Neill Cream. In fact, to this day there are those who will swear that the mysterious sex-slayer and the Canadian-trained physician were one and the same. Perhaps it had something to do with the principal target - London's streetwalkers. Or perhaps it had something to do with Cream's last words, which, legend has it, were uttered as the gallows trapdoor opened and sent him plunging into the hereafter. "I am Jack ..." The noose choked off the end of the sentence and sparked more than a century of speculation.'

Mara Bovsun, *Doctor Death*, *Daily News*, New York, NY, USA, 26 August 2007.

http://www.nydailynews.com/news/crime_file/2007/08/26/2007-08-26_doctor_death.html?ref=rss



SILENCE THE DREADFUL BELL. 'What do upcoming musicals inspired by such disparate sources as Jane Austen, Hanukkah, the Latin poems of Catullus, roller derby, Sherlock Holmes, the murder spree of Charlie Starkweather, Jack the Ripper, and the sci-fi movie 'The Last Starfighter' have in common?' asked Frank Scheck rhetorically in the *New York Post*. And his answer? 'Not a damn thing.' But he added that all musicals were being presented as part of the fourth annual 'New York Musical Theatre Festival' being held on many different stages throughout the city from 17 September to 7 October. Your move.

Roll Model, *New York Post*, New York, NY, USA, 15 September 2007.

http://www.nypost.com/seven/09152007/entertainment/theater/roll_model.htm

THE USES OF ADVERSITY. 'The TUC's (Trades Union Congress) opinion of Private Finance Initiatives is in the same category as its opinion of the identity of Jack the Ripper: potentially interesting, but practically irrelevant.'

Daily Telegraph, London, UK, 10 September 2007.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion/main.jhtml?xml=/opinion/2007/09/10/dl1001.xml>

FOR YOU AND I ARE PAST OUR DANCING DAYS. '[Mark] Rylance plays the protagonist: a fretful loner who, from a Maidstone garage, transmits an internet chatroom show devoted to the anti-Stratfordian case. His sole companion is a failed musician devoted to the idea that crop circles are astral signifiers. Through the magic of the web, Shakespeare himself miraculously appears, along with rival candidates for authorship such as Sir Francis Bacon, the Earl of Oxford and the Countess of Pembroke. We even get an intervention from a passing cop who applies Jack the Ripper identification techniques to Shakespearean authorship.' Michael Billington in a review of *I Am Shakespeare*, playing at the Minerva Theatre, Chichester, Sussex.



The Guardian, London, UK, 3 September 2007.

<http://arts.guardian.co.uk/theatre/drama/reviews/story/0,,2161056,00.html>

FORTUNE AND MEN'S EYES. 'When you think of a cold-blooded criminal, who comes to mind? Ted Bundy? Jack the Ripper? How about your friendly neighborhood embezzler?' Thus starts an article about embezzlers who do the crime but not the time in the *Ann Arbor News*. It seems that Washtenaw County Prosecutor Brian Mackie is angered by many things - including the fact that embezzlers rarely spend a day in jail is one of them. 'Embezzlers are calculating,' Mr Mackie says. 'The crime is cold-blooded in that it is well thought out and takes place over an extended period.' He believes that, because embezzlers' crimes are calculated, the prospect of time behind bars would act as a deterrent and wishes more judges sentenced embezzlers to weekends in jail in addition to ordering the return of the money.

Embezzlers do their crime, serve little time, Jo Mathis, *Ann Arbor News*, Ann Arbor, MI, USA, 18 September 2007

<http://www.mlive.com/news/aanews/index.ssf?/base/news-24/1190126834303580.xml&coll=2>



A MERE ANATOMY. From 25 October 2007 to 20 January 2008, the London Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery will host an exhibition entitled *Walter Sickert: The Camden Town Nudes*. The exhibition will bring together fifteen of Sickert's main nudes from private and public collections and will assemble - for the first time - Sickert's all four Camden Town Murder paintings. Sickert drew his inspiration for these paintings, dating from about 1908, from Emily Dimmock, a young prostitute who was murdered in her lodging house in 1907. The paintings show naked women overshadowed by clothed men in dilapidated surroundings.

The Courtauld Institute calls Sickert (1860-1942) 'one of the most important British artists of the twentieth century' and describes the paintings to be exhibited as 'among his most beautiful and complex works; admired both for their virtuoso brushwork and their highly original approach to the nude genre.' It adds: 'Against contemporary conventions of the idealised nude, Sickert depicted his naked models in the shabby interiors of Camden Town bedsits, investing the images with the disquieting themes of prostitution and poverty associated with this working class area of North London where he lived and worked.'

In recent times, Sickert - who has often been linked to the Ripper murders - was fingered as Jack the Ripper himself by Patricia Cornwell, the American crime writer. Ms Cornwell, whose theory has not found much favour among either *Ripperologists* or art lovers, claimed that the *Camden Town Murder* paintings amounted to a confession that Sickert was the murderer who killed and disembowelled five prostitutes in the East End of London in 1888.

Dr Barnaby Wright, the curator of the forthcoming exhibition, does not believe that Sickert was the Ripper. 'There are no slashed throats and you can't tell if the women are dead or not,' he said. 'Sexual danger, threat, even murder could be present but one of the paintings could also be read as a couple facing terrible hardship.'

The Courtauld Institute is located at Somerset House, Strand, London.

<http://www.courtauld.ac.uk/gallery/exhibitions/2007/sickert/index.html>

Ben Hoyle, *Is this just a painting, or a confession by the man who was Jack the Ripper?* *The Times*, London, UK, 22 September 2007.

http://entertainment.timesonline.co.uk/tol/arts_and_entertainment/visual_arts/article2507881.ece

BUT NOT FOR LOVE. 'You don't have to live where I do, on London's Commercial Street - the old stomping ground of Jack the Ripper which, to this day, is one of London's sorriest areas for prostitution - to know that most hookers are not internet-savvy entrepreneurs who make millions from blogging, but it helps. No doubt Belle, or Piper, wouldn't offer a blow job for 'a fiver for the train back to Croydon' as I was offered while enjoying an alfresco ciggie last week.' Martin Daubney, Editor, *Loaded* magazine, on ITV2 television drama *The Secret Diary of a Call Girl*.

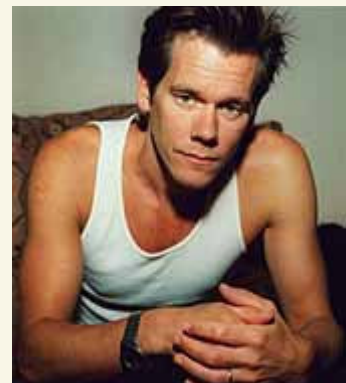
Emine Saner, *Wrong Call*, *The Guardian*, London, UK, 20 September 2007.

<http://politics.guardian.co.uk/homeaffairs/story/0,,2172923,00.html>

EVERY MAN IN HIS TIME. Actor Kevin Bacon - of six-degrees-of-Kevin-Bacon fame - has reportedly stated that he is sick of playing weirdos and paedophiles - as he did in *JFK*, *Hollow Man*, *The River Wild*, *In the Cut*, *The Woodsman* and half a dozen other films. What would he like to do? Comedy. Says Ian McShane of *The Independent*: 'Perhaps Bacon can ease his way into those more romantic and humorous roles he yearns for by funding a few productions himself. "Clowning Around With John Wayne Gacy" might suit his talents, maybe "Ted Bundy's Fun Day", or "A Day On The Big Dipper With Jack the Ripper". What a laugh they'd be.'

Ian McShane, [HolyMoly.co.uk](http://www.holymoly.co.uk), 28 August 2007

<http://www.holymoly.co.uk/news/28/kevin-bacon-wants-to-show-his-lighter-side-1315.html>



A DEED OF DREADFUL NOTE. The police and a Humane Society have established a special joint task force to prevent cat mutilations and killings in Edmonton, Canada. There have been 21 mutilation deaths in two years, although police suspect there may be more since people do not always report a dead animal. Five cats were found mutilated in Edmonton last summer, a dozen more in the west end this year and four in St Albert since late last month. Many of them haven't been identified. One Humane Society staff member underlined that animal cruelty can often lead to cruelty towards humans. 'Everybody's taking it very seriously because we all know how far it can go,' she said. Edmonton police Sgt. Duane Hunter stated: 'This is a criminal investigation, in the fact that they are suspicious deaths,' and added 'The task force will help investigators work on current cases and prevent new ones.' The *National Post* remarks: 'Humane Society officers have the power to arrest people in cases of abuse but, clearly, this series of Jack-the-Ripper-type murders on felines is out of their league.'

In the UK, animal charity People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) has sent out help packs to police forces amid growing fears for the safety of pets. Peta has published a report on its website entitled 'Animal Abuse and Human Abuse' showing that animal abusers move on to increasingly more violent crime. Among the cases cited are serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer, who impaled dogs' heads, frogs and cats on sticks, and high school killers such as Kip Kinkel, 15, of Oregon, and Luke Woodham, 16, of Missouri, who tortured animals before going on shooting sprees. Columbine High School students Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, who shot and killed 12 classmates before turning their guns on themselves, bragged to their friends about mutilating animals. Peta's report is based on studies from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and contains testimony by lawyers, social workers, psychiatrists and investigators on the link between cruelty to animals and other types of violent behaviour.

Cat-killer task force: Animal cruelty is no joke, *National Post*, Ontario, Canada, 21 August 2007.

<http://communities.canada.com/nationalpost/blogs/posted/archive/2007/08/21/cat-killer-task-force-animal-cruelty-is-no-joke.aspx>



UNNATURAL DEEDS. 'However, as people became more and more desensitized to violence, fear and anxiety became harder to instil through the written word. As the media started to grow and more people realized the depths and the horrors their fellow human beings were capable of, somehow, the monsters that were Dracula, Frankenstein's monster, and Mister Hyde seemed less horrifying. This was the case when the murders perpetrated by Jack the Ripper came into the knowledge of the general British public, as the unknown killer had done things that were debased, even by the standards of Shelley's or Stoker's classics.'

The Evolution of the Horror Genre, [malo-articlesbase.com](http://prgb.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=13368&Itemid=), 23 August 2007,

http://prgb.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=13368&Itemid=

THE SUN, THE MOON AND THE STARS. Was the Ripper investigation botched? Bill and Rich Sones, citing E J Wagner's *The Science of Sherlock Holmes*, definitely think so. First of all, they assert that lack of funding and training for support staff led to evidence related to the murder of the five mutilated victims, all 'ladies of the night' found within a half-mile radius, being treated unscientifically. 'For example,' they add, 'the corpse of Mary Ann Nichols — usually considered the first victim — was only superficially examined by a physician before mortuary workers (actually inmates from a workhouse) stripped the body. They had made no notes, labelled no evidence, and had only vague recollections afterward.' The Sones quote Coroner

What about the bloodhounds brought to London to be put on the killer's trail? The Sones recall that *The Times* reported that somehow the dogs had disappeared, and conclude: 'Oddly, while the public believed them to be roaming free, the Ripper murders stopped, and only after it was announced the dogs were back in their kennel did the murders resume.'

Wynne E Baxter at the Inquest: 'It appears the mortuary-keeper is subject to fits, and neither his memory nor statements are reliable.'

Not content with dissecting the investigation, the Sones appear to endorse Wagner's suspect. 'Not far from the murder scene and some 20 years earlier,' they write, 'a young Constance Kent — whose mother had a history of mental illness — had confessed to the brutal stabbing death of her half-brother. Released from prison at age 41, she possessed some medical skill as a midwife and was sporadically attracted to religion.' They recall Wagner stating that there are no available facts as to where she went or how she lived. Still, Wagner says, 'as it was just three years before the Ripper murders and the Ripper was believed to be a knife wielder with some medical knowledge, it is tempting to speculate about a connection...' Tempting indeed.

Bill Sones and Rich Sones, *Deseret Morning News*, Salt Lake City, UT, USA, 30 August 2007
<http://deseretnews.com/article/1,5143,695205257,00.html>

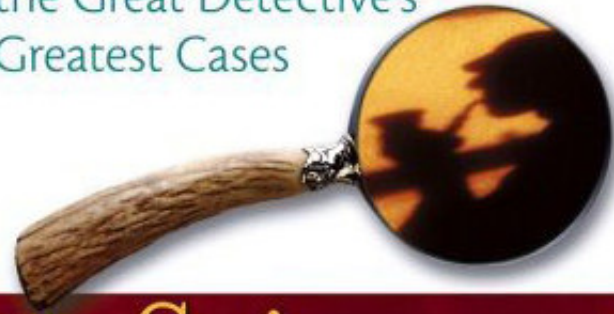
A SAD TALE IS BEST FOR WINTER. 'These crimes sell a great many papers, which neither Iraq nor Darfur will do. Some colleagues would accuse me of an absurd squeamishness, because I hang my head in shame at what our trade, as well as the Portuguese police, has made of the McCann story. They would say the world has been ever thus, since the days of Jack the Ripper.' Max Hastings on the press and the Madeleine McCann case.

I hang my head in shame at what my trade has made of the McCann story, *The Guardian*, London, UK, 10 September 2007.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,2165699,00.html>

NO OTHER MEDICINE BUT ONLY HOPE. 'They were very critical of the McCanns originally for leaving Maddy unattended in their apartment, in their hotel room. But after that there was huge sympathy for the McCanns as being punished way too harshly for an oversight. The thought, though, that they themselves were responsible for their own daughter's death and then dumping her body somewhere, that justifies the least. That would put them in the annals of crime along with Jack the Ripper.' Sarah Baxter of *The Times*, on hearing the news that Portuguese Police reportedly had evidence to charge the McCanns in their daughter's death.

Portuguese Police Reportedly Have Evidence to Charge Kate McCann in Daughter's Death, *The Big Story with John Gibson*, Fox News, 11 September 2007.
<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,296444,00.html>

From Baskerville Hall
to the Valley of Fear,
the Real Forensics Behind
the Great Detective's
Greatest Cases



The Science of
Sherlock
Holmes

E . J . W A G N E R

WE HAVE SEEN BETTER DAYS. 'I can just hear the newscast now: "And in other news, Paris Hilton has been adjudged a model of modesty, Jack the Ripper was a hero of the women's rights movement, and Vlad the Impaler was really a convivial kebab chef in Soho ..." All nonsense, of course - but no more nonsensical than an absurdly tendentious article in the September 19 front section of the *Washington Post* that somehow equates the Red Army in the second world war with freedom fighters.'

Quin Hillyer, *Raising the red flags. A Washington Post 'fact-checking' exercise that bashes Republicans is a perfect example of why American conservatives despise the mainstream media*, *The Guardian*, London, UK, 20 September 2007.
http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/quin_hillyer/2007/09/raising_the_red_flags.html

THROUGH ANOTHER MAN'S EYES. Cor Blimey! The Blind Beggar, the Whitechapel pub once frequented by East End villains Ronnie and Reggie Kray, is getting a civil partnership licence. Barman Kieran Kennington-Apollinaire, 25, who had had to travel outside London to 'get hitched' himself, said: 'There are a lot of gay and lesbian bars around here. 'But there are very few places in the East End which do gay weddings.' Ronnie shot dead gangland rival George Cornell with a 9mm Mauser at the Beggar in 1966 after Cornell called him 'a big fat poof'. It beggars belief, don't it?

Krays' Blind Beggar pub gets licence for gay weddings, *East London Advertiser*, London, UK, 19 September 2007.
<http://www.eastlondonadvertiser.co.uk/content/towerhamlets/advertiser/news/story.aspx?brand=ELAOnline&category=news&tBrand=northlondon24&tCategory=news&itemid=WeED19%20Sep%202007%2017%3A42%3A24%3A200>

OF THINGS PAST. 'Dig below the topsoil of your current existence and chances are you will uncover a family tree that, far from being a sturdy oak, is actually an elm, riddled with illegitimacy, informal adoptions, changed names and convictions. At first glance this might prove disappointing. Not so much that there isn't a duke tucked away somewhere as that the scandals are so damn ordinary. Being related to Jack the Ripper or Dick Turpin would confer a certain dark distinction. Learning that most of your ancestors turned crispy in the Great Fire of London would at least give you the sense of being tied into the grand narrative of British history. But discovering that they spent most of their time clinging to the perch of respectability, and sometimes falling off, is hardly the stuff dinner party anecdotes are made of.'

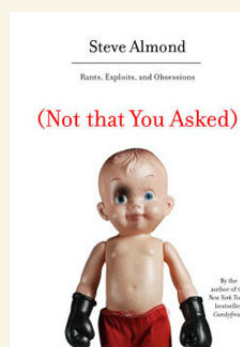
Kathryn Hughes, *History shows the apple hasn't fallen far from the family tree*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, 21 September 2007
<http://www.smh.com.au/news/opinion/history-shows-the-apple-hasnt-fallen-far-from-the-family-tree/2007/09/20/1189881678743.html>

GOLDEN LADS AND GIRLS. The opening date for the Flint Youth Theater's production of *Yours Truly, Jack the Ripper* has been changed from 5 to 11 October 2007. The production will run for seven performances, on 11-13, 19-20 and 26-27 October at 8 pm. The theatre is located at 1220 E Kearsley St, Flint, Michigan. Advance tickets are \$14 and are available at (810) 237-1530 or www.flintyouththeatre.com. Tickets also are available at the door from one hour before each performance for \$16. Tell them *Ripperologist* sent you.

Flint Journal, Flint, MI, USA, 21 September 2007
<http://www.mlive.com/entertainment/fljournal/index.ssf?/base/features-2/119038448199260.xml&coll=5>

A WILDERNESS OF MONKEYS. 'Steve Almond is not the skunk ape, he is not Nostradamus and he is not Jack the Ripper (so far as we know anyway). He does not party with Paris, run with O.J., break bread with that mad man from *Hell's Kitchen* or star in a sitcom with Charlie Sheen (though all would benefit from his company). He is not the Next Big Thing, the Great White Hope, the Who What Where, the Be-All to End All Be-Ins. He is not your father's Oldsmobile.' John Hood on Steve Almond, author of *(Not That You Asked): Rants, Exploits and Obsessions*.

Telling You Anyway: Steve Almond waits for no ask, *Sun Post*, Miami, FL, USA, 26 September 2007,
<http://www.miamisunpost.com/0927bound.htm>



DEATH WILL HAVE ITS DAY. As India advances towards superpower status it also begins to rank among the nations where serial killers increasingly roam. Another killer has emerged in the Baljeet Nagar area of India's bustling capital, New Delhi, in the wake of several similar cases throughout the country earlier this year. He has become known as Delhi's Jack the Ripper or the Hammer Man, as he uses a hammer or another blunt instrument to kill unsuspecting women in the early hours of the morning. The Delhi Ripper doesn't rape or rob. He kills the women, tears their clothes and vanishes into thin air. Over the last two months, he has attacked five women, leaving three dead. His last victim, a 45-year old former nurse called Darshana, was found in her room on the morning of 20 September 2007. Neighbours who noticed that she hadn't shut her doors during the night entered her room to find her with only the face covered. According to the police, her head was smashed beyond recognition. She was taken to the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital but was declared dead on arrival.

Locals said last year there were also similar attacks on women and they fear that a 'psychopath' killer may be on the prowl. The police, however, have not accepted this possibility yet. 'As of now there is no evidence to suggest that there is a psychopath hammer man targeting women in the area,' they said. 'We are investigating the cases.' They added: 'A case of culpable homicide not amounting to murder has been registered at the Anand Parbat police station but the actual cause of death will be known only upon arrival of the autopsy report.' They also claimed that in some cases, victims of attacks had refused to file complaints and there are registered cases in only two of the assaults.

The last victim, Mrs Darshana, had herself survived a similar attack a month ago. The police had then claimed that she had fallen off the cot. Her neighbours, however, have a different story to tell. 'He seems to have accomplished what he had unsuccessfully attempted one month back,' they said. But the police remained unconvinced. According to them, Mrs Darshana's brother told them that she had been mentally unstable for 17 years.

Harsh Vardhan Sahni, 'Hammer Man' strikes in Delhi, *The Times of India*, New Delhi, India, 21 September 2007, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Hammer_Man_strikes_in_Delhi/articleshow/2388018.cms
Delhi's 'Jack the Ripper' kills 3 women, spreads panic, *ibnlive.com*, 21 September 2007.
<http://www.ibnlive.com/news/delhis-jack-the-ripper-kills-3-women-spreads-panic/49079-3.html?xml>



IF MUSIC BE THE FOOD OF LOVE. We think we would have remembered the name of this New Zealand heavy metal or grunge group - but the outfit only recently came to our attention. Similar to the better known spoof band Spinal Tap, portrayed in the excellent 1984 Rob Reiner movie of the same name and who are shown toying with the lyrics of a song about the Ripper, this NZ foursome actually recorded a song called 'Jack the Ripper' which appeared on an EP in 2003, 'We Are Deja Voodoo' and then on a 2004 LP called 'Brown Sabbath.' This outfit wears its influences on its sleeve. Deja Voodoo actually began life as the fictional house band for the New Zealand show Back of the Y Masterpiece Television. Shall we say the lyrics to 'Jack the Ripper' are a little bit on the repetitive side? Perhaps they come across a lot better with the feedback at multi-decibel level.

According to one website 'Jack the Ripper' is 'very scary.' We also learn that 'These days Deja Voodoo claim to be

New Zealand's premiere Grunge rock band and few would bother to argue with them.' Deja Voodoo's band members are (or were) Chris Stapp (bass, vocals), Matt Heath (guitar, vocals), Gerald Stuart (vocals), Piers 'Wheels' Graham (drums). 'Deja Voodoo weren't good but they weren't as bad as some had hoped. They bemused audiences from Dunedin to Auckland, the only saving grace being the finale where Matt smashed ten burning acoustic guitars over Chris' head.'

www.lyred.com/lyrics/Deja+Voodoo/Brown+Sabbath/Jack+The+Ripper/

AND FINALLY, A TEST OF YOUR RIPPER KNOWLEDGE

The question last month was:

What American sleuthing duo met Jack the Ripper? The answer: Nick and Nora Charles. In *Shadow of the Thin Man* (W S Van Dyke, 1941) Nick (William Powell) and Nora (Myrna Loy) go to a wrestling match at the Arena Midtown. Both the Arena marquee and a poster inside advertise the World's Heavyweight Championship: Chuck Tschekov vs Jack the Ripper. Some sources say the role of the Ripper was played, uncredited, by wrestler Tor Johnson - later to appear in Edward D Wood Jr's *Plan 9 from Outer Space*.

Some Like It Hot: An Impossibly Difficult Quiz Question by Jeremy Beadle

Last month Jeremy posed this seriously hard question:

Which Ripper suspect is linked to...

Paul Edward Dehn, screenwriter of 'Goldfinger', 'The Spy who Came in from the Cold', three of the 'Planet of the Apes' films and 'Murder on the Orient Express';

A J P Taylor, controversial historian who once argued that the major cause of the First World War was the wrong turn taken by the chauffeur of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914;

Kenneth Wolstenholme, football commentator famous for 'Some people are on the pitch ... they think it's all over ... it is now!' "

John Peel, radio presenter one of the first to play reggae and punk on British radio and was the longest-serving of the original DJs of BBC Radio 1, broadcasting on it from 1967 until his death in 2004.

The Answer:

James Maybrick . All were sons of cotton merchants.



Loretta Lay Books

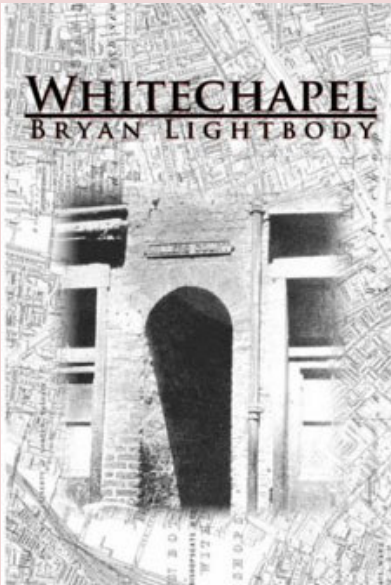
MAIL ORDER ONLY
24 Grampian Gardens,
London NW2 1JG
Tel 020 8455 3069
www.laybooks.com
lorettalay@hotmail.com

STEWART (WILLIAM)
Archer (Rodney) & Jones (Powell)
Begg/Fido/Skinner

Colby-Newton (Katie)
Eddleston (John J.)
Evans (Stewart) & Skinner (Keith)
Fuller (Jean Overton)
Griffiths (Major Arthur)
Harrison (Paul)
Hinton (Bob)
Horsler (Val)
Leeson (Ex-Det. Sergeant B.)
Rumbelow (Donald)

Jack the Ripper 1st edn. h/ back	£900
The Harlot's Curse p/ b	£35
The Jack the Ripper A to Z hb/dw signed labels : Begg/ Skinner/Rumbelow (wrote Intro')	£60
Jack the Ripper h/b (ex- lib.)	£45
Jack the Ripper An Encyclopedia 1st US edn. h/b	£50
Jack the Ripper Letters From Hell hb/dw signed labels	£15
Sickert & The Ripper Crimes (with unique bookmark) 1st edn. hb/dw	£30
Mysteries of Police and Crime 3 vols (1920) h/b	£75
Jack the Ripper The Mystery Solved hb/dw	£25
p/b signed label	£10
Jack the Ripper h/b (The National Archives)	£8
Lost London 1st edn. (1934) h/b v.scarce	£100
The Complete Jack the Ripper hb/dw signed labels Rumbelow and Colin Wilson	£30

Book Reviews



WHITECHAPEL

By Bryan Lightbody

2007, 485pp, Authorhouse, ISBN 978-1-4259-6181-7, £16.14

The Ripper's identity revealed. The relationship between the victims explained. Motive uncovered. While Bryan Lightbody's *Whitechapel* is a work of fiction, a novel combining factual and fictional characters, it manages to tie up pretty much all the loose ends that have had students of the Ripper case scratching their heads for years.

We have suspects collaborating, witnesses bungling, a vigilance committee full of menace and policemen much cleverer than we'd suspect. The main names from Commercial Street station are Abberline and Godley, and the interaction between the two is very reminiscent of Michael Caine and Lewis Collins in the 1988 movie *Jack the Ripper*. When reading of the duo's exploits, therefore, it's impossible to picture anyone other than those actors. The situation is the same with the Whitechapel Vigilance Committee and George Lusk.

The story of the Whitechapel murders unfolds around various fictional characters, including Ralph, a young newspaper seller, Fred Churchyard, a rent boy paid to testify against Francis Tumblety on gross indecency, and PC Robert Ford, who infiltrates the Vigilance Committee, murders Michael Ostrog and falls in love with Mary Kelly. Apart from that, not much of a role. Seriously, Mr Lightbody tells us that *Whitechapel* is the first of a trilogy starring Robert Ford.

In his introductory Author's note, Mr Lightbody says: "Whitechapel is an historical novel. It is a work of fiction based on true events. [It] is written to allow the reader to enter the world of Victorian London, learn of the events of the autumn of 1888 and to link together some of the enigmas of the case to perhaps provide a tangible answer to the enduring mystery of Jack the Ripper. Its overall purpose is to entertain".

And entertain it does. Critics may argue that a firmer use of the Editor's pen would have been beneficial, especially with regards to punctuation, but this would ignore the pure fun to be had in this book. It's obvious that Mr Lightbody thoroughly enjoyed himself writing *Whitechapel*, and taken in the same spirit, the reader can do so too.

CATCH ME WHEN YOU CAN *JACK THE RIPPER*

By Leanne Perry

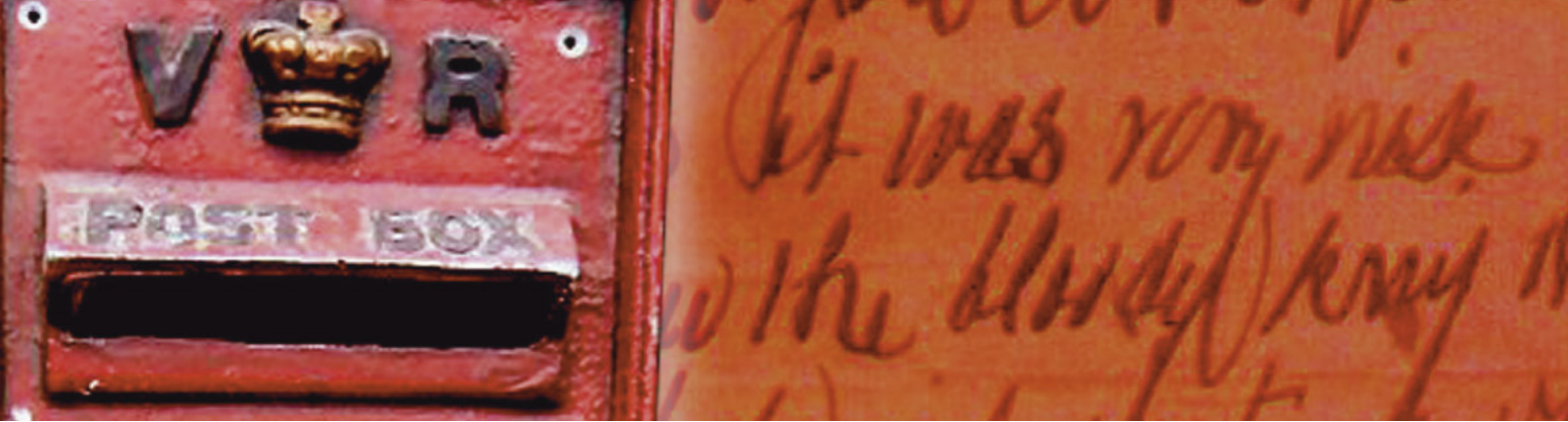
Foreword by Shannon Christopher, Illustrations and maps by Jane Coram
softcover A5, 193 pages including index.

A book that examines the 1888 murders attributed to Jack the Ripper in detail; presents the evidence; uses new information and considers the opinions of modern Ripper enthusiasts, which all seem to lead to the same conclusion.....that Joseph Barnett should not be ignored as a serious contender for the title 'Jack The Ripper.'

TO ORDER A COPY SEND YOUR NAME, POSTAL DETAILS AND A CHEQUE FOR £15
(WHICH INCLUDES POSTAGE & DELIVERY), TO:

LEANNE PERRY, P.O. BOX 8349 BLACKTOWN N.S.W. AUSTRALIA 2148
email: leaperry01@hotmail.com





Dear Rip,

Just a few lines to let you know that conference is very nearly upon us. We are glad to be staging this weekend's events with our old friends the Britannia chain of hotels at their historic Victoria Hotel in Lichfield Street, Wolverhampton.

As a reminder, this conference is themed around Catherine Eddowes, the first time a Ripper victim has played host and we are sure that you will all be impressed with what we have to offer. We are extremely proud to announce that our official sponsor for this year's event is the National Archives.

We are already fully booked for delegates requiring accommodation, however, if anyone has not yet reserved their place and would like to stay for the full weekend, please drop me a line and I will see what I can do. There is always room for more!

Places are still open for day delegates, who can attend one, two or all three days of events and all delegates and guests receive a very exclusive limited edition souvenir conference delegate pack.

We're very excited about this year's conference. Everything is in place and we're just waiting for the big day to arrive.

We have lots of special events lined up including the announcement of the winner of the Whitechapel Society 1888 Photographic Competition in association with English Heritage. We also have exclusive author book signings, question and answer sessions for the speakers and one or two special surprises. We are very pleased to introduce a great line up of speakers which includes Mike Huie, Dr David Morris, Andy Aliffe, Neil Bell, Stewart Evans, Robert Eighteen-Bisang, your editor Don Souden and we will also be introducing Ripperology's very own genealogist Neal Shelden to the spotlight. As always our weekend will be superbly hosted by Mr Jeremy Beadle.

So if anyone has not yet booked, don't delay or you are certainly going to be missing out on a truly ripping weekend!

See you there!

Claudia Aliffe

Conference Administrator

and on behalf of the Conference 2007 team

Dear Rip:

I want to thank the editors of Ripperologist for their latest presentation of Mr. Gavin Bromley's work. His article in Ripperologist 81 on "Mrs. Kuer's Lodger" followed his earlier contributions in issues 70, 71, 74, 75, and 78. This article is of real value to all Ripperologists, focusing as it does on Mrs. Kuer and her sinister lodger on Batty Street around the time of the Double Event.

By the sheer amount of time and effort he expends in his research, Mr. Bromley saves others in the field the same amount of time and effort in collating the facts on the specific stories he delves into. It is no accident therefore that Mr. Bromley is to be found in the upper echelons of 21st Century Ripperologists.

On behalf of everyone at JTRForums.com, I thank you for your mutual collaboration and look forward to more 5-star articles from Mr. Bromley.

Sincerely,

Howard Brown

JTRForums.com

An addendum to Gavin Bromley's article can be found on page 13

On the Crimebeat

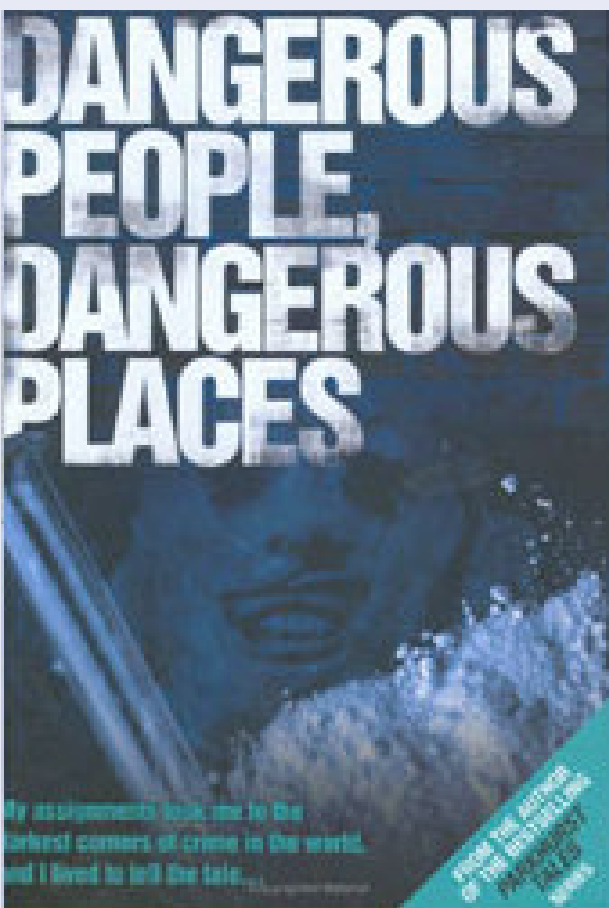
WILF GREGG looks at the new additions to the True Crime bookshelf

DANGEROUS PEOPLE, DANGEROUS PLACES

Norman Parker

H/B, 313 pp., Illus., John Blake Publishing, £17.99

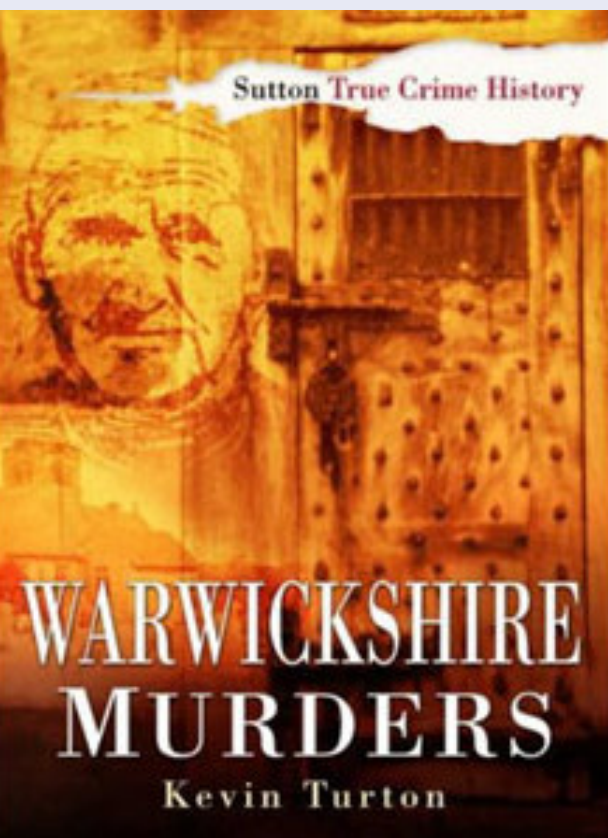
As is well known, Norman Parker served 24 years in prison for murder having previously received a six year sentence for manslaughter. To his credit, he studied for and gained a masters degree while banged up. On parole he settled down to writing and his first books, *Parkhurst Tales 1* and *2* were very successful, and other books have followed.



This book is something of a curate's egg. The chapters dealing with dangerous people are generally well structured and illuminating, particularly in the case of the bisexual gunman David Martin, who committed suicide in Parkhurst while serving a 25 year sentence. A perceptive piece on the Great Train Robbers, nicely entitled "The Curse of Driver Mills" is also very good. A visit to Colombia in search of Luis Albert Garavito, serial killer of young boys, gives very useful information on this rarely written about case.

The dangerous places of the title are accounts of visits he made to such areas, when bankrolled for the trips by various magazines. The accounts of two further visits to Colombia, firstly in search of guerrillas and secondly to find a cocaine farm, to Sri Lanka after the Tamil Tigers, to Iraq and Gaza etc., are overlong and largely repetitive, more concerned with his own actions in safeguarding himself.

Mr Parker is at his best when writing about people he has encountered as in *Parkhurst Tales* and those in this book, but less sure on non-personal matters.



WARWICKSHIRE MURDERS

Kevin Turton

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

Another in Sutton's True Crime History Series and well up to the standard set by its predecessors. 21 cases ranging date-wise from 1832 to 1958, including the IRA Coventry bombing of 1939 and the so-called "witchcraft murder" of Charles Walton in 1945. Perhaps lesser-known but nonetheless interesting are those of the fortunate midwife, Elizabeth Brandish (1897), and the earlier "witch" murder by James Hayward (1875).

The much-neglected case of Matthew Kavanagh (1958) is well covered. Kavanagh was one of a still somewhat rare breed who twice stood trial for different murders, being acquitted on the first occasion, but convicted and executed for the second. Another bizarre case is that of Edwin Moore, who burnt his mother to death following an argument over food in 1907.

A really good collection supported by the usual high production from Sutton. Strongly recommended.

MURDER ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS

Jonathan Goodman

S/B, 358 pp., Illus., Kent State University Press, \$18.95

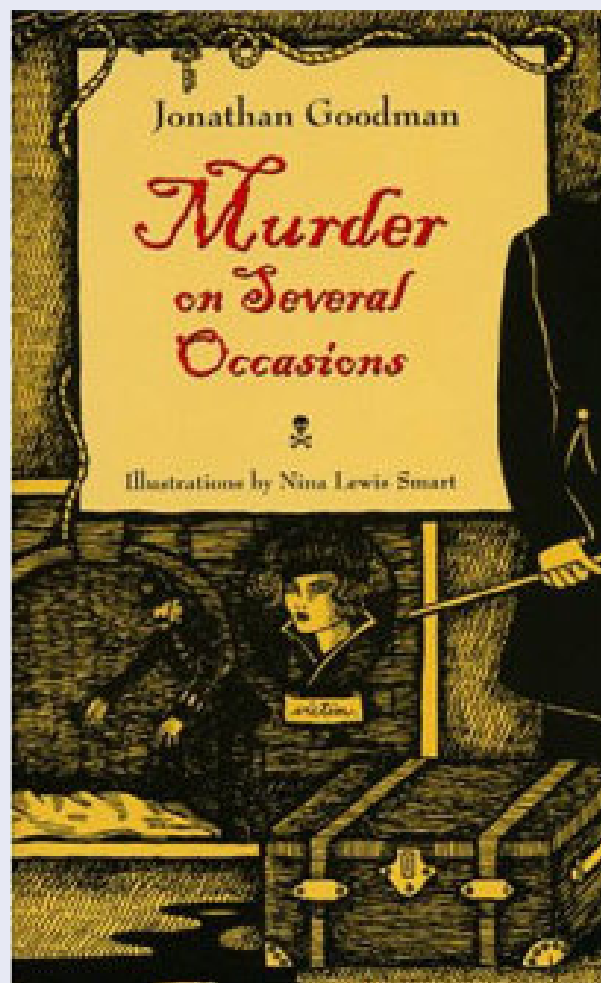
A collection of essays put together by the author with, as he states in his introduction, the aim of being diverse and not having a central theme as is the case with so many anthologies.

The cast list includes Madame Fahmy; the killing of actor William Terriss; sadistic serial killer Michele Lupo; the Brighton Trunk Murders; the Lindbergh baby case; and the body snatchers Burke and Hare.

In several instances there have been additions to the case accounts. For example, in the Fahmy case we read of a later murder in the Savoy Hotel; the Brighton Trunk Murders include John William Holloway, who in 1831 was the inaugurator of this practice; and Burke and Hare are followed up by their English equivalents Bishop, Williams and May.

Perhaps my favourite of this collection is his account of the Lupo case. In other hands this could have read like a stomach-churning chronicle of sadism but the author's style makes it completely acceptable without losing anything of the facts.

A fascinating collection, well illustrated including. unusually, intriguing drawings by Nina Lewis Smart, precede each chapter. Jonathan Goodman has been described by Jacques Barzun as "the greatest living master of true crime literature" and this book fully backs up that claim.



Jeder Band ist vollständig abgeschlossen.



Detectiv **Sherlock Holmes** und seine weltberühmten Abenteuer.

45. Band.

Das verrufene Gasthaus zu Kairo.

