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May 2006

The Curse upon Mitre Square

CINDY COLLINS SMITH

SAMUEL F LANGHAM:

DOWN GOLDEN LANE

Robert Linford,
John Savage and
David O'Flaherty

RETURN TO

MILLERS COURT

Simon D Wood

A DESCENDANT OF
POLLY NICHOLS VISITS
THE EAST END

Neal Stubbings

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Quotes for May

Jack the Ripper was never killed. I think he's doing my shirts!

Henny Youngman (Born in Liverpool, 1906). *Henny Youngman's 500 All-Time Greatest One-Liners*, Pinnacle Books Inc., 1981.

J'ai peur que Moscou ne soit devenu le refuge de Jack l'Eventreur.

Boris Akounin, *Missions spéciales*.

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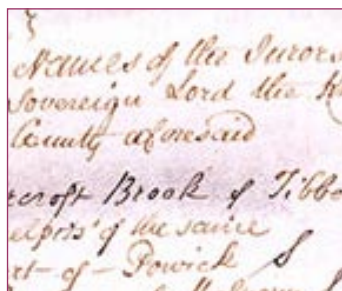
Return to Millers Court

Simon D Wood probes deeper into what truly happened in a small, sordid room off Dorset Street as the Lord Mayor's Show brightened up the streets of London.



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Cindy Collins Smith rediscovers an early exploitation thriller putting forward the ghost of a mad monk as the Whitechapel murderer and celebrates the unexpected insight it affords into the mindset of the Ripper's contemporaries.



The Green of the Peak Part V: Samuel Frederick Langham (1823-1908): Down Golden Lane: 1884-1908

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A Memory of Mary Ann Nichols

Neal Stubbings recounts how for a few days in April he escorted Maureen Adamson, the great-great-granddaughter of Mary Ann Nichols, to the London places where her ancestor was born, lived and died.

Plus, in the *Ripperologist Interview*, Mary Ann Nichols's descendant talks about her search for her unknown ancestor.

Contributors to this issue

CINDY COLLINS SMITH

Cindy Collins Smith's writings on film have appeared in several books, including a forthcoming *Midnight Marquee/Luminary Press* 'Loss of Identity' encyclopaedia. She has also edited for publication *The Curse Upon Mitre Square*. In Ripperological circles, Ms Smith is better known as the owner of the celebrated *Hollywood Ripper* website. In her day job, she edits a magazine, newsletter and conference publications for a professional association. Cindy Collins Smith lives with her husband, fellow film history writer Brian Smith, in Falls Church, Virginia.

ROBERT LINFORD

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

DAVID O'FLAHERTY

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

JOHN SAVAGE

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

NEAL STUBBINGS

Neal is a researcher from Hornchurch in Essex, specialising in descendants of the victims. He has succeeded in contacting descendants of Polly Nichols, Catherine Eddowes and Annie Chapman, the latter resulting in the discovery of the only known photograph of a victim in life. Neal was a contributor to the limited-edition volume *Who Was Jack the Ripper?*

SIMON WOOD

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

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In Future Issues

And finally, we announce the contents of coming Rip issues - so you can better organise your life round them.

We would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance given by the following people in the production of this issue of *Ripperologist*: Maureen Adamson, Andy Aliffe, Howard Brown and Tim Mosley. Thank you!

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PAUL BEGG
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

What is History?

John Vincent, a Professor of History at Bristol noted for his unorthodox views, begins his excellent *An Intelligent Person's Guide to History* (1996) by saying that 'History is about evidence. It is also about other things: hunches, imagination, interpretation, guesswork. First and foremost, though, comes evidence; no evidence, no history.'

What he means is that 'evidence' is the foundation upon which history is built, but 'evidence' on its own isn't history. This is something a lot of people don't seem to understand. They think 'evidence' is history and they talk about 'evidence' as if it were usable information, the finished product. Facts, we are often told, speak for themselves; but the truth is that very often they don't. For example, we're told that there is no evidence that Montague John Druitt was Jack the Ripper and that any argument to the contrary is wholly speculative. Yet there *is* evidence that Montague John Druitt was Jack the Ripper. It comes in the shape of information provided to Sir Melville Macnaghten to which he referred in written sources dating from 1895 and 1911. What we don't know is what that information was and therefore we can't make an informed judgement about its accuracy. However, we *can* assess Macnaghten and base some conclusions on that assessment.

Mind you, that sounds a lot easier than it is, because one has to know an awful lot about Macnaghten to be able to assess him properly. But this isn't an uncommon problem for historians, who frequently know that something happened, but just as frequently don't know *why* it happened. In such situations, they either admit to total ignorance or try to provide a rational and reasonable explanation based on whatever bits and pieces of evidence they have available. This is where the hunches, imagination, interpretation and guesswork come in. This is when the historian becomes a chef.

All those people who talk about 'evidence' as if it were the finished product make the fundamental mistake of thinking that 'evidence' is dinner, whereas 'evidence' is only the ingredients of dinner. Historical evidence has to be truthful, accurate and reliable, just as a chef's ingredients have to be the best and freshest, and just as the chef's ingredients don't become dinner until he has combined them together in the right way and cooked them for the correct length of time, historical evidence doesn't become meaningful until it's been properly sorted and understood. And just as the quality of the chef's final dish will have a lot to do with his knowledge, skill, understanding and experience, so the picture of events resulting from an analysis of the evidence will have a lot to do with the knowledge, skill, understanding and experience of the historian. That's why a historian is a historian and a tinker, tailor, soldier or spy generally isn't. Give a pile of ingredients to a trained and experienced chef and he'll create dinner; give them to my late father-in-law and you'll get a mess. Cooking Sunday lunch doesn't make you Escoffier.

Now take Sir Robert Anderson. He was a Millenarist theologian with a career spent in the world of deception. This makes him a very complex and sometimes contradictory character. Any assessment of what he did or might have done and why he might have done what he did demands a knowledge of the type of person Anderson was, the sort of things he and people like him would do and not do, the morals and mores of the times and how he would have reacted to them. It's therefore unlikely that those who lack this depth of knowledge, especially those who base their opinions on modern experience and common sense, will be able to assess properly the character of Anderson. Martin Fido, the author of *The Crimes, Detection and Death of Jack the Ripper*, is a highly qualified professional academic who has studied - and, indeed, specialised in - the times of Robert Anderson. He is therefore well placed to assess and draw meaningful conclusions about this multifaceted character, whereas someone who lacks that knowledge and experience most probably isn't.



Sir Melville Macnaghten

In *The Practice of History*, the formidable G R Elton maintained that 'understanding what the evidence says, and understanding how it fits together' is what leads to historical truth, and understanding the evidence is achieved through 'the asking of the right questions, and the application of informed standards of probability.'

To make a brief detour, you'll notice that Elton speaks here of 'informed standards of probability'. Earlier I said that we'll never know on what evidence Macnaghten based his beliefs about Dr. Druitt. Yet, if we have a good and full knowledge of Macnaghten's life and career, culled from official documents as well as his own and other people's private and public writings, we can assess how likely he is to have correctly assessed the evidence he possessed. We can then reach an informed conclusion about the probability of his conclusion having a solid basis.

Elton went on to define 'the right questions' as questions that are penetrating and fruitful and 'really exhaust the possibilities of the evidence.' Part of being historians is being able to ask the right questions; and that's what historians' training prepares them to do. As Elton said, 'The purpose of a proper research training must therefore include the recognition of the right questions, which means a penetrative analytical approach to the material with a mind alert to every possibility as well as the ready discarding of any questions that turn out to be wrong because they yield no answer or because they result in no fresh knowledge.'

Quite a while ago there was a furious debate on the message boards of the *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* website. One debater maintained that Joseph Hyam Levy had seen more than he admitted to while another claimed that he hadn't. Levy was one of the three Jews who passed the entrance to Mitre Square and saw standing there a man and a woman who may or may not have been Catherine Eddowes and her murderer. As far as the 'evidence' goes, Levy said he paid the couple scant attention, couldn't describe them and wouldn't be able to recognise them again. That's what he said. On that basis, there is no reason to suppose that he saw more than he said he saw, and to maintain otherwise would be manifestly wrong. But Levy also said other things and other people also said other things. If we have the necessary wit and intelligence, we must question what these people said and 'really exhaust the possibilities of the evidence.'

One of Levy's companions was Joseph Lawende. He *did* pay marginally more attention to the couple than Levy did, but only *because* Levy had earlier remarked that the Square ought to be watched. If Levy remarked that Mitre Square ought to be watched, it isn't unreasonable to suppose that he wouldn't have paid the couple less attention than Lawende did.

Levy also told the Coroner at Eddowes's inquest that he'd said to Harry Harris, the third man, 'I don't like going home by myself when I see these sorts of characters about. I'm off.' Asked if there was anything terrible in their appearance, he replied, 'I did not say that'. Asked if he felt frightened by the couple, he said 'not exactly'. What he didn't explain was what he meant by 'those sorts of people' and why 'those sorts of people' made him reluctant to go home on his own. Above all, he didn't explain how he knew the couple were 'those sorts of people' if he didn't pay them any attention. On top of these questions - which can be asked as a result of reading the newspaper reports - journalists who actually spoke to Joseph Hyam Levy also sensed that Levy knew more than he was saying.

So we can see how asking the right questions of the evidence can lead to a conclusion opposite to the one reached from the evidence of Levy's bald statement. We can see that Levy's statement does not tally with what he said to his companions, we can sense evasiveness at the inquest and we have the testimony of contemporary journalists that they shared that feeling.

The *Casebook* debater who believed that Levy hadn't seen more than he said he did was very dismissive of this sort of evidence, calling it 'rhetorical questions' and 'subjective speculation'. Yet it's obvious that such questions *must* be asked and that asking them is part of the process of exhausting the possibilities of the evidence. Asking such questions is what history is all about. Not asking them leads to hidebound, dead-end history.

Of course, what we're talking about here is commonplace source analysis, the art of not just listening to what a source says but searching for what lays behind what the source says. Although that sounds simple enough, it is at the very heart of the fundamental philosophy of history - a topic sometimes impenetrable to the layman but hotly debated by historians. At one time, E L Carr and G L Elton were at opposite ends of the pole, the former arguing that history was and is influenced by the historian and the latter that the truth is buried in the documents and can be unearthed by the cool objectivity of a properly trained historian. Since the 1980s, postmodernist theory has outdated the views of both Carr and Elton and denied the concepts of historical truth and objectivity. Thankfully, that's altogether another subject.



Sir Robert Anderson



SIMON D WOOD

Return to Millers Court

Enigmas have no solution. Drawing upon the overall umbrella of events surrounding the crime and the multitude of players and events, paint the entire affair as too complex to solve. This causes those following the matter to begin to lose interest more quickly without having to address the actual issues.

Rule No. 12, Twenty-Five Rules of Disinformation

I'm an iconoclast in the matter of Jack the Ripper. I find faintly ludicrous the notion that Montague J Druitt, Aaron Kosminski, Michael Ostrog or [insert your suspect's name here] woke up one morning to discover he could don the mantle of a phantom able to kill swiftly and silently on the streets of Whitechapel whilst running split-second rings around the police. But as an iconoclast I have learned how difficult it is to challenge accepted wisdom on the subject. Aristotle must have found himself in much the same situation when he first suspected that the world wasn't flat.

The Whitechapel Murders aren't flat either. There is more to them than we have ever imagined, and, despite the mountain of information we have amassed over the years, we are only just beginning to scratch the surface. We have a long way to go, and if we are ever to get to the bottom of the mystery we will have to ask awkward questions and challenge some long-held and cherished assumptions.

I have never believed there was a fifth 'Ripper' murder, least of all that of an Irish prostitute named Kelly, whether Mary Jane, Marie Jeannette - or Jeneatte, as Abberline spelled her middle name in his handwritten report of 12 November - and since writing *The Enigmas of Millers Court* (*Ripperologist* 62 (December 2005)) I have continued to examine the 'Mary Kelly' photographs in an attempt to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion as to what they have to tell us.

The scenario I originally set forth suggested that the police were involved in a cover-up at Millers Court. Whilst I had no reason to alter my opinion about this, I set out to test my conclusions based solely on photograph MJK1.¹ I had no idea whether I would find anything more or, indeed, whether there was anything more to find, but it proved to be an interesting exercise. It yielded surprising results, providing corroborative evidence of a police cover-up in the murder of 'Mary Kelly' and confirming that events in Room 13 were far removed from our current understanding.

Ever since Donald Rumbelow discovered MJK1 in 1967, we have believed it to be the one official scene-of-crime photograph in the whole Ripper canon. But, what is the basis of this belief? Although the police had been photographing murder victims from as early as 1880, no photographs were taken at the murder sites of the first four Ripper victims. For such a supposedly high-profile murder investigation, this was a serious omission. Prior to the photographs of 'Mary Kelly', the only official scene-of-crime visual was Frederick Foster's sketch of Catherine Eddowes's body.

Room 13, Millers Court, was the only self-contained crime scene. MJK1 - our one real glimpse into that autumn of terror - conveys the savagery of the murder far more effectively than any newspaper article or dry-as-dust police report could. But what was so special about the 'Mary Kelly' murder that it warranted a photograph? And, more importantly, what was the purpose of the photograph?

These questions are not as irrational as they might at first sound, for there is a subtle distinction between a scene-of-crime photograph and a photograph taken at the scene of a crime. And it is an important distinction, too, because close examination reveals MJK1 to be at odds with all we have been told about the murder of 'Mary Kelly'.

The first policemen at Millers Court were Inspector Walter Beck and Sergeant Betham², who arrived at around 11.00am. According to the not always reliable Walter Dew, on recovering from his shock of seeing the body, Beck 'sent messages to the chief station (Leman Street) by quick-running constables. From there the messages were promptly

¹ For clarity, MJK1 refers to both MJK1 and MJK2, which are essentially the same photograph.

² Dew, Walter: *I Caught Crippen*, 1938; Evans, Stewart P and Keith Skinner: *The Ultimate Jack the Ripper Sourcebook*, 2000; Rumbelow, Donald: *The Complete Jack the Ripper*, 1975; *Daily Telegraph*; *Manchester Guardian*; *The Times*.

relayed by telegraph to Scotland Yard.³ Beck also summoned Dr George Bagster Phillips, who arrived in Millers Court at 11.15am.

According to inquest testimony, next on the scene was Inspector Abberline, who arrived at 11.30am. The *Manchester Guardian* of 10 November tells us:

Within a very short time half a dozen cabs arrived in Dorset-street from Whitehall, conveying detectives from the criminal investigation depot, among them being Inspectors Abberline and Reid. Never before had so many men been despatched to the scene of a murder from Whitehall.

Whilst lending credence to Dew's version of events, this newspaper account may not be entirely accurate. From the timing of Abberline's arrival we can deduce that he was most probably at Leman Street police station that morning, for if he had been at Commercial Street police station he would have arrived at about the same time as Inspector Beck. But if he had been at Scotland Yard when Beck's telegram arrived at some time after 11.00am he probably wouldn't have reached Millers Court in under half an hour, and might even have been as late as Assistant Commissioner Anderson or Dr Bond. This is because 9 November was Lord Mayor's Day and, from 10.00am that morning until after the Lord Mayor's Parade had passed, many of the main thoroughfares in and around the City and parts of Central London (including Whitehall Place and Scotland Yard) were closed to wheeled traffic.⁴

Also in Millers Court that morning were Chief-Inspector John West, Local Inspector Edmund Reid and Superintendent Thomas Arnold, all of H Division. So, between 11.00am and 1.30pm, when the door to Room 13 was broken open, at the very minimum a doctor plus five Metropolitan Police detectives were assembled at the murder scene.

Exactly who took MJK1 is unknown, but, according to the *Daily Telegraph*:

'Before anything was disturbed a photograph was taken of the interior of the room.'⁵

Donald Rumbelow fleshes out this brief account with some intriguing detail:

*Apparently as the morning dragged on, and nothing happened in Millers Court, somebody quietly asked the City Police for their help which they gave by breaking into Kelly's room and taking the photograph of her body...*⁶

This flatly contradicts the story about Superintendent Arnold ordering the removal of a window to gain access to Room 13 - but which we know from the exterior photograph of the room never took place. In addition, if Rumbelow's account is correct, it follows that the City of London Police took the photograph before the door was officially 'broken open' at 1.30pm. Which begs the question of why they didn't slip the door lock while they were in the room.

At the inquest, Dr Phillips deposed:

On the door being opened it knocked against a table, the table I found close to the left-hand side of the bedstead, and the bedstead was close up against the wooden partition, the mutilated remains of a female were lying two-thirds over towards the edge of the bedstead, nearest to the door of entry she had only her under-linen garment on her...

Assistant Metropolitan Police Commissioner Robert Anderson arrived in Millers Court at 1.50pm, by which time, presumably, the City of London photographer who unofficially took MJK1 had made himself scarce. According to Rumbelow's account, however, he must have returned later to take the exterior photograph of Room 13 which Dr Phillips produced at Kelly's inquest. Anderson was followed ten minutes later by Dr Bond, who stated in his notes:

The body was lying naked in the middle of the bed... The legs were wide apart, the left thigh at right angles to the trunk & the right forming an obtuse angle with the pubes... The skin & tissues of the abdomen from the costal arch to the pubes were removed in three large flaps. The right thigh was denuded in front to the bone, the flap of skin, including the external organs of generation & part of the right buttock. The left thigh was stripped of skin, fascia & muscles as far as the knee...

Photograph MJK1 appears to bear out the doctors' observations. The bed is roughly in the position described by Dr Phillips, and the body, though not 'lying naked', is spread out as described by Dr Bond. The doctors continued their examination for about two hours



MJK1A

3 *Manchester Guardian*, 10 November 1888. Betham may be a misspelling of Badham. On 12 November, Sergeant 31H Edward Badham was a signatory to George Hutchinson's statement. Badham's forename is given as Eugene C in Evans, Stewart P and Keith Skinner: *The Ultimate Jack the Ripper Sourcebook*, 2000.

4 For a full list of closed streets, see *Daily Telegraph*, 6 November 1888, and *The Times*, 7 November 1888.

5 Dew, Walter: *I Caught Crippen*, 1938.

6 *Daily Telegraph*, 10 November 1888.

before the body was removed to the mortuary. During this time police were also in the room, diligently searching for the slightest clue or trace of evidence that might lead to identifying the murderer.

No murder weapon was found. Traces of a large fire were found in the grate. That is all they noticed. Other than a few scrappy household items, neither the Assistant Commissioner - who, according to the *Daily Telegraph*, was at the murder scene for some time - nor the doctors or the detectives saw anything out of the ordinary. But apart from a dead body, what else might have been in Room 13 that was out of the ordinary?

When preparing my original article for *Ripperologist*, I looked for similarities between the two 'Kelly' photographs. I hoped to find something in MJK1, reproduced above, to substantiate the assortment of domestic ware visible in the pelvic area in the other photograph. But, as their absence in MJK1 appeared to be so blindingly obvious, I overlooked the mutilated corpse and instead concentrated my efforts on the discrepancies between the positions of the bed and the heights and contents of the bedside table.

This proved to be a big mistake on my part. For the past thirty years or so, authors and researchers whose opinions I respected were in agreement about the circumstances of the body in MJK1. I had unquestioningly accepted their conclusions and, consequently, fallen into the trap of believing that the information was a given, an immutable part of Ripper lore, and that there was nothing more to learn from the photograph. But as I was soon to discover, this was far from the truth.

Look again at MJK1 whilst bearing in mind that if the City of London police did have to break into Room 13 to take the photograph, then it must depict the murder scene *exactly as left by the Ripper*.

Next, let's look at the area contained within a black rectangle in the photograph below.



MJK1B

Below are two versions (of which the second one, MJK2B, has been enhanced) of the pelvic detail contained within the black rectangle in MJK1B above. No retouching was involved.⁷

The large 'D' shaped object leaning back into the right of the picture is anyone's guess, but certainly isn't anatomical. However, there is no mistaking the second object in the foreground. Protruding from the pelvic area at a 20 degree angle to the left is a glass bottle which, once you know it is there, can be faintly discerned in many published versions of the photograph. Reflections are visible on its stopper and on the shoulders below the neck, and a small section of bedding or other material is visible through the main shaft of the bottle.

Readers of my previous article have argued that, if the objects I saw in the photograph were actually there and constituted evidence of some sort of cover-up in Room 13, the conspirators could never have hoped to get away with it once their superiors saw the photographs. On the face of things, this appears to be a valid argument. In his 1894 notes, Sir Melville Macnaghten referred to a



MJK2A



MJK2B

⁷ The photograph used is the large-size photograph on the *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* website in Adobe Photoshop 8 on a Mac G4.

'Mary Kelly' photograph 'without seeing which it is impossible to imagine the awful mutilation.' But we have no way of knowing whether he saw MJK1 or the second photograph we are familiar with. Rumbelow, for instance, mentions a lost album of photographs.⁸ Perhaps these were the photographs Macnaghten saw. Yet, if this is not the case, how best could we account for the intriguing coincidence of similar undocumented evidence in MJK1 and the possibility that Macnaghten may well have been aware of it?

If MJK1 was an official scene-of-crime photograph depicting the murder scene exactly as left by the Ripper, then Dr Phillips, who was in Millers Court from 11.15am, Inspector Abberline, who was there from 11.30am, and all the other detectives present must have seen these objects either through the broken window panes or while the City Police photographer was setting up his camera. Yet nobody reported seeing them. This makes their presence in MJK1 suspicious and confirms some sort of cover-up in Room 13. How high it went or exactly who saw what remains unclear. However, if Rumbelow's story is correct and MJK1 was taken by the City Police, then the City Police were also complicit.

But I don't believe MJK1 was taken by the City Police, for the simple reason that any successful cover-up relies on as few people as possible being party to it. I suspect this was strictly a local Metropolitan Police affair. The objects in the pelvic region were photographed and then removed prior to the arrival in Millers Court of Anderson, Bond, the other doctors and three Chief Constables. Even so, MJK1 still leaves us with a conundrum. Why would someone remove the objects only to later compromise himself and his colleagues by placing into evidence a photograph that contradicted medical and high-ranking police eye-witnesses to the murder scene?

The main reason why I doubt Anderson et al saw this evidence is that, if the bottle was the Ripper's handiwork, there would have been absolutely no reason for the police not to report the fact; if not for public consumption, then at least in the official files which would remain safely locked away for 100 years. But the police reported nothing. As far as officialdom was concerned, these objects never existed. All trace of them was eliminated, but - and this is the crux of the matter - not before they had first been photographed *in situ*. To my mind it is this illogicality about MJK1 that rules it out as a scene-of-crime photograph and leaves us with only one other explanation: that it was simply a photograph taken at the scene of the crime. But why would such a photograph have been taken?

This question leads us into dark, uncharted waters. Look again at MJK1. It is pornography of the worst kind. The foreign objects in the pelvic area show a complete and utter contempt for the victim, and the unashamedly phallic bottle turns an already horrific murder scene into a degrading parody. It is impossible to say who came to such a violent and humiliating end in Room 13, or understand how one human being could have been filled with such rage and loathing for another. But while identity and motive remain a mystery, there is one thing of which we can be certain. Whoever died in this squalid room held some significance for the authorities. For had the victim been a complete and utter nobody, such as a penniless Whitechapel prostitute, why would the police have taken the unprecedented step of photographing this climactic moment - a moment, remember, that according to official records never took place?

There is one slender clue to the identity of the victim which I am currently pursuing, but until it bears fruit I remain as baffled as the next person and wouldn't presume to be doctrinaire about a solution. All I can say at this point is that I believe that, for reasons I do not yet fully understand, MJK1 was meant solely for private circulation: that it was a trophy, a memento, a keepsake - maybe even some sort of proof - of whatever unimaginable event took place in Room 13, Millers Court.

Acknowledgements

My thanks to AP Wolf for invaluable information regarding police photography.

⁸ Rumbelow, Donald: *The Complete Jack the Ripper*, 1975

Got something to say?

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

Please send your comments to contact@ripperologist.info



CINDY
COLLINS SMITH

The Curse Upon Mitre Square

Okay, everything you've heard is true. *The Curse Upon Mitre Square* is a pulpy piece of exploitation trash. Think Elvis clones. Think Alien advisors to the White House. Think Batboy. Think entertainment value. Written and published in October 1888, this first piece of Jack the Ripper fiction exploits the recent and ghastly murder of Catherine Eddowes in Mitre Square, but makes no pretense of actually solving the Ripper case. Because it contains plot holes bigger than the Grand Canyon and proposes the ghost of a mad monk as a potential Ripper suspect, students of the Ripper case often dismiss the book as an insignificant curiosity. Yet in addition to its entertainment value, *The Curse Upon Mitre Square* actually provides valuable insight into the mindset of the culture during the Ripper killings.

Background



PC John Neil

In the wee hours of August 31, 1888, the unfortunate Constable John Neil turned his lamp upon the mangled body of the first universally agreed upon Ripper victim: Mary Ann Nichols. Her throat had been slashed, and (as the coroner later discovered) she had been disemboweled. Contemporary British society thought her the third victim of the same killer(s) who had recently murdered two other prostitutes in Whitechapel streets, even though neither of those women had been similarly ripped.

The day after Nichols' murder, the high-society *Times* of London spouted the official police line: that the killings all appeared the work of "a gang of ruffians" from the "neighborhood, which, blackmailing women of the 'unfortunate' class, takes vengeance on those who do not find money for them." That same day London's progressive and populist *Star* newspaper ran a front-page editorial attributing the crimes more likely to "a murderous maniac loose in East London." *The Star* went on to add that

Nothing so appalling, so devilish, so inhuman - or, rather, non-human - as the three Whitechapel crimes has ever happened outside the pages of Poe or DeQuincey. The unraveled mystery of "The Whitechapel Murders" would make a page of detective romance as ghastly as "The Murders in the Rue Morgue."

The "hellish violence and malignancy of the crime," coupled with its apparent lack of motive, led the paper to conclude that the "murderer must be a Man Monster." With these final words, the *Star* unleashed every form of mythology that would soon surround the vicious serial killer who would come to be called "Jack the Ripper."

Ten days later, the stodgy old *Times* would draw out the same comparison for its West End readers, claiming that "one may search the ghastliest efforts of fiction and fail to find anything to surpass these crimes in diabolical audacity." And the *Times*, too, would invoke Poe and DeQuincey (*Confessions of an English Opium Eater*) to reinforce the heinousness of the crimes. These papers clearly determined that the easiest way to comprehend these seemingly motiveless murders - committed so audaciously, in Whitechapel streets, against women who had no known enemies and certainly no money - was to interpret them through the filter of pre-established nightmares. Though no credible interpretation ever argued that the killings must be the unintended massacres of an agitated and frightened orangutan, these comparisons to *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* show how truly "non-human" the killings appeared.

Soon the public began its own attempt to explain the Whitechapel murders. Within five weeks of Nichols' death, three more prostitutes had died on East End streets: Annie Chapman, Liz Stride, and Catherine Eddowes. Each woman had had her throat slit, and both Chapman and Eddowes had been ferociously ripped. Also within five weeks of the Nichols murder, the killer had acquired his trade name, and various interpretations - published in the pages of London newspapers - established some of the most enduring themes for Ripper lore:

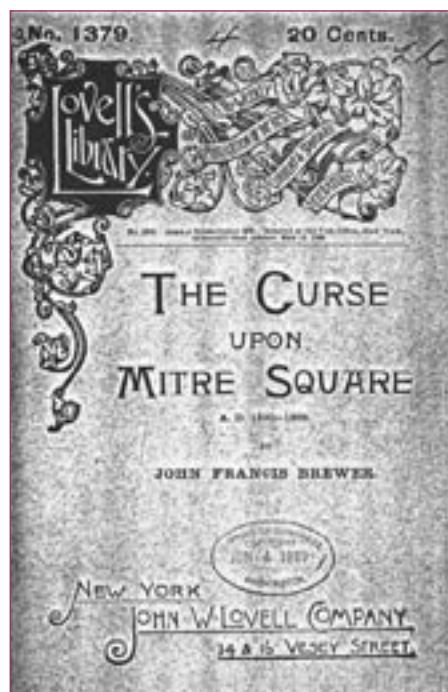
- * Dr L Forbes Winslow claimed that the "lunatic" killer belonged to "the upper class of society" (*Times*, 12 September).
- * Coroner Wynne Baxter noted at the Inquest on Annie Chapman that the killer not only possessed surgical knowledge, but also may have taken Chapman's uterus for research purposes (*Times*, 27 September).
- * Edgar Sheppard, a medical doctor, wrote that perhaps the killer "may be an earnest religionist with a delusion that he has a mission from above to extirpate vice by assassination. And he has selected his victims from a class which contributes pretty largely to the factorship of immorality and sin" (*Times*, 2 October).

The mad upper-class doctor on a mission from God became part of the foundation for *The Lodger*, the first full-length novel based upon the killings.

Yet for one very large segment of London, it was impossible to conceive an Englishman as the Ripper, and so the killer must be "other." In the East End, which housed a large immigrant community, the local newspaper claimed not only that "no Englishman could have perpetrated such a horrible crime," but "that it must have been done by a Jew." In letters written to the *Times* Edward Dillon Lewis's knowledge of the English "phlegmatic nature" caused him to implicate the more volatile French or Italians, while "Nemo"'s time in India led him to indict the "methods of Eastern criminals." "Nemo" claimed that the mutilations visited on these women were "all peculiarly Eastern methods and universally recognized, and intended by the criminal classes to express insult, hatred, and contempt" (*Times*, 4 October).

As soon as Kate Eddowes' slaughtered body was found on September 30 in Mitre Square, J F Brewer found a way to hang the crimes on the ultimate "other"... and make some money in the process. Published within weeks of the Stride/Eddowes killings, his resulting piece of Gothic entertainment recounted the story of the mad monk Martin, whose ghost could now be seen during the witching hour, walking the haunted corridors of Mitre Square, where he was rumored to kill those who came to mock him. Described by noted "Ripperologist" Donald Rumbelow as a "piece of nonsense," *The Curse Upon Mitre Square* is certainly a shameless bit of exploitation fiction. Nevertheless, its contemporary popularity shows that it served a purpose for its public. It offered a "motive" - or at least an "explanation" - for the inexplicable crimes taking place in the East End.

In fact, for its Victorian audience it may almost have seemed more logical to posit that a malign supernatural agency lay behind the killings than to accept the conventional notion that not only could a human mind concoct such atrocities, but that a mere human being could commit them so silently in London streets and leave no trace behind. When Mary Kelly—the last of the killer's five "canonical" victims - died in her room at Miller's Court on November 9, the sheer grotesqueness of her mutilations could be perceived as validating even the most sensationalistic and exploitative explanations... even though nobody (outside of fiction and film) ever seriously ascribed the killings to a supernatural force.



The Others

In fiction and film, our culture has sometimes imagined the woman who brutalizes and murders children as the victim of a vampire who must now seek blood herself. We have imaged the likable guy next door who dismembers strangers as a werewolf who has lost conscious control of his actions. We have imaged the abused child who turns to violence as a Frankenstein's monster. And even as recently as *Twin Peaks*, we have imaged the father who molests and then murders his daughter as merely the physical host for an evil entity who takes control of him. In "real life," these horrors are perpetrated by friends and neighbors - by people too much like ourselves. No wonder that culture often finds a supernatural explanation far more appealing. It is psychologically easier to externalize monstrous human impulses and blame them on a non-human "other" than it is to confront the monster lurking within ourselves.

Yet in December 1957, when police discovered the contents of Ed Gein's "charnel house" in Plainfield, Wisconsin, there followed a cinematic trend towards looking at the psychological mechanisms behind the deeds of thoroughly human "monsters." Inspired by the Gein case, Robert Bloch wrote *Psycho*, in which he portrays a seemingly normal but oedipally warped motel proprietor who commits serial murder just underneath the gaze of his small town neighbors. While Bloch goes out of his way to make Norman Bates unattractive, Alfred Hitchcock makes him every bit as physically

and socially attractive as he needs to be for the screen. He becomes, distressingly, the "serial killer next door." And even more distressingly, audiences are implicitly compelled to ask themselves if they, too, could commit such abominable deeds.

Fourteen years later, in the analytical early 70s, audiences were more than ready to stop naval gazing and self-questioning. In *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (the next major film inspired by the Gein case), there is simply no time to worry about motivation. It is far more important to run! In this film, the serial killers (who live literally next door) are a family of inbred hillbilly cannibals. Human, yes. But still about as "other" as any of the non-English groups suspected in 1888 of producing the Ripper.

Since these two Gein-inspired films become foundational to the slasher genre, it is interesting to note that the trend is to move away from realistic human characters and into mere parodies of human beings. By the time we get to our iconic slashers, the transformation from human into monster is complete. Michael Myers (*Halloween*), Jason Vorhees (*Friday the 13th*), and Freddy Krueger (*Nightmare on Elm Street*) have all been human. But by the time they begin their sprees, they have been transformed somehow into supernatural killing machines - a curious fact to keep in mind while reading *The Curse Upon Mitre Square*.



Ed Gein

Fantasy Life

The Curse Upon Mitre Square marks the beginning of a trend in Ripper lore - the impulse to create fantasy from the Ripper case.

Robert Bloch is perhaps the primary practitioner of Ripper fantasy, in both the supernatural and science fiction genres. His story *Yours Truly, Jack the Ripper* (1943) - which has also been adapted for radio and television - presents the Ripper as a sort of human-turned-vampire who feeds off the life force of others. He must kill ritualistically in order to prolong his own life. In his teleplay, *A Wolf in the Fold* (1967) for the *Star Trek* series, Bloch presents the Ripper again as a parasite - this time, an immaterial entity feeding insatiably off death and fear. And in the story *A Toy for Juliette* (1967) (and in Harlan Ellison's sequel to it, *Prowler in the City at the Edge of the World*) the Ripper gets transported into a future far more evil than any world he could have envisioned.

But Bloch and Ellison are not the only creators of Ripper fantasy. The Ripper (or some version of him) has appeared in *The Twilight Zone*, in *The Night Stalker*, in *Babylon 5*. His spirit has variously possessed his daughter, a film professor, and a disgraced San Diego doctor. He has appeared as an organ-seeking Sister Hyde and a freebase-deranged Mr Hyde. He has come back to life in a wax statue, has been resurrected from blood dripping on a stone from the Thames, and has taken residence in a ring he once wore. We have seen him immortal and nearly invincible; used by powerful aliens for their own purposes; shot into the 20th century and beyond.

In short, Jack the Ripper has become one of the single-most obsessive subjects for fantasy fiction and film.

In Reality

Yet beneath all the fiction and sensationalism lay a few - very few - bare facts: a killer or killers brutally murdered several women in the East End of London; the *modus operandi* included slashing the throat and disemboweling the victims; the victims were members of what was termed the "unfortunate class"; each woman was a prostitute, each an alcoholic; several had been working-class wives and mothers before their drinking drove them away from their families and into the extreme poverty of the East End; there was never any public acknowledgement that a killer had been caught; the insolubility of the crimes created an outcry against the government, forcing the resignation of Police Commissioner Sir Charles Warren and nearly bringing down the Home Secretary.

Everything else constitutes interpretation. We simply do not know for certain how many women died, or the killer's gender, occupation, social class, motive, or precise method. We simply do not know how the killer (or killers) selected victims, whether there was any significance to the type of victims selected, or whether the victims were targeted because they were prostitutes... or because they were alcoholics, women, weak, middle-aged, easily available for slaughter, or reminded the killer of a hated mother. We also do not know for sure why the police never solved the case, why so many police files disappeared, or even if the killer wrote any of the taunting letters purporting to come from "Jack the Ripper." In other words, aside from the bare facts, we really know nothing.

It is, of course, within this "nothing" - this cipher - that Ripper interpretation and the resulting fiction (and cinema) operate. Each fills in the blanks according to its own needs. And since *The Curse Upon Mitre Square* fills in the blanks according to a cultural imperative to supernaturalize such horrors and shift responsibility to something truly "other," this first piece of Ripper fantasy cannot be so easily dismissed as mere "nonsense."

Samuel Frederick Langham (1823-1908)

Down Golden Lane: 1884 - 1908

ROBERT LINFORD, JOHN SAVAGE AND DAVID O'FLAHERTY

In 1884, the Court of Common Council elected Samuel Langham the City Coroner, a franchise office that mixed the qualities of the commissioned/chartered coroner with the elected coroner. Let's roll the clock back and quickly examine its history in that famous square mile.

In the medieval era, coroners in the counties served the financial interests of the King; at the same time, however, they were elected by the freeholders. Not so in the City of London, which had a coroner but no election. Rather, the King's Chamberlain (his butler) served as coroner and in times of distress, the City's website tells us, even as Mayor. For example, according to R. Henslowe Wellington, during the tenth and eleventh years in the reign of Edward II, John de Wengrave was both Mayor and Coroner, but Wellington cautions that such times were the exception to the rule and normally the offices of the Chamberlain/coroner and the Lord Mayor remained distinct entities. Most of the time in the medieval City, boys were boys, girls were girls and the Mayor was the Mayor, while the Chamberlain was a combination of the Royal Butler and the Coroner - the fellow who organized the King's Household and made sure His Majesty got his financial due from the City's judicial proceedings. Wellington:



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

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the citizens of London did not have the right to elect their Coroner. The functions of that office were exercised by the chamberlain and the sheriffs; with them the aldermen of the various wards co-operated. The statement made by some writers that the offices of mayor, chamberlain, and Coroner were held by the same person, is not tenable. "Et nota," says a record of 14 Edw. II., "quod Botellarius domini Regis et Camerarius domini Regis et Coronator idem sunt [and note that the Butler of the Lord King and the Chamberlain of the Lord King and the Coroner are the same]. The mayor and the chamberlain were usually distinct persons, but the chamberlain was ex officio Coroner, at all events, in the reigns of Edward I. and Edw. II. - and both these offices were held by the King's butler; the duties of Coroner were usually performed by his deputy or by two deputies, who were called "sub-coronatores." ¹

Let's amend: while the office of City Coroner was joined to the office of Chamberlain, much like the office of Chief Coroner is joined to the office of Lord Chief Justice, usually the Chamberlain's deputy exercised the coroner's duties as a 'sub-coronator'. At this time, the City coroner held his office exclusively by commission with no input from the public.

The practice of holding the City coronership by virtue of office sat rather heavily on the people of the City, who were dissatisfied that they had no control over their coroner, and that they suffered 'many mischiefs' and 'various troubles' because of it (specifically what those were, the people were too polite to say). They looked around England and observed that if, in most places, the coroner served the King's financial pleasure, at least people in the counties determined who their coroners were.

¹ R. Henslowe Wellington. *The King's Coroner: Being a Complete Collection of the Statutes Relating to the Office Together with a Short History of the Same*. (London: William Clowes & Sons, Limited, 1905), 33-4.



Richard II

In 1377, the City petitioned Richard II for the power to appoint and dismiss the City Coroner:

Also, the said commons, mayor, aldermen, and commons, of the city of London pray of the king their lord that because of various troubles which arise in the said city, because the coroner is not subject to the mayor, aldermen, nor any other ministers of the same; that they may elect the coroner from amongst themselves, and remove him from office when it pleases them, since many cities and towns within the land answer to the king, in such manner as pertains to this office.

*Answer. The king does not wish to relinquish his ancient right.*²

'Well, all right then,' the City replied, touching a forelock. 'Just checking.' It waited another century until 1478, when it found Edward IV more amenable, or perhaps just short of funds. In that year, he sold the City the right to appoint its own coroner. In 1550, Edward VI tacked on the Southwark coronership to that of the City's, since as the City's website says, its 'administration was at that time in the hands of the City, even though it was physically on the other side of the river.'³ However, the pairing of the Southwark and City coronerships doesn't seem to have been a given, or at least the City reviewed the pairing before the selection of each new coroner. For example, in May 1884, just before Samuel Langham's election, the Officers and Clerks Committee

issued a report to the Court of Common Council that recommended, '[The] Court should appoint one person to be Coroner of the City of London and the town and borough of Southwark...'⁴

As we've said, the coronership of the City of London and Southwark was classified as a franchise coronership, meaning that initially the Chamberlain was the commissioned coroner and, after the City gained the power to appoint its own coroner, by charter the Lord Mayor was also a coroner. However, in Langham's day, the Lord Mayor rarely exercised the office and, presiding over the Court of Common Council, an elected body, appointed coroners by a vote in council. That makes for an odd mix of the virtues of office, the chartered coroner with the elected coroner.

The combination of virtues and small size of the district allowed the City an advantage over the vast counties in the way it dealt with vacancies in the coroner's office. Recall that West Middlesex coroner Thomas Diplock's death in 1892 also meant that his deputy coroner's term expired. That left West Middlesex with no one to hold inquests. The counties' solution to vacancies resided in Section 19 of the Coroners' Act 1844 - although that Act established the election of coroners to particular districts, it still allowed them jurisdiction over the entire county under certain circumstances. Section 20 restricted coroners to exercise their countywide jurisdiction only during the death, illness, or unavoidable absence of the sitting coroner.⁵ That's precisely what happened in Diplock's case; George Danford Thomas of Central Middlesex filled the gap in West Middlesex. Meanwhile, Danford Thomas had his own district to attend. Since both West and Central Middlesex were large areas to cover, presumably Danford Thomas relied heavily on his own deputy to continue holding inquests in Central Middlesex. Meanwhile, it took months for the Middlesex and London County Councils to appoint Diplock's successors, which meant a sustained burden and possible backlog of inquests for both Danford Thomas and his deputy. In the counties, where only the freeholders appointed coroners, resources were stretched thin during vacancies.

In the square mile of the City's franchise, there was no neighbouring coroner to come over and fill vacancies, but since the Lord Mayor was by charter the coroner, he, or rather the Common Council he presided over, could act just as the medieval Chamberlain had and appoint a sub-coronator. So whenever there was a vacancy, the Lord Mayor and the Council simply deputized someone to serve as acting coroner. For example, when City coroner and former President of the Coroner's Society William Payne died in February 1872, the City Solicitor temporarily acted as coroner until the selection of a replacement - who turned out to be William John Payne, the former coroner's son and deputy.⁶

When in his turn W J Payne died suddenly on 14 April 1884, ending Langham's tenure as deputy City Coroner, and with no one holding inquests, the Lord Mayor quickly moved to plug the vacancy by calling a special meeting of the Court of Common Council on 16 April, expressly to determine an acting coroner:

² Geoffrey Martin (ed.), 'Richard II: Parliament of 1377, Text and Translation', in *The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. C. Given-Wilson et al., item 31. CD-ROM. Scholarly Digital Editions, Leicester: 2005.

³ 'City Coroner', City of London website. www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/our_services/health_safety/coroner.htm#history Accessed 25 March 2006.

⁴ 'Court of Common Council', *The Times*, 30 May 1892.

⁵ Wellington, 163.

⁶ 'The Office of City Coroner', *The Times*, 29 February 1872.

The Lord Mayor, M.P., who presided, said he had called the Court together in very painful circumstances for the purpose of announcing the death of Mr W J Payne, the City Coroner. It was in one sense a formal matter, and it might have been supposed that the Court had been summoned with a view of considering another subject. He had, however, summoned a special meeting of the Court for Friday for the purpose of discussing the new Municipality Bill introduced by the Government. Until the Court met that day there was no power to hold an inquest, and as several bodies were awaiting inquests and burial it had been necessary to call the meeting for the purpose of appointing a temporary coroner to carry on the duties of the office until a permanent officer was elected.

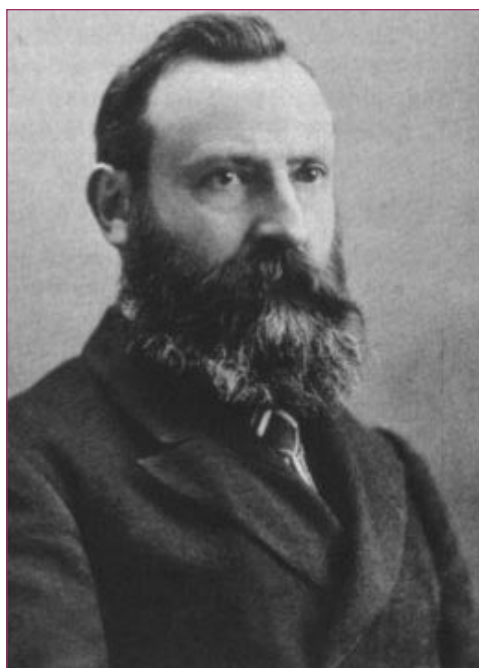
The Town Clerk having read a letter from Mrs. Payne announcing the death of her husband.

Mr Green, the chairman of the Bridge-house Estates Committee, moved a resolution expressing sympathy with Mrs. Payne, and proposing that the Town Clerk (Sir John Monckton) be appointed temporary coroner to continue the duties of the office until the next order of the Court.

Sir John Bennett seconded the motion, which was agreed to unanimously.

Mr Green further moved that it be referred to the Officers and Clerks Committee to inquire into the nature, duties, and emoluments of the office and to report thereon forthwith to the Court, together with the qualifications necessary for person to be elected to the office. This was also seconded and agreed to.⁷

On 25 April 1884, we find Monckton as City Coroner pro tem during an inquest for three barmaids who died in a fire at the Bell tavern, Old Bailey.⁸ There's a minor mystery: Monckton acted as City Coroner through 16 April to 12 June 1884. A glance back at our subsection in Part IV, 'Hundreds of Children, Hundreds of Times', shows that that inquest was held on 5 June 1884 during Monckton's tenure as acting coroner. Yet there's Langham still acting as Deputy City coroner, although his term expired with Payne's death. Apparently, Monckton appointed Langham his deputy, the same procedure the City Solicitor appears to have followed following the death of the elder Payne in 1872. Langham was a sound choice. By 1884, he was a veteran of five thousand inquests.⁹



Wynn Westcott

Nearly two months later, the Court of Common Council, with the Lord Mayor presiding, gathered at the Guildhall to elect Payne's replacement on 12 June 1884. There were twelve candidates, including several present and future coroners: Langham, one Dr T S Horsford, Mr B E Greenfield, Dr G E Yarrow (whom Roderick Macdonald would soundly whip in the North East Middlesex election of 1888), and Dr Wynn Westcott (who succeeded Macdonald in 1894). Before the vote, the Council interviewed each candidate.

Before the election, Mr Greenfield was asked whether he was a member of the London Municipal Reform League, and he replied in the affirmative amid derisive cries. He ultimately withdrew from the contest. The other candidates answered the same question in the negative. The candidates were first reduced to two - Dr Horsford and Mr Langham - by show of hands, and then a poll of the members was taken. For Mr Langham 95 votes were recorded, and for Dr Horsford 85, and Mr Langham was declared duly elected. Both gentlemen returned thanks to their supporters.¹⁰

That was it; Langham was Coroner for the City of London and Southwark, with very little fuss - unless one were a member of the London Municipal Reform League. The election held in council was very different from the cantankerous county elections Baxter, Macdonald and Diplock engaged in, and the City proceedings were very similar to what the County Councils would adopt once the Local Government Act 1888

abolished coronial elections in the counties.

There was another advantage to being City Coroner. Unlike his counterparts in the County of Middlesex during this time, Langham inherited a dedicated mortuary and coroner's court complex that the Corporation had built seven years earlier in 1877. Under the Public Health Act of 1866, nuisance authorities had had the power to provide places for the reception of dead bodies, and there was a lone mortuary in Golden Lane prior to this time. There was additional legislation, and Section 141 of the Public Health Act 1875 enabled local authorities to use public funds, if it desired, to...

⁷ 'Court of Common Council', *The Times*, 17 April 1884.

⁸ 'The Fatal Fire in the City', *The Times*, 26 April.

⁹ 'Obituary', *The Times*, 29 April 1908.

¹⁰ 'Court of Common Council', *The Times*, 13 June 1884.

provide and fit up a proper place for the reception of dead bodies before interment (in this Act called a mortuary), and may make byelaws with a respect to the management and charges for use of the same; and they may also provide for the decent and economical interment, at charges to be fixed by such byelaws, of any dead body which may be received into a mortuary.

In the legislation's wording, there was no requirement for the local authority to provide any 'proper place' at all, and in the late nineteenth century, the term "mortuary" fit loosely. While discussing the history of the word, R. Henslowe Wellington wrote in *The King's Coroner*: 'In modern usage it denotes a place for the reception of dead bodies before interment'.¹¹ So with no legal requirement to construct mortuaries, and the definition of 'proper place' and 'decent' also slack, that meant that in less progressive areas like the county of Middlesex a shed belonging to the Whitechapel Union served as a mortuary. In some of the districts of that county, if there were doubts about what constituted 'proper' and 'decent' places, the meaning of 'economical' was crystal clear.

Next, section 143 of the Public Health Act authorized the local authority to provide - again at its discretion - places for post-mortem examinations. Echoing that earlier Act of 1866 that allowed nuisance authorities to provide similar facilities, it also gave coroners the power to remove bodies for the purposes of performing post-mortems, with transport expenses coming out of the poor rate.¹²

*Any local authority may provide and maintain a proper place, (otherwise than at a workhouse or at a mortuary) for the reception of dead bodies during the time required to conduct any post-mortem examination ordered by a coroner or other constituted authority, and may make regulations with respect to the management of such place; (and where any such place has been provided, a coroner or other constituted authority may order the removal of the body to and from such place for carrying out such post-mortem examination, such costs of removal to be paid in the same manner and out of the same fund as the costs and fees for post-mortem examinations when ordered by the coroner).*¹³

Westminster and the City were early districts that took advantage of the Act, and they did so in a most progressive manner, building the first court/mortuary complexes in London. The Westminster facility opened in November 1876, and shortly afterwards, in January 1877, the Corporation approved the Commissioners of Sewers' plan to build a coroner's court in Golden Lane. As Ian Burney writes in *Bodies of Evidence*, the creation of 'a model inquest site' was for the Commissioners a moral mission to remove City inquests from the public house. For the considerable sum of £12,000, Burney writes that the City received a one-stop complex for all the coroner's needs, including 'a coroner's court, a deadhouse fitted for post-mortem examinations, a laboratory with weighing and consulting rooms, a keeper's house, and sheds for a disinfecting apparatus and an ambulance'. Now possessed of such a facility, the City Coroner would no longer have to beg lodgings amid the inappropriate atmosphere of taverns, as the Commissioners wrote, 'to the great disgust of every person concerned, and the discredit to our great City, which ought to provide the necessary requirements of decency and decorum in the administration of this important branch of the law.'¹⁴ W J Payne, the City Coroner at the time, was thrilled. 'I rejoice to think,' he wrote, 'that after 30 years' experience in holding inquests in public houses, I shall now, through the great kindness of the Corporation of London, have a Court where the inquiry can be conducted with quietude and propriety.' Thomas Wakley's former organ, *The Lancet*, also heralded the City Coroner's release from his 'grotesque surroundings' into a more dignified and convenient place.¹⁵

Southwark too, where Langham also served as coroner, had its own coroner's court with adjoining mortuary in High Street. So, as the coroner for the City of London and the Borough of Southwark, Langham had two dedicated facilities at his disposal, although we can find him on occasion holding inquests at hospitals, presumably because it was more inconvenient to inquire into institutional deaths at the respective institution.

It's impossible to underestimate the psychological lift the coroner's court in Golden Lane offered to the proceedings of the inquest. Langham's brethren in the County of Middlesex tramped their way across their districts, hauling their travelling inquests from lodging to lodging like judicial hobos. From the smoky interiors of pubs like the Lamb Tap in Chiswick, Thomas Diplock must have gazed upon Golden Lane with an envious eye. Langham's deputy in 1886, Wynne Baxter, must have missed Golden Lane when he became East Middlesex coroner that December. In Whitechapel, Baxter and divisional surgeons like George Bagster Phillips had to make do with a Union shed with no post-mortem conveniences, staffed by inexperienced inmates. Baxter and Phillips famously complained during the Annie Chapman inquest.

11 Wellington, 204.

12 Where the local financial authority in counties set individual schedules for inquest expenses and reimbursed coroners out of the county rate, procedure differed for medical witnesses. Per Section 3 of the Medical Witness Act, coroners billed the costs of testimony and post-mortem examinations to the Overseers or the Churchwardens of the parish where the death occurred, who then reimbursed coroners out of funds set aside for the relief of the poor (Wellington, 122).

13 Wellington, 204-5.

14 'Extracts from the Minutes of the Commissioners of Sewers relative to the Provision of a Coroner's Court Room', *Report of the Medical Officer of Health*, 9 January 1877, Guildhall Library, Misc. MSS 149.8, quoted in Burney Ian A., *Bodies of Evidence: Medicine and the Politics of the English Inquest 1830-1926* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 87.

15 John Payne, coroner for the City of London and Southwark, to the commissioners of sewers, 12 March 1877, Guildhall Library, Misc. MSS 149.8, quoted in Burney, 87.

Phillips: I went to the labour- yard of the Whitechapel Union for the purpose of further examining the body and making the usual post- mortem investigation. I was surprised to find that the body had been stripped and was lying ready on the table. It was under great disadvantage I made my examination. As on many occasions I have met with the same difficulty, I now raise my protest, as I have before, that members of my profession should be called upon to perform their duties under these inadequate circumstances.

The Coroner: The mortuary is not fitted for a post-mortem examination. It is only a shed. There is no adequate convenience, and nothing fit, and at certain seasons of the year it is dangerous to the operator.

The Foreman: I think we can all endorse the doctor's view of it.

The Coroner: As a matter of fact there is no public mortuary from the City of London up to Bow. There is one at Mile-end, but it belongs to the workhouse, and is not used for general purposes.¹⁶



The Vestry Hall, Cable Street ©Adam Wood

Besides providing sufficient practical facilities, the atmosphere in Golden Lane offered its own mental boost to the proceedings. To help explain what we mean, if you have a copy of Evans and Skinner's *Ultimate Sourcebook*, compare two sketches of inquests that it reproduces. First, forget what you know about the Stride inquest and scrutinize only the composition of the sketch (below) and the picturization it offers. Consider how the people are arranged, and what the seating says about their psychological relationship with one another. One thing that leaps out at us is that the borrowed premises of the Vestry Hall in Cable Street, St George's in the East, aren't suited to lend authority to a judicial proceeding. It creates a forced fraternity at the inquest. Everyone sits on the same level, everyone is more or less the

same. Roles are ill defined. Who's in charge? It's true Baxter holds the centre and draws the eye, but with no robes of office, what's his authority? We might take him for a *concierge*. Or mistake him for a secretary. The way he's enclosed by the jury's semicircle, he might be a target of accusation. Who is that standing? Is he asking Baxter a question or has he come to take him away? Well, we know that's Diemschutz giving testimony and attending Baxter's questions; apparently the witness is crossing to an unseen chair or either he must stand in order to be seen. But we must confine our knowledge to the sketch, so isolate Baxter and Diemschutz. In the detail you've made, who holds the position of power? Diemschutz, who looms over the coroner.



The arrangement of space has an impact on how we perceive the story in the picture. Everyone looks cramped. Baxter isn't particularly identifiable as a magistrate; the jury rings their legal advisor as if they're about to gobble him up, and spectators are mashed against the backs of jurors. The sketch screams 'informality' - look at the juror down centre of Baxter, the one resting his head. Wake up, you.

¹⁶ Stephen P. Ryder, (Ed.) 'Annie Chapman's Inquest', *Casebook: Jack the Ripper*. www.casebook.org/official_documents/inquests/inquest_chapman.html Accessed 27 March 2006.

People attending the inquest would have seen the same picture we see, and that's why the Vestry Hall was ill suited to serve as a court. It failed to define roles or lend authority to the proceedings. It's bad picturization. Imagine the sketches Thomas Diplock's tavern inquests must have produced; they must have been much more confusing. When coroners were forced to hold formal proceedings in informal and borrowed locations, ought we to wonder why respect and understanding often eluded them? We ought not.

Back to *Sourcebook*; if you like, examine its reproduction of the *Pictorial News*' sketch of the Eddowes inquest. Unlike the borrowed venues like the Vestry Hall and taverns, the function of the space in Golden Lane is not to provide a mere room to shelter the inquest, but also to telegraph clearly to people that they were in a court. It exudes formality, dignity and order. There's no crowding, no blurring of roles. Like Diemschutz, John Kelly also occupies a high focal point as an important witness, but his space is enclosed. His role is defined and he does no looming. The jury has its place, interested parties and spectators have theirs. Without knowing anything about the Eddowes inquest, the design of the space allows us immediately to identify the seat of legal authority, the coroner occupying the central background in his role of oversight. You see? If you want to lend dignity to the inquest, composition and the picturization of authority count for a lot.

Ian Burney's right: the Golden Lane coroner's court was designed to be a model inquest site, a prototype that later became prevalent in other parts of London during the 1890s and into the early twentieth century. In 1938, the City Corporation gave its prototype a thorough polishing, putting on a new roof and rebuilding the interior. *The Times* glowed: 'The court room is now handsomely furnished in oak and lighted by lamps concealed behind the frieze.' The Lord Chief Justice at that time, Lord Hewart, attended the opening ceremony and gave a speech on the history and function of the coroner's office.¹⁷

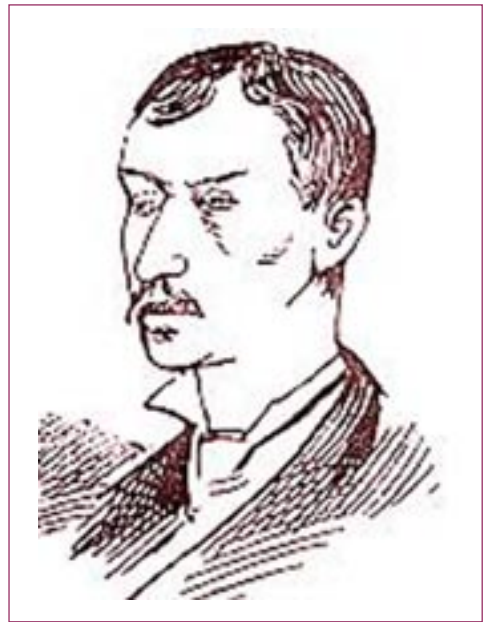
Golden Lane was a place of which the City was proud.

Interested Parties

When you read newspaper accounts of the Catherine Eddowes inquest, have you ever wondered why that fellow Crawford pipes up with so many questions? Indeed, the City Solicitor's questioning of witnesses shaped much of the enquiry.

In October 1888, Homewood Crawford (1850-1936) was thirty-eight, the son-in-law of a former Lord Mayor of London (Sir Francis Wyatt Truscott) and in the third year in his office as City Solicitor. Like Langham's father, Crawford also served as Under-Sheriff of London and Middlesex from 1875-1880, and then again during 1884-1885. He was active in several City Guilds, serving as Master of the Glovers', Fanmakers', Vintners' and Musicians' Guilds. Crawford was an amateur actor, musician, and hymn writer. He was also the first Master of the City of London Solicitors' Company, and sat on the Council of the Law Society for fifteen years. He was a Mason, and during 1889-1890 served as president of the Board of Grand Stewards. He was knighted Sir Homewood Crawford in 1900. As World War I engulfed Europe, he assisted the Professional Classes Relief Council by forming recruiting bands. He retired as City Solicitor in June 1924, and sometimes gave public lectures on crime and criminals that were mostly drawn from his experiences in the Central Criminal Court.¹⁸ Perhaps one of his tales concerned the wayward Kate Eddowes.

Had there been a criminal trial in her murder, Crawford would have prosecuted, and on behalf of the City Police, he was actively engaged in the inquest as an interested party and allowed by Langham to ask questions of witnesses - note we write allowed. Interested parties enjoyed no right to inquest witnesses. Of questions by interested parties and juries, Rudolph Melsheimer wrote:



Louis Diemschutz



John Kelly

¹⁷ 'Lord Chief Justice on Coroners. New City Court Room Opened', *The Times*, 29 May 1935.

¹⁸ 'Sir Homewood Crawford: Long Service to London,' Obituary, *The Times*, 19 November 1936.

*It is the duty of the coroner to examine the witnesses himself, but he has a discretion, in cases where he thinks that it will be of any assistance, to allow questions to be put by, or on behalf of, persons interested. And after each witness has been examined, the coroner should inquire whether the jury wish any further questions to be put. This is essential to the due administration of justice; the jury living in the neighbourhood being, most probably, acquainted with the circumstances better than the coroner.*¹⁹

We'll discuss juries a little later; for now let's stick with interested parties since it affords us an opportunity to understand how inquests investigating criminal deaths differed from criminal trials. In murder, manslaughter and suicide cases, interested parties were often solicitors appearing on behalf of families or persons likely to be accused of crimes at the inquest. For that reason, inquests sometimes took on an atmosphere of criminal trial or grand jury. Yet the concept of inquest was very different. Once again, interested parties had no rights of access there; remember Melsheimer's mention of the coroner's discretion in the quotation above. He writes further:

*What interests may be represented by counsel or solicitor upon the inquest is a matter entirely within the discretion of the coroner; if it seems to him that the jury are likely to be benefited by their assistance he ought to allow them to be heard. It is usual to allow the family of the deceased, and any person who is likely to be accused by the verdict, to be represented by counsel if they desire it; but it should always be borne in mind that they have no right to address the jury or to put questions to the witnesses except by permission of the coroner. There is in this respect no analogy whatever between a coroner's inquest and a trial of issues.*²⁰

No analogy between inquest and trial; inquests were preliminary fact-finding missions to determine causes of death. Sometimes they made accusations of criminal guilt but their verdicts made no legal determination. The investigation of criminal accusations belonged to the province of grand juries and criminal trials, and it was the criminal court that determined actual guilt or innocence. Grand juries were conducted in secret; inquests were (most of the time) open. In the inquest, properly there were no pro or con parties. Everyone gathered for the same purpose: to determine the truth.

However, we've definitely seen aberrations involving factions during the nineteenth century. As we discussed in Part I, the Second Bravo Inquest of 1876 was essentially a public grand jury. Another aberration we've encountered is the 1819 inquest into the death of Peterloo victim John Lees.²¹ Lees, you might remember, was a veteran of Waterloo who took part in a tremendous Radical demonstration at St. Peter's Field, Manchester, numbering thousands of people. The potential for riot made the magistrates nervous so they ordered the military in to break up the proceedings. Unfortunately, the yeomanry were a little too enthusiastic in their business and eleven people were hacked to death, including John Lees.



The Peterloo Massacre

Talk about factions in the inquest! On one side, there was the coroner and solicitors for the Manchester magistrates trying to limit evidence. On the other side, Radical lawyers from London, notably James Harmer, sought to draw out the proceedings of the inquest and gain maximum publicity for the Radical cause. Acting on behalf of John Lees's parents, Harmer profoundly irritated coroner Thomas Ferrand by asking inconvenient questions and threatening to introduce five hundred witnesses to the massacre. In this case, the interested party was definitely not welcome, by neither the coroner nor his officer, a man named Batty.

¹⁹ Melsheimer, 35.

²⁰ Melsheimer, 25.

²¹ *Ripperologist* #63 (January 2006), 23-4.

When Harmer turned up with his multitude of witnesses, Batty tried to close the door of inquest in his face.

Mr Harmer. - If you had not seen me here with the witnesses, would you not have proceeded with the inquest?

Mr Batty. - I will answer you no more questions; and (pointing to a gentleman who was taking notes at the table) I suppose I shall see all this in black and white in the newspapers in a few days.

Mr Harmer. - Any gentleman who acts conscientiously and correctly need never be afraid of the publication of his conduct. Besides, this is an open Court; any man is at liberty to publish any thing which takes place here.

Mr Batty. - If Mr Ferrand was here, I am sure that he would not allow one of you in the room.

Mr Harmer. - I beg to observe, Mr Ferrand could not legally exclude us; for as this is a public court of Justice, to inquire into the cause of the death of a fellow subject, who has met his death by violence, if all the people of England could be so compressed, they are entitled to be present in this room.²²



James Harmer ©National Portrait Gallery

The truth was that in the inquest there was no right of access and Ferrand did possess a discretion to silence Harmer, which he constantly tried to exercise, but the London lawyer representing the Lees's family was too slippery for him. If you were a parent or a friend of John Lees, it was a good thing Harmer acted so, because Ferrand's inquest was not objective. 'We don't want your evidence,' Mr Batty the coroner's clerk hissed as the proceedings began. Harmer's goal was to get the jury to accuse the Manchester magistrates and yeomanry of murder for their role in the Peterloo Massacre. That was bad news for the coroner who took the part of the magistrates and cover-up. Therefore, Ferrand attempted to restrict evidence by limiting testimony to only the people who had specifically seen John Lees cut down. Since the massacre was composed of thousands of strangers panicking, that limited the testimony to no one. Ferrand set quite an unreasonable bar, as was obviously his intention.

Mr Harmer. - Before the evidence is closed, I shall implicate many persons by name. It is not for you, nor for me, to anticipate the evidence. The Jury are to judge from the evidence, who are implicated in this foul murder. Does the learned gentleman mean to say, that only the hand that inflicted the fatal blow is stained with guilt? If so, his law is against all the text-writers on the law of England. Mr Batty, I will not be laughed at by you.

Mr Batty. - I did not laugh.

Coroner. - Turn away, Mr Batty; I see the motive of that observation.

Had we not actually beheld it, we could not believe one who speaks the English language - (we beg pardon, Mr Batty speaks only Rochdale vulgarisms) - could act the part now exhibited. The nauseous wretch most deliberately reared up his bottom towards Mr Harmer, and grinning graciously, asked, "Do you wish me to turn my back?" This passed without remark from the Coroner...

Mr Harmer. - The Jury see that.²³

That division into factions made the proceedings irregular, and that's why, when the High Court quashed the Lees inquest due to legalities about the jury's view of the corpse, they controversially refused to issue a mandamus ordering Ferrand to hold a second proceeding. What would be the point, the Court argued, if the second inquest promised to be irregular as well?

...Mr Harmer applied to him [Ferrand] for five hundred new summonses, and announced, that as long as there was a gentleman in the county who could throw any light on the subject, he would continue to call witnesses. The siege of Troy was nothing to such a proceeding: ten years would not exhaust the numbers which might be called; there was no hope, in fact, of any termination to the inquest.²⁴

Instead, the High Court recommended that the better venue was the seclusion of a grand jury proceeding. Ferrand took full advantage of the High Court's ruling and never reconvened a second inquest. There never was a completed inquiry into the death of John Lees, a man who had served his country at Waterloo. James Harmer, the interested party, had been just a little too interested to suit the coroner and the High Court. It's interesting that the Court criticized Harmer's 'siege' and not the coroner who inhibited evidence. For them, an inquest investigating the Peterloo Massacre was too open a vehicle, particularly when public resentment of the Government was at a high.

22 "Oldham, Sept. 8. Coroner's Inquest on the Body of John Lees." *The Times*, Sept. 11, 1819.

23 'Coroner's Inquest on John Lees. - Third Day', *The Times*, 2 October 1819.

24 'Law Report. Court of King's Bench, Monday, Nov. 29. Oldham Inquest. The King V. Ferrand.' *The Times*, 30 November 1819.

Oh, the imperfect world. But aberrations like the Lees inquest help us better appreciate the properly held inquest. Let's say then, that when proper procedure was observed, *ideally* there were no factions in the English inquest. Although interested parties had the welfare of their clients at heart, in the eyes of the competent and impartial coroner everyone present was there to assist the inquest in determining the facts. Well and good, but the coroner's discretion over an accused person's representation complicated an issue of civil liberty. In the Lees case, Ferrand inhibited evidence in favour of the party the jury was likely to accuse of murder, the Manchester magistrates. Now, flip that scenario over and imagine a coroner inhibiting testimony that was likely to turn suspicion *towards* a potential suspect, one whose accusing inquest will start him down the road to the scaffold if a trial finds him guilty. The ability of an interested party representing the interests of the accused becomes extremely important. Yet there was still no right of access to witnesses and jury. It seems unfair; inquest verdicts are merely accusations of murder and manslaughter and although they are inconclusive, still... why should the coroner have any discretion over a person's ability to defend himself or herself in a public forum?

Well, the answer to that concern is that biased coroners like Thomas Ferrand were a minority. Impartiality was the key - in a search for the facts, the coroner wasn't there to protect anyone's interests, unlike Thomas Ferrand in 1819. The inquest's job was to hear all the evidence, and interested parties didn't present 'cases' in the coroner's court. Everyone who stepped forward was heard in the interests of determining the facts, and therefore properly there were no 'cross examinations' to speak of, at least not in the way we think of them, which is as an effort to colour the evidence in a particular party's favour. Fact-finding was a simple concept of joint effort between people, but rather incompatible with the adversary-based procedure of criminal trials when it came time to introduce inquest depositions as secondary evidence. Rudolph Melsheimer mused over the problem in 1888.

*It is clear that the coroner is bound to hear the evidence on both sides, if indeed there can be said to be 'sides' at all upon an inquiry of this nature. This, it is presumed, is not to protect the interests of those who may be suspected or ultimately accused; but because the inquiry, how the party came to his death, cannot be truly satisfied, unless all the witnesses who know anything of the death be examined. This will not confer the right of access upon the witnesses generally, contrary to the direction of the coroner; for it is the constant practice in Courts of justice, both in civil and criminal proceedings, to order the witnesses to leave the Court, and to examine each out of the hearing of the others, a mode best calculated to ensure the truth. But how, it is said, can the depositions taken before the coroner be evidence, unless the party against whom they are used be present, and have the opportunity of cross-examining the witnesses? It must be admitted that, ordinarily, where there can be no cross-examination, depositions are not admissible; but those taken before the coroner have been said to be an exception to this general rule. The coroner is an elective officer, appointed on behalf of the public, to make inquiry about the matter within his jurisdiction, and therefore the law presumes that the depositions made before him will be fairly and impartially taken.*²⁵

If you have the perspective of a suspect in a murder case, that assumption of impartiality might be a bit of a leap for you. The inquest has accused you of murder in a public forum where you don't necessarily have a right of representation, and though the inquest's verdict doesn't determine your guilt, still its depositions are admissible as evidence in the criminal court that will determine whether you hang or not. Inconveniently for you, your lawyer cannot cross-examine a deposition so it seems quite unreasonable for the court simply to trust the coroner's impartiality. Legal theory offers you several reasons to assuage your doubts; whether they comfort you is a different story.

Suppose the criminal court incorrectly assumes impartiality in the inquest. Question: What if the coroner hates you and summons only impartial witnesses who would love to see you hang? Answer: Your safeguard would be the impartial jury's pursuit of evidence. Jurors would check the coroner by insisting on hearing *all* the relevant testimony, and if the coroner inhibited them in their pursuit, the High Court would quash the proceedings.

Wait a moment. Question: What if you were the parish bully and everybody on the jury has such a grudge against you that they conspire with the coroner to accuse you of murder? Answer: This would be an example of gross misconduct during publicly open proceedings, which the press would expose to the public. Once again the High Court would have grounds to quash the inquest verdict.

Question: But what if you were such a horrendous person that, in some extreme scheme, even the Justices on the Queen's Bench loathed you and allowed the misconduct to pass unchallenged? Answer: Don't worry, the inquest is preliminary, and you will have your day in the criminal court.

Question: But what if the worst witness against you, the fellow who lied about seeing you committing the act of murder, Witness X, conveniently dies before your criminal trial, a suicide to spite you? Since he can't make an appearance for cross-examination, there's only the record of his inquest deposition, which no lawyer can really discredit. Answer: You worry a lot.

Look, we can't account for all worst-case scenarios, but if you're such a lout that everyone in England so despises you, it's probably best that you exit this life and start fresh in the next. Meanwhile, as Melsheimer told us, during

²⁵ Melsheimer, 22-3.

normal procedure coroners would properly allow the participation of interested parties and their access to witnesses and juries with the understanding that they were there to assist the inquest. But even if the coroner refused, the business of the inquest was to determine all the facts in a transparent manner, so its depositions are unlikely to railroad you onto the scaffold.

Let's return to the Eddowes inquest of October 1888. The relationship between coroner and interested party was much more cordial than the aberration of the Lees case, especially since there was no suspect in sight.

Mr Crawford, addressing the coroner, said: I appear here as representing the City police in this matter, for the purpose of rendering you every possible assistance, and if I should consider it desirable, in the course of the inquiry, to put any questions to witnesses, probably I shall have your permission when you have finished with them.

*The Coroner: Oh, certainly.*²⁶

Oh, the tranquillity. It's no wonder that Langham was glad to have Crawford present because Langham was impartial to the evidence and Crawford was there to help to assist the inquest's pursuit of the facts. The community (in the form of the jury), the coroner and interested party (on behalf of the City police) made a joint effort to determine the facts of Eddowes's murder in the interests of public safety. Because the proceedings were transparent, we can rest assured that all the Ripper inquests were conducted impartially and fairly. When they were not, publicity allowed disaffected parties to make a lot of noise, as witnessed in the Lees case or the first Bravo inquest in 1876, when the coroner sought to persuade his jury to return a suicide verdict against its will.

At the conclusion of the inquiry, jury and coroner noted Crawford's cooperation.

*The Coroner afterwards stated that the jury desired him to thank Mr Crawford and the police for the assistance which they had rendered in the inquiry, and he also wished to add his own thanks.*²⁷

That's a lot better than old James Harmer got, isn't it?

Being ourselves interested parties who can ask no direct questions, we have tremendous reason to be grateful to the Eddowes inquest. Except for Neal Stubbings's *Catherine Eddowes, Jack the Ripper Victim*, it's Crawford, the jury, and Langham's questioning of witnesses which create not only our best picture of Catherine Eddowes's death, but of the woman herself. If the inquest failed to determine her murderer, it certainly accomplished its immediate purpose: identify the victim. A woman of complicated character emerges from the testimony.

Leading Towards Houndsditch

The mystery of Mary Jane Kelly captures our imagination because she is literally a faceless woman with no past, Ripperology's dreadful centerfold pinup, the perfect prostitute. With no antecedents, she is whoever we want her to be.

On the surface, chasing Catherine Eddowes seems an entirely different proposition. Kelly is mysterious and remote. Good old Kate appears affable and approachable. She's our chum, and we'd feel perfectly comfortable throwing an arm over her shoulder, buying her a drink and asking her to explain the mysteries of her life - and she'd do it. We'd be fools though, to believe much, if anything, that came out of her mouth. Where Kelly has no face, Eddowes shows us many, and that makes her an elusive figure in her own right. She is forever walking away from us, a flurry of Michaelmas daisies slipping around the next corner.

That corner. We hate that corner. It makes for a horrible view of the victim, and anyone trying to understand Kate Eddowes occupies a seat next to PC George Henry Hutt.

I pushed open the swing-door leading to the passage, and said, "This way, missus." She passed along the passage to the outer door. I said to her, "Please, pull it to." She replied, "All right. Good night, old cock." (Laughter.) She pulled the door to within a foot of being close, and I saw her turn to the left.

*The Coroner: That was leading towards Houndsditch? - Yes.*²⁸



Houndsditch

²⁶ Ryder.

²⁷ Evans and Skinner, p. 265

²⁸ Stephen P. Ryder, (Ed.) 'Catherine Eddowes' Inquest.' *Casebook: Jack the Ripper*. www.casebook.org/official_documents/inquests/inquest_eddowes.html Accessed 29 March 2006.

On that understatement, Eddowes takes an eternal left and vanishes forever in search of some easy answer to her problems, leaving behind a cornucopia of names and titles for us to puzzle over: Chick, Mrs. Conway, Mrs. Kelly, Mary Ann Kelly of Fashion Street, Wife, Mother, Sister, Supposed Singlewoman, Hopper, Seamstress, Unfortunate, Prostitute, Whore.

Victim.

Who was Kate Eddowes?

How wonderfully terrifying it would be to go round that corner with her into the Ripper's teeth, but the Houndsditch of 1888 - and the promise of its answers - is quite beyond our ability to reach. One thing we *can* do is resort to Samuel Langham's inquiry of her murder and the examination of witnesses who knew her in life. Nobody needs to tell us that we follow a long trail of footsteps. What can we say about an inquest that for over a century has seen print hundreds of times? Not much really, except that the Eddowes inquest is a terrific example of cooperation between coroner, police and community in investigating a sudden death.

How tempting it is to paint the slight, five-foot, auburn-haired Eddowes as the Audrey Hepburn of the East End - the jolly, clever Unfortunate down on her luck but with a song always on her lips, dancing through the East End wearing a mish-mash of men and women's clothing. The hard truth is that the jovial singer in mismatched clothes had a mismatched character. Real people always do.

Bruised on the outside, she was also bruised on the inside. Probably never married to Thomas Conway in the context of religious ritual, she was his property nonetheless, even going so far as to brand his initials on her arm as though she were a livestock specimen. She was proud of the relationship; she interpreted herself through its lens, calling herself 'Mrs. Conway' even long after she had left her husband. That submergence of self makes Kate Eddowes the antithesis of the modern feminist. Certainly on no account can we call Eddowes a feminist in either the modern or even the Victorian sense. Yet, bafflingly, she was shrewdly aware of her own value - a feminist virtue in a role that in the strictest sense is most unfeminine owing to its often-subservient nature. Kate Eddowes performed the duties of a Victorian wife, bore her husband three children and received husbandly beatings that doubtlessly facilitated her slide into alcohol abuse. She indeed 'bought and paid for' the privilege of the title of 'wife' with hard, painful labours and experience. Yet she deserted the family that so defined her. She was a mother who in some way seems incapable of nurturing; indeed, she appears to have demanded that her family nurture her by accepting payment for nursing her daughter through childbirth and begging her family for money to the point that her daughter Annie avoided her. For Kate Eddowes, we can make an argument that while 'family' was one way to gain recognition and self-worth, it was also something of a business proposition, one that she had bought and paid for with her body, and one from which she expected to receive dividends. Motherhood was a concept that Eddowes rejected in mid-stream. How willingly or with how much regret, we don't know, but imagine what discordant feelings Annie Phillips must have felt as she testified at her mother's inquest and reclaimed their relationship.

Having left her family, Kate turned towards a doubtful, sour independence. The things we own reveal character, and the inventory of the victim's possessions reveals a scavenger's nature. There were the practical items, red flannel for holding pins and needles, scraps of linen, skirting, a thimble, rags, a knife, and a spoon. There were calico pockets and tins, storage items. Although she was dirty when found in Mitre Square, cleanliness was a concern; she carried a handkerchief, six pieces of soap, another piece of flannel to wash with, and a comb. There were luxury items, the two short black clay pipes, tea, and sugar, and a piece of decorative red silk. How sad these things are, how pathetic. The life of a homeless person, always on the move. Yet we tell you there's optimism there. She was a collector with one eye looking towards the future. There's optimism in pins and needles; there's mending there. There's optimism in soap. There's optimism in the pawn tickets, although they represent an optimism that was never quite redeemable.

That list is all that remains of Kate's voice. Poignant. Wretched. Hopeful. That voice reveals the practical scavenger intent on maintaining normality in the face of adversity. Normality in the face of adversity, what's more British than that? We're inclined to quote Churchill's Finest Hour speech, but that's far too romantic a notion, since it's sadly



Catherine Eddowes

evident that Catherine Eddowes was largely responsible for blitzing herself.

Her presence with a stranger in the darkest corner of Mitre Square reveals the grim result of that blitz. Despite cautions from witnesses that she did not, Catherine Eddowes did resort to prostitution to support herself; but that occupation did not define her. A woman who probably had a multitude of sexual partners, she was capable of two long-term relationships. She loved and was loved in return. People who knew her tried to protect her reputation, such as it was. Despite her faults, Catherine Eddowes was the type of person who inspired that sort of sentiment. Like her pawn tickets, she was redeemable.

Homeless, she had something approaching a regular address: Cooney's, at 55 Flower and Dean Street, which she inhabited on and off for seven years, where she was known and liked. A woman of supposedly sober habits, she was a public drunk sprawled in the street, too drunk to comprehend the simplest of questions, too drunk to walk unaided, and initially too drunk to concoct even a false name to give the police. Yet she was industrious. She hawked trinkets and found work as a seamstress and a hopper. Her browned skin speaks to the fact that she and Kelly managed to find work during what was a particularly disastrous hopping season - an impressive feat when we realize that work was scarce and employers turned many hoppers away. Eddowes and Kelly must have scrambled for their berths.

She was society's discard and, as witnessed by her last drunken escapade, she could be spectacularly unreliable, probably as much to her own consternation as to that of those who knew her. On the other hand, she wasn't discarded - she was missed as you would be missed. In John Kelly, she appears to have found the comrade she never had in Thomas Conway and, hours before she ever ventured into Mitre Square, there was her comrade pacing inside Cooney's, enquiring after her. Someone wondered where she was; and it's certain that not everyone can say the same.

Irresponsible, manipulative, hard-working, hard-drinking, irrepressible Kate Eddowes turned towards Houndsditch and found Death. Having by most standards lived a failed life, she still acquired redemption along the way. *Bought and paid for*, she'd say. *Bought and paid for* - once again, with her body. Thousands of mourners watched her funeral procession while cursing her murderer. The lover and comrade was missed. The wayward sister was missed. The failed mother was missed. Her sassy farewell to George Hutt, 'Goodnight old cock', provoked laughter in the coroner's court. Nearly one hundred and twenty years after her death, we're still reading and writing about her. Something of her survives when her contemporaries who lived into old age are forgotten. After all this time, the continued interest of strangers would amaze her. *Why*, she might ask us, *have you remembered me?*

Why? Because, despite her troubles, Catherine Eddowes did not self-destruct. She did *not* commit suicide. She didn't throw life away. She meant to live; she held onto life until it was stolen from her. As a murder victim, the prostitute occupies a moral high ground that would have been incomprehensible to her in life. That's one answer, but the emotion attached to her, then and now, is born from sterner stuff than simple sympathy for a woman brutally slaughtered. It originates from more than fascination with Jack the Ripper. Perhaps even Eddowes's sheer likeability doesn't account for her historical endurance. 'I wish I was like you,' she once told her sister Emma. It's condescending to suggest she was like us. *We are like her*. 'That's crazy,' you might say, but look around. In this modern world, few escape life without compromising themselves and today there are countless whores walking the earth dressed in Armani suits as they pursue their own easy answers. Aren't we all similarly complicated people of sunshine and shadow turning left, leading towards Houndsditch?

Good and Lawful Men

Having treated interested parties, let's seize an opportunity to examine the real driving force of the Victorian inquest, the jury. Many of us who have served on trial juries may incorrectly suppose we have had the same experience as the jurors who sat for the Eddowes inquest. We have not. Throughout our series, it's been convenient to write of the coroner holding inquests for simplicity's sake, but that's inaccurate. Actually, the jury held inquests before the coroner; they assessed evidence and returning verdicts under his guidance, but they were not restricted to his guidance. Juries, in fact, had a power to ignore testimony and coroners altogether. Unlike trial juries, inquest juries were not targets for prosecutors and defence lawyers to throw their cases at. Inquest jurors participated in court proceedings. They spoke, they interacted with coroners, witnesses, and interested parties. They freely asked questions and commented on evidence. Sometimes they compelled coroners and police to find new evidence. In the English system of inquest, we must think of the inquest jury as an investigative body in its own right.

Once the coroner decided to hold an inquest, his agenda turned to issuing a warrant for summoning 'not less than twelve nor more than twenty-three good and lawful men to appear before him at a specified time and place, there to inquire as jurors touching the death of such person as aforesaid'.²⁹ Because of the requirement that the jury view the body, and because bodies decompose, the coroner had to summon his jury quickly. Rudolph Melsheimer writes:

Delay on his [the coroner's] part is punishable. For instance it has been held to be inconsistent with a coroner's duty to delay holding an inquest upon a body in a state of decomposition during so long a period as five days without special reason. It must in all cases be held within a reasonable time after the death, but no precise definite time can

²⁹ Melsheimer, 5.

*be specified within which the inquest can be held; the body is part of the evidence, and it is essential that that should be in such a state that information may be derived from the inspection of it; and by the state of the body alone can the period within which the inquisition may be held be determined. Where, however the body has been buried so long, that it may reasonable be presumed that the view of it could afford no information, the coroner ought not to disinter it.*³⁰

First, the coroner's warrant was delivered to his officer, or if he didn't have one, to the relevant peace officer of the parish. Checking against a list of eligible jurors, the officer wrote the summons for the particular number of inhabitant householders specified in the coroner's warrant. Under provisions of the County Juries Act 1825 and the Juries Act 1870, a number of people were exempted from jury duty. The exclusions were extensive. We won't offer a complete list here; it would be too lengthy. We'll just say that inquest jurors weren't members of the government, the clergy, Roman Catholic priests, the peerage, the judiciary, the post office, the military, police, or the legal and medical community. They couldn't be gaolers, court officers, coroners, keepers in lunatic asylums, or any of the Queen's household servants. In cases of prison inquests, jurors could have no connections with the prison. Outlaws and people convicted of treason or felonies could not serve unless they had received a free pardon.

Considering the multitude of exceptions, the acceptable juror in 1888 was male and likely a tradesman, such as a carpenter or shopkeeper. He had been a citizen of England and Wales for at least ten years, owned a house, but needn't have been of any particular age or to own any particular amount of property. Since there was a requirement that the jury sign the inquisition, he knew how to write his name. His jury service cost him income. In the County of Middlesex, he was entitled to no fee for his service, although other places did pay, like the City of London (where sympathetic jurors awarded Annie Phillips their fees at the end of the Eddowes inquest) and Surrey (where jurors received a shilling a day). The number of men in a jury could never be less than twelve. Jurors only had to serve once a year, unless everyone on the Jury List had already been summoned in a given year.³¹

Ideally, the juror shouldn't have been a witness in the case he was about to hear, but if he neglected to inform the coroner of his knowledge beforehand, he could still give testimony while simultaneously serving on the jury.³²

Besides writing the jury summons, the coroner's officer (or peace officer), selected two or three constables, depending on the coroner's requested number of jurors. He gave them a precept, directing them to summon six jurors each 'on sight', make a return to the coroner that his warrant had been carried out, and deliver the return to him at the inquest. The precept also directed the constable not to depart the inquest without permission - a guarantee of his work. 'Hereof fail not at your peril,' the precept warned.³³ With that, the officer gave the constables the jury summons.

In other words, the precept said: 'Don't throw away the summons, claim you left it on the door, and scratch your head when no jurors turn up at the inquest.' Knowing he was answerable to the coroner and required to deliver the summons 'on sight', the parish constable went round to individual houses and physically put the warrant in the prospective juror's hands or, if he wasn't home, left it with a member of his family.³⁴ Because of the officer's precept, 'I didn't get the summons' wasn't a viable excuse for failing to report to the coroner.

Having completed his rounds, the constable filled out his return of the coroner's warrant, a brief form of two sentences letting the coroner know he'd executed his initial warrant.³⁵ His last bit of business was to attend the inquest to deliver it, remaining there until the coroner was satisfied on his jury.

Once summoned, the potential jurors appeared at the time and place the coroner had appointed for the inquest. The coroner then opened the court by proclamation, wherever his court happened to be: a dedicated facility, a hospital, the town hall, private dwelling, or pub.

*You good men of this county [or, liberty, as the case may be] summoned to appear here this day, to inquire for our sovereign lady the Queen, when, how, and by what means R.F. came to his death, answer to your names as you shall be called, every man at the first call, upon the pain and peril that shall fall thereon.*³⁶

The coroner or his officer then called over the names of the jury, 'beginning with those of the parish where the inquest is to be taken, and the others in the order specified in the warrant'. As each name was called, the juror presented himself. The coroner ticked his name off his list, a simple check mark to show that that person was present.

³⁰ Melsheimer, 9-10.

³¹ Melsheimer, 13.

³² Melsheimer, 29.

³³ Melsheimer, 231-2.

³⁴ Melsheimer, 232.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Melsheimer, 232.

If a potential juror failed to present himself, his name was called a second time, and then, if there was still no answer, a third time. If the juror didn't appear after the third call, or likewise appeared and refused to serve, the coroner was able to fine him an amount not exceeding £5.³⁷ That was the 'pain and peril' mentioned in the proclamation. Whenever this happened, likely the coroner raised a questioning eyebrow towards the summoning constable who performed an uncomfortable shuffle. 'Where are my jurors?' asked the coroner's stern gaze.

What if less than the required twelve jurors appeared for duty? Did the coroner have to call off the inquest? That was an unsatisfactory conclusion every coroner wanted to avoid. Therefore, if the full complement of twelve failed to report after several calls, the coroner made a proclamation for the default of jurors - a warning that he was about to fine them.

*You good men who have been already severally called, and have made default, answer to your names and save your fine.*³⁸

There was a last roll call. After that, if the coroner was still short of the twelve he needed, he had the ability to summon more people from the neighbourhood until he had a sufficient number of jurymen. In other words, he appealed to spectators in court or had his officer and the constables round up people straight off the street. This was why the summoning constable had to remain until the coroner released him. Melsheimer wrote that during such moments coroners should examine the constables on the methods they had used to summon the jury, and not allow them to leave until a full jury was in attendance.³⁹

But the coroner wasn't bound to accept just anyone for service. He apparently posed a few basic questions to potential jurors to determine their suitability, and the definition of 'good and lawful' was a matter of opinion, as we see at the Frances Coles inquest of February 1891.

On the names of the jurymen summoned being called out by the Coroner's officer, it was found that only eight answered, the remainder of those present being substitutes. Some of the latter were accepted, but when Mr Backert [Bachert], the chairman of the so-called Whitechapel Vigilance Committee, offered himself as a substitute in place of a Mr Fielder, the Coroner declined to allow him to serve.

Mr Backert. - Why?

The CORONER. - Because I decline.

Mr Backert. - You decline simply because I happen to be chairman of the Vigilance Committee, and you think I shall fully investigate this matter. I have a right to be on the jury.

The CORONER. - I have decided you are not to serve on this jury.

Mr Backert. - Yes; because you know I shall inquire into the case.

The CORONER. - You have already been told I shall decline to accept you.

Mr Backert (walking to the back of the court). - You will hear more of this.

The jury, having been sworn, proceeded to view the body. On their return Mr Backert, addressing the Coroner, said:- "It was only after you heard who I was that you would not allow me to serve on the jury."

*The CORONER. - If you do not keep quiet I will have you ejected from the room.*⁴⁰

Jurors, Melsheimer advised in 1888, ought 'to be persons who are indifferent to the subject matter of the inquiry'.⁴¹ So at Coles in 1891, there was no seat on the jury for Albert Bachert and certainly no right to serve. Meanwhile, Baxter presumably levied a £5 fine on Mr Fiedler for failing to turn up.

Once the required twelve (or more) jurors were collected, the coroner administered the jury's oath, first to the foreman, who was either simply the first jurymen the coroner called or alternatively a nominee of his fellow jurors. The remaining men were sworn in batches, three or four at a time, in their order upon the panel. Form 2 supplied the wording of the oath.



Juror's roll-call from a Worcestershire inquest

38 Melsheimer, 233.

39 Melsheimer, 16-17.

40 Ryder, *The Times* 16 February 1891.

41 Melsheimer, 14.

*You shall diligently inquire and a true presentment make of all such matters and things as are here given you in charge on behalf of our Sovereign Lady the Queen, touching the death of C.D., now lying dead, of whose body you shall have the view, and shall without fear or favour, affection, or ill-will, a true verdict give according to the evidence and to the best of your skill and knowledge. So help you God.*⁴²

Sometimes it happened that jurors held religious beliefs that prevented them swearing oaths. Did the coroner excuse them from service? Not at all - there was an alternative wording that was tacked on to Form 2.

*I, A.B., do solemnly, sincerely, and truly affirm and declare that the taking of any oath is according to my religious belief unlawful; and I do also solemnly, sincerely, and truly affirm and declare that I will {as in Form 2}.*⁴³

Now, the oaths taken, the coroner and the jury were married for the duration. They were locked into holding the inquest. For the coroner to refuse to hold the proceedings without an adequate reason, or from improper motives, was the type of behaviour for which the Lord Chancellor was liable to remove him from office.⁴⁴ Come what may, whether the details were embarrassing or not, and no matter how delicate the evidence, once the jury was sworn, the inquest would unfold to their satisfaction, under the advice and supervision of the coroner. An ancient and intricate bond had formed.

Sworn in, the jury went to view the corpse, often - but by 1888, not necessarily - accompanied by the coroner. A relative or acquaintance also went with the jury in order to identify the body - likely Joseph Barnett at the Mary Kelly inquest, John Kelly or Eliza Gold in the case of Catherine Eddowes. A legal formality and of no real practical value as the inquest underwent a process of professionalization, the jury's view of the body had its origins in the ancient practice of the Presentment of Englishry, when medieval villagers had to satisfy the coroner that deceased persons were Saxon and not of Norman descent, in which case the village would have had to pay the large *murdrum* fine designed to discourage assassinations. The medieval view was a financial imperative. By the nineteenth century, the *murdrum* fine was of course extinct, and the establishment of identity served an obviously practical investigatory purpose; but identification was often made before the jury formed. Qualified medical witnesses supplied juries with the cause of death. Why force the jury to view the body? This was the question critics asked more and more during the late nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, ultimately leading to the view's demise. Yet tradition counted for much, and while it endured, the Victorian non-professional's view of the corpse was still the community's affirmation that the dead person was one of their own, whether that person was from the locality or not, whether the person was a countess, a prostitute, or even unidentified. It didn't matter who the deceased was, the community still wanted an accounting for the death for interests of safety.

Upon the jury's return from their view, the coroner briefly outlined the case at hand and explained to them that their purpose was to determine the cause of death. Then the inquest turned to the examination of witnesses, and it's at this point in the proceedings that the jury's real influence first comes into play. Of Form 2 of the jury oath, notice the phrase 'and to the best of your skill and knowledge'. An entire world of legal intricacy existed in just those few words, and they differentiated the inquest juror from the trial juror. Inquests did not proceed like criminal trials. Where magistrates and grand juries considered accusations, coroners and juries were on fact-finding missions to determine causes of death. Quite simply, in the interest of community safety, that meant that inquest juries weren't necessarily limited to considering the evidence presented in court. The inquest jury was an inquiring body in its own right, just as much as any interested party or coroner. Melsheimer writes:

*This is the old form of oath, and survives no doubt from the time when the jury were selected with special reference to their personal knowledge of the matters to be inquired into... The difference between this form of oath and that administered upon a trial is noticeable as giving larger power to the jury in the former case. It is their privilege, for example, at any time during the investigation, to call back before them any witness who has been examined, and to ask any question that may suggest itself to their minds as elucidatory of their inquiry.*⁴⁵



Henry Hunt

⁴² Melsheimer, 223.

⁴³ Melsheimer, 233.

⁴⁴ Melsheimer, 18.

⁴⁵ Melsheimer, 17-18.

Jurors could ask questions. While considering evidence, they could reject it, recall witnesses, and insist that new ones be called. As we've seen, the jury, under the Medical Witness Act 1836 and the Coroners' Act 1887, could reject even sophisticated medical witnesses as unsatisfactory. Placing that sort of judgment in the hands of laymen might sound like a recipe for disaster, but remember where the nineteenth century inquest came from: Peterloo, Henry Hunt's investigation of Ilchester Gaol, and Wakley's reforms. The English inquest was an attempt by the community to protect itself, and so all the witnesses were answerable to the community, represented by the jury. In the self-interest of the community the inquest used all the tools at its disposal: witness testimony, the coroner's guidance, and the jury's knowledge of their neighbourhood. For example, in Eddowes:

The Foreman: What guided you in determining whether the woman was drunk or not?

[Robinson]: Her appearance.

The Foreman: I ask you because I know of a case in which a person was arrested for being drunk who had not tasted anything intoxicating for eight or nine hours.⁴⁶

Another example of a juror applying his knowledge:

Crawford: When did you see her next morning?

Kelly: About eight o'clock. I was surprised to see her so early...

A Juryman: Is not eight o'clock a very early hour to be discharged from a casual ward?

Kelly: I do not know. There is [sic] some tasks - picking oakum - before you can be discharged. I know it was very early.⁴⁷ Even police had to account to the jury. The Eddowes inquest, once again:

A Juror: It seems surprising that a policeman should have found the piece of apron in the passage of the buildings, and yet made no inquiries in the buildings themselves. There was a clue up to that point, and then it was altogether lost.

Mr Crawford: As to the premises being searched, I have in court members of the City police who did make diligent search in every part of the tenements the moment the matter came to their knowledge. But unfortunately it did not come to their knowledge until two hours after. There was thus delay, and the man who discovered the piece of apron is a member of the Metropolitan police.

A Juror: It is the man belonging to the Metropolitan police that I am complaining of.

And then later, no doubt to PC Long's mortification:

A Juror: Having examined the apron and the writing, did it not occur to you that it would be wise to search the dwelling?

[Long] I did what I thought was right under the circumstances.

The Juror: I do not wish to say anything to reflect upon you, because I consider that altogether the evidence of the police redounds to their credit; but it does seem strange that this clue was not followed up.

[Long] I thought the best thing to do was to proceed to the station and report to the inspector on duty.

The Juror: I am sure you did what you deemed best.

In some cases, one sitting of the inquest wasn't sufficient to review all the evidence. If the coroner thought it necessary, and when the jury wanted to hear more, the inquest adjourned. The coroner then proclaimed:

All manner of persons who have anything more to do at this court before the coroner for this _____, may depart home at this time, and give their attendance here again [or at the adjourned place] on _____ next, being the _____ day of _____ instant, at ten of the clock in the forenoon precisely. - God save the Queen.⁴⁸

As we saw in Part III of our series, adjournments were somewhat risky affairs. Coroners weighed the prospect of new testimony against a possible procedural failing of the inquest. If the proceedings didn't reconvene at the specified time and place, then the entire proceedings would drop, and the inquest would have to begin all over again. Such an occurrence would be especially problematic for very lengthy inquests - take for example the second Bravo inquest, which lasted over twenty sessions. Imagine that after the eighteenth adjournment, the proceedings dropped because the coroner failed to attend, or died (as happened during the Crippen inquest). Imagine another scenario when less than twelve jurors returned for the adjourned inquest, making it impossible for the jury to return a verdict. The entire inquest would have to start over again, with new jurors to make up the deficit, and all the witnesses would have to be recalled. There would be another trip to the cemetery, another unpleasant exhumation of the poisoned Bravo, and another distasteful view that really didn't offer jurors any information about the cause of death.

⁴⁶ Ryder.

⁴⁷ Ryder, 'Daily Telegraph-5 October 1888.' *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* CD archives.

⁴⁸ Melsheimer, 236.

To help ensure that jurors would return to adjourned proceedings, the coroner imposed a financial obligation upon them:

*You acknowledge yourselves severally to owe to our sovereign lady the Queen the sum of ten pounds, to be levied upon your goods and chattels, lands and tenements, for her majesty's use, upon condition that if you, and each of you, do personally appear here again [or at an adjourned place] on _____ next, being the _____ day of _____ instant, at ten of the clock in the forenoon precisely, then and there to make further inquiry on behalf of our said sovereign lady the Queen, touching the death of the said R.F., of whose body you have had the view; then this recognizance to be void, or else to remain in full force. Are you content?*⁴⁹

Once the jury was content that it had heard all the evidence it desired, the coroner summed up the case for them, explaining any applicable laws (i.e. the difference between murder and manslaughter). Then the jury withdrew to consider their verdict. Rudolph Melsheimer explains that as they deliberated, juries balanced law and their own discretion.

*It is peculiarly the province of the jury to investigate and determine the facts of the case; they are neither to expect, nor should they be bound by, any specific or direct opinion of the coroner upon the whole of the case, except so far as regards the verdict which, in point of law, they ought to find as dependent and contingent upon their conclusions in point of fact. But in questions of law, juries ought to show the most respectful deference to the advice and recommendation of the coroner; ad questionem facti non respondent iudices, ad questionem legis non respondent juratores [Judges do not answer questions of fact; juries do not answer questions of law]. The verdict should be compounded of the facts as detailed to the jury by the witnesses, and of the law as stated to them by the Court.*⁵⁰

During this stage of deliberation, the jury oath comes into play once more. Despite that bit about restricting verdicts to only the evidence and law presented in Court, Melsheimer allowed in his commentary that the oath invited jurors 'to use their skill and knowledge also, and [the jury] may therefore presumably give a valid verdict in cases where no evidence whatever is tendered'. For the legal system, that ability presented some alarming ramifications. In theory, the jury could completely disregard the coroner's legal advice, and all the witness testimony. What could the coroner do about it? Well, nothing. Although he could advise and warn, he was bound to accept the verdict.

Furthermore, no legal mechanism punished a jury delivering a verdict that had no grounding in law. In essence, the jury, who were laymen, could usurp the entire proceedings,⁵¹ all because of that one phrase in the jury oath: 'to the best of your skill and knowledge'. Although by resorting to legal theory we can imagine ridiculous worst-case scenarios of juries disregarding all facts and law - 'in the case of Mary Jane Kelly, the jury returned a verdict of "Felo de se"' - in actual practice, illustrations are a little more subtle. Consider this verdict we cited in Part III:

*The jury were locked up for nearly three hours, and ultimately returned a verdict of "Manslaughter" against both Ward and Williams, a verdict which the Coroner [Roderick Macdonald] said he did not think would be sustained in another Court.*⁵²

Witness the Strand case from Part IV, and Langham's acceptance of the manslaughter verdict against Abraham. Langham had no choice but, as we saw, the criminal court acted as a check against the inquest jury's faulty verdict by not sustaining their verdict of manslaughter.

Riders of responsibility, those incidental opinions attached to verdicts, presented another source of conflict between coroner and jurors. When riders had nothing to do with the verdict, coroners could restrict them, and often clashed with juries over them.



Guys Hospital

At Guy's Hospital, yesterday, Mr Samuel F Langham held an inquiry respecting the death of Ellen Elizabeth Hawes, aged three years, the daughter of a gas labourer, living at 9, Arthur-street, Old Kent- road. Mrs Hawes stated that three weeks ago her daughter fell with her head against a stone step, and, after apparently recovering, lost her sight and the use of her left leg. Acting on medical advice the witness took the child to Guy's Hospital, arriving there just before 11 o'clock on Friday night week last. The child was seen by a doctor, but he refused to admit it, and told the witness to go again the next morning for some medicine. She went again on the Saturday, but was then told to bring the child at night. This she did and the child was once more sent away. On the Monday she went again and the child was then admitted. Dr William Graham Stewart, house

49 Ibid.

50 Melsheimer, 40.

51 Melsheimer, 41-42.

52 'Inquests', *The Times*, 14 October 1890.

physician at the hospital, said he saw the child when it was admitted on the evening of Monday, October 8. It died on the 12th inst. from meningitis. The child's life would not have been saved if it had been admitted when the mother first took it to the hospital. He did not see the child before it was admitted. The jury found, in accordance with the medical testimony, that the child died a natural death but wished to add a rider to the effect that the hospital authorities deserved censure for sending the child away late at night when it was dying. The Coroner. - But you are told that that had nothing whatever to do with the death. A Juror. - There is no reason why the hospital authorities should not be censured for sending the child away on two bitterly cold nights. (Hear, hear.) They ought to be severely censured. (Hear, hear.) The Coroner. - I have recorded a verdict of natural death. The foreman (after consultation). - I must ask you, Mr Coroner, to put our rider on the depositions. The Coroner. - I must decline. The hospital doctor acted on the best of his judgment. A juror. - There is not one dissentient amongst us and we all agree that the hospital authorities ought to be very severely censured. The Coroner. - I am sorry to say I cannot agree with you.⁵³

A far more sensational battle took place in 1887 Staffordshire.

Some unusual incidents have taken place at Tunstall, Staffordshire, in connexion with an inquest over which Mr John Booth, coroner for the county, presided. The inquest, which was first held a week ago, was for the purpose of inquiring into the death of George Wright, aged 48 years, a labourer, who was killed at Clanway Colliery, Tunstall, on the 24th of May. The jury, after inspecting the spot where the accident occurred, returned the following verdict: - "That George Wright met with his death accidentally, but that a stricter supervision by the responsible managers was wanting." The coroner prepared the inquisition, omitting the latter clause, but the jury declined to sign it, and were thereupon bound over in the sum of £50 severally and individually to appear at the next assizes and answer for their conduct. Ultimately, however, the inquiry was adjourned to allow the jury to consider their position, and they met again yesterday, when a remarkable scene was witnessed. A lively altercation between the coroner and the foreman of the jury ensued, resulting in the jurors persisting in their determination not to sign the abbreviated verdict. They were accordingly bound over to appear at the next Stafford Assizes. During the proceedings one jurymen threatened to lock the coroner in the room and compel him to listen to their arguments, which he positively declined to do.⁵⁴

Riders of responsibility were acceptable when they related to the cause of death and were recommendations to prevent future deaths such as altering a dangerous feature in the community, like a railway crossing with no guard. When riders assigned moral blame inconsistent with the verdict, then there was likely conflict between coroner and jury. That probably helped stereotype the coroner as an autocrat, but this anecdote illustrates what happened when the coroner was weak:

An inquest was held on a girl of nineteen who was said to have had sexual relations with a much older married man. At one stage it was thought that the man might have been responsible for the death; but medical evidence disproved this. The coroner, at the request of the jury, censured the man for his relations with the girl.⁵⁵

Such riders and censures were as harmful as the masked prison death, and they help us appreciate the delicate balancing act coroners had to perform as they tried to avoid inhibiting juries while helping them return responsible verdicts and riders.

After the jury reached a verdict, the coroner and jury certified the inquisition, a form that recorded the name of the deceased and their verdict, by signing it.

Sometimes it happened that twelve members of the jury, the necessary number to return a verdict, couldn't agree. Under Section 4 (5) of the Coroner's Act 1887, the coroner could then adjourn the inquest and have the jury report at the next assizes under the charge of a judge or commissioner. As we wrote in Part II of our series, Thomas Diplock once encountered such a jury.

During the course of his career it is evident that he must have had many inquests of a sensational and important nature. Perhaps the most curious was one which occurred recently. It was in connection with an inquiry held on the body of a child that was found in a railway carriage with a blow on its skull. The facts of the case were exceedingly simple, the medical evidence pointing conclusively to the fact that death was due to violence. Four or five of the jurymen were for returning a verdict of willful murder, but the remainder wished to return an open verdict. To the surprise of the disagreeing jurymen they were bound over to attend at the Old Bailey on the following Monday. Accordingly the "good men and true" appeared before the Recorder, who, along with the officials of the Court, was equally surprised as the jury at this apparently novel procedure. The law on the matter was looked up, and Dr Diplock was found to be perfectly in his rights in doing what he had done. The Recorder reviewed the evidence, and a verdict of willful murder against some person or persons unknown was returned. It was remarked that such an occurrence of binding a jury over to appear at the Old Bailey had not been known for many years.⁵⁶

53 'Inquests', *The Times*, 17 October 1900.

54 'Coroner and Jury', *The Times*, 10 June 1887.

55 'Report of the Departmental Committee on Coroners (First Printed in 1936, Reprinted 1964)', *The Shipman Inquiry*. <http://www.the-shipman-inquiry.org.uk/gencat.asp?p=2&ID=45> Accessed 14 October 2005.

56 'Death of Dr Diplock, The West Middlesex Coroner', *West London Observer*, 7 May 1892.

If at the assizes the jury was still unable to agree, they were simply discharged.

However, the coroner possessed discretion to detain the jury himself, for as long as he saw fit, forcing them to remain in isolation until they reached a verdict. To encourage them to hurry things along, he could even deny them nourishment. By 1888, coroners rarely exercised this option, and for good reason. In Melsheimer's opinion, that discretion was unconstitutional because while the law compelled jurors to serve, no law actually required them to reach a verdict. Yet the power still existed, as illustrated by the following form of instruction from the coroner to his officer (Form 35 in Jervis, fifth edition, 1888).

*You shall well and truly keep the jury upon this inquiry without meat, drink, or fire; you shall not suffer any person to speak to them, nor shall you speak to them yourself, unless it be to ask them if they have agreed upon their verdict, until they shall be agreed. So help you God.*⁵⁷



The Old Bailey in 1842

With the 1887 Act as their guide, surely most coroners would have preferred simply sending their conflicted juries to the Old Bailey rather than starving them into submission to reach a verdict. The threat contained in Form 35 must have been rare.

There you have it: a basic overview of the inquest jury. It's good to take notice of some of the problems that were inherent with the jury system, and the non-professionalism exhibited in bad verdicts and irresponsible riders are probably two reasons why the jury hasn't survived in most forms of the modern inquest. At the same time, we ought to remember that during the nineteenth century, the jury's discretion acted as a check against the coroner's discretion, and the image

of the coroner as an autocratic figure lording it over juries and routinely cramming evidence down their throats is a misconception. When such cases occurred, publicity and higher courts remedied the situation. In the Victorian concept of the English inquest, coroners and juries shared a balance of power in the interests of oversight, safety and reform, albeit sometimes uneasily.

The Surrey Revolution

On 1 April 1891, a new scale of inquest fees devised by the London County Council came into effect, enforcing a universal fee of five shillings for coroners' officers who summoned juries. This was an attempt not only to save taxes, but also to consolidate procedure in areas that had recently been part of separate jurisdictions - Surrey and Middlesex - but were now incorporated into the new County of London. For officers of what had been the old county of Middlesex, to whom the magistrates had paid only three shillings, that was welcome news. However, if you were an officer on the other side of the Thames, working in Surrey, the new schedule was bad news, since the Surrey magistrates had formerly paid them 7s 6d.

Also affected were jurymen in Surrey, who had once received a shilling each for their service. Under the new scale, they received nothing at all, in keeping with their brethren in old Middlesex across the Thames.⁵⁸

At the conclusion of an inquest in Southwark on 2 April 1891, the day after the new schedule came into effect, Samuel Langham was one of the its first critics.

He was, he remarked, sorry to say that the County Council, who had drawn up a new scale for the remuneration of coroner's officers, had not inserted in it the usual fee of a shilling which had been allowed jurors for some considerable time, in fact ever since he had had to do with that county; and, as a consequence, he was unable to pay them as usual that day. He very much regretted the course the County Council had taken, but, strongly as he objected to it, still it was not a matter in which he could interfere, and all he could do was to urge them to use their influence amongst their representatives on the Council to get the old scale, which was a liberal one, restored in its entirety. He could not see the slightest benefit in making the alteration, and he asserted that it was utterly uncalled for. He contended

⁵⁷ Melsheimer, 238.

⁵⁸ 'Inquests', *The Times*, 2 April 1891.

that during the time he had held office in that district nothing could have been better than the old system. There had not been the slightest friction with regard to it. All his officers had discharged their duties exceedingly well under it, and he did most strongly protest against the abolition of the fees and the reduction in the scale of payment. He also saw that the Council were of opinion that it was "most undesirable to hold inquests in publichouses," and that it urged the coroners to refrain from doing so as far as possible. He submitted that it had always been the custom of the coroners to dispense with publichouses when they could, whereas it looked as if the Council thought the coroners were anxious to go into them. He also saw that the Council considered it desirable that in the coroners' districts in the county the metropolitan police should be appointed in lieu of special officers, and they begged to express the hope that the coroners would concur with them in the matter. He begged to say most emphatically that he declined to do so. His officers had always faithfully discharged their duties to him, and as long as they did so he should stand by them. Under the alteration he expected all sorts of difficulties to arise, and he could not see why the county Council did not attend to their own business instead of attempting to interfere with what they did not understand. The jury warmly concurred in the coroner's remarks, and the subject then dropped.⁵⁹

Surrey jurors began to strike in protest of the disallowance of their fees. When only ten out of fourteen summoned jurymen turned out for an inquest at the Crown public house, coroner G P Wyatt asked journalists to make up the deficit, which they agreed to do. After the last witness testified, the foreman, James McCarthy, suggested that the jury should revolt as a way of protesting the disallowance of their fees.

[McCarthy] remarked that the County Council had taken away the fees of the jurors, whilst they had been increasing the salaries of already overpaid officials. From time immemorial, he said, when the "crown's quest" laws were first framed, the fee of 1s was paid to the jurors in Surrey. It was then considered as equivalent to the pay of a mechanic. At that time wages were not high, and a mechanic worked for something like 1s a day, and a labourer for 4d or 5d. Taking into consideration the rising strides in work and wages, he thought that the fee of a coroner's jurymen should be advanced instead of abolished. He knew that the law of the land could compel them to act as jurors, but it could not compel them to give a verdict, and he should refuse to do so until the proper fee had been tendered him, believing that if that stand was taken up by one jury the whole of the coroners' juries would follow.

Wyatt joked about invoking Form 35.

The Coroner. - In the event of the jury not giving a verdict, I shall have to keep you here until you do. (Laughter.)

A jurymen said if the reporters on the jury were willing to be locked up he was. (Laughter.)

McCarthy, however, was quite serious. As insufficient as one shilling was, he wanted it. The mood of the discussion turned darker. McCarthy, who seems to have had some knowledge of coronial procedure, cited the usual practice of binding inquest juries over to the Justices.

The foreman said that in the case of juries at the County Courts not agreeing they were not locked up. They were allowed out before giving a decision.

The Coroner said that in that case he should have to adjourn the proceedings to the Central Criminal Court, and if the Judge saw fit to discharge them without a verdict then the responsibility would be taken off his shoulders.

A Jurymen. - Our taxes, house rent, and expenses are increasing, and yet we are not to be paid for our time.

The Coroner. - The County Council says it will decrease your taxes by abolishing the juries' fees.

The Foreman. - £30,000 was voted last night for the maintenance of Royal Palaces. Let them give it to the juries.

Mr McCarthy went on to say that unless they showed fight the County Council would soon trample upon them. The County Council, however, had had no hesitation in voting their Vice-Chairman £5,000, and he did think that gentlemen seeking the honour of being county councillors should not take the fees, whilst they expected the poor ratepayers to attend inquests and lose their time for nothing at all. (Hear, hear.) On a show of hands being taken at this juncture, nine of the jury were in favour of giving a verdict and three against it.

At this point, Wyatt could have disowned the matter and bound the jury over to another court. Instead, he elected to begin the inquest over again, replacing the three jurymen by new jurors who would have to view the body.

The Coroner said he must have some new jurymen and rehear the evidence. After considerable delay, the Coroner's Officer secured the services of four house-holders, three of whom he brought in direct from the street. As the jury had been kept waiting for a long time, a jurymen asked permission of the Coroner to get some refreshment.

The Coroner. - You cannot have anything.

The Jurymen (reaching his hat down). - I must go and have a drink, Sir. (Laughter).

⁵⁹ 'The New Scale of Payment at Inquests'. *The Times*, 3 April 1891. Regarding Langham's criticism of the LCC's desire to appoint members of the Metropolitan Police as officers for county coroners, the LCC would find further fuel for that fire in December 1891 and January of the following year, when it successfully prosecuted Thomas Hammond, the officer for North East Middlesex, for forging expense vouchers. For details, see Part III of our series in *Ripperologist* 65, p 43.

Wyatt, however, was no longer joking. The jurors had interfered with the integrity of the proceedings.

The Coroner. - No.

By refusing the juryman drink, Wyatt invoked the spirit of Form 35 - a rare event. The new inquest continued.

Subsequently the fresh jurymen were sworn and a new foreman chosen. The evidence was then recapitulated, and finally a verdict of "Accidental death" was returned by the jury. The Coroner fined the absent jurymen.⁶⁰

Therefore, James McCarthy, instead of losing one shilling, possibly lost either the £5 amount that coroners fined absent jurors, or even the £10 jurors faced by not returning for an adjourned proceeding. The ancient power of Form 35 had reared its head, and Holt had flexed his coronial muscles to preserve the integrity of the inquest.

None the less, McCarthy's proposal caught fire. When Wyatt held an inquest in Bermondsey on 8 April, another jury protested the disallowance of their fees by refusing to return a verdict. Wyatt advised the jurors that they would better serve themselves by petitioning the Council, since he was powerless to pay them without their sanction, polled the jury to test their resolve and once again threatened to exercise his discretion under the controversial and unconstitutional Form 35.

In favour of giving a verdict, 3; against, 12. The Coroner said he should adjourn the case till 6 that evening, as he had other cases to attend to. In the meantime they would be put under lock and key.

The foreman. - I think that is intimidation.

The doctor in the case said that if the jury were going to be locked up for four hours he should like to go as he had other duties to perform.

The Coroner. - I am afraid I shall have to keep you here, too. (Laughter.)

Subsequently several of the jurymen said that, although they still protested, rather than be kept there all night they would return a verdict. The second show of hands, however, only resulted in 11 jurymen supporting that proposition. Finally, after much delay, another juryman was induced to make up the number, and a verdict was returned. The other three jurymen, including the foreman, refused to sign the inquisition.⁶¹

To help insure against future disruptions to his proceedings, Wyatt instructed his officer to summon eighteen jurors for the next inquest, hedging a bet that at least twelve would return a verdict.⁶²

Rather coincidentally around this time, one sly and insubordinate coroner had the bright idea to ignore the Jury List and summon to serve on one of his juries a member of the LCC who, of course, would not receive a fee. The council member refused, properly since Parliament had recently excluded the new councillors from serving on juries.⁶³ Sadly, the rebellious coroner trying to make a point wasn't named in council, but he possibly was Langham or Wyatt.

Affected coroner's officers in Surrey, having had their fees decreased and understandably grumbling about it, met with representatives of the LCC at the Horns public house in Kennington, where they made their case against the new schedule to a representative of the Council.

Coroners' officers generally were a well-deserving body of men, and their duties not always of the most pleasant nature. They were at everybody's beck and call, and the fees allowed under the old scale - 9s for the first case and 6s for each succeeding case - were not at all disproportionate to the amount of work they had to do; but under the new scale - 5s for the first and 2s for each of the others - the miserable pittance they were asked to receive was nothing more than an insult. Probably the London County Council were under the impression that coroners' officers in Surrey followed some other occupation. But that was not so. In concluding his remarks, the chairman said that he thought it was a gross injustice to have their fees cut off at a moment's notice. Mr Isaac Sheppard, the officer for Lambeth, then addressed the meeting, and said that he had held his present position for 26 years without a complaint of any kind. He averaged about six inquests a week, and about the same number he had registered by the coroner, for which he did not receive one penny piece. The other day he had to go a distance of 15 miles, for which he received 1s 3ds, whereas his actual expenses were 2s 6d, besides loss of time. It was impossible to do the work as it ought to be done under the new scale of fees. Mr W Smith, coroner's officer for the outer liberties of Lambeth, stated that he had had only one inquiry in three weeks, during which time he had had seven deaths registered entailing the same amount of work, for which he received nothing. In one of the cases he had to travel to Norwood three times. Several others having also stated their grievances, it was decided to forward a petition to the London County Council asking them to reconsider their decision with regard to the fees.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ 'Juryman's Fees', *The Times*, 8 April 1891.

⁶¹ 'Inquests', *The Times*, 9 April 1891.

⁶² 'Inquests', *The Times*, 11 April 1891.

⁶³ 'The London County Council', *The Times*, 8 April 1891.

⁶⁴ 'Inquests', *The Times*, 13 April 1891.

As Surrey officers petitioned the Council directly, Wyatt continued to serve as a magnet for juries' complaints. At an inquest in Walworth on 21 April, another foreman encouraged the jury not to sign the form of inquisition as a means of protest. Wyatt's scheme of summoning extra jurors hadn't helped. In fact, it actually hurt as the foreman focused on the extra men summoned away from their usual jobs.

I must also say that I think it scandalous that so many men should be called away from their business to serve on this jury to-day. Judging from the number here I should think that the Walworth-road is completely denuded of tradesmen.

The coroner. - I cannot help it. I have got my business to do, and the London County Council only make the laws, not do the work. There are only 17 jurymen present, and I am entitled to have 23. I am really very sorry for you, but I cannot help it. The matter has been brought before the London County Council five or six times with no effect.

The foreman. - Well, it's the last straw that breaks the camel's back, and I shall not sign.

A jurymen. - I consider it monstrous. We had to wait three-quarters of an hour for your arrival, and there are many of us here who have lost 5s or 6s. One gentleman in particular had to go a distance of some miles, besides losing his dinner.

The coroner. - Well, what is your decision? I must have a verdict of 12, or otherwise keep you all here until you agree.

A jurymen. - How long will you keep us if we refuse to sign?

The coroner. - I cannot say exactly. An indefinite period. If the London County Council choose to stop the money it is no fault of mine. I should advise you to go in a body to Spring-gardens and protest personally, but I am afraid your excursion would have little influence.

The foreman. - There are many men as eligible as ourselves who would be glad to earn a shilling, whilst we tradesmen, who are heavily taxed, have to put up our shutters to attend here.

Eventually enough jurors relented and signed the inquisition. Then they delivered a written protest that was forwarded to the LCC,⁶⁵ and which was presented in Council alongside the officers' petition. The Council referred both to the Sanitary Committee.⁶⁶

The reaction of the Sanitary Committee to the petitions is unknown, but, apparently, it had little effect, as Wyatt foretold. In May 1892, Wyatt's officer brought a suit against the London County Council for lost fees, which was unsuccessful since, as Mr Justice Day had noted when Wynne Baxter also attempted to sue the Council to recover his lost wages in 1890, the court couldn't enforce the contract.

One of the results of the LCC's docking of officers' pay in Surrey affected the condition of corpses. When one of Mid-Surrey coroner A Braxton Hicks's medical witnesses complained about the disgraceful and filthy state of a corpse in Battersea, and of having to wash it before he was able to perform a post-mortem,⁶⁷ the coroner observed that the Council no longer allowed him to pay his officer to wash bodies. Hicks had appealed to the chief officer of the LCC's Public Health Department, Alfred Spencer. Spencer had replied:

Sir,--I am to inform you that in future the Council will not be prepared to make any payments for the cleansing of the body either in those cases where it has already been cleansed by the friends of the deceased or after a post-mortem examination. It is the practice for medical men to leave the body in a clean and proper condition after making a post-mortem examination, and the committee are of opinion that this should be done in all cases.

Spencer was of no help - as Wyatt said, the Council made the law but didn't do the work. Hicks, stuck with the policy, appealed to the jury to determine his procedure.

It was easy to see what would be the result if such a rule were persisted in. He had been subjected to the indignity of having his acts inquired into behind his back by persons who were sent round to the different districts by the London County Council. This he did not mind so much, but what he did object to was any interference with his discretionary power.

The foreman. - Then we are to understand that the doctor is to cleanse the body himself both before and after his examination.

The coroner. - Yes; in the present case the doctor was left to cleanse the body himself. Continuing, the coroner said he would be glad if the jury would express their opinion as to what should be done, in order that he might know how to act with regard to that district. After some consultation the foreman announced it to be the jury's opinion that bodies should be cleansed and properly prepared for the doctor to make his post-mortem examination, and that they

⁶⁵ 'Inquests', *The Times*, 22 April 1891.

⁶⁶ 'London County Council', *The Times*, 30 April 1891.

⁶⁷ An odd contrast to George Bagster Phillips's reasonable objection that Annie Chapman had been washed before his examination, potentially removing evidence.

*thought the London County Council should pay the cleansing fee, but as they understood that other parishes provided a mortuary keeper, they requested the coroner to write to the Battersea Vestry asking them to do the same.*⁶⁸

Whether Hicks got his mortuary keeper or the London County Council ever relented and instituted a new schedule of fees isn't known at this time.

'The Occasional Growl'

In November of 1885, the Corporation of the City of London, concerned with the amount of fires of undetermined origin and the resulting loss of property, held a meeting to discuss the creation of a fire marshal for the City - someone who not only investigated fires, but prevented them as well. Of course, coroners, the magistrates of sudden death, investigated cases where fatalities occurred, but then there were the non-fatal cases where coroners had no power.⁶⁹ What the Corporation wanted was a magistrate of fire. But who should it be?

Well, if you want to know how to put out a fire, ask a fireman. As 1888 began, the Gas and Water Committee approached the head of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Captain Shaw, for his advice.

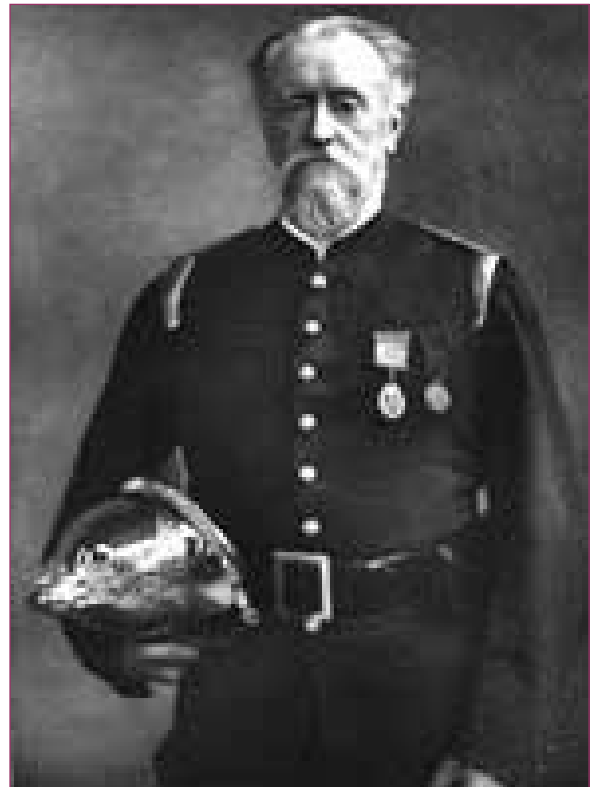
Apparently, it wasn't the first time. Shaw observed that over the course of his career, there was a lot of moaning about fire investigation, but in the end, no one ever did anything substantial in the way of improvement. Shaw was shrewd enough to realize that complaining ('the occasional growl' as he put it) was cheaper, and more satisfying, than paying the taxman an extra lump sum to send some sensible person out to sift through smoking ruins. Actually, Shaw thought that the complainers might have a point - the expenses associated with having a dedicated fire marshal in the City were in his opinion prohibitive.

As it stood at the beginning of 1888, the Fire Brigade officer was the closest London had to an arson investigator, but his inquiry at the scene of the fire was cursory. Financially speaking, it made no sense to investigate the causes of non-fatal fires without determining how to prevent them in the future and reduce material losses. At the same time, Shaw thought it was impossibly expensive to investigate every fire thoroughly with examinations of witnesses and firemen, who could more gainfully spend their time working. To hold an inquiry for every one of the 2,000 fires in London, whose cost was set by Shaw at a questionable figure of £50 per inquiry, would mean a £100,000 burden on the ratepayers annually.

Perhaps the thing to do, if one wanted to save money, would be to investigate only suspicious fires, much the same way coroners investigated suspicious death.

No light bulb went off in Shaw's head, however. Investigating non-fatal fires had been a duty of the City Coroner as recently as the mid-nineteenth century, a fact that Shaw was aware of, but he doubted whether the application of the coroner's open inquest to arson presented a solution to the Corporation's fire woes in 1888. He wrote to the Gas and Water Committee:

There are undoubtedly many members of every community whose private business would not bear the light of an official inquiry. The persons concerned might be perfectly innocent of any unlawful action in connexion with the fire, but they might all the same be irretrievably ruined by the exposure of their affairs. The curiosity aroused might also prove disagreeable, and there would be great danger of such inquiries being made of use of for the pecuniary ends of those commercially interested in opposition - in short, their rivals in trade. Many would take such an opportunity for bringing forward any unpleasant circumstances concerning the career of the sufferer, and, under cover of giving evidence of spreading slanderous reports. In the City of London and the borough of Southwark in 1845 special fire inquests were held by the coroner on the causes of all fires which were thought to be doubtful in their origin. These inquiries were carried on until the beginning of the year 1850, and were then discontinued, as it was found by the authorities that the amount of money expended far exceeded the importance of the results, and there was understood to be some doubt as to the strict legality of the proceedings, or of the payments rendered necessary by them. It was



Captain Shaw

⁶⁸ 'Inquest Fees', *The Times*, 14 May 1892.

⁶⁹ 'To the Editor of *The Times* ("A Fire Office Manager")', *The Times*, 11 August 1887.

said at the time that although perhaps inquests might legally be held there was no fund out of which the expenses could be paid except in the event of loss of life. From the year 1845 to 1850 71 fire inquests were held, with the result that nine fires were found to have been willfully caused, 34 to have been accidental, and in 28 cases no conclusion at all could be arrived at. In four out of the nine cases the persons implicated were prosecuted; but out of the four there was only one conviction.

Discounting the value of the City Coroner's fire inquests, Shaw himself favoured the creation of a salvage corps, but acknowledged that because other authorities independently investigated fires (police, water companies, insurance companies, and the Fire Brigade), cooperation with such a public oversight body might not be forthcoming.

Shaw saw no clear alternative, but concluded:

*The time is coming when it will be absolutely necessary that some arrangement shall be made for the enormous quantity of uninsured property, which is stated by the insurance companies to amount to four-fifths of the whole, although other authorities estimate it only at one-half. But, whatever the proportion may be, there can be no doubt that the value of uninsured property in such a city as London is enormous, and that there ought to be some recognized body entrusted with the duty of guarding and otherwise protecting it during and after, fires, and with the power of investigating all circumstances connected with fire.*⁷⁰

A magistrate, a guardian, a protector. Despite Shaw's dismissal of the value of the City Coroner's fire inquests, Samuel Langham must have looked awfully pretty to the Corporation as a solution for its fire woes, and for very good reason: money. Shaw had cited a considerable expense for fire inquiries: £50 an incident. However, coroners' inquests averaged under £2, a very attractive alternative to local government. The Corporation must have sifted the past and reached back to mid-century. Why had it discouraged the economical fire magistrate it had once had and desired to have again?

1851: The Fires of Conflagration

It was said that the ancient coroners investigated arson, but the power fell into disuse. As Wakley in 1839 had invoked *De Officio Coronatoris* as the basis for his insistence that authorities inform him of all sudden deaths in his district, thereby expanding the coroner's authority, in 1845 City Coroner William Payne also cited *De Officio Coronatoris* as a rationalization for investigating non-fatal fires. The relevant statute, the same Wakley had used, directed the thirteenth century coroner to, per our emphasis:

*Go to the places where any be slain, or suddenly dead, or wounded, or where houses are broken...*⁷¹



Thomas Wakley

Just like Wakley, Payne sought to revive an ancient power, one so old that no one associated it with coroners anymore. Actually, Payne may not have had to stretch all the way back to the thirteenth century for precedent. Samuel Langham once made a vague and very obscure reference to arson inquests in the eighteenth century. He told a jury in 1898, 'His respected predecessor in office, being satisfied as to the immense public importance of such investigations, revived the practice of conducting them, although none had then been held for 100 years.'⁷² Unfortunately, Langham provided no further details, a great pity, because, as we will see, the disuse of the coroner's ability and lack of precedent was going to become a central issue in the validity of non-fatal inquests.

That's because in actuality, without hearing more from Payne, he seems to have based his initiative on nothing more than his interpretation of ancient legislation. Yet his non-fatal fire inquests, investigating 'broken houses', proved publicly popular, unlike Wakley's early attempts at his own initiative, which of course had involved the controversial handling and dissection of corpses. In the non-fatal inquest concerned with destruction of valuable property, Payne offended no tender sensibilities. *The Times* heartily approved of the practice of investigating suspicious fires:

The step taken by Mr Payne, the Coroner for the City of London, in holding a court to inquire into the origin and circumstances of the late fire in Aldermanbury, is one which we trust will be followed in all similar cases; and if it were to be extended to others (in particular to railway catastrophes), where there is any appearance of criminal negligence, we believe it might be highly beneficial. In modern times it has been usual for Coroners to sit

70 'The Origins of Fires', *The Times*, 6 February 1888.

71 Wellington, 39.

72 'The Great Fire in London', *The Times*, 13 January 1898.

only when death has ensued, but in law their jurisdiction is much more extensive. The revival of a branch of his power by Mr Payne, after such long disuse, may naturally induce some speculation as to its legality [De Officio Coronatoris is cited]... the Coroner's duty is to inquire, on behalf of the Crown, into a variety of matters affecting the public peace and safety; and in the event of fires, and colliery explosions, and railway crashes, we should be well pleased to see this officer instituting an investigation, even although the suffers should be only half-killed, maimed, or wounded. The negligence may have been so gross as where it has been more destructive to life...⁷³

However, Payne's financial authority, the Court of Common Council, while agreeing that the fire inquests were useful, questioned their legality. The wording of *De Officio Coronatoris* was vague. Did Payne have it right? Did it really instruct coroners to investigate 'broken homes', or did it merely instruct coroners to go to destroyed homes to investigate sudden death? Had Payne revived an old duty or had he created a new one? With no relevant examples of medieval procedure surviving, no one really knew. Meanwhile, these inquests cost money.

That was how things stood during the period 1845-1850. Payne continued investigating arson while the Common Council entertained doubts about the expenses and validity of his non-fatal inquests.

In 1851, a wharf fire devastated the property of Mr Alderman Humphrey, including four warehouses occupied by hop merchants Edward Wigan and Company. No one died. However, in this case, the man who had initiated the non-fatal inquest, City Coroner William Payne, abruptly refused to hold one, despite an appeal by Wigan, who then turned to the Lord Mayor to force Payne into action:

My dear Lord Mayor. - A calamitous fire has destroyed our warehouses, and we cannot account for its origin. We have applied to the coroner to hold an inquest to ascertain the cause of the fire, but he has declined doing so, although we have offered to defray the costs. There being a Common Council this day we take the liberty of addressing your Lordship to use your great influence with the Court, to direct the coroner to hold the inquest, the amount of property destroyed being so great, and the cause of the fire involved in so much mystery.

After reading Wigan's letter, the Court of Council considered intervening, but realized they had no power to do so; only the High Court Justices could direct Payne to hold an inquest through a *mandamus*. Instead, the Court of Common Council debated the fire inquests, some members insisting that they were illegal while others cited their obvious usefulness. They never really decided anything except to hold off paying expenses until the law was sorted out.⁷⁴ The High Court would have to determine the validity of the non-fatal inquest.

This had been the Common Council's policy for some time and the reason why Payne had refused Wigan his inquest. In fact, Payne had already gone two years without the Court of Common Council reimbursing him for non-fatal fire inquests. Payne wrote to *The Times*.

Sir, - I pray you to allow me the opportunity of saying a few words about the holding of inquests in cases of house burning...

The reason why I had expressed a determination not to hold any more fire inquests was, because the corporation have not paid the expenses of the last two years' inquests, although the Finance Committee, so long ago as the month of October last, made their report recommending the payment, and expressing their opinion that such inquiries were judicious, and calculated to protect the property of the citizens of London and the inhabitants of Southwark; and, further, recommending that the coroner should receive an intimation that it was desirable to continue the holding of such inquests.

This report was met, on the part of two or three members of the Court, with the unworthy and disreputable suggestion that my only object in holding those inquests was to increase my own fees.

Now, it so happens that I never asked the corporation to allow me any fees for holding these inquests. The recommendation to pay them was always made voluntarily by the committee, and for three years was readily acquiesced in by the Court.

*However, in order to remove any impression that my object has been the unworthy one imputed to me, I have written to the Lord Mayor requesting that the part of the committee's report which recommends the payment of any fees to myself may be passed over, thus leaving the actual disbursements paid out of my own pocket on the holding of those inquests the only subject to be considered by the corporation.*⁷⁵

Having seized the opportunity to make his point in public, Payne relented and held the inquest (although Wigan paid for the proceedings, not Payne), and the jury returned a verdict that they believed 'there was the highest degree of probability' that arson was involved in the destruction of one of the warehouses.⁷⁶ In the wake of another successful fire inquest and in the face of a bleak prospect that he was going to have to fund them himself, that October Payne frostily approached the Lord Mayor and the Court of Common Council to make good on his two years' worth of expenses.

⁷³ Editorial, *The Times*, 27 August 1845.

⁷⁴ 'Court of Common Council. The Recent Fire at London-bridge', *The Times*, 27 June 1851.

⁷⁵ 'Inquests on Fires. To the Editor of *The Times*', *The Times*, 28 June 1851.

⁷⁶ 'The Late Fire at London-bridge', *The Times*, 9 July 1851.

My Lord and Gentlemen. - As I shall not have occasion to render any further accounts to the corporation on the subject of inquests in cases of houseburning, I beg respectfully to ask what course this hon. Court purposes to adopt respecting the two years' expenses already held before it in accordance with the sanction of the corporation in former years, and of which the Finance Committee have recommended the payment.

I also request permission to mention that the inquiry into the cause of the late extensive fire in Southwark (the expenses of which are to be paid by Messrs. Wigan, whose property is destroyed) was productive of this good result, that the Secretary of State, on being made acquainted with the verdict of the coroner's jury, immediately acted upon it, and communicated to me his intention of offering a reward for the discovery of the guilty party, with a promise of her Majesty's pardon to any party concerned who could aid such discovery, except the person who actually set fire to the premises.

Once more, there was consensus that in the Court of Common Council that non-fatal fire inquests were important contributions, 'deeply interesting to the citizens of London (Hear, hear)'. Although the Wigan inquest cost the Council nothing, and Payne had publicly vowed to pay for future inquests himself, minimal inquest expenses were not the Common Council's concern so much as the legality of the inquests. Some members continued to hold that non-fatal fire inquests were illegal. Coroners were supposed to investigate death, not house fires. Again, they could reach no consensus.⁷⁷

The dilly-dallying over legality and expenses apparently killed Payne's tastes for his fire inquests, despite an acknowledgement that they were in the public's best interests, and despite Payne's vow to pay for them himself. The High Court did not clarify matters, and in the City of London, confusion over watery old laws drenched the publicly applauded non-fatal fire inquest and put it out. Although Payne's successor and son, William John Payne, lobbied for their revival during the 1870s, there appears to have been no more held in the City.

The Queen vs Herford

However, Payne's initiative spread across England, but other coroners faced the same charges of illegality that Payne had. The state of coronial law remained murky and besides the unclear wording of *De Officio Coronatoris*, another significant obstacle was the legal requirement to hold inquests upon view of a body, *super visum corporis*. Without the coroner and jury's view of a corpse, no inquest was valid. In non-fatal inquests, there was no corpse, so how could they be valid?

In June 1860, the High Court finally addressed the issue, ordering Manchester coroner Edward Herford to demonstrate why the Justices shouldn't prohibit him from holding inquests sans fatalities. In an affidavit read by the Solicitor General, Herford cited that in investigating arson he had responded to a request from police authorities as well as modern practice by coroners like William Payne.

If you will recall our examination of the Mary Kelly inquest in Part III, you might remember our citation of *Queen vs Sylvester*, which the High Court heard in November 1860.⁷⁸ The same Court heard Herford's case in June and, just as the Solicitor General would later cite *De Officio Coronatoris* as a basis to criticize Sylvester's actions, he adopted the same course during his defence of Herford that June, citing that the medieval statute was still technically on the books, and ought to apply to Victorian coroners.

The learned Solicitor-General then contended at considerable length that a coroner had the power to hold inquests not only in cases of arson but also in cases of burglary, rape, &c., and in support of his argument cited numerous old authorities, such as Bracton,⁷⁹ Britton, Fleta, the Year Books, Coke, Hale, Hawkins, Comyns, and the statute 4th of Edward I., de officio coronatoris, &c. He contended that the power and duty of the coroner to hold such inquests were recognized by statute, and, as there was no statute taking away that power and duty, they still subsisted in law, and that the mere disuser of the function could not render its exercise illegal.

However, this was countered by a Mr Mellish, who rather cleverly contended that the old statute, in directing that coroners to go to 'broken houses', simply meant that medieval coroners had visited scenes of disaster in preparation for holding inquests *super visum corporis*, and using the statute as a basis to investigate broken houses themselves was simply a misreading of the statute. The same statute also directed that there could be no inquest without a view of the corpse. This was the opinion some members of the Common Council shared a decade earlier.

The Solicitor General's citation of *De Officio Coronatoris* found no favour. Just as the Lord Chief Justice would reject its relevance when he considered the Sylvester/Francis Kent inquest that November, he suggested that six hundred years of disuse had rendered the power questionable, if it had ever existed at all.

⁷⁷ 'Court of Common Council. Inquests in Cases of Fire', *The Times*, 10 October 1851.

⁷⁸ See *Ripperologist* 65 (March 2006), p 37.

⁷⁹ Henry Bracton was a mid-thirteenth century legal commentator who contributed to a tome describing the English judicial system. Given Bracton's great influence, the work is commonly referred to as Bracton. Scholars commonly cite R.F. Hunnisett's argument (*The Medieval Coroner*, 1961) that Bracton carried so much weight that his descriptions of the medieval coroner's duties were the basis for *De Officio Coronatoris* - some of the passages are nearly identical. Therefore, it might be the case that the duties described in the statute weren't necessarily law but rather an expression of the influential Bracton. Bracton Online may be freely accessed at <http://hsl.law.harvard.edu/bracton>.

Lord Chief Justice Cockburn said he was of opinion that the coroner, in holding this inquest, was going beyond the proper limits of his office, and that a writ of prohibition ought to issue. He (the Lord Chief Justice) had the authority of the greatest writers who had expounded the law of England for saying that the office of coroner, with reference to felonies, was limited to the case of homicide. Lord Coke and Lord Hale both laid down that law; and Chief Baron Comyns, without expressing any doubt on his part, adopted their authority. Those three authorities were sufficient to make good the proposition of law that the coroner had not the jurisdiction contended for. But, besides that, from the time of the 24th of Henry VI. down to the last 10 or 20 years there was an uniform absence of the exercise of such jurisdiction. If it formed any part of the duty of coroners to hold such inquests, and, in addition to cases of homicide, arson and other felonies were included, it seemed difficult to conceive that there should have been no exercise of that jurisdiction. That circumstance, combined with the authorities referred to, was sufficient to satisfy his (Lord Chief Justice Cockburn's) mind that the jurisdiction did not exist. We had also an exposition of the law in what had been done by the Legislature, for where the office of coroner ceased to be held by the greatest men in the country, and came to be exercised by men who could not afford to give their time, the Legislature interfered, and provided that remuneration should be given to coroners; but that remuneration was limited to inquests held on the bodies of those who were killed. From that



Lord Chief Justice Cockburn

it must be inferred that coroners did not possess the jurisdiction contended for, or the Legislature would have taken care that they should be remunerated. The only difficulty which the question presented was that which arose from the statute the 4th of Edward I. and the passage in Bracton, which Mr Mellish had explained more or less satisfactorily. His Lordship would not say that all doubt and difficulty were removed; still, it was found that from the time when those statutes passed the jurisdiction had never been exercised, and those great authorities which had been referred to laid down in unambiguous terms what the law was; and, though Hawkins, an inferior authority, had laid down a contrary doctrine, though not without some doubt, it was not therefore to be assumed that coroners possessed a jurisdiction which, down to modern times, they had never exercised nor claimed to exercise. As to the importance to the public which might attach to the exercise of such a jurisdiction, that was a question which, after the lapse of 500 or 600 years, must be referred to the Legislature, which must determine whether or not the jurisdiction should be given. It seemed that some of the coroners had exercised that jurisdiction, and some had not; but, if it was to be exercised, it must be by the interference of the Legislature, for as the law now stood there was no right to exercise the jurisdiction, and therefore the present rule to issue a prohibition must be made absolute.

The other Justices concurred, and there was a rule absolute for prohibition.⁸⁰ The opinion of the High Court was that the only felony that coroners should investigate was homicide, not arson. If coroners had once had the power to investigate non-lethal cases - and, reading that statute as Mellish had, that was a big if - coroners had lost that right by not exercising it.

'Use it or lose it' was still only judicial opinion, except for Edward Herford; the High Court had just told him to stop. The state of coronial law remained confused until, as Lord Chief Justice Cockburn had suggested, Parliament addressed it. At the same time, *Queen v. Herford*, the High Court's prohibition of Edward Herford's power to investigate arson, was enough to kill any further attempts by other coroners at holding non-fatal fire inquests. Almost thirty years passed.

Did the High Court miss something in its view that there was lack of precedent? We have Samuel Langham's obscure reference to eighteenth century examples of arson inquests, a good area for future research by the coronial scholar. Had the elder Payne in fact based his 'revival' on recent precedent? Was Langham, the Grand Old Man of coronial policy, correct, and if so, would this knowledge have had any impact on the High Court's prohibition of Herford? It's a relevant question affecting nearly thirty years of suspicious but uninvestigated fires in England and Wales.

In a review of the events of 1851 and 1860, the Corporation of 1888, seeking to create a fire magistrate, might have learned a lesson. The problem with Payne's fire inquests hadn't been that they were ineffective or that they were too expensive. To agree with Shaw's observation that fire inquests returned few prosecutable accusations of arson, one must also make the same criticism that death inquests returned few accusations of murder and manslaughter while ignoring their valuable contribution to public safety. The real problem had been the ancient and obscure state of coronial law.

⁸⁰ 'Court of Queen's Bench, Westminster, June 11. (Sittings in Banco, before Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, and Justices Wightman, Crompton, and Blackburn.) *The Queen v. Herford*', *The Times*, 12 June 1860.

The City of London Fire Inquest Act, 1888

Hooray, that had changed by 1888; Parliament had just consolidated all the scattered laws the year before, producing the Coroners' Act 1887. 'Great timing', you might say. However, once the Corporation decided that, despite Shaw's fears of ineffectiveness and of slander hatcheries, the City Coroner was after all the appropriate authority to investigate suspicious fires, it faced a problem that hadn't existed in 1851. In 1888, the law was neither ancient nor obscure. Non-fatal fire inquests were definitely illegal.

This was because as they reviewed legislation, Parliament had followed up on *Queen v. Hereford* and essentially fell into line behind Lord Chief Justice Cockburn and the judicial opinion of old Lord Hale; Section 44 of the Coroners' Act 1887 expressly forbade coroners from holding inquests into felonies other than murder and manslaughter. That meant that in 1888, no coroner could investigate arson without an associated death.

For the Corporation, seeking to protect millions of pounds worth of property, illegality was simply an obstacle to overcome and, unlike the dithering of 1851, its action in 1888 was admirably simplistic and direct. Make a new law. The Corporation quickly promoted a bill, and on 28 June 1888, Parliament passed 51 & 52 Victoria, c. 38, 'An Act to define the Jurisdiction and to regulate the Proceedings of the Coroner of the City of London with regard to Inquests upon Fires within the said City'.

Besides allowing the City Coroner to investigate non-fatal fires, it

1. Required the heads of other investigative bodies - the Commissioner of Police and the Chief Officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade - to report fires to the coroner.
2. Invested the City Coroner with the same duties he undertook when investigating sudden death - the compulsion of witness testimony, the paying of expenses, etc.
3. Mandated that fire inquests should follow as closely as possible the procedure of death inquests.
4. Enabled jurors to return verdicts of arson.
5. Required the City Coroner to take and sign depositions.
6. Required the City Coroner to report the findings of the fire inquest and supply a copy of the depositions to the Lord Mayor, the Home Secretary, and any interested party willing to pay a small fee (two pence per folio of seventy-two words).
7. Gave the City Coroner and his jury the power to enter and view premises.⁸¹

Because the Act was local and concerned only the City Coroner, Section 44 of the Coroners Act 1887 still applied to every other coroner in England and Wales, forbidding them to investigate potential arsons. Samuel Langham possessed a unique power. On 26 July 1888, he held the first fire inquest in the City of London since approximately 1851.

*Yesterday, at the City Coroner's court, Golden-lane, Mr Langham held the first fire inquest under the Act which has just been passed, at the instance of the Corporation, to enable the City Coroner to inquire into all fires occurring within the area of the City of London. The inquiry in question was to ascertain the origin of the conflagration that occurred on Sunday at the establishment of Messrs. W. Carson and Sons, paint manufacturers, La Belle Sauvage-yard, Ludgate-hill. The mode of procedure adopted was exactly that followed in the investigation of the cause of a death. The jury, summoned in the same way, consisted of occupiers of premises in the ward of Farringdon without. The Coroner, in opening the proceedings, observed that many years ago inquests were held in connexion with all fires that occurred in the City, but this lapsed in the time of Mr Payne, who was coroner several years ago. It had been felt by the City Corporation that it would be a distinct advantage if inquests into the origin of fires were revived. Accordingly they promoted a Bill in Parliament which had just become law, and henceforth all fires occurring in the City would be inquired into in the same way as a death was inquired into. He was anxious to make the inquiry as successful as possible, inasmuch as it was contemplated if it proved of utility in the City to extend it all over the country. The advantage of thus inquiring into the origin of fires could not be overrated, and it was believed that one of the results would be that the number of fires now occurring in the City would be considerably diminished.*⁸²

On the afternoon of 19 November 1897, a massive fire in the City, said to be London's largest since 1666, broke out along a number of thoroughfares flanking Aldersgate-street. Feeding off tall buildings lining narrow streets, it quickly spread and overwhelmed firemen who desperately sent for reinforcements of steamers and coal, destroyed over a hundred clothing warehouses, sent multitudes of young girls working inside them scrambling for safety while putting them out of work, and caused losses that *The Times* estimated at between a million and two million pounds.⁸³ With not one life lost, no coroner could have investigated this disaster.

⁸¹ Wellington, 255-8.

⁸² 'Fire Inquest', *The Times*, 27 July 1888. Langham's reference to William John Payne suggests that non-fatal inquests were held during his tenure as coroner 1872-1884, but in fact the younger Payne had been his father's deputy during the 1845-1850 period and so had held some of those inquests himself.

Except Samuel Langham. After hearing the evidence (with City Solicitor Homewood Crawford again assisting the inquiry), Langham's jury delivered a comprehensive opinion on the cause of, and the response to, the fire that had produced no fatalities but had still devastated a considerable portion of the City and affected thousands of people.

The Coroner. - Where did the fire originate?

Mr Hembry (the foreman). - We find that the fire originated on the first floor of 15, Well-street, E.C., in the occupation of Messrs. Waller and Brown.

The Coroner. - At what time?

Mr Hembry. - From 12:45 to 12:50 p.m.

The Coroner. - What was the cause?

Mr Hembry. - The ignition of a stack of goods near the well hole on the first floor.

The Coroner. - Was it spontaneous combustion?

Mr Hembry. - No.

The Coroner. - Was it gas explosion?

Mr Hembry. - No.

The Coroner. - Was it accidentally fired?

Mr Hembry. - No.

The Coroner. - Was it willfully fired, and, if so, by whom?

Mr Hembry. - Yes, by some person or persons unknown. (Applause, which was instantly suppressed.)

The Coroner. - Was there delay on the part of the Fire Brigade in arriving at the scene of the disaster?

Mr Hembry. - There was no delay after the receipt of the call.

The Coroner. - Were the appliances and the steamers and the supply of coal and water sufficient?

Mr Hembry. - As regards the appliances at the fire, yes; as regards the steamers at the fire, yes; as regards the coal supply, no; as regards water, yes.

The Coroner. - What was the cause of the rapid development of the fire?

Mr Hembry. - The style and construction of the buildings, the narrowness of the streets, the late call, and the further delay of 14 minutes from the call in getting the first steamer to work.

The Coroner. - Have the jury any suggestions or recommendations as to the reconstruction of the buildings destroyed, leaving the particulars of plans to the Corporation, the freeholders and those most interested in carrying them out?

Mr Hembry. - We recommend that this area should be so reconstructed as to have greater regard for the safety of the adjacent property, and that in all new buildings of the warehouse class match-lining on the walls and ceilings be prohibited, all ceilings to be plastered or covered with fire-resisting material...

The Coroner asked if the jury had any further recommendations.

Mr Hembry replied that they desired to add the following rider to their verdict: - "That the jury, while of opinion that the officers and men of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade are equal, or superior, to any similar body of men, are not satisfied that its methods and appliances are such as they should be, and make the following recommendations: - (1) That fire alarms should be fixed to or near every post box; (2) that the position of all hydrants be uniformly indicated on walls and lamps throughout greater London; (3) that unless arrangements can be made by which large steamers can be got to work more quickly the pressure in the water mains should be increased so as to make the hydrants more effective; (4) that gas stop-cocks should be placed outside all premises; (5) that two steamers be kept, one always under steam, at the following City stations - namely, Watling-street, Whitecross-Street, Whitefriars, and Bishopsgate-street; (6) that a better system be adopted for utilizing the volume of water in the mains; and (7) that all facilities be offered by occupiers of buildings to members of the fire brigade in order that they may be better acquainted with the geography of their buildings." ⁸⁴

The Corporation now had its fire magistrate, who sought not only to determine how fires started, but how to prevent them in the future. However, because the power was peculiar to the City of London, Langham found himself in the odd position of not being able to hold fire inquests in Southwark or Lancaster, where he was also the coroner.

Langham's hope that the fire inquest would spread to the rest of the country was disappointed. As the century ended and a new one began, other coroners in England and Wales remained powerless to investigate fires without fatalities, and when in 1926 the Coroners' Amendment Act neglected to extend the power, Langham's successor in the City, Dr Frederick J Waldo, criticized it.

⁸³ 'Great Fire in London', *The Times*, 20 November 1897.

⁸⁴ 'The Great Fire in London', *The Times*, 13 January 1898.

*The chief flaw in the Act, as affecting the true interests of the public, was the omission of any provision for judicial inquiries by coroners generally into non-fatal, as well as fatal, fires. This was at present alone provided for by a special Act in the City of London, and as coroner for the City and Southwark he was still in the anomalous position of being powerless to act in the case of non-fatal and incendiary fires, save in the City of London. The holding of city fire inquests had led to the saving of life and property, and had served as a deterrent to crime, gross neglect, and carelessness, while in a few cases convictions for arson had followed the holding of such inquests.*⁸⁵

According to the City of London's website, ultimately even the City Coroner lost his jurisdiction to investigate non-fatal fires in 1977, presumably to another investigative body. We wonder whether the City received the same financial bargain that inquest offered.

On the Shelf



Wynne Baxter

Coroners held office for life. Diplock and Macdonald died in harness while in September 1920 seventy-six-year-old Wynne Baxter suffered a heart attack as he presided over the third of six inquests in Poplar. Few retired; witness our old friend Dr George Danford Thomas.

After serving Central Middlesex almost thirty years, a veteran of 40,000 inquests who stood alongside Wynne Baxter against the Middlesex magistrates in 1887, and taking over Thomas Diplock's duties for a time after Diplock's death in 1892, Danford Thomas himself was a victim of ill health in 1910. Finding it difficult to cover his large territory, but unable to afford retirement, he applied to the London County Council to petition Parliament the power to grant him a pension. He also asked that they divide Central Middlesex and to relieve him of one-half of his responsibilities. The

LCC refused, instead threatening to apply to the Lord Chancellor to have Danford Thomas removed from office - small thanks after a career of service.⁸⁶ Danford Thomas continued working as his health deteriorated, and he died during an adjournment of the Crippen inquest in August 1910.

In following years, the LCC instituted a mandatory retirement age, which Ingleby Oddie had cause to lament in 1939.

[Oddie disclosed at the end of his last inquest] *that he did not want to retire now, but had to do so on reaching the age limit. Yesterday was his 70th birthday, and it was at Paddington that he ended his 27 1/2 years as coroner, during which he has held 20,000 inquests.*

Many friends attended to bid him goodbye, and he told them that he had hoped that he might have been allowed to go on a little longer, say, until the end of the war, in view of his long services and in view of the fact that the last three coroners to retire in London were 80, 79, and 75 years of age. After all, he said, 70 in these days was not so very old, but the County Council had turned a deaf ear to his appeal and therefore he was debarred from continuing his work, and reluctantly he had to allow himself to be placed "on the shelf." It would be understood that this was a very trying moment for him.

*Mr Oddie added that he liked to think that the secret poisoner had not got past him, although he may have got past some coroners.*⁸⁷

⁸⁵ 'New Coroners Act. Dr Waldo's Criticism', *The Times*, 18 December 1926.

⁸⁶ 'The Central District Coroner', *The Times*, 14 February 1910.

⁸⁷ 'Coroner's Reluctance to Retire.' *The Times*, 19 December 1939.

⁸⁸ 'Court of Common Council', *The Times*, 24 May 1901.

Fortunately, Samuel Langham managed a more graceful exit on Midsummer Day 1901, when he confronted the same shelf that Oddie would so reluctantly face almost forty years later. The Court of Common Council treated Langham more liberally than the LCC would behave towards George Danford Thomas and Oddie, voting Langham a pension of £600 a year, about half of his annual salary.⁸⁸ Dr Frederick J. Waldo, a former medical officer, succeeded him as City Coroner with Francis Danford Thomas, the son of the late Central Middlesex coroner, acting as his deputy (and Waldo's eventual successor).

Langham, who had been a widower since the death of his wife Matilda in 1893, removed to 4 Parade Lane, Worthing, where he resided for another seven years before dying on 26 April 1908 at the age of eighty-five, leaving effects valued at £426.6s1d.⁸⁹ Back in the old court in Golden Lane, Dr Waldo paused to remember his predecessor, remarking that Langham had 'filled the ancient and honourable post of [City] Coroner in an able manner for upwards of 20 years'.⁹⁰

We remember Samuel Langham for the exhaustive and well-run Eddowes inquest, but his career spanned half a century, 1849-1901. Langham began as a contemporary of Thomas Wakley during the most tempestuous period in the coronial system's history, in which the coroner's role was redefined. In his nearly forty years with the Coroners' Society, he had helped form, distribute and advise generations of coroners on proper procedure. The public's watchful guardian also pioneered a ninety-year period in which the City Coroner exercised a unique power: the ability to inquire into non-fatal arsons.

Samuel Frederick Langham was the Grand Old Man of the English inquest. Wakley the Radical birthed the modern system, but it's the conservative Langham who nourished reform on the milk of procedure and made its bones strong.

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89 *The National Probate Calendar*, 1908 cited in electronic correspondence from Ruth Barriskill, Guildhall Library to John Savage, 8 April 2005.

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

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NEAL STUBBINGS

A Memory of Mary Ann Nichols

This is an account of the first visit to London of Maureen Adamson, the great-great-granddaughter of Mary Ann 'Polly' Nichols, Jack the Ripper's first canonical victim.

1st Day, Tuesday 11 April 2006

Maureen Adamson came to London from her home in Canada to see the places where her ancestor, Mary Ann Nichols, was born, lived and died well over a century ago. I met her for the first time at 10.45am, 11 April 2006, outside St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, City of London. In 1864, Mary Ann Walker had married William Nichols there. *Ripperologist's* friend and contributor Andy Aliffe joined us minutes later. After a brief discussion we resolved to go first to the East End of London where Mary Ann Nichols met her untimely death on the early morning of Friday 31 August 1888.

Andy showed to Maureen the building once known as the Working Lads' Institute, where the inquest on Mary Ann was held. After a quick look at the shop at 123 Whitechapel Road where Joseph Merrick, the Elephant Man, was once exhibited, we made our way to Buck's Row, today Durward Street. It would be Maureen's very first look at the place where her great-great-grandmother was murdered. Andy explained the layout of the area and pointed out the locations where significant houses and warehouses were situated in 1888. He also led Maureen to the exact spot where Mary Ann was found. Standing where Mary Ann's body once lay, Maureen felt great unease. Even today the area retains a sense of menace, as though the events of 118 years ago had left an indelible mark on what was once Buck's Row. Maureen confessed to me later that she was eager to leave the place as quick as possible. Shortly after noon, we parted company with Andy at Whitechapel Station. From there, Maureen and I travelled back to the St Bride's area of the City of London, both to try to recover my camera, which had gone missing earlier in the day, and to continue our tour of the area where Mary Ann lived as a child.



Maureen Adamson at St Bride's Church ©Andy Aliffe

We stood in Shoe Lane trying to imagine what the streets looked like in 1845, when Mary Ann was born to her parents, Edward and Caroline Walker. Further on, we needed to exert our imagination again to conjure up Dean Street, off Fetter Lane, where the Walker family had moved by the time of the 1851 census. We walked down Whitefriars Street and Bouverie Street, where Mary Ann's future husband, William Nichols, lived and worked at different times in his life. Once across Blackfriars Bridge, we walked the short distance to the Peabody Buildings down from Duchy Street at Lambeth. Although access to the Peabody site is denied by a tall fence and gate, I was able to show Maureen where Mary Ann and her family once lived and where her first marital problems began. The unrelenting rain and cold brought an end to our first day at around 2.30pm.

2nd Day, Wednesday 12 April 2006

At 11.00am, Maureen and I met at Ilford Station, East London. From there it was but a short trip back to Manor Park and the City of London Cemetery. At the cemetery gates we started our long trek to Mary Ann's grave in Plot 318. The grave, which has a memorial on top, has been kept in very good condition. Maureen, who clearly felt quite emotional at this time, was very pleased to see that visitors had left many flowers on the grave. We both placed more flowers and



Maureen at Mary Ann Nichols' grave ©Neal Stubbings

spent some time at the grave pondering over Mary Ann's life. We then made the short walk over to Catherine Eddowes's grave to leave some flowers in commemoration of her 160th birthday. We were both saddened, however, to see the metal plaque broken off from the slabs underneath.

Back in the East End that afternoon I took Maureen down Brushfield Street to see Spitalfields Church and the Ten Bells pub. We then went round the back of the houses to Wilkes Street, where I showed her the house where my Huguenot ancestors once lived. Next we walked to Hanbury Street, where Annie Chapman had died and from where Mary Ann's funeral cortège had started out on its way to the cemetery at Ilford.

After a walk down Brick Lane and a quick glance towards Old Montague Street, where the mortuary once stood that housed Mary Ann's body, we went to look at Thrawl Street and what used to be the Frying Pan pub. Thrawl Street has changed a lot since Mary Ann lodged there in 1888 and the Frying Pan is now a curry house. We moved on towards Osborn Street, where Maureen stood at the crossing with Whitechapel Road evoking the last time Mary Ann was seen alive. Shortly before 2:30 in the morning of 31 August 1888, Mary Ann's friend, Ellen Holland, had run into her at that same spot and tried unsuccessfully to persuade her to go back home with her. We next took a short walk to Berner Street, where Elizabeth Stride met the Ripper. The same anxiety Maureen had felt at Durward Street resurfaced. She didn't wish to linger, so we made a quick exit back to Whitechapel High Street, the White Hart pub and the old site of George Yard. Maureen and I came to an agreement here that George Chapman, who had once worked as a barber out of the pub's cellar, was not the Ripper.

We next walked up Commercial Street. Once again, we tried to imagine what these places had looked like in the past, what Flower and Dean Street was like when Mary Ann lodged there for a short time. We went on to Dorset Street, as it was once called, and continued to Mitre Square, where we completed our informal Ripper walk.

To close the day, we journeyed over London Bridge to look at the remaining Victorian part of the bridge and on to Southwark where Shakespeare once walked. Our visit covered Southwark Cathedral, the real Globe theatre layout and other South Bank sites. At 6.00pm, we parted again at Blackfriars.

3rd Day, Monday 17 April 2006

Maureen and I met at 11.00am at Westminster Station. We started the day with a short walk across Westminster Bridge to St Mary's Church, Lambeth, where Mary Ann's parents, Edward Walker and Caroline Webb, were married in 1840. The old church is now the Museum of Garden History, so we did not go inside but retraced our steps back to Westminster.

At Trafalgar Square we recalled that Mary Ann had allegedly spent time there at the end of 1887 with other homeless people. From there we went to the Murder One bookshop in Charing Cross Road, where I showed Maureen their display of Jack the Ripper titles. We spent time there talking about the different suspect theories. Maureen bought a copy of Donald Rumbelow's *The Complete Jack the Ripper*, which she wanted to take along to the world renowned author's Ripper walk we were planning to join later in the day.

After lunch, we took a short walk to the National Portrait Gallery to see portraits of such 1888 notables as Prime Minister Salisbury and Randolph Churchill.



Maureen with Donald Rumbelow ©Neal Stubbings

At Tower Hill that evening we introduced ourselves to author Donald Rumbelow and his wife Molly and joined his famous Ripper Walk. Donald's fame and reputation had attracted well over 100 people. Maureen and I blended easily with the crowd. During the early part of the walk, Donald and I discussed some of the Ripper theories and research and Maureen explained to him her family's connection to Mary Ann Nichols. At the end of the walk, Donald signed the copy of his book for Maureen. We walked back with him to Liverpool Street station, discussing further Ripper theories on the way. At 10.00pm we said our farewells after a very enjoyable evening.

4th Day, Wednesday 19 April 2006

From our meeting place at St Paul's Cathedral Maureen and I headed first for the Guildhall Library, where we began a day of research at 11.30am. Maureen was very pleased to acquire a printed copy of Mary Ann and William's marriage entry from the St Bride's church register which had the original signatures of both parties.

Within a short time we were on our way to the Family Records Centre in Finsbury, where Maureen wanted to obtain copies of her family's census records. After a search of the Birth and Marriage registers, we took a short walk over to the Greater London Archives to search for further family register entries and Mary Ann's workhouse records for Lambeth and St Giles at Endell Street. By coincidence, as we walked back to West London we passed by Endell Street, near Covent Garden, where Mary Ann had sought refuge in late 1887.

Maureen's first visit to London to see the places where her great-great grand mother Mary Ann was born, was married, had children and met her untimely death, was over.

Maureen Adamson: the Ripperologist interview

Maureen, could you please tell us how you are related to Mary Ann Nicols?

Mary Ann Nichols
Edward John Nichols
Lilian Nichols
Lilian Macdonald
Maureen Adamson

How did you come to discover this?

I have always been interested in genealogy. We had a book around the house when I was growing up that traced my father's ancestors and I found it to be fascinating. Many years later, when I got a computer at home and hooked up to the internet, I started to record my information in a family tree database. The Nichols family proved to be a challenge. Finding Nichols in London is easy, finding Nichols who are related is not so easy! My mother had told me her grandparents were Lilian Oxley and Ted Nichols. I knew my grandmother's birthdate since childhood, so all I had to do was order the birth certificate. From that, I confirmed that Ted was, as I had guessed, Edward. So I ordered the marriage certificate for Edward Nichols and Lilian Oxley. That told me the names and occupations of both their fathers, and matched up to information I already had on Oxleys. I then went to the 1881 Census that is online and looked for Edward Nichols with William Nichols as the head of household. I found them together at 6D Block Peabody Buildings, Lambeth. Because I already had the names Percy



Lilian Nichols and Lilian Oxley ©Neal Stubbings

and Henry from a cousin, I knew it was the right family. From there, I put the address into Google and found myself deep into Ripper territory - the *Casebook.org* victim outline on Polly Nichols!

Were you aware of the Ripper case beforehand?

Yes. I had read books and seen television shows and movies on the subject.

What was your reaction when you realised your link to Polly? Do your family share the same feeling?

I was quite surprised. Once when I was watching a show about JTR on TV, they mentioned the name Nichols, so I asked my mother if that was our relative. She did hesitate, then said "no," but she stood there to watch the rest of the show! At the time I didn't realize that Mary was often called Polly, and whatever name I said to my mother, she said the other one, thereby "proving" that the one on the TV was not related. Family members reactions are varied, some are very interested and others aren't. For obvious reasons, the really young family members haven't been told.

Have you met other descendants of Polly, or any other victim?

I count 29 descendants of Polly that I've met, all before I knew of the Ripper connection.

What are your feelings on the way the victims are remembered and treated?

Neal Stubbings very kindly showed me to Polly's grave. Someone had left flowers for her and I was touched by that gesture, because I doubt Polly received many flowers in her final years. It did not occur to me that anyone other than a family member might do that. We also stopped at Catherine Eddowes' grave that day. On the other hand, some researchers are driven by the mechanics of the crimes or the nature of the suspects, so they are not as focused on the victims and can sometimes seem disrespectful. The lowly circumstances the victims found themselves in was insult enough and being killed while engaged in prostitution, the degradation. Books and movies seem to exaggerate characters, so I've come to expect it and not take it too seriously, but there seem to be a lot of people who don't know fact from fiction. I think you can say almost anything, as long as it is done respectfully and in the appropriate context.

Revelations of the True Ripper

By Vanessa A Hayes

ISBN Number: (978) 1 - 4116 - 9741 - 6

Revelations of the True Ripper is a true crime non-fiction work based on the historical crimes of Jack the Ripper, written from a woman's point of view. Vanessa A Hayes wrote *Revelations of the True Ripper* following years of researching all the known information available. She did not initially set out to write a book, just to test the theories. One night - or should we say early morning - her Jack the Ripper became apparent.

About the Author

Vanessa A Hayes is an avid reader and researcher with a penchant for murders. *Revelations of the True Ripper* is her first book of many in the true crime non-fiction genre. She is currently working on her second book about women who commit murder. This is due for release in 2007. *Revelations of the True Ripper* looks at the Whitechapel Murders of 1888. Vanessa asks questions and delves into the lives of the 'Unfortunates' in the East End, giving you her Jack the Ripper. She did not choose her suspect, she found him in the detail and history of the times. In *Revelations of the True Ripper* you will see why Vanessa believes her Jack the Ripper had motive, causation, drive and passion. So who was he?



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Cyber Jack: the Ripper on the Internet

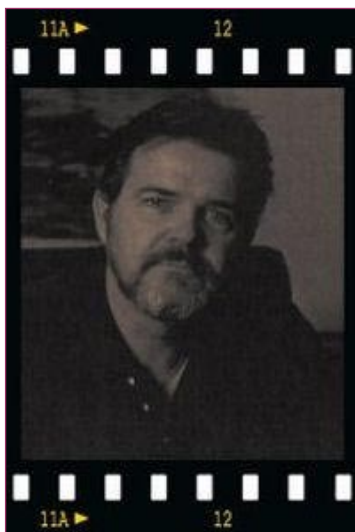
MONTY

First the bad news: due to unavoidable circumstances, Monty has to be taken offline for a few months. But never fear, he'll return after the Summer with his rapier insights into the world of Jack on the Web.

The good news is that the *Cyber Jack* column will continue in his absence, with input from just about everybody! If you spot a site that should be shared with our readers please let us know.

This month's featured site is Jana G Oliver's [The Fancy Dress Albert Public House](#). Jana, author of *Sojourn*, describes this unusual site thus:

The Victorian Era was a vibrant time, both in human and technological terms. When I realized that there was virtually no audio content focusing on this particular period in history, The Fancy Dress Albert Public House was born. By taking advantage of 'play-on-demand' audio and creating a pub-like environment, the chat is informal and the guests are put at ease. The subject is always something Victorian in nature with a worldwide scope. That's a lot of ground to cover, but fortunately The Fancy Dress Albert isn't going to run out of beer anytime soon.



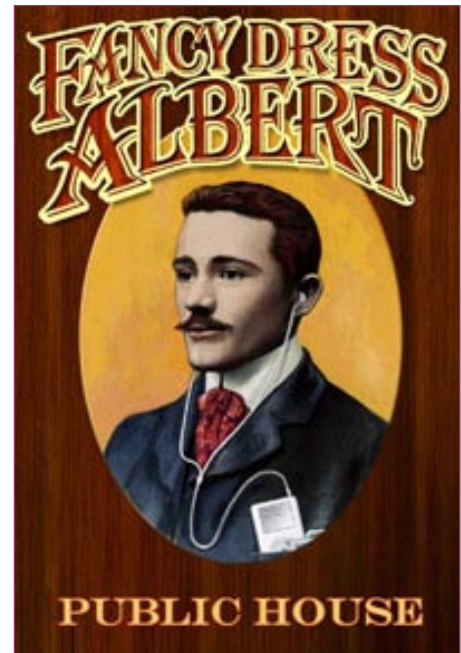
Robert W Walker

Essentially, Jana interviews knowledgeable folk on various Victorian topics - there's talk of an interview with the *Rip's* Executive Editor Paul Begg in the offing, along with topics as diverse as *Wonders of the New London Underground* and *Latest Police Theories Regarding the East End Lunatic* - and converts the recordings to MP3 format. These can then be downloaded free from the website and played on your computer using your favourite audio software, or transferred to your iPod or other MP3 player for listening on the move.

Launched on 8 May, the first interview is with Robert W Walker, author of *City for Ransom*. The podcast - interview - will be airing until 28 May. It lasts for 39 minutes, and features accompanying music provided by the Regimental Band and Corps of Drums, 1st Battalion; The Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment (Berkshire and Wiltshire).

The next interview will air from 29 May to 18 June and features Thomas Flagel and Ken Allers Jr, authors of *The History Buff's Guide to Gettysburg*. Flagel, a historian, partnered with Allers, a licensed Gettysburg battlefield guide, to create the book using reader-friendly Top Ten Lists. "From the days leading up to the historic battle and the aftermath in which the townsfolk were left to rebuild their lives and town (and the later establishment of the national battlefield park), *The History Buff's Guide to Gettysburg* is a fresh, new approach to the subject.

But worry not if you miss an airing; previous interviews are also available for download!



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CHRIS SCOTT

Press Trawl

The Echo
17 September 1888

BLOOD

At a moment when our medical men and so called scientific experimentalists are trying to persuade us all to be:
Inoculated for Cholera,
Inoculated for rabies,
Inoculated for Typhoid,
Vaccinated for Smallpox, and
Inoculated for Pulmonary Consumption,

I propose to suggest a line in which their inquiries may be pursued with great advantage to the entire community. You will have seen that one of the great difficulties associated with the discovery of the Whitechapel murderers - I assume that there are two at least - will be the question of blood.

Usually, when a mysterious murder has been committed, the police are on the lookout for someone whose clothes bear marks of blood. Often they arrest people whose clothes are stained, only to find that the marks are not those of blood at all. At other times they take men up who have blood upon them, but who some plausible reason for its being there.

Take the case of the Eltham murder. Someone, who must have stains of blood upon his clothes, was "wanted" and presently young Pook was arrested. He had blood on his coat or vest. But he proved that he was subject to epileptic fits, and that the blood might have been produced by his biting his own lips. The blood on Habron's clothes, it will be remembered, very nearly consigned a man to the gallows, as Mr. Peace afterwards blithely explained; while not many years ago a man arrested in the Midlands would have been in jeopardy of his life had he not proved that some blood on his clothes was that of a pig he had killed.

Now, I am assuming that the police are right in their conjectures, which are that one of the horse slaughterers in the neighbourhood of this murder may possibly have had some connection with the last crime. Supposing such a man were arrested - in the present state of our science nothing could be drawn legally from the fact that he had blood upon his clothes. he could not say that it was the blood of a horse, and not that of a woman, and no one could contradict him.

This brings me to an important point which I want to lay before you - The blood of men and women is different from that of other animals, and our scientists ought to know exactly in what respects. To be more exact, I may mention that it is already known that lithium, for instance, exists in larger proportions in human blood than in that, say, of a pig. The spectroscope has shown this conclusively. What I claim is that there are other differences which our "wise men" ought to discover.

There is, for instance, a difference between arterial and venous blood when it first flows. Is it not extremely likely that the spectroscope would show similar differences in these stains? And do you not see that if it did so, and our scientific men were clever enough to note them, a murderer who had cut a throat and received thence the one kind of blood on his clothes, could not explain the stains away by saying that he had accidentally given himself or received?

Then again, the exact spectrum band of each of the two different forms in each case of

Human Blood,
Horse Blood,
Ox Blood,
Sheep's Blood,
Pig's Blood,
Dog's Blood, and
Bird's Blood,

should all be regularly tabulated, so that here again the criminal pursuer might have an absolutely trustworthy guide. Were such a table drawn up, see the good results which would appear immediately. We execute for murder - the sentence, when once carried out, is irrevocable, and a mistake cannot be rectified. Is it not worthwhile to hang the right man?

Again, we often now are perplexed which man to arrest. Do we not let criminals loose who should be carefully tended, and brought before a Jury of their fellow countrymen? Surely the repression of crime would be facilitated by such a study as that I have suggested. the idea is one for scientific men carefully to consider.

About Town.

WHITECHAPEL MURDERS

STILL NO ARRESTS

THE HOLLOWAY PRISONER

Still no arrest; but the police are hopeful. Such is the news this morning. It is stated that the police have some fresh information which encourages them to believe that before the week is over they will be able to solve the mystery. From what direction this information proceeds is as yet purely a matter of conjecture. They are being daily, almost hourly, flooded with suggestions and statements. These are committed to writing at Commercial street Station, and in several instances the police have been made cognisant of what the informers consider to be suspicious movements of individuals whose appearance is supposed to tally with that of the man wanted. Every "clue" given by the public in their zeal to assist the police has been followed up, but hitherto without success.

CONTRADICTIONARY ASSERTION

Meantime, it is asserted by one authority that the police have obtained some important information in reference to the lunatic arrested at Holloway on Thursday. He is said to be a master German pork butcher, and has been in the habit of carrying large sharp knives. He has been, it is avowed, absent from home frequently during the past ten weeks, and it is therefore believed that he has been missing about the times of the murders. It is also ascertained - so, at least, it is asserted by the Daily News - that he entirely changed his clothes after the murder. It is doubtful whether assertions are justified. Another reporter declares that the lunatic has been discharged.

"THE DUTY OF THE GOVERNMENT"

The Vigilance Committee met at the Crown Tavern, Mile end road, on Saturday. The object of the gathering was to consider what steps should be taken to aid the police. Mr. Aaron, who presided, announced subscriptions of £5 from Mr. Spencer Charrington, Mr. Aaron, and himself. The speaker added that he had been forcibly reminded, during his efforts to obtain subscriptions towards a reward for the apprehension of the murderer, of the great dissatisfaction which existed owing to the withdrawal of Government rewards for the discovery of the murder; for with one exception every donor had expressed an opinion that it was the duty of the Government to offer a substantial reward in such cases, and many persons who were ready to lay down £100 towards any charitable object had flatly refused to subscribe to this funs on the ground that it was the imperative duty of the Scotland yard authorities and of the Home Office to offer a pecuniary inducement to persons (not he actual murderer) to come forward and give information. He regretted to say that the police authorities had decided to offer no reward, but at the same time it was only fair to reflect that the police probably knew more about the matter than they chose to make public, and that therefore they considered a reward unnecessary. Time, of course, might show how the matter stood, and he trusted that the police were right in what they were doing. The proceedings were eventually adjourned until today, when a definite programme will be arrived at as to the amount to be offered as a reward for information.

MARY ANN NICHOLL'S DEATH

ANOTHER MAN WITH A KNIFE

POLICE UNABLE TO FIND HIM

A great deal of additional evidence, relating to the brutal murder of Mary Ann Nicholls, in Buck's row, Whitechapel, on August 31st last has been gathered by the police. The inquest on the body of the unfortunate woman was resumed by Coroner Wynne E. Baxter, at the Working Lads' Institute, Whitechapel road, this afternoon.

AN OLD SCAR ON THE HEAD

Dr. Llewellyn was recalled. He said there was an old scar about an inch and a quarter long on the forehead of the deceased. The deceased had worn rings some time previous to her death.

NO NOISE IN THE NIGHT

Mrs. Emma Green, a respectably dressed woman, said she lived at New Cottage, Buck's row. That was the cottage next to where the deceased was found. Two sons and a daughter lived there with her. On Thursday, the 30th of August, they were in bed by eleven o'clock. Witness and her daughter slept in a front room on the first floor. Witness did not

wake up that night until she heard a knock at the front door. That was about four o'clock. Witness opened the window, and looked out. She saw several constables and some other men. Witness also saw the body of a person lying on the ground. It was, however, too dark for her to see who it was. There was not sufficient noise that night to awaken anyone in the house.

By a Juror - There was often great noise in the street, as people passed through it. They did not, however, take any notice of it.

SINGULAR VISITOR TO CAMBRIDGE HEATH ROAD

Thomas Ede, a signalman in the employ of the East London Railway Company, said that he saw a man on the 8th inst. with a knife.

The Coroner mentioned that that was the morning of the Hanbury street murder, but he would take the evidence.

Witness said that he was coming along the Cambridge heath road, about twelve o'clock on the day mentioned. When opposite the Foresters' Arms he saw a man on the opposite side of the street. His appearance, which was peculiar, attracted witness's attention. He at first appeared to have a wooden arm. Witness watched him for some time, and he then saw a knife up his sleeve. He saw about four inches of the blade. He put his hand in his trousers pocket. Two or three men also saw the man, and witness asked them to arrest the man. They would not do so, so witness followed him for some distance. The man saw that he was being followed, and he quickened his pace. Witness then lost sight of him.

THE MAN NOT FOUND

Inspector Helson said the man had not been found.

The Coroner - Can you describe the man to us?

Witness - He was about five feet eight inches in height, and was about thirty five years of age. He had dark hair and moustache. He wore a double peaked cap. He was attired in a short dark brown jacket, and a pair of white overalls over a pair of dark trousers. The overalls were clean. The man walked as though he had stiff knee joints.

STREET QUIET IN THE NIGHT

Walter Purkis, of Essex Wharf, Buck's row, said he was manager of the wharf. It was immediately opposite where the deceased was found. Witness slept in the front of the house, and was awake a considerable portion of the night. Witness, however, did not know that anything had happened in the street until he was called up by the police at about four o'clock in the morning. Neither witness nor his wife heard a sound during the night. The street had been unusually quiet. Neither witness nor his wife had heard a sound during the night. had there been any quarrelling in the street that night, or had the deceased called out for assistance, witness said he thought he would have heard it.

"PAY NOT UP TO MUCH"

Albert Mulshall, a night watchman in the employ of the Whitechapel District Board, said that on the night of Aug. 30th, he was on duty in Winthorpe (sic) street. Witness admitted that he "dozed" once or twice.

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

Witness, in answer to further questions, said he was within seventy yards of the place where the murdered woman was found. Witness, however, did not hear any noise that night. The streets were very quiet.

POLICE CONSTABLE SAW NOTHING SUSPICIOUS

Police Constable John Thail (sic) said that on his beat he passed the end of Buck's row. Witness passed the end about every thirty minutes. He, however, saw nothing there on the night of August 30th. At about 3.45 he was signalled by another constable, by the flashing of his lantern. He went down Buck's row, and found Police constable Neal (sic) who was alone with the body of the murdered woman. He fetched Dr. Llewellyn. There was a large quantity of congealed blood on the pavement, near the woman's neck; and when witness lifted up the body the back appeared to be saturated with blood as far as the waist. Witness afterwards searched Essex Wharf, the Great Eastern and East London and District Railways, but found nothing of a suspicious character.

The inquiry is proceeding.

JEWS AND THE EAST END MURDERS WHAT THE CHIEF RABBI SAYS

In all the synagogues of London the Jewish community rigidly observed Saturday as the Day of Atonement. At the Bayswater Synagogue, Dr. Hermann Adler, the Deputy Chief Rabbi, having pointedly alluded to the iniquities of "that grinding tyranny and physical and social debasement known as the sweating system," referred to the recent Whitechapel outrages. He emphatically expressed his conviction that no Hebrew, native or alien, could have been guilty of such

atrocious and inhuman crimes. He said he felt sure he uttered the sentiments of the Jewish community generally, and especially of their East end brethren, in expressing a hope that the mystery would soon be cleared up, and that the spread of true religious and secular education, the culture of the mind and heart, would stay the commission of such abominable and revolting deeds.

The Echo
18 September 1888

THE SALVATION ARMY ITS SEAMY SIDE

It has always been to me a matter of surprise that any man with any sense of self respect could take office in the Salvation Army. "General" Booth, addressing his officers, indeed, says:- "There are those who would have you believe that you are in a measure of very serious bondage. I cannot accept it for a moment. I consider that there are no men on the face of the earth that have not only a grander opportunity to take part in this fight for the redemption of the race, but who have greater freedom in the fight. While you act up to the light you possess you walk about your parishes like independent kings, no man daring to make you afraid. Neither malice nor envy can overthrow you." No doubt the "General" means by this that his officers can rely upon being treated fairly by himself and his sons. So they might, perhaps, if the Booths were infallible. The statements in "An ex Captain's Experiences of the Salvation Army," just published at the Christian Commonwealth Office, go far to show that any man who accepts service under "General" Booth is in danger of suffering the disagreeable consequences that often befall those who voluntarily surrender their freedom into the hands of spiritual autocrats.

A MORE THAN PAPAL DESPOTISM

Dr. Cunningham Geikie, a Norwich clergyman, who contributes a striking preface to this pamphlet, declares with truth that Mr. Booth and his family "are immeasurably more despotic than Leo XIII and his Cardinals." Dr. Geikie declares that no one can read ex Captain Redstone's narrative without feeling that, whoever becomes a Salvation Army officer, is henceforth a slave, helplessly exposed to the caprice of his superiors, and he adds, from his own personal observation, "I have heard more than one case from sufferers, in which jealousy of their popularity was, apparently, the only reason for transference to some station where success was simply impossible. I never saw such abject terror of superiors as seems to be characteristic of the officers of the Salvation Army." There is reason for this terror, for they are all under

A SYSTEM OF ESPIONAGE.

The majors are set to watch the captains. "What am I to do?" said one of these persons to ex Captain Redstone, "when I am sent to a place to see and to quiz?" Another wrote, "Look out for the Devil; he is on your track, and so am I, too." Another publicly rated Mr. Redstone before his corps for the merest trifle. In the end, Mr. Redstone, a married man, who had given up a situation which he had held five years, after two years' service, "without trial, without formulated charges, on the strength of secret complaints, which were never apparently tested, was dismissed with less courtesy than most people would show a beggar, with two shillings and fourpence for his last week's salary." These are Dr. Geikie's words, for Mr. Redstone himself tells the simple story of his unworthy treatment without one single bitter word. Dr. Geikie declares that an officer, still in high favour at "Headquarters," told him of some of the blemishes in the Army, but conjured him on no account to breathe a syllable, "as there were eavesdroppers about who reported every word they heard."

GRINDING POVERTY

Ex Captain Redstone was appointed to one station, where the expenses were 31s. a week before he received any salary at all. The system appears to be on the principle, "Heads I win, tails you lose." No salary is, in fact, guaranteed. If a captain collects enough money, he may take his salary up to a fixed amount; if he does not he must go short. The "General" guarantees no fixed salary. The result is that at hard stations men with families have to endure much privation, and yet are occasionally donned by the "General" for special contributions. Dr. Geikie says:- "Is it right to take advantage of the enthusiasm of young people, who know nothing of the facts of the case and send them out to virtual starvation? It is quite certain that Mr. Booth and all his family have at least decent food and shelter, but how many of their unfortunate officers, male and female, suffer from the want of both. The cases I have heard from victims are distressing beyond words. Working from morning till night, they have hardly food enough to sustain life. One good fellow frankly told me that when he had nothing he just went and begged."

THE DEVIL IN THE ARMY

Our own belief is that most of the Salvationists are honest, simple minded, earnest people; but there is a decidedly unpleasant flavour of Pharisaism about their literature. They are encouraged to make flaming professions of "full surrender," "scriptural holiness," and "perfect love," which, no doubt, bring in big subscriptions from outside, but which have an unfortunate result upon themselves. Dr. Geikie says that one captain frankly told him that "many of the lasses seemed to come to the platform only to find sweethearts, and went off when they had succeeded in doing so."

Probably many young women go to church for the same purpose. At the last station to which ex Captain Redstone was sent the treasurer was sadly disappointed because women officers had not been sent, for no one else would do any good there. At a previous station he found that the tambourine lasses disappeared when they found he was a married man. The reports of the stations are not trustworthy. When the newly arrived captain had expected to find fifty he found only ten; but, as Dr. Geikie remarks, "How many officers would have moral courage to fill in the shadows of their local picture when the penalty of telling the whole truth is ruin?" Ex Captain Redstone had a banner bearer at one of his stations, a young married woman, who told his own wife that he was the only man captain they had had there whom she had not kissed. The captain took her banner away but the major restored it and this woman used to testify that she "was saved higher than the Apostle Paul." We do not doubt that the Salvation Army is doing good work on the whole; but there is not a little shame in the Gospel of Noise.

THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS
POLICE HAVE A CLUE
INQUIRIES IN LUDGATE CIRCUS

Is there a clue? The police apparently believe there is. The following facts have just come to hand in connection with it:- On the day of the murder (the 8th inst.) a man was seen in the lavatory of the City News Rooms, 4 Ludgate circus buildings, changing his clothes. He departed hurriedly, leaving behind him a pair of trousers, a shirt, and a pair of socks. Unfortunately no one connected with the establishment saw the man, or he would certainly have been stopped and questioned as to why he was changing his clothes there, and leaving the old ones behind.

Mr. Walker, the proprietor of the news rooms, states that he did not hear of the occurrence until late in the afternoon, when his attention was called to the clothes in the lavatory. He did not at the time attach any importance to the fact, and the clothes were thrown into the dust box, and placed outside, being carted away in the City Sewers cart on the Monday. On the following Tuesday, however, he received a visit from a man who said he was a police officer, and asked for the clothes which had been left there on the Saturday. Mr. Walker replied that if he wanted them he would have to go to the Commissioners of the City Sewers, telling him at the same time what he had done with them. Two detectives called on Thursday last, and had an interview with Mr. Walker, and they succeeded in finding a man who saw the visitor changing his clothes in the lavatory. He has given the police a description of him. He is stated to be a man of respectable appearance, about thirty years of age, and wearing a dark moustache. The police are very reticent about the matter, and decline to give any information on the subject. They evidently attach some importance to the affair. Mr. Walker again received a visit from two detectives yesterday morning. The police are now trying to trace the clothes. There is a hope that they may furnish some clue which will lead to the identity of the man they are seeking.

ATTEMPT ON AN OTHER WOMAN
POLICE ATTRACTED BY SCREAMS
ARREST OF A MAN WITH A KNIFE

Charles Ludwig, 40, a decently dressed German, of 1 The Minories, was charged at the Thames Police court today with being drunk and threatening to stab Alexander Fineberg, of 51 Leman street, Whitechapel. Prosecutor said at three o'clock that morning he was standing at a coffee stall in Whitechapel, when the accused came up drunk, and in consequence was refused to be served. He then said to prosecutor. "What are you looking at?" and then pulled out a knife and tried to stab witness. Ludwig followed him round the stall and made several attempts to stab him. A constable came up, and he was given into custody. Constable 221H said the prisoner was in a very excited condition, and witness had previously received information that he was wanted in the City for attempting to cut a woman's throat with a razor. On the way to the station he dropped a long bladed open knife, and on him was found a razor and a long bladed pair of scissors.

Inspector Punley, H Division, asked the Magistrate to remand the prisoner, as they had not had sufficient time to make inquiries concerning him.

A City constable, John Johnson, 86B, stated that early that morning he was on duty in the Minories, when he heard loud screams on "Murder" proceeding from a dark court in which there were no lights. The court led to come railway arches, and was well known as a dangerous locality. On going into the court he found the prisoner with a woman, the former appeared to be under the influence of drink. Witness asked what he was doing there, when he replied, "Nothing." The woman, who appeared to be in a very agitated and frightened condition, said, "Oh, policeman, do take me out of this." The woman was so frightened that she could then make no further explanation. He got her and the accused out of the court, and sent the latter off. He walked with the woman to the end of his beat, when she said, "Dear me! He frightened me very much when he pulled a big knife out." Witness said, "Why didn't you tell me that at the time?" and she said, "I was too much frightened." He then went and looked for the prisoner, but he could not find him, and therefore warned several other constables what he had seen. Witness had been out all the morning trying to find the woman; but up to the present time had not been able to do so. He should know here again. He believed the prisoner worked in the neighbourhood. Great excitement prevails there, as it is believed that some important

discoveries in connection with the recent murders might come to light, and several people have alleged this man knows something about the tragedies. It has already been ascertained that Ludwig who now professes that he is not able to speak English, has been in this country for about three months. He accounts for his time during the last three weeks; but nothing is at present known what he has been doing before that time. Mr. Saunders said it was clear the prisoner was a dangerous man, and ordered him to be remanded.

FINEBERG REPEATS HIS STORY

Alexander Fineberg is a young man, apparently about 20 years of age. In answer to inquiries by our representative today, he said, "While standing at a coffee stall at the end of Commercial road and Whitechapel road about half past three o'clock this morning, Ludwig came to the stall. He asked for a cup of coffee. So far as I can remember he wore a tall hat, a black frock coat and a stand up collar. He appeared to me to be a broken down musher. I should say he was about 40 years of age. he was about 5ft 6in in height; had dark hair and a grisly moustache and whiskers. He tendered one halfpenny for the coffee, and as he would not give a penny the woman who was in charge of the stall refused to serve him. He appeared to me to be intoxicated. He then turned to me and said, "Who are you looking at?" He spoke in broken English. I replied, "I am not looking at you. I am not doing any harm." He then said, "Do you want something?"

THE CONSTABLE APPEARS

"With these words, " said Fineberg, "he opened his coat, and pulled out a large, long bladed penknife. He struck at me with it, but I evaded the blow, and ran round the stall. He followed me, so I took a dish from off the stall to throw at him. The woman in charge, however, asked me not to do so, but to give the man in charge. At that moment a constable came up, and I charged the man with attempting to stab me. While we were standing there Constable Johnson came up and said he wanted Ludwig for attempting to cut a woman's throat. They then took him to Leman street Police station."

THROWING AWAY THE KNIFE

"On the way to the station one of the constables said to me, 'Watch his hands; he may throw something away.' Almost immediately afterwards I heard something drop, and we then saw a long bladed penknife lying on the pavement. I think he took the hint from the constable."

"But he asserts that he does not understand English."

"Oh, he can understand it when he likes. He addressed me in broken English."

HAD SEEN THE MAN BEFORE

"Have you seen the man before?" inquired the reporter.

"Oh, yes. I should have told you. About a quarter past three, I saw Ludwig walking towards the Minories with a woman. I noticed him particularly, because of his dress. About a quarter of an hour afterwards, the woman again passed the stall. She was running in the direction of Whitechapel road, and was shouting, although I could not understand what she said. It was about five minutes after that that Ludwig came up to the stall."

WHAT THE PRISONER SAYS

The prisoner Ludwig asserts that he lives at No. 1 The Minories. When our reporter visited there this morning, however, two persons on the premises denied that he resided there. the ground floor is occupied by a barber, and there is a club on the first floor. The upper portion of the house, however, is, it is stated, unoccupied. Constable Johnson has not yet been able to identify the woman whom he found with Ludwig in the Minories this morning. The police are, indeed, very reticent in the matter, and will merely say they are investigating the case.

THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS LUDWIG NOT THE MAN STILL WITHOUT A CLUE

The Whitechapel murders are still a profound mystery. The sane or maniac criminal has not yet been arrested, for the Police have satisfied themselves, from inquiries made, that the German Ludwig, alias Weitzel, who was charged with attempting to stab a man with a penknife, could not have killed either of the unfortunate East end women whose death has caused so much apprehension to Whitechapel residents and anxiety to the police authorities. "Nothing to work upon" - an official term for absence of clue - is said to account for the non-success in tracing the murderer.

Dr. G.B. Phillips, the divisional surgeon, has had another consultation with the police authorities respecting certain theories advanced. There are three points upon which there is agreement - that Annie Chapman was lying dead in the yard at 29 Hanbury street, when John Richardson sat on the steps to cut a piece of leather from his boot, his failure to notice the deceased being explained by the fact that the yard door, when opened, obstructed his view; that the poor creature was murdered in the yard, and not in a house, as had been at one time suggested; and that the person who committed the deed was a man with some knowledge of human or animal anatomy.

A FINSBURY LANDLORD INTERVIEWED

The landlord of the hotel in Finsbury where the man Weitzel stayed at various times, has made the following statement to a representative of the Press Association this morning:- "I must say I have been very suspicious of the man since the last murder at Whitechapel. On the day after that event, that is Sunday, he called here about nine o'clock, in a very dirty state, and asked to be allowed to wash. He said he had been out all night, and began to talk to me about the Spitalfields affair. He wore a felt hat, a dirty greyish suit, and yellow seaside slippers. He brought with him a case of razors and a large pair of scissors, and after a time he wanted to shave me. I did not like the way he went on, and refused. Previous to this, I had not seen him for about eighteen months, and he made most contradictory statements as to where he had been. I did not see whether he had any blood on his hands, as has been said, for I did not watch him very closely, and wanted to get him out of the place as soon as possible."

A MOST EXTRAORDINARY MAN

"He is," added the landlord, "a most extraordinary man, is always in a bad temper, and grinds his teeth in rage at any little thing which puts him out. I believe he has some knowledge of anatomy, as he was for some time an assistant to some doctors in the German army, and helped to dissect bodies. He always carries some razors and a pair of scissors with him, and when he came here again on Monday night last he produced them.

He was annoyed because I would not let him sleep here, and threw down the razors in a passion, swearing at the same time. If there had been a policeman near I should have given him into custody. I noticed on this occasion a great change in his dress. Whereas on the former visit he looked very untidy, he was this time wearing a top hat and looked rather smart. He has told me that he has been living in the West end, but I believe he is well known at the cheap lodging houses in Whitechapel. On Monday last he remained here until about one o'clock, and I then turned him out, as he is a very disagreeable fellow, and very dirty in his habits. The police have not been to see me yet about him."

LETTER FROM THE HOME SECRETARY REFUSING TO OFFER A REWARD

This morning a meeting of the Vigilance Committee, of which Mr. Lusk is president, met again at 74 Mile end road, for the purpose of receiving the reports of their honorary officers in the matter. From the statements of Mr. Aarons, Mr. B. Harris, Mr. Cohen, and the president himself, there appeared to be a general belief that a substantial Government reward would bring about the apprehension of the murderer. The secretary said that on the 15th inst. the Committee sent a letter to the Home Secretary on the subject, which was to induce him to offer a reward, or to augment their fund. The following reply had been received:-

Whitehall, 17th Sept., 1888

Sir - I am directed by the Secretary of State to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th inst., with reference to the question of the offer of a reward for the discovery for the perpetrators of the recent murders in Whitechapel; and I am to inform you that, had the Secretary of State considered a proper one for the offer of a reward, he would at once have offered one on behalf of the Government; but that the practice of offering rewards for the discovery of criminals was discontinued some year ago, because experience showed that such offers of reward tended to produce more harm than good, and the Secretary of State is satisfied that there is nothing in the circumstances of the present case to justify a departure from this rule.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

G. Leigh Pemberton

ANNIE CHAPMAN'S DEATH LIVELY EPISODE AT THE INQUEST DR. PHILLIPS' EVIDENCE PORTIONS OF THE BODY MISSING

The resumed inquiry into the circumstances of Annie Chapman's death at 29 Hanbury street, was held this afternoon, at the Working Lads' Institute, Whitechapel road, before Mr. Wynne E. Baxter, who was accompanied by his deputy, Mr. George Collier.

Chief Inspector West, Inspector Abberline, Inspector Helson, and Inspector Chandler represented the police.

"DARK ANNIE'S" FELLOW LODGER

Eliza Cooper, living at 35 Dorset street (a common lodging house), Spitalfields, said she had been lodging there for five months. On the Saturday before Annie Chapman's death, witness lent a piece of soap to the deceased. Ted Stanley was then present. On the following Tuesday witness asked Mrs. Chapman for the piece of soap lent her. Then they went to a public house, and a quarrel ensued.

Did you strike her? - Yes, on the left eye and also on the head.

When did you last see her alive? - On the Wednesday, 15th of September.

She was then wearing three rings on the third finger of the left hand.

Were they gold? - No, brass - all three. She has never had a gold wedding ring to my knowledge.

Did you know of anyone else besides Stanley with whom she associated? -

She associated with several others besides Stanley.

By the Jury - I could not say that any of the men are missing.

"SHE HAD BEEN SEIZED BY THE CHIN"

Dr. G.B. Phillips, re-examined, deposed - On the last occasion I mentioned that there were reasons why I thought the perpetrator of the murder caught hold of the woman's throat. On the left side, below the lower jaw, are three scratches, one and a half to two inches below the lower lobe of the ear, and going in the contrary direction to the incision in the throat. These are of recent date. The abrasions are on the left side, and on the right side are corresponding bruises. I washed the bruises, and they became much more distinct, whereas the bruises mentioned in my last evidence remained the same. The woman had been seized by the chin while the incisions in the throat had been perpetrated.

BETTER NOT TO GIVE FULL DETAILS

Dr. Phillips then paused, and said that, in the interests of justice, he thought it would be better not to give the full details.

The Coroner - We have to decide the cause of death, and have a right to hear the particulars. Whether that evidence is made public rests with the Press. I may say that I have never heard of any evidence being kept back before.

Dr. Phillips - I am, of course, in the hands of the Court. What I was going to detail took place after death.

The Coroner - That is a matter of opinion, Doctor. Medical men often differ, you know.

"JUSTICE MIGHT BE FRUSTRATED"

Dr. Phillips repeated that he did not think the details should be given. Justice might be frustrated and (glancing at some ladies and boys in the Court) -

The Coroner remarked that justice had had a long time to solve the case; but he certainly thought that ladies and boys should leave the room.

The Foreman - We are of opinion that the evidence the doctor wishes to keep back ought certainly to be given.

The Coroner said he had delayed calling the evidence in order that it might not interfere with justice; but justice had had about a fortnight to avenge itself.

Dr. Phillips - But it will not elucidate the cause of death.

The Coroner (warmly) said he must have the evidence.

The Court was then cleared of ladies and boys.

PORTIONS OF THE BODY MISSING

Dr. Phillips (missing) - The abdominal wall had been removed in three portions, two taken from the anterior part, and the other from another part of the body. There was a greater portion of the body removed from the right side than the left. On placing these three flaps of skin together, it was evident that a portion was wanting. I removed the intestines as I found them in the yard. The mesentery vessels were divided through. The large intestine remained in situ, but cut through with a keen incision transversely. (Further details were given, which created a great sensation, the doctor asserting that other portions of the body were missing.)

KNIFE FIVE OR SIX INCHES LONG

It was evident, continued the witness, that these absent portions, together with the incision in the large intestine, were the result of the same excising power. Thus I consider the weapon was from five to six inches long, and the appearance of the cuts confirm to me in the opinion that the instrument, like the one which divided the structures of the neck, must have been of a very sharp character. The mode of removal of the abdominal wall indicated a certain anatomical knowledge; but the incision of certain viscera conveyed to my kind a greater anatomical knowledge. It is only an inference, but I think I ought to mention it, that the early removal of the intestines in the yard was necessary to enable the operator to effect other incisions of certain organs.

"MUST HAVE TAKEN FIFTEEN MINUTES"

The Coroner - How long did it take to inflict all these injuries?

Dr. Phillips - I could not have performed the removal in under a quarter of an hour.

In reply to other questions, Dr. Phillips said that had he to excise the portions in a deliberate way, as a surgeon, it would have taken him an hour to remove them.

USELESS TO PHOTOGRAPH RETINA

By the Jury - Witness, at an early stage, gave his advice to the Police that it would be useless to photograph the retina of the woman's eyes to see what was the last object retained on them. He also advised that bloodhounds would be of no use. The appearance of the dead woman's face was consistent with partial suffocation.

ANNIE CHAPMAN SEEN IN SPITALFIELDS

Elizabeth Long, Church row, Whitechapel, stated that on Saturday morning, the day of deceased's death, she was passing down Hanbury street, to go to Spitalfields Market, at half past five o'clock, when she saw a man and a woman on the pavement. The man's back was turned towards Brick lane and the woman's towards Spitalfields Market. They were standing a few yards from No. 29 Hanbury street, the Brick lane end. Witness saw the woman's face. She had seen the body in the mortuary and was quite sure that it was the same.

HER COMPANION "LOOKED LIKE A FOREIGNER"

Witness could not see the man's face. She noticed that he was dark, and had a brown hat turned up at the side. It was a brown "deerstalker."

Witness thought his coat was dark. It was a man who looked to be over 40 years of age. He was a little taller than the deceased.

Did he look like a working man? - He looked like a foreigner. he was dark.

Did he look like a dock labourer? - What I should call shabby genteel.

They were talking loudly. He said to her, "Will you?" and she said, "Yes."

Was that all? - Yes.

Did you see where they went to? - No. I went to my work, and did not look back. I saw nothing to make me think they were the worse for drink.

NOT AN UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE

Was it not unusual to see a man and a woman, talking together at that hour of the day? - I see a lot of them sometimes talking at that hour.

(The report will be continued.)



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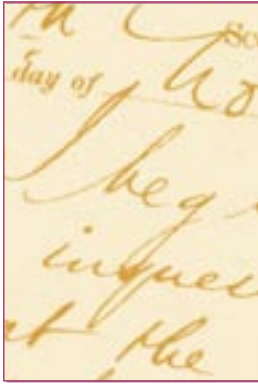
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Wolff (Camille) WHO WAS JACK THE RIPPER? hb/dw new, but with small mark to fep, with 9 signatures, some labels £90



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

I Beg to Report

JACK THE RIPPER FOR PRESIDENT. 'Having George Bush voice concern about America's addiction to oil is like Jack the Ripper lobbying the London municipal government for safety measures to be put in place to protect women on the streets at night. Right after his "addicted to oil" pep talk Bush promptly announced to America that he would vigorously support World Ports Dubai taking over control of America's oil port terminals because it would facilitate the industry. Incredible! I rest my case for using the Jack the Ripper analogy.'

Ben Roberts, Hooligans in the halls of power, Trinicenter.com, 17 April 2006.

WHAT, NO RIPPER? A list celebrating icons of England now includes the Notting Hill Carnival, Hadrian's Wall, the mini-skirt, cricket, Morris dancing and the pub. Blackpool Tower, the Eden Project, Big Ben and York Minster are also among 21 new additions to the list. Other icons added in April include the flag of St George, London's famous curry road Brick Lane, the Lindisfarne Gospels, Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* and *The Domesday Book*.

The first 12 icons were announced in January and include Stonehenge, Punch and Judy, SS Empire Windrush, Holbein's portrait of Henry VIII, the cup of tea, the FA Cup, *Alice in Wonderland*, Routemaster buses, King James Bible, the Angel of the North, Spitfire and Jerusalem. Nelson's flagship HMS Victory, Constable's painting *The Hay Wain*, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, the Globe Theatre, the Sutton Hoo helmet and the Machin (Queen's head) stamp complete the list. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport commissioned the project to spark a debate about what cultural treasures best represent England.

The public can nominate their own choices of icon and vote for what should be included on the project's website. Celebrity nominations included fashion designer Mary Quant suggesting cottage pie, actress June Whitfield voting for the English sense of humour, ballerina Darcey Bussell for the Royal Opera House and comedian Eddie Izzard nominating the South Downs.

Jerry Doyle, managing director of ICONS, said: 'We are delighted with the response from the public. It has been overwhelming, with around a quarter of a million visits to the site, more than 5,000 suggested nominations and around 300,000 votes. Nominations have ranged from popular national treasures like *Wallace and Grommit* and *Dr Who* to controversial suggestions like fox hunting, where the debate rages on. ICONS offers a unique experience - a tantalising mix of things about life in England. Who else boasts egg soldiers, the misplaced apostrophe and Shakespeare's plays in their collection?'

BBC News, 27 April 2006.

PLAY IT AGAIN JACK. Round 1: Thames River: Jack the Ripper: 'Arr! You wish to hinder me?' ... Host: 'Heh, heh, heh... so you managed to defeat my Jack the Ripper. That's right, all that has happened here has been under my control. And the things you've seen so far are just the start of the horrors... Heh, heh, heh... Go to the House of Wax... If you dare! My waxwork figures will be waiting for you! Perhaps you will be my next wax masterpiece. I need a replacement for Jack the Ripper, after all!'

Chris Castiglione, Vampire: Master of Darkness. Game Script Version 1.0.

HUMANITARIAN JACK THE RIPPER? 'Brace yourself, but three years ago [Philadelphia Flyers hockey player] Denis Gauthier was named top humanitarian by the Calgary Flames. It makes you wonder if the other finalists were Jack the Ripper and Charles Manson, but apparently Denis the Menace has a softer, gentler side.'

Bucky Gleason Voorhees, Buffalo News, Buffalo, NY, USA, 28 April 2006.

VAN GOGH'S EAR FOR MUSIC. 'Less persuasive, but no less intriguing, is Gayford's theory that Van Gogh's ear-cutting episode may have been inspired by a similar scene in Emile Zola's novel *The Sin of Father Mouret* or perhaps the then widely reported exploits of Jack the Ripper. Gayford also notes that Van Gogh's razor work would in turn later inspire others to follow his lead.'

Brad Quinn, The Yellow House: Van Gogh, Gauguin and Nine Turbulent Weeks in Arles, by Martin Gayford, Daily Yomiuri, Japan, 30 April 2006.

LAST LIVING CONTEMPORARY OF JACK THE RIPPER CELEBRATES 128TH BIRTHDAY. Friends and relatives of Cruz Hernandez gathered on 3 May in San Agustin, El Salvador, to celebrate her 128th birthday, a milestone that might make her the world's oldest person. Hernandez, who relatives say spends most of her time dozing and no longer speaks, was surrounded by 200 people at her party, some bearing a cake and others dressed as Salvadoran mythological heroes. According to national records, Hernandez was born on 3 May 1878, in one of the country's central provinces, where she gave birth to 13 children. She now has 60 grandchildren, 80 great-grandchildren and 25 great-great grandchildren. National birth registry officials sent Hernandez's documents to the Guinness World Records organisation last year but have yet to hear whether the case was accepted. Guinness claims Ecuadorean Maria Esther de Capovilla is the world's oldest living woman at age 116. But Ms Capovilla was only born in 1890. Ms Hernandez, on the other hand, was 10 in 1888 - and is therefore the last living contemporary of Jack the Ripper.

Reuters, 4 May 2006.



The ID card of Cruz Hernandez



The room where Armin Meiwes killed and ate Bernd-Jurgen Brandes

THE WAY OF ALL FLESH. Armin Meiwes, 44, the German cannibal who killed and ate a willing victim, received a life sentence for murder on 9 May 2006 after Germany's top criminal court ruled his 2004 conviction for manslaughter and eight-year jail sentence was too lenient. In delivering the decision, Judge Klaus Drescher rejected the defence's argument that Meiwes had acted on his victim's request, a crime similar to euthanasia which in Germany carries a maximum prison term of five years. 'The defendant was fully conscious of his actions and could control them,' Drescher told the court. 'This is not killing on request,' he said. 'He killed him because he wanted to slaughter and eat his flesh. He had achieved the biggest kick of his life.' Under German law, Meiwes could be released after 15 years. The court rejected a request by prosecutors to deny his right to be released early because his victim had volunteered to be killed and eaten.

Meiwes had corresponded with some 400 people over the Internet in search of a willing victim, including one man who had advertised for 'a likeable, older gentleman to read me my death

sentence'. But the search was fruitless until he met Bernd-Jurgen Brandes, a top IT manager with German firm Siemens who posted an advert for someone to 'obliterate his life and leave no trace'. Brandes travelled by train to meet Meiwes in the western town of Rotenburg. There Meiwes videotaped himself severing Brandes's penis with a knife before both men tried to eat it. Bleeding profusely, Brandes fell unconscious. With the video recorder still rolling, Meiwes laid him out on a bench, kissing him on the lips before plunging a knife into his throat. 'The next one must be young but not so fat,' Meiwes said after the slaughter was complete and his victim was suspended from a meat hook. Meiwes next froze 30 kg (66 lb) of flesh in parcels labelled, among other things, schnitzel. He later ate the flesh with red cabbage and potatoes.

A psychology expert said during the trial that Meiwes's fantasy had its roots in his father's departure from the family home and a domineering and embittered mother. The expert added that Meiwes' desire to eat someone stemmed from a desire to find a partner who would not abandon him.

Reuters, 9 May 2006.

BEST OF OLD BRITISH BODS. Seventy-five-year-old Sean Connery and 60-year-old Helen Mirren are the UK's sexiest pensioners, according to a poll by finance firm Virgin Money aiming at finding the sexiest British star old enough to draw a state pension. Just over half of the 2,423 respondents voted for Connery, more than double the number who chose runner-up Patrick Stewart, 64. Actor Anthony Hopkins came in third place, followed by fellow actor Michael Caine and singer Cliff Richard. Mirren received 21% of the vote, narrowly beating former Bond girl Honor Blackman, 78, with 19%. Diana Rigg, Julie Christie and Joan Collins also made it into the top five. At the other end of the scale, broadcaster David Frost, 67, and former Prime Minister Baroness Thatcher, 80, were voted least sexy OAPs.

This is London (Evening Standard), 9 May 2006
playfuls.com, 19 May 2006.



Abdul El-Gharras

A DREADFUL DEED. Abdul El-Gharras, 31, accepted some crack to sell from Marvin Gentles, 28, but instead of selling it he smoked it. When Gentles tracked him down at his flat in Lisson Grove, central London, El-Gharras killed him and cut up his body with a saw. When he could not clean the blood from his flat he set it on fire, causing an explosion. Gentles's torso was discovered in Regents Canal after a passer-by picked a shopping bag out of the water thinking somebody had dumped unwanted pets. Another bag of body parts was found near a shopping trolley and police divers found Gentles's head in a holdall that had been weighed down at the bottom of the canal. His arms and legs have not been found.

The prosecution said Gentles suffered 26 stab wounds and cuts - some of them while he was still alive. A statement read to the court from the victim's sister said: 'That he (Mr Gentles) might have still been alive when he was cut up, haunts me.' Mrs Justice Rafferty told El-Gharras: 'Whether she be right or wrong, you are responsible for these nightmares. This was a dreadful deed.' The judge ordered El-Gharras must serve at least 18 years.

BBC News, 27 April 2006

FILL ME IN ON YOUR NEW VISION. British participant in the International German Beard Championship Steve Parsons wore a cricketing outfit and an 'English' moustache, thin with fine, long points, sported by Victorian army officers and possibly Jack the Ripper. Asked why the moustache style was called 'English', he said: 'No idea, you don't see them a lot in England.' Steve Parsons is the reigning World Champion in the English Class of moustache, the first man from Great Britain to hold that title.

Der Spiegel, 1 May 2006.

JACK THE RIPPER: THE MYSTERY SOLVED. Freshmen from the newly created Academy at Belvidere High School, Rockford Ill, USA, have solved one of the world's great crime mysteries: Who was Jack the Ripper? A student jury found Joseph Barnett guilty of the Ripper's murders in 1888 London. Barnett, a labourer with ties to one of the victims, Mary Jane Kelly, was one of six suspects Belvidere teachers and students picked as the most likely to have committed the crimes. Two student judges presided over the four-hour mock trial at the Boone County Courthouse. The students' quest began inside a Belvidere classroom two weeks ago where they created a crime scene and proceeded to determine a suspect using the Jack the Ripper murders as a backdrop. 'We like to keep it contemporary,' said Freshman teacher Chris Biesbrouck, as he talked about the kids learning forensics, blood spatter, DNA and other crime-solving techniques. 'The kids are interested in CSI and other shows like that. This is a way we can teach them things like biology and anatomy and we tied it in with the Jack the Ripper case.' Attorneys from the Boone County Bar Association helped lead the students while Judge Gerald Grubb loaned them his courtroom.

Rockford Register Star, Rockford Ill, USA, 2 May 2006.



Steve Parsons

IT'S OUR PLEASURE TO SERVE YOU. 'And the police, all those detectives, the media frenzy, calling you "Jack the Ripper"; it must have been a terrible ordeal through those years. My, my, my.' Former American pop star Pat Boone, commenting on the news reported by the Associated Press on 26 April 2006 that the US Supreme Court 'is considering whether a prisoner can challenge the way he is executed. Convicted murderer claims cruel and unusual punishment.' To wind up his parody of the execution of a serial killer carried out in strict accordance with his wishes, Mr Boone cites a passage from the Bible: 'Show no pity; life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot! *Deuteronomy 19:19-21*.' That surely shows how he thinks.

Death first-class, WorldNetDaily, Grants Pass, OR, USA, 6 May 2006.

DR RIPPER, I PRESUME? Lawyer Damian Scattini, who represents disgraced surgeon Jayant Patel - accused of killing 13 patients and maiming scores of others - said on 9 May that his client had been called everything from Dr Death to 'worse than Jack the Ripper' even though criminal charges were yet to be laid against him. Proceedings against Dr Patel before the Health Practitioners Tribunal were adjourned for six months. The Medical Board of Queensland, which brought the action against Dr Patel in the hope of getting him permanently deregistered, asked for the adjournment so as not to interfere with the criminal prosecution being prepared by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Amanda Watt, Courier-Mail, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, 10 May 2006.

HI-YO RIPPER!!! 'The question often asked about the Lone Ranger—who is that masked man?—needs to be asked by auctioneers. They must unmask a prospective seller to know whom they are dealing with. Until then, that person is a stranger who could be the auction version of Jack the Ripper.' And a bit of a mixed metaphor to boot.

Steve Proffitt on the need for auctioneers to screen prospective sellers, Who Is That Masked Man?, Maine Antique Digest, Waldoboro, Maine, USA, 9 May 2006.

IN HEAVEN THERE IS NO BEER. And no Jack the Ripper either, if you believe American humorist [Art Buchwald](#). He says: 'So get a legal pad and a pencil. Start writing down the names of people you don't want to meet in Heaven. You can eliminate the ones you don't believe would make it there in the first place, such as Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Jack the Ripper and Al Capone.'

Art Buchwald, The Not-So-Sweet Hereafter, Washington Post, 11 May 2006.

JACK THE RIPPER STRIKES AGAIN. 'The River City Rascals [an Independent Frontier League, FL, baseball team from O'Fallon, Missouri] are pleased to announce the return of Jack "The Ripper" Clark to the Rascals coaching staff.'

Our Sports Central, Independent and Minor League Sports News, Marshfield, WI, USA, 11 May 2006.

BODY AND SOUL. Shows like the controversial *Bodies Exhibition* which put human tissue on display will have to be licensed from this autumn. The Human Tissue Authority will ask show organisers to meet standards on public safety and appropriateness. Crucially, exhibitors will have to show they have consent to display the bodies of the people they are showing. It comes after organisers of a show in London denied exhibiting the bodies of Chinese political prisoners. The organisers of the Bodies Exhibition, which displays 22 whole body specimens and more than 260 organs, strenuously denied claims the corpses used were of members of the Falun Gong sect persecuted in China. Organisers Premier Exhibitions insisted they exercised 'due diligence' and acquired the body parts from 'appropriate sources'. 'We have written indemnities, and we visited China on several occasions to ensure that the sourcing process is both legal and moral, prior to curating the exhibition,' they said. The bodies they show have been preserved using a special plastination technique using liquid plastic and developed by controversial German scientist Gunther Von Hagens. He hit the headlines in 2003 when he was accused of illegally obtaining bodies sold by psychiatric and general hospitals, a prison and a medical faculty in China and Kyrgyzstan. Although the following year he was cleared of the claims, his Body Worlds exhibition, which included the bodies of a pregnant mother and a horse, has caused a stir in many countries. He also courted controversy by performing an autopsy in front of a live audience.



Bodies: soon to be covered up?

The Human Tissue Authority (HTA) now says organisers of any show involving bodies, body parts or human tissue less than 100 years old will have to meet licensing conditions from 1 September. Chief executive of HTA Adrian McNeil said: 'In all the activities across our remit, what concerns us is that bodies or body parts are treated with respect and with appropriate dignity. If the person applying for a licence for the display can show that proper consent has been given and the other licensing requirements are met or being worked towards, then there is no reason why a licence should not be issued.'

The HTA is now consulting on a draft code of practice for licensing such exhibitions under the Human Tissue Act 2004. These will include issues around public safety, appropriate display premises and consent. Under the Act, public display of a whole body, body parts, or tissue also requires the consent of the person to whom it belongs, whether they are living or deceased. The draft code being consulted upon says: 'At the heart of the Human Tissue Act is the requirement that consent be obtained for the removal, storage and use of any relevant material which has come from a human body for certain scheduled purposes.' It adds: 'This code is intended to foster the underlying assumption of the Act that all human bodies, body parts and tissue within the Act's scope would be treated with appropriate respect and dignity.' The code says consent can only be given by someone who is 'appropriately informed' and has the capacity to agree to the proposed activity. The consultation period ends on 28 June.

BBC News, 15 May 2006

JACK THE RIPPER AND THE MOORS MURDERS 1. 'George Orwell, in his famous 1945 essay charting the rise and fall of the great English murder, could not have anticipated its pathological, newspaper-filling reinvention on the moors above Manchester two decades later. But the Moors Murders, in which five children and teenagers were killed by Ian Brady and Myra Hindley, have inspired if not more newsprint then, at least, more journalistic venom than Jack the Ripper, Dr Crippen and the Yorkshire Ripper's crimes combined.'

Andrew Billen on See No Evil: The Moors Murders (ITV1, 14-15 May 2006), starring Maxine Peake as Myra Hindley. The Sunday Times, UK, 13 May 2006.

JACK THE RIPPER AND THE MOORS MURDERS 2. 'Britain is still gripped by the memory of the Moors murders and only Jack the Ripper has a similar place in the nation's psyche.'

Barry Didcock on See No Evil: The Moors Murders (ITV1, 14 - 15 May 2006), Hindley & Brady: too evil for tv?, Sunday Herald, Glasgow, Scotland, UK, 14 May 2006.

JACK THE RIPPER AND THE MOORS MURDERS 3. 'Arguably the most gripping British crime, alongside those of Jack the Ripper, the Moors murders hold an immense fascination for all generations. They represented a loss of innocence that has forever left its mark on society.'

Fiona Leith, A tragedy too soon for the local multiplex, Scotsman, 21 May 2006.

JACK THE RIPPER GOES TO WAR. 'For the first time in the history of America, we are embarked upon a war of pure aggression, without even the pretense of defense of ourselves or others. This is a watershed event of the magnitude that must have been experienced by Jack the Ripper as he took down his first victim.'

Edgar J. Steele, Bush Still Must Go! The People's Voice, Nashville, TN, USA, 19 May 2006.

BUT WHICH ONE IS THE FUNNY MAN? 'Props, costumes and physical gags are minimal, and except for one scene played between Satan and Jack the Ripper, the characters are written as realistic adults.'

Kathleen Strecker, A funny thing's happening at the River Theater (Review of the sketch comedy show The Return of the Never-Before-Seen Thing From the Sea), The Daily Astorian, Astoria, Oregon, USA, 20 May 2006.

YOU MAY BOO JACK THE RIPPER. 'Yes, [San Francisco Giants player Barry] Bonds is an alleged steroid cheat. He's often rude and self-centered. He deserves to be booed but shouldn't be subject to venomous abuse. He's not Charles Manson and Jack the Ripper rolled into one.'

Eric Gilmore, No better place than Oakland for Bonds to take on The Babe. Mercury News, San Jose, CA, USA, 20 May 2006.

JACK - THE LEICESTER CONNECTION. Local historian and author Stephen Butt will give a talk about how a local Leicester man may have tracked down Britain's most notorious serial killer, Jack the Ripper. Surely he doesn't mean Leicester-born John Merrick - the Elephant Man? Find out when Mr Butt speaks at historic [Belgrave Hall Museum](#) on 6 June 2006. Booking essential. Admission charge £2.50. At Belgrave Hall Museum & Gardens, Church Road, off Thurstaston Road, Leicester, LE4 5PE, Leicestershire. Tel: 0116 266 6590. Fax: 0116 261 3063. Anita.Harrison@leicester.gov.uk

GHOST WATCH AT BELGRAVE HALL, LEICESTER. Maybe you will be privileged to see the Ripper's ghost when historic Belgrave Hall hosts a ghost watch on 24-25 June. As seen on Living TV's *Most Haunted*, [Belgrave Hall](#) is famous for its ghostly goings on and this unique experience will teach you how to hunt for a ghost. Ticket price includes a buffet at the museum plus a talk and training by a paranormal expert. Remember to bring warm clothing! Booking essential, age limit 16 years and above. No alcohol to be brought onto the premises. Tickets available from the Guildhall Box Office, telephone 0116 253 2569. £45.00. At Belgrave Hall Museum & Gardens, Church Road, off Thurgaston Road, Leicester, LE4 5PE, Leicestershire. Tel: 0116 266 6590. Fax: 0116 261 3063. Anita.Harrison@leicester.gov.uk

INFAMOUS CRIMES COURSE IN KANSAS. On June 3, the city that saw the recent capture and sentencing for life of the notorious BTK killer, Dennis Rader, will be the venue for a course on the Ripper case and other crimes in history. Instructor Tony Lubbers will discuss 'Famous/Infamous Crimes in History' The [course description](#) states, 'Study unsolved cases such as Jack the Ripper, Lizzie Borden, Lindbergh baby kidnapping, and the Zodiac murders. Analyze their similarities and differences in order to assess why these cases stand out among other similar types of cases. Business & Technology Building (Room 101), Friends University, Wichita. Course number DCP 1996 WI. 1 credit hour for Friends University-enrolled students; 0.8 Friends University continuing-ed units, pass or fail. Seminar fees: \$125 for college credit; \$89 for non-credit.

JACK, LIZZIE AND THE VILLISCA, IOWA AXE MURDER. 'Sometime during the night of Sunday, June 9, 1912, a person or persons unknown entered a modest house in Villisca, Iowa and bludgeoned to death the eight people sleeping there... The Villisca Axe Murder is the only Iowa crime that has potential historical and literary "legs." In this sense, it is like the two great murder epics, Jack the Ripper and the Lizzie Borden case. Jack the Ripper, well into his second century continues to provoke controversy while novels, plays, motion pictures, and even musicals based on his crimes spew out into the popular literature market. Historical studies of this serial killer ranging from serious to fanciful also seem to spring up like mushrooms as the years go by...'

'Villisca's murder is only eighty years old and while it has yet to provoke national interest, there are signs that it will remain a viable topic into the 21st century. There is now a novel and a play based on the event and two scholars from Kansas City have a historical study of the murder nearing completion. Fourth Wall Productions, a Hollywood-based documentary film company, is producing a feature length film based on the murder with an anticipated release during 2001. Villisca is cautiously experimenting with using the murder as a means of attracting tourists, and the murder house is now a private museum semi-restored to its 1912 condition.'

[Dr Ed Epperly, Professor of Education, Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, USA, Villisca Axe Murders June 9, 1912.](#)

WILLIAM F NOLAN ON JACK THE RIPPER AND THE LONDON BRIDGE. In *Science Fiction Weekly*, prolific author William F Nolan, author of *Logan's Run*, co-written with George Clayton Johnson, and some 80 other books, explains how he came to write his time-travel Ripper novel, *Terror at London Bridge*: '... I had always wanted to write a story about Jack the Ripper, but the problem was to find a totally fresh approach. That problem was solved when my wife [Cameron] and I visited the London Bridge in Lake Havasu, Arizona. A wealthy American bought the bridge from England... had it torn apart and shipped over, stone by stone, to the US. They rebuilt it in Arizona and diverted a section of the Colorado River to run under it. When my wife and I arrived there, it was late at night and all the other tourists were gone. We were the only people in this British village built around the bridge. I stood there, looking up at the dark stone structure. Then I said, "I'll bet Jack the Ripper walked over this bridge after his murders in Whitechapel." And that did it. I had my fresh approach. My idea was that Ripper had been shot on the bridge and had been crushed by a stone that fell with him into the river. It's found at the bottom of the Thames a century later and brought back to Arizona to be fitted into the structure, and a drop of tourist's blood brings him "back" to start his reign of terror all over again. It worked out beautifully. Prime popcorn entertainment.'



William Nolan

[Science Fiction Weekly, issue 403, interview by Michael McCarty](#)

WHAT'S IN A NAME? 'Names are memorable and create a lasting image. For example, Jack the Ripper. Everyone remembers Jack the Ripper. No one remembers Elmo the Cutter. See what I mean?'

[Quoted in 'Arizona: Lots of Beach, Very Little Water' on Best Western International Trip Planner website](#)

THE SOUNDS OF MUSIC. 'A pretty-good cover of Nick Cave's *Jack the Ripper*, taken from a recent split with Paper Chase, is hellishly nervous and raw.'

[Brian Howe, Xiu Xiu, Australia / New Zealand Tour EP, \[Popfrenzy; 2006\], Record Reviews, Pitchfork, 22 May 2006.](#)

THE NOT-QUITE-THE-JACK-THE-RIPPER MUSICAL. 'The New York Musical Theatre Festival announced 18 new musicals to be part of this year's Next Link Project, which will be presented at the third annual festival, Sept. 10 -Oct. 1. The Next Link Project makes up more than half of the productions that play at the NYMF – the other works seen at the festival are part of the NYMF Invited Works, which gives international productions their American debuts. The 2006 Next Link Project selections – announced May 21 at a special 'Unleashing the Next Link' kick-off event at New World Stages – are as follows: ... The Piper: Music, Lyrics & Book by Marcus Hummon. "Jack the Ripper meets the Pied Piper, with a haunting Celtic score." '... Well, remember you read it here first.

[Playbill, 22 May 2006.](#)

ROMANCING THE STONE. An ancient artefact embodying a myriad half-remembered legends is ingloriously stuck on the wall of a sports shop at 111 Cannon Street, City of London. Its future is uncertain as the building that houses it is slated to be pulled down. This enigmatic object, which is possibly more than 3,000 years old, or maybe Druid in origin, though more commonly believed to be a Roman milestone, is inextricably linked with London's history. It is known as the London Stone. Located along what some believe to be a ley line connecting significant places, it might well be the mystical centre point of London or even the whole of Britain. Shakespeare and William Blake wrote about it. Queen Elizabeth I's adviser and occultist, John Dee, was obsessed by it, believing that it had magic powers. Charles Dickens, writing a newspaper series about various London landmarks in 1879 called the Stone 'that curious relic of old London'.

An old legend says that the fate of London is tied to the survival of the stone in the same mysterious way as to the ravens at the Tower: 'So long as the stone of Brutus is safe, so long shall London flourish.' One of many legends is that Brutus the Trojan, or Brutus of Troy, founded London, around 1070BC, about 1000 years before the Roman invasion. Following the destruction of Troy, Brutus, a Trojan prince, was guided to the triangular white island of Albion by the goddess Diana. After sailing up the Thames he first had to fight a race of giants, led by Gog and Magog. The city he established was called 'Troia Newydd' (New Troy) which later became 'Trinovantum'. The people who came with him were 'Britons'. Brutus put his palace on the site where the Guildhall is today and erected a temple in honour of Diana, the goddess who had guided him, on the hill site where St Paul's is. It has been claimed that the London Stone is the altar piece from this temple. Brutus is said to have been buried at the other sacred hill site, now known as Tower Hill and there are statues of Gog and Magog at the Guildhall.



The London Stone

It has been claimed that the London Stone is the altar piece from this temple. Brutus is said to have been buried at the other sacred hill site, now known as Tower Hill and there are statues of Gog and Magog at the Guildhall.

In *Henry VI*, part 2, Shakespeare depicted the 15th-century Peasants' Rebellion leader, Jack Cade, using the London stone to signal he has taken control of the city and is now its Lord Mayor. Scene VI is set in Cannon Street, London: 'Enter CADE and the rest, and strikes his staff on London-stone. CADE: Now is Mortimer lord of this city. And here, sitting/ upon London-stone, I charge and command that, of the city's cost,/ the pissing-conduit run nothing but/ claret wine this first year of our reign. And now/henceforward it shall be treason for any that calls/me other than Lord Mortimer.' Cade's rebellion failed but the King offered the leaders a pardon and they left London. Yet many, including Cade, were suspiciously killed in the following weeks. The King ordered Cade's body to be returned to London, where it was drawn and quartered and his head displayed with many others on a pole at [London Bridge](#).

In the 16th century William Camden believed that it was a Roman milestone, the central milestone from which all distances were measured in the province. In the 17th century Christopher Wren saw foundations below it during the rebuilding after the Great Fire and was convinced it was not a mere pillar but something more elaborate, which he suspected was connected with the mosaic pavements and walls of the Roman building seen to the south. In 1742, it

was moved to the north side of Cannon Street (which would now be in the middle of the widened road). It was again moved in 1798 when the small portion of the London Stone was incorporated in the south wall of St Swithin's Church until 1960.

Some people think the Stone can be traced back to Druid times, perhaps as a [Pagan Ritual Altar](#) or a sacrificial stone. This was certainly the belief of William Blake who, in *To the Jews*, imagined the laments of the execution victims: They groan'd aloud on London Stone,

They groan'd aloud on Tyburn's Brook. There's even a legend that claims it to be the same stone from which [King Arthur](#) pulled the sword Excalibur, (although there are several places in Britain that make the same claim). Certainly it seems that this particular area of London has long been significant. In 1840, excavations to build sewers at Bush Lane, next to Cannon Street Station, uncovered ancient remains of large walls belonging to a pre-Roman building, which was perhaps some kind of palace. The persistent story that the stone was the symbolic centre point from which every distance in Roman Britain was measured was already in circulation in the 16th Century.

It has been suggested that the London Stone is all that remains of an ancient stone circle that once stood at the top of Ludgate Hill on the same site now occupied by St Paul's Cathedral. King Lud lived in the city around 73 BC and expanded it. It became known as 'Caer-Ludd' (Lud's Town). When he died he was buried at what was believed to be the highest point, now known as Ludgate.

The first known reference to the Stone is in a book belonging to Athelstan, (Ethelstone) King of the West Saxons in the early 10th Century. In the list of lands and rents some places are described as being 'near unto London stone'. It was already a landmark in 1198 when it was referred to on maps as Lonenstane or Londenstane. As was common at that time, people who lived nearby were named de Londenstane. In fact the first mayor of London was Henry Fitz-Ailwin de Londonestone (meaning 'Henry, son of Ailwin of London Stone') who was appointed some time between 1189 and 1193. Over the years the London Stone became the traditional place to pass laws, make proclamations, reclaim debts and swear oaths, sometimes with ceremony, perhaps accompanied by drums and trumpets or in front of a crowd. Petitioners could strike the Stone with their papers in order to make their position known to the authorities. In the 17th century, spectacles that failed to meet the required quality standards were ritually smashed against the Stone.



The London Stone sketched in 1791

Once the Stone was so well recognised that the area and the church were it stood were named after it. It was considered to be the guardian of the City, a place for worship or legal proclamations, a point from where all distances from London were measured. Today, seen closely, the stone is a small, blackened, damaged and seemingly insignificant block of a type of limestone called [oolite](#), known to be only a fragment of the original Stone. Much of it is black with city grime although some exposed clean sections indicate damage to the original surface. There are no markings on the Stone but there are two grooves on the top.

Hedley Swain, archaeologist at the Museum of London, says the stone is clearly an ancient block - but despite the many legends, nothing is known about its origin, date or purpose. A more pressing concern is how to rescue the stone from its current position in a building set to be pulled down. 'The trouble is that at the moment it's not really looked after by anyone,' says Mr Swain. He expects the stone to be brought to the Museum of London for display while the building that houses it is demolished and a new building is constructed in the site. 'People go to look for it, thinking it's going to be a grand object, and then they walk up and down Cannon Street and can't find it,' he adds. 'We get letters from people saying that it's appalling that it's being kept in this way.'

Mr Swain says there is no way of confirming rival theories that the stone was a Roman distance marker or part of a prehistoric standing stone or any of the many more different versions. The area between Cannon Street and the River Thames was a site of important Roman

buildings and the stone could have been from these buildings. But it could also have been much older and part of some other pre-Roman edifice.

Truth be told, it's not entirely the case that no one is looking after the stone, because it does have a current custodian: Chris Cheek, the manager of the Sportec sports shop to which the stone is attached. 'And even though he isn't a household name,' says BBC writer Sean Coughlan of Mr Cheek, 'Londoners might not realise that he has already saved their city from the destruction promised if the stone is lost.' As Mr Cheek recalls, 'When we were setting up the shop, there were cowboy builders here, and one of them was just about to take a chisel to the stone. I told him 'Whoah. Stop right there.'

Mr Cheek has become attached to this strange situation, where one of the city's most ancient objects is parked in his shop, surrounded by football shirts, cricket bats and trainers. Does Mr Cheek believe in the legend that London's future well-being depends on this stone? 'Yes. I do really,' he says. 'I'm not into hocus pocus, but there is something about this stone. For some reason it's been kept, there's something special about it.' This could be because of its associations with druids, he suggests, or maybe just the sheer weight of history, from the Roman legionnaires through to the Blitz. Mr Cheek also believes the stone reveals something about people's characters. 'There are people who have travelled all the way from Australia to see this stone. And there are other people who are so hectic, so busy with their appointments, that they walk past it every day of the week and never even see it. And there are people who come in for a pair of socks and then suddenly see it. "Is that the London stone? I've heard of that".' Mr Cheek also enjoys the idea that, until the stone is moved to a museum, he is the latest in a long line of people to be in charge of something so ancient and mysterious.

But perhaps the London stone's most remarkable achievement is to have survived, through wars, plagues, fires and even 1960s planning, right in the middle of the financial district of the capital. Most probably, the stone is still set not too far from where it stood when the Romans were building London. Eighteenth Century prints show it kept in an elegant stone casing. In old photographs Victorian policemen guard the stone when it was set into the wall of a church, St Swithin, at waist height. St Swithin was damaged during World War II and the stone was then attached to a new building on the site. When this building is pulled down the Corporation of London will ensure that the new building that will take its place will put the stone on display in a more prominent way.

Archaeologist Hedley Swain says the stone also serves as a reminder that 'under the superficial veneer of being a modern business capital, London has so many deep layers of accumulated history'. Mr Cheek adds that the stone's real appeal is its mystery: 'If it doesn't have a beginning, then perhaps it doesn't have an end either.'

[BBC News Magazine, 22 May 2006](#)
[BBC h2g2 Guide](#)
[Wikipedia.](#)

DEADLIER THAN THE MALE. Rudyard Kipling may have been right when he wrote: For the female of the species is more deadly than the male. As readers of *Ripperologist* are aware, Professor Ian Findlay, Director of Forensics for Gribbles Molecular Science Laboratory at Brisbane, Australia, has tested 118-year-old DNA Jack the Ripper may have left behind and built a partial female profile. (See Nicholas Smith, *Catalyst: Professor Findlay and the Ripper's DNA, Ripperologist* 66 (April 2006)). Could Jack have been a Jill?

In his test, Professor Findlay used technology developed by him at Queensland's Griffith University. The technology, called Cell Track-ID, is hundreds of times more powerful than the DNA profiling techniques used by crime-fighting bodies such as the FBI. Cell Track-ID consists of modifications to the traditional DNA extraction technique – known as short tandem repeats (STR) profiling – which works by amplifying the DNA billions of times to look for very specific markers. But while the STR method needs samples of 200 or more cells, Cell Track-ID provides single-cell forensic DNA fingerprinting. The new technology remains similar to STR profiling, but has been refined to have a much better extraction protocol. This keeps the DNA intact, therefore providing much more information and making it possible to examine the smallest genetic material up to 160 years old.

Professor Findlay first tested the new technology on a lock of hair said to be from Catherine Eddowes, one of Jack the Ripper's victims. (See *The Adventure of the Plaited Hair: A Mystery Featuring Stephen P Ryder, Andy Aliffe, the BBC and Some Relics of Jack the Ripper and his Victim Catherine Eddowes Ripperologist* 61 (October 2005)). The results of the test, however, proved negative. The strand of hair was not from Eddowes.



Professor Ian Findlay

At the next stage, Professor Findlay used Cell Track-ID to test saliva that could have been left behind by the Ripper - if he licked the stamps on the envelopes of taunting letters he sent to the London police. 'If we found DNA on the stamps we could compare that with DNA from the descendants of the suspects,' he said. Most of the 600 or so letters claiming to have come from the Ripper have been dismissed as hoaxes but a few are thought to be genuine. 'The letters that Ian looked at are the ones that we feel are worth looking at - the ones that are most likely to contain DNA, the ones that may possibly have come from the killer,' says Stewart P Evans. 'Scotland Yard kept them under lock and key until 1961, when they handed them over. So we can be assured that they have not been altered.'

'In the case of the Ripper, we tested the technology on real letters and obtained profiles from those letters,' said Professor Findlay. 'It's possible the Ripper could be female but the results are inconclusive.' He added that, because the samples were so old, very small and poorly preserved, only a partial profile was built that 'didn't reach forensic

standards' nor identified an individual. 'It shows the technology works... the FBI lab in Virginia got no profiles... but the samples were just too difficult.'

The partial female profile was built from what is known as the Openshaw letter. 'That's the letter postmarked the 29th October 1888 and again signed Jack the Ripper. If we could identify the writer of that letter we might be getting somewhere to proving who the killer was,' Stewart Evans has said. The subject of the letter is the human kidney that was sent to George Lusk of the Whitechapel Vigilance Committee. Professor Findlay also said: 'The Dear Boss letter, said to have blood stains from Mary Kelly, had a male profile so it wasn't the blood of Mary Kelly'. He took swabs from the saliva under the seal and stamp of the envelope, as well as bloodstains on the letter, to glean a DNA 'fingerprint'.

But could a woman have committed the brutal Ripper crimes? Inspector Abberline has been reported as believing the Ripper could have been female because a witness insisted she had seen victim Mary Jane Kelly hours after her death. Abberline suggested this was the killer escaping in Kelly's dress and a maroon-coloured shawl. Abberline's superiors doubted that a woman could be capable of such atrocious crimes - but with all London's police force looking for a male murderer, a female killer could have walked the streets of Whitechapel with far less fear of capture.



Madame Tussauds' wax figure of Mary Pearcey

The name of murderess Mary Pearcey has been mentioned in connection with the crimes. Born in 1866, Mary was brought up by her mother and elder sister after her father, Thomas Wheeler, was convicted of murder and executed. In 1890, two years after the Ripper killings, she was convicted of murdering her lover's wife and their baby daughter - a crime that bore striking similarities to the Ripper killings and sent her to the scaffold. All the victims had their throats cut. Each was killed in private and dumped in a public place. The question whether Mary would have had the physical strength to carry out the murders was answered by Sir Melville Macnaghten: 'I have never seen a woman of stronger physique... her nerves were as iron cast as her body.' Mary, said to have 'lovely russet hair and fine blue eyes', never worked and suffered from recurring periods of depression. She was a heavy drinker and spent most of her time in the company of wealthy men. Then she fell in love with furniture remover Frank Hogg - but he was already married to a younger woman called Phoebe and had a young daughter. On October 24, Phoebe was invited for tea at Mary's house in Kentish Town, North London. At 4pm, neighbours heard screaming and the sickening sounds of violence. That evening Phoebe's corpse was found on a heap of rubbish at Hampstead, North London. Her face was wrapped in a cardigan, her skull had been crushed and her head was nearly severed from her body. A black pram was found a mile away, its mattress soaked in blood. Phoebe's 18-month-old baby was found dead, apparently smothered, in Finchley. Witnesses said they had seen Mary pushing the pram around the streets after dark. And when police searched her

home they found blood splattered on walls, ceilings, a skirt, an apron, a fire poker and a carving knife. Mary insisted she had been killing mice. While police searched her house, she sat at her piano, playing popular tunes. When she was arrested and charged, she was wearing Phoebe Hogg's wedding ring. She protested her innocence throughout the trial at the Old Bailey, but was convicted and hanged, aged 24, on 23 December 1890.

Stewart Evans points out that there is no hard evidence to suggest that Mary was Jill the Ripper. He says: 'The problem is that, no matter how progressive DNA forensics becomes, we can only work with the samples of evidence found in 1888. And the best piece of evidence, a blood-stained apron found near the bodies of one of the victims, hasn't survived.'

[The Age, Melbourne, Australia, 17 May 2006](#)

[Rossella Lorenzi, DNA Method Could Reveal Jack the Ripper, Discovery News, 11 November 2005](#)

[Julie McCaffrey, EXCLUSIVE: JILL THE RIPPER; Mirror.co.uk, London, 20 May 2006](#)

THE KOSMINSKI CODE. 'Yes, the modern Catholic Church has problems. So, we get a conspiracy that sounds suspiciously like the truth behind the Jack the Ripper mythos!'

[Mel Neet, Da Vinci Code Review, BTCNews, USA, 22 May 2006.](#)

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS



EPIPHANY OF THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS (Hardcover, ISBN:1425934153, Paperback, ISBN: 1425934161) by Karen Trenouth, is a self-published book which purportedly 'details the reasons behind the Whitechapel Murders of 1888, how the murders occurred, who was responsible, and how this series of murders was linked to another infamous scandal that rocked all of England a year later. The identity of "Jack the Ripper" will be revealed as this previously untold story unfolds.' The blurb adds: 'What is the true story of the Whitechapel Murders? You have seen the films; you have read the various books on the subject. Now, 118 years later, is the time for the truth.' According to the book's preface, the truth seems to be somehow related to Alfred Pearson, a 27 year old moulder from Brierley Hill, Kingswinford, who on the evening of 8 October 1888 jumped at a young couple brandishing a trowel and yelling 'Jack the Ripper!!! Jack the Ripper!!!' at the top of his lungs.

DID THEY REALLY DO IT? FROM LIZZIE BORDEN TO THE 20TH HIJACKER (Paperback, 256 pages, Thunder's Mouth Press, ISBN: 1560257741, \$14.95), Fred Rosen.

JACK THE RIPPER (Paperback, 160 pages, Pocket Essentials, ISBN: 1904048692, £4.99), by Mark Whitehead and Miriam Rivett, is described as the Essential Guide to 'Jack the Ripper', contains an introductory essay and considers many of the Ripper's proposed identities, a summary of his crimes, victims and the ill-fated investigation, plus a guide to the Ripper's many fictional outings, from Hitchcock's *The Lodger* to Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's *From Hell*.



Dear Rip

Your Letters and Comments

CLICK TO EMAIL US

Ripperologist 66 (April 2006)

Email to Ripperologist, 13 May 2006

Dear Rip

In the Reviews section of *Ripperologist* 66 (April 2006), the reviewer of Robin Odell's book, *Ripperology: A Study of the World's First Serial Killer and a Literary Phenomenon*, notes that Odell omits a lot of privately published books and mentions my name in that context. I would like to point out that I did not self publish my book, *From Hell: the Jack the Ripper Mystery*. It was submitted in the usual way to a publisher who accepted it. This may seem like a minor point but I have posted in a rather negative way on the boards about the vanity press, and I wouldn't like anyone to think I was being hypocritical about the process.

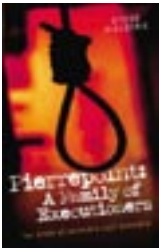
Bob Hinton

Sorry Bob, we stand corrected. That said, no criticism was intended of either Robin Odell or of authors who self-publish their work - on the contrary, the review emphasized that self-published works can often be excellent. We also wished to observe that Robin's strict criteria had resulted in the omission of some first-rate books such as yours. For our readers, Bob Hinton's book, From Hell: The Jack the Ripper Mystery, was published by Old Bakehouse Publications, a long-established firm based in Abertillery, South Wales. It's still available - go to www.oldbakehouseprint.co.uk. Rip.



WILF GREGG

On the Crimebeat



Pierrepoint: A Family of Executioners

Steve Fielding

Hardback, 306 pp.

Illus., John Blake

£17.99

[BUY NOW](#)

This book charts the careers of the three members of the Pierrepoint family, who arguably were the dominant figures over the last 60 years of capital punishment in the UK.

The first to take up the rope was Henry Albert Pierrepoint, known as Harry, who seemingly had always had the ambition to be an executioner. After applying and successfully completing the training he was placed on the official list in 1901. His first appointment was to assist James Billington at the execution of Marcel Faugeron at Newgate in November of that year. His third appointment was as number one, as the chief executioner was known, for the execution of wife murderer Richard Wigley in March 1902. As assistant, he participated in the executions of the baby farmers Amelia Sachs and Annie Walters, the crazed Edgar Edwards and the Stratton brothers, among others. As number one, his executions included Arthur Devereux, the poisoner Richard Brinkley and the Reuben Brothers, among many more. However, by 1910 Harry had taken to drink and was engaged in a fierce rivalry with the other notable executioner of the day, John Ellis. Prior to the execution of Frederick Foreman in July, 1910, the two executioners came to blows. Ellis made an official complaint to the Home Office and Harry Pierrepoint was struck off the official list.



Henry Pierrepoint

Before this, however, Harry had been joined on the official list of executioners by his elder brother, Tom. Time wise, Tom was the longer serving of the three. He first participated in an execution when he assisted Harry in hanging Harold Walters at Wakefield in April 1906 and continued until August 1946 when, as number one, he hanged John Caldwell in Glasgow. As assistant, his notable cases included the Reuben brothers and Dhingra, the assassin of Sir William Curzon-Wylie. As number one, his headline cases included Field and Gray, Patrick Mahon, Norman Thorne, Louisa Calvert, Chung Yi Miao, Ethel Major and Ruxton - to name but a few. Tom Pierrepoint was a taciturn and reticent man, who made few public comments. When Ellis attempted suicide in 1924, Tom's only public comment was 'He should have done it bloody years ago.' On another occasion he expressed strong views on the need for capital punishment.

In 1932, the third Pierrepoint was added to the official list of executioners. He was, of course, Harry's son and Tom's nephew, Albert Pierrepoint, who would go on to totally eclipse father and uncle, both numerically and in public recognition. Albert's first execution was assisting Tom in the execution of Patrick McDermott at Mountjoy Prison in December 1932. For some period after this they largely worked in tandem, Tom as number one and Albert as assistant, until October 1941,

when Albert carried out his own first execution, that of Antonio Mancini, for a Soho knife murder. For the next few years they shared executions. During the Second World War, they both added numerically to their totals as they were engaged by the American authorities to execute servicemen convicted of murder and rape. These executions took place at Shepton Mallet Prison and both Pierrepoints were critical of the American practice of reading the death warrant while the condemned man stood on the drop.

In 1946, Tom Pierrepont carried out his last execution in Barlinnie Prison, Glasgow. Seemingly, owing to age - he was then 76 - he had become too slow. He was not struck off the list, but merely received no more appointments. This left Albert free to cement his position as chief executioner.

After the end of the war, Albert made frequent trips to Germany to execute people convicted by war crimes tribunals. Many of these were multiple executions, including those convicted at the Belsen trial. On occasion, he executed as many as sixteen in a day, often with a break for lunch! Domestically, he despatched most of the infamous names over the next few years, including Heath, Margaret Allen, Haigh, Miles Gifford, Christie and Ruth Ellis, plus Evans, Bentley, Mattan and George Kelly, all of whom had their convictions quashed posthumously. Albert's last execution was at Walton Prison in July 1955. In January 1956, he suddenly resigned, apparently in a fit of pique at being offered a reduced fee when the condemned man received a last minute reprieve. Before this, he had changed his day-time job and become a licensee. His first hostelry was the quaintly named Help the Poor Struggler, which defies coincidence. In the pub, he was apparently the typical avuncular landlord joining in the singing with the customers. In 1950, he had executed one of his regular customers and singing partner.



Tom and Albert Pierrepont

In 1973, Albert's rather disappointing biography, *Executioner Pierrepont*, was published. He also began to express doubts about capital punishment; whether by belief or by an acceptance that it was coming to an end is not known. His behaviour in later life became rather eccentric. Albert Pierrepont died at the age of 87 in a nursing home.

Perhaps what comes out of this book is the awful ordinariness of these men who would leave home on a morning, travel to a prison, prepare the gallows, have a meal and retire for the night. On rising, they would have breakfast and then despatch the condemned in a matter of seconds before returning home to perhaps an enquiry from their nearest as to whether they had 'had a good day'.

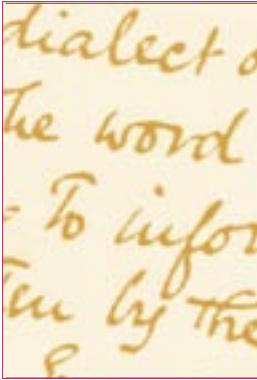
As the author of the excellent three-volume *Hangman's Record*, Steve Fielding is well qualified to cover the careers of these three family men who embraced the rope with an enthusiasm that many of us perhaps would regard as strange - to say the least.

This book covers a fascinating subject and is history, albeit fairly recent. Capital punishment has gone for ever and will not return, even though there are regular calls for its return whenever a particularly heinous murder breaks into the news. The state no longer has any need for good and faithful servants like the Pierreponts.

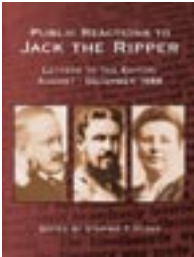
Strongly recommended.



Didn't know about that new book?
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Reviews



Public Reactions to Jack the Ripper. Letters to the Editor: August-December 1888

Edited by Stephen P Ryder
Madison, Wisconsin: Inkling Press, 2006
Paperback, 247 pp.
ISBN 0975912976
US \$19.99
[BUY NOW](#)

Letters to the editor in the London press during the murder series of 1888 probably will not help us catch the elusive murderer who has fascinated us for so many decades - but they do provide a fascinating sidelight on the society of the day. As with a number of other specialty books on the Whitechapel murders that have been appearing in recent years, including, for example, Evans and Skinner's *Jack the Ripper: Letters from Hell*, *Public Reactions* gives us a better rounded view of the effect of the crimes on people in London and beyond and provides interesting glimpses into human psychology. In these letters, correspondents criticise the police and their methods, cogitate about suspects and urge social reforms to eradicate the degraded conditions in London's East End where the murders occurred.

A number of the correspondents are well known: George Bernard Shaw, Sir Charles Warren, coroner Roderick Macdonald, Rev Samuel Barnett, George Lusk, Albert Bachert and acting Chief Rabbi Hermann Adler. Dr Adler, writing in *The Times* of 3 October 1888 was anxious to deny the oft-repeated anti-Semitic slur, mentioned by the newspaper's Vienna correspondent that, as Adler put it, 'in certain circumstances a Jew might be justified in slaying and mutilating a Christian woman' (pp.93-94).

Many of the writers are anonymous or call themselves such names as 'A Reader' - who, in the *Irish Times* of 12 October, recommends that persons who willingly make false confessions to the crimes and so mislead the police should be subjected to '[a] few lashes of the cat[o]nine tails' (p.166). Also included is an unsigned letter in reference to Dr Francis Tumblety from the *Washington Evening Star* of 21 November on the mysterious disappearance years earlier of the young American Isaac Golliday, an acquaintance of the Ripper suspect (the correspondent notes that Golliday's father 'had tried to break up the friendship between his son and Dr Tumblety'). This is a sidelight on the career of the American quack doctor that has been a particular interest of editor Stephen P Ryder. Indeed, not all the letters published in the book are from the major London newspapers, as Ryder's foreword implies. Another slight inaccuracy would be to say, as Ryder does, that the writers were 'in large part normal, everyday Londoners' which seems to indicate that all strata of society are included. More than likely the bulk of writers are of the middle or upper class and few are from members of the working class, probably represented mostly by the likes of Lusk or Bachert.

Of special interest is a letter from Rev Fred W P Jago in *The Times* of 3 October suggesting the possibility of tracking the killer by examination of the bloody fingerprint on one of the letters (evidently referring to the fingerprint on the Saucy Jack postcard) (pp.91-93). As Ryder notes in a footnote, fingerprint evidence would not be used officially in England until 1901, although Dr Henry Faulds had suggested its use in crime detection as early as 1880. The book is lightly footnoted and could probably do with more commentary than is given. Two indexes are provided, an alphabetical listing of correspondents and a breakdown by topic (eg, 'Detection Suggestions'). An appendix usefully reprints the 1 December *Pall Mall Gazette* article by 'One Who Thinks He Knows', attributed to Ripper suspect Robert D'Onston Stephenson, discussing the Goulston Street Graffito and the writer's theory that the murderer might be a French practitioner of black magic (pp.216-219). This article is criticized by 'A Frenchman', writing in the 6 December *Pall Mall Gazette*, who correctly points out that the writer's claim that the inscription said 'juives' would indicate the female for 'Jews.' The idea therefore, the Frenchman said, was 'utterly baseless and absurd... Perhaps "One Who Thinks He Knows" also thinks that the uneducated Frenchman speaks of femmes when he means hommes!' (pp.209-210).

The book is a direct offshoot of one of the major activities overseen by Ryder as owner of the *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* website: the careful transcription of news articles on the case. In an afterword, Ryder generously praises the late Adrian M Phipers for starting the *Casebook Press Project*. This project now accounts for a mind-boggling 4,000-plus articles on the Whitechapel murders culled from newspapers round the world - an invaluable resource for researchers. As Ryder notes, since Adrian Phipers's passing, the work has been carried on by *Ripperologist's* own indefatigable Chris Scott, among other stalwarts. The editor notes that it was Mr Phipers's enthusiasm for the newspaper project that ignited his own interest in the Victorian press and that led to this book.



Revelations of the True Ripper

Vanessa A Hayes

Morrison, North Carolina: Lulu, 2006

hardcover or downloadable ebook, 287pp,

\$20.40 printed, \$5.81 download

[BUY NOW](#)

I hope Vanessa Hayes doesn't expect that critics will go easy with her for seriously trying to make a case that Jack the Ripper was someone as internationally significant and respected as Dr Barnardo. One imagines that if Ms Hayes's book were backed with the marketing clout of *Portrait of a Killer* the reaction to such a suggestion from the Barnardo charity would make the roasting Patricia Cornwell received from art critics look like a high summer jamboree. This would be a pity, because the book itself is quite good and Ms Hayes's enthusiasm shines through like a beacon in the night, but such a controversial theory demanded more solid sourcing than might otherwise be considered warranted and a lot more research than seems to have been done. Ms Hayes needed to show that Dr Barnardo wasn't elsewhere when the murders were committed or, at the very least, she needed to address his whereabouts in some detail, and because the charity event he attended and his arrest by the City Police on the night of the double event potentially provide him with a cast-iron alibi, she definitely needed to source the story and provide as many details as possible. And I don't know whether or not Dr Barnardo had a 'pathological hatred of prostitutes', but Ms Hayes doesn't present any real evidence that he did, and before I accept a claim like that I really want chapter and verse with bells on.

This book is a bit of a throwback to the old days of Ripperology when the theorist picked on some moderately plausible person as a suspect and structured a case against them. This isn't exactly what Vanessa Hayes has done because her suspect emerged from her researches and she then built a case of circumstantial evidence against him. The trouble is that both methods can, with varying degrees of success, produce a case against almost anyone. This said, Ms Hayes presents a good circumstantial case against Dr Thomas Barnardo: he had medical training, he could move freely among the police and the prostitutes without arousing suspicion, he knew the East End well enough to make his escape through the warren of courts and alleys, he had close contacts with policemen like Robert Anderson and could have known what precautions the police were taking to capture the killer, and a time spent in the United States could have made him familiar with Americanisms such as 'Boss'. As pointed out earlier, Hayes also argues that Barnardo had a 'pathological hatred of prostitutes' and a belief that any evil was acceptable if it achieved a greater good (that the lives of a few drab prostitutes could be sacrificed if it brought about social reforms that would save thousands of young lives). Hayes further argues that Dr Barnardo 'thought that the battle against prostitution was a war against evil itself. He saw the Unfortunates as the embodiment of evil.'

The trouble is that whilst all this sounds tolerably persuasive, the same reasoning could also be applied to hundreds and perhaps thousands of other people, every one of them seeing prostitution as a social evil, and many of them having a good working knowledge of the East End. Many would have had medical training - if, indeed, medical training is a prerequisite of being Jack the Ripper - and it's questionable whether Dr Barnardo could have walked the streets without arousing suspicion, there being some evidence that doctors were carefully watched by the police; in his book *A Doctor in the Nineties* Dr Halsted observed: 'I became aware that I was being shadowed by the plain clothes men... a whole year after the search was tenaciously kept up. I must be the only man living to have been suspected of being Jack the Ripper.' So it is unlikely that Dr Barnardo could have walked freely through the murder district without arousing suspicion, especially if he was seen near the murder scenes. Indeed, legend has it that he was picked up and questioned, which if true means that he did arouse suspicions.

Ms Hayes does not support her case that Dr Barnardo had a 'pathological hatred of prostitutes' or that he saw prostitutes as 'the embodiment of evil', and whilst I can't claim to know much about Dr Barnardo, my understanding is that if there was one person who didn't pathologically hate prostitutes it was Dr Barnardo, whose critics, as Ms Hayes actually points out, tried to suggest that he liked prostitutes rather more than he should have done, claiming that he was to be seen arm in arm with them and entering their homes. And whilst prostitutes were commonly seen as an embodiment of evil, Dr Barnardo apparently recognised prostitution as the economic and social exploitation of women.

Vanessa Hayes begins her book with an account of PC Spicer's story about arresting the man who was with a prostitute named Rosie down Heneage Court on the night of the Double Event. At the Commercial Street police station the man was cursorily examined and released once it was established that he was a doctor practicing in Brixton. Spicer says he was chastised by his superiors because of this, which has always seemed a bit odd to researchers, and Vanessa Hayes asks, 'What was it about this doctor that put him beyond the law?' Of course, she thinks this Brixton doctor was really Dr Barnardo, who, she tells us, is also known to have been arrested on the night of the double event. The trouble here is that Ms. Hayes says that both Dr Barnardo and the Brixton doctor were taken to Lime Street police station. I don't know where Dr Barnardo was taken, but the Brixton doctor was taken to Commercial Street police station. Besides, Lime Street was a City police station so Spicer, a Met PC, wouldn't have taken him there anyway. But it is also possible that the incident didn't happen on the night of the double event at all, but in 1889, and that the Brixton doctor and Rosie were the two people Spicer interfered with when drunk that led to his dismissal from the force. Spicer's drunkenness would account for the cursory examination of the suspect at the police station and the hostility Spicer says he was shown by his superiors.

Overall, Vanessa Hayes book carries you along, her enthusiasm is infectious and her writing style, a little gushing at times, is personal and has a charm that overcomes the book's deficiencies.

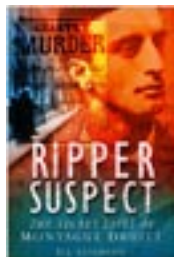
Jack the Ripper Unmasked

37pp

Available on eBay as a limited offer PDF file delivered by email or on CD.

(As of writing this item is no longer listed)

Badly written and with a marginal grasp of its material, this offering has all the overall appearance of having being thrown together with less thought than the worst pieces of wit and wisdom found on the wall of a lavatory cubicle. Take this description of George Hutchinson, for example: 'He was spotted near four of the murder sites just before the murders, he lived in white chapel, and most people new him especially the prostitutes. He only came forward to the police after eight witnesses said he was there why did he wait so long...' Nothing more needs to be said, really.



Ripper Suspect: The Secret Lives of Montague Druitt

D J Leighton

Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2006

(Original Publication: London: Hydrangea Publishing, 2005.)

H/back, 208pp, illus; index; bibliog.

ISBN: 0750943297, £18.99

[BUY NOW](#)

Originally self-published last year and reviewed in issue 57 of *Ripperologist*, D J Leighton's book has been picked up by Sutton, the second time, I think, that a professional publisher has seen the merit in a self-published book, the other time being Ivor Edward's *Jack the Ripper Black Magic Rituals*. Apart from some tidying up of the spelling and grammar, however, the book remains the same as the volume published in 2005 and is subject to the same criticisms.

The paucity of information about Druitt makes him step from the pages as a pretty one-dimensional character, and Leighton could have fleshed him out with some information about the routine at Mr Valentine's school (or one like it) and life in his chambers. But Leighton's thoroughly engaging writing style adds needed colour and sweeps the reader along. Whilst there's little insight into his home life, school and university days, and his legal and teaching career, and a strong suggestion that Druitt could have mixed with or otherwise been associated with a homosexual elite, when it comes to Druitt's cricketering career, Leighton comes alive and produces an interesting and entertaining potpourri of late 19th-century cricketering characters and the sort of milieu in which Druitt would have mixed.

Unfortunately Leighton has not taken the opportunity one assumes Sutton would have afforded him to modify his unquestioning acceptance of the royal conspiracy theory as set out by Joseph Sickert and Melvyn Fairclough in *The Ripper and the Royals*.

Ripperana. The True Crime Mystery Magazine

Editor: Nick Warren

16 Copperfield Way, Pinner, HA5 5RY, UK

nwarren@ripperana.fsnet.co.uk

No.56, April 2006, 28pp,

UK £8, Overseas £15, €25 or USA \$25, for one year (four issues).

Long gone are the halcyon days of *Ripperana*, when it ruled, alone and unchallenged, the Ripper magazine world. But, while other magazines have emerged, some overtaking and outdistancing *Ripperana*, some vanishing or changing hands, editors, formats or orientations, *Ripperana* can be relied upon to hit regularly your post-box, mailbox, in tray - or whatever they call the place where you receive your correspondence in your neck of the woods - basically unchanged and unmoved, still under the editorship of its founder, Nicholas Warren, still wrapped in white, unadorned covers and still making few concessions to the shifting winds of Ripperology. Whether this is a good or a bad thing depends on your preferences. The present issue of *Ripperana* was the subject of a debate on the *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* Message Boards where quite a few posters admitted to a soft spot for the dean of Ripper publications. Well, we'd still like to see a number of changes in *Ripperana*, and will keep saying so, but for the moment we will limit ourselves to recalling that its next issue, July 2006, will signal the beginning of its 15th year. For what it started and for what it still accomplishes, we wish *Ripperana* well.

The current issue, No. 56, begins with an editorial dealing with some old crimes which have recently found their way back into the headlines: the Moors Murders and the Yorkshire Ripper case. What has made the first news again is a letter sent by convicted murderer Ian Brady to the mother of one of his victims and several TV semi-documentaries scheduled to mark the 40th anniversary of his and his accomplice Myra Hindley's trial. And while the Yorkshire Ripper, Peter Sutcliffe, is not himself in the news, his misguided impersonator, Wearside Jack, is. The first feature article, by Derek Osborne, claims that Inspector Abberline discontinued the investigation of the carrot-moustached man seen with Mary Kelly on the evening of her murder in favour of the foreign-looking man sighted by George Hutchinson. There seems to be little evidence that the first line of inquiry was indeed abandoned or that the first suspect was, as Osborne appears to believe, Jack the Ripper. Charlie Clark posits that, far from being deserted at night, the streets of Whitechapel where the Ripper stalked his victims were teeming with people. Allan Jones reports some inconclusive genealogical research and Pope-de Locksley compares the various estimates of the number of Ripper victims.

Last, but by no means least, comes Stephen Ryan's compelling piece on Dr Charles A Hebbert and Mary Kelly's heart. Ryan's information on Dr Hebbert, who reportedly was present at Kelly's medical examinations and took down Dr Thomas Bond's notes

at his dictation, will be new to many students of the case, but not to all. Furthermore, Ryan weakens his case by protesting a tad too much that his contributions, in the form of a news clipping once sent to *Ripperana* and articles published in *The Criminologist* in 1997 and 1998 and recently in *The New Criminologist*, have not been accorded the recognition they deserve. We'd be delighted to learn more about Ryan's research and conclusions, but we'd prefer them to be properly described, developed and explained, supported by evidence and uncontaminated by dogmatism and what might appear to be unnecessary bitterness. May we hope for another attempt on his part? Rounding up the current issue of *Ripperana* are news notes, letters and a page and a half of reviews. We note that the latest four or five issues of *Ripperologist* deserve no comment but for the briefest mention of their new format - erroneously reported as internet only.



The Journal of the Whitechapel Society

Issue 7, April 2006

Edited by Adrian Morris

Subscriptions: 179 Eswyn Road, London SW17 8TN

£6.00 for six issues

[BUY NOW](#)

Weighing in at 28 pages, the *Journal* is the club magazine of the Whitechapel Society, a largely social group who meet six times a year in the East End, and is the newest and slimmest magazine to join the Ripper fold. At a cost of £1.00 an issue (the cover price is £3.00 to non-members/subscribers) one can't really complain if the articles are a little lightweight. The cover article is also the most heavyweight and comes from the prolific Joe Chetcuti, who looks at Dr Tumblety as a Fenian agent. Bernard Brown kicks off with an article about the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway, known as the LB&SCR or Brighton Line, which was created on 27th July 1846 when the London & Brighton Railway amalgamated with the London & Croydon Railway. Alan Hunt has a page about the disastrous battle of Spion Kop, for which Sir Charles Warren was rather unfairly blamed, and Des McKenna begins a series called 'All Roads Lead to Whitechapel' in which he makes nationwide geographic associations with people involved in one way or another with the Ripper case, but the connection seemed a long time a'comin. There's an interview with Professor Clive Emsley, a report of Stuart Sullivan's talk at the club meeting, and some bits and bobs of news which include a report of how the Legoland theme park was going to reconstruct the Ripper murder sites. We assume this story was an April fool gag - and a good one too; we particularly liked the reconstruction being completed just in time for the park to close for the winter - but it's not clear whether the joke was by or on *Whitechapel Journal*.

Jack - The Musical: The Ripper Pursued

Book by Christopher T George and Erik Sitbon

Lyrics by Christopher T George

Music by Erik Sitbon

Additional arrangements by Lauren Konen and Bryan Long

Directed by Elizabeth Peterson-Vita

Musical Director Lauren Konen

A Production of Actors Scene Unseen

Duke Power Theatre, Charlotte, NC

13-14 May 2006

I had the privilege of being present for the North American debut of *Jack - The Musical: The Ripper Pursued*, by the *Rip's* North American editor Chris George and French composer Erik Sitbon. The show is a unique fictional adaptation of the story of Jack the Ripper. This version inverts the Ripper myth and tells the story from the psychotic inside out. It is a dark secret exposed and explored. We follow the evolution of the monster and experience first hand the tormented soul ablaze as newspaperman Tom Dolan (Bryan Long) commits the murders to further his career but then gets caught up in the powerful lure of murder lust.

Sitbon's music was wondrous, constantly in motion between emotions, calming to startling, mournful to uplifting, fully matching the drama of the story. The show was almost more of an opera than a traditional musical. The romance was real and heartening; the drama was moving and tearful; the terror was gut-wrenching and chilling.

Some of the actors did more than merely perform. Jason Barney, as Dolan's fellow newsman Alfred Corner, shone with an inner verve that truly brought his characters to life in delightful, refreshing, scene-stealing ways. Of course, the dramatic action swirled and climbed throughout, rising to a hurricane-force crescendo. Center of the storm was lead actor Bryan Long as Dolan aka Jack the Ripper. Physically and psychologically Long inhabited his character like few actors ever do. He commanded the stage and gave an outstanding and truly haunting performance. It is very rare, in my experience, to move an audience to audible gasps and sobbing outbursts. Mr Long did so. He poured out his soul on that stage. A bravura performance. The applause was much deserved.

Do yourself a favour. Go see *Jack - The Musical*. Or listen to it on CD, [available from the producers](#). Better yet, request the musical come to your own home town and experience the power of it live. I promise you this is one play you do not want to miss. This performance reaches down deep inside, like a knife plunging soul-deep. Just as Jack the Ripper haunts humanity, this play haunts your subconsciousness.

Thomas Fortenberry, thomasfortenberry.net



Missions spéciales

Boris Akunine

Paris: Éditions 10/18, Collection : Grands détectives, 2003

Softback, 475 pages, ISBN : 2264036796, €7.80

[BUY NOW](#)

Early in *Le Décorateur* (The Decorator), the second of the two novellas in *Missions spéciales*, Erast Petrovich Fandorin, counsellor for special assignments in the staff of the Governor-General of Moscow, pauses dramatically before declaring: 'I fear Moscow has become the refuge of Jack the Ripper'. Fandorin, the hero of a series of mystery thrillers by Boris Akunin, is of course right. Several prostitutes have been murdered and horribly mutilated in Moscow and their killer is none other than Jack the Ripper. Not a copycat, not a red herring, not a Tsarist conspiracy, but the real Ripper, who is pursuing his life avocation in Russia's great city. Akunin is scrupulously accurate as to historical references. The victims imputed to the Ripper during his passage through London are not ten or twenty imaginary ones but the canonical five known to all students of the case, plus or minus a couple others, such as Rose Mylett, whose inclusion is made necessary by the demands of the plot. Contemporary theories as to the Ripper's identity are correctly described and his modus operandi is recalled with precision, down to his habit of taking away victims' organs - though small details are cleverly added, again to further the plot. *Le Décorateur*'s unusual accuracy would be reason enough to recommend the novella; but it also has a detective who practices martial arts, a memorable villain, a Japanese sidekick, a naive and endearing Watson-like assistant, a love interest, a convincing roster of suspects, a strong supporting cast, a little known locale, a plausible solution to the mystery and a highly satisfactory conclusion. And the first novella in the book, *Le Valet de Pique* (Jack of Spades) is not bad either; it pits Fandorin against an estimable adversary: a confidence man, a master of disguise, a witty opponent who may be likened to Raffles and, particularly, Frenchman Arsène Lupin. Be warned, though: *Le Valet de Pique* is comedy; *Le Décorateur*, tragedy. And you must read them in this order.

Boris Akunin is the pen name of Grigory Chkhartishvili, a philologist, critic, essayist, deputy editor of a literary magazine and translator of Japanese fiction born in Georgia, then part of the USSR, in 1956. In 1998 he signed his first detective story Boris Akunin - which he took from the word *akunin*, which means 'villain' in Japanese and, combined with B for Boris, gives (B)Akunin, ie Bakunin, the Anarchist author. In a very short time, Akunin has become one of the most widely read authors in Russia and has achieved best-seller status in many other countries as well. He has written nine Erast Fandorin novels and several in two other series. As of now, only four of his novels have been translated into English, though quite a few more are available in French or German. If you can read either language, rush to get the Fandorin-meets-the-Ripper book. Otherwise, publication of its English translation has been announced for February 2007 under the title *Jack of Spades* and *The Decorator*. It's worth the wait.



Lost

Gregory Maguire

New York: ReganBooks, 2002

Paperback, 340 pp. ISBN 0-06-098864-9

US \$14.95, Canada \$22.95

[BUY NOW](#)

When I heard that there was a Jack the Ripper component to this novel by the acclaimed writer of *Wicked*, itself made into a hit musical of the same name, I had great hopes of a fine fictional treatment of the Ripper story. Silly me. The book, although brightly written, is a bit of a hodge-podge that ultimately disappoints. The legend of Jack the Ripper is only one of a plethora of elements that the writer juggles in rather confusing fashion as Maguire's protagonist, Winifred Rudge, a bemused New England writer, goes to London to find her roots.

Lost is a rag-bag-type novel in which the writer crams in an endless stream of literary references drawn from - among other sources - *Alice in Wonderland*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Peter Pan*, *Dracula* and *Dante's Inferno*. Along with these elements Maguire mixes in cryptic puzzles. Could the rumor be true that her great-great-grandfather, Ozias Rudge, was the inspiration for Charles Dickens' Ebenezer Scrooge? The name of Winnie's forbear is typical of the literary name-dropping in the novel. The Christian name 'Ozias' conjures up Shelley's poem *Ozymandias* and the surname 'Rudge' of course references Dickens's *Barnaby Rudge*.

A ghost is making a racket in the chimney of her ancestral home, Rudge House, on Hampstead Hill. She wonders if it is the ghost of g-g-grandfather, the ghost of Scrooge, or a female victim of Jack the Ripper walled up in the chimney. But then when she finds the Ripper never lived in Hampstead, her attention wanders off elsewhere. I guess Maguire had not heard of Patricia Cornwell's Sickert-as-Jack theory and the painter's studio in that north London burb. In fact, of course, Ms Cornwell's book came out about the same time as Maguire's *Lost*. Pity that. Using Sickert as a character might have helped bring focus to this shambolic novel. Not recommended.



Too Many Mothers: A Memoir of an East End Childhood

Roberta Taylor

London: Atlantic Books, 2006

Softcover, 245pp, ISBN: 183252301X, £7.99

[BUY NOW](#)

Back then, when men worked close to home and came back for their lunch and called it dinner, when relatives lived in the same street or within a couple of streets, and when all the kids knew each other and turned up at one of their aunties for their tea, and when there wasn't any money and when overcrowded, cramped, conditions, no privacy, and grinding poverty was a shared experience, the life lived by Roberta Taylor wasn't uncommon or restricted to the East End. It was common to the back-to-backs across Britain. At first glance, then, this record of East End life in the 50s by Roberta Taylor, the actress best known for her roles of Irene Raymond in *East Enders* and the hard drinking chain smoking Inspector Gina Gold in *The Bill*, looks like one of those two-a-penny rags to riches celeb bios milking the legendary hardship of East End life.

There's a bit of that in *Too Many Mothers*, now available in paperback, but the book manages to lift itself above that to recall with both joy and sadness, and a lot of personal detail, a family where love was in abundance, if money wasn't, and where scandal was never far away and pretty much always involved Granny Roberts, whether it was paying of a tallyman with sexual favours or being sent to Holloway. The book is funny - Aunt Vi married three times, each husband an Indian, who were nicknamed Raj, Taj and Bobtail (for those not old enough to know, there was a TV programme for little children called *Rag, Tag and Bobtail*, actually a phrase with quite ancient origins). Writing of Aunt Flo, who suffered a head injury as a child and was 'eccentric' thereafter, Taylor writes, 'With Granny gone, Flo felt, well, not much really. She always looked as if she was waiting for a bus.' The book is also sad, in parts enough to make you cry.



Salaam Brick Lane: A Year in the New East End

Tarquin Hall

London: John Murray, 2006

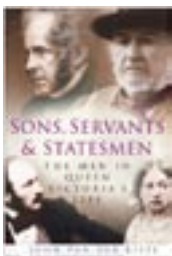
Softcover, 270pp, ISBN: 0719565561, £7.99

[BUY NOW](#)

You've gotta read this.

Tarquin Hall spent ten years working as a journalist abroad and returned to England to find himself priced out of the housing market. He was forced to rent a sordid little room in Brick Lane from a Mr Ali. On the face of it, Tarquin Hall, a public schoolboy, was an unlikely person to find acceptance in Brick Lane, apart, maybe, as someone to punch, but instead of adopting a reserved and superior attitude, he lived among and as one of his neighbours and suffered just as those around him. In so doing he heard some fantastic stories that made his worries seem small and unimportant and which he relates unjudgementally in this wonderful book. You'll love Mr Ali, a wonderful comic character, a sort of Asian Rigsby, and Hall's account of the many asylum-seekers he meets, who suffer conditions so appalling that it's difficult to believe that they exist in Britain, will never let you look at illegal immigrants in the same way again.

A wonderful book. A fantastic read. Buy it. Now!



Sons, Servants and Statesmen: The Men in Queen Victoria's Life

John Van Der Kiste

Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2006

Hardback, 246pp, illus.; notes; bibliog.; index

ISBN: 0750937882

£20

[BUY NOW](#)

Historians and writers have probed and examined Queen Victoria's life from almost every direction and yet she remains sufficiently enigmatic to sustain several hundred biographies and related titles. John Van Der Kiste has contributed a fair few to the pile - we've reviewed *Dearest Vicky*, *Darling Fritz* (Sutton, 2002) and *Edward VII's Children* (Sutton, 2004). It is always a pleasure to read him, his style being relaxed and his narrative easy to follow. This latest addition takes a look at the various men in Queen Victoria's life. She was lucky with her men, having some outstanding mentors and advisors, not the least of whom were Leopold I of Belgium and her first prime minister, Lord Melbourne, but also unlucky in that so many of them died young - her father died when she was just eight months old, her husband, Albert, whom she described as 'my father, my protector, my guide and adviser in all and everything', died in 1861, and her uncle, Leopold I of Belgium (the father of sometime Ripper suspect Leopold II) died a few years later. She also enjoyed some questioned relationships with her servants, most notable, of

course, John Brown and the arrogant Munshi. Her like of Disraeli and dislike of Gladstone - 'he speaks to me as if I were a public meeting' - is well known. An enjoyable read.



Jack of Jumps

David Seabrook

London: Granta, 2006

Hardcover, 367pp, illus; bibliog.

ISBN: 1862077703, £18.99

[BUY NOW](#)

Between 1959 and 1965 eight prostitutes were found naked and dead in West London (some sources credit six murders in 1964-5) and the uncaught killer was nicknamed 'Jack the Stripper'. The web that reaches out from these crimes covers the sex-trade underbelly of the Swinging Sixties, the notorious Profumo Affair - two victims, Hannah Tailford and Frances Brown, being said to have been peripherally connected to the 1963 scandal - the suicide - or was it murder? - of boxer and entertainer Freddie Mills, the suggestion that the murderer was Tommy Butler, the senior policeman who headed the Great Train Robbery investigation, the police corruption scandal surrounding West End coppers and the pornography trade, and the career of John du Rose, who famously announced on 2 April 1970 that 'Jack the Stripper' was a suspect who committed suicide as the police net closed in.

Granta have been pushing David Seabrook's book, probably the first look at the Jack the Stripper murders since the NEL paperback *Found Naked and Dead* by Brian McConnell back in 1975. It's a great read, albeit Seabrook has a rather pretentious style, punctuating his narrative with personal asides and seeming irrelevancies - at one point engrossingly discussing the Freddie Mills murder case, then suddenly interspersing lines from 'The Missing Page', one of the classic episodes of *Hancock's Half Hour*. Somehow it all weakens the power of the narrative, like one of those flimsy Channel 4 documentaries that try to hide the lack of substance behind arty camera work.

Not that Seabrook lacks substance, but often he goes nowhere. For example, John du Rose, nicknamed 'Four Day Johnny' because he had a reputation for solving cases in four days, steps from the pages of the book as 'a bullshitter', as one ex-policeman called him. One of the policemen outspokenly contemptuous of du Rose, Detective Superintendent Baldock, is quoted as saying that 'John du Rose should never have been called in. He hindered more than he helped.' But just as one thinks one's about to get some inside information, Seabrook tells one that Baldock is enjoying his retirement and doesn't want to get involved. Deflation. Then, bewilderingly, Seabrook goes off on one of his asides before suddenly revealing the for-so-long unrevealed name of the man who du Rose thought was Jack the Stripper.

I don't know whether the man's wife is still alive, whether she is and she refused to speak to Seabrook, or whether Seabrook couldn't or simply didn't bother to contact her, but his assessment of the man's suicide note, complete with a couple of questions about the man's brother, seems to be guesswork, supposition. Not that it much matters, I suppose, because we're assured that there was absolutely no evidence against him and that he was 'exploited for gain and glory' by John du Rose, who 'by any other name would stink as sweet'.

Baldock did have a suspect and this is the man Seabrook seems to settle with. He was a policeman and his career details are given, although no name - it took less than thirty seconds to find out though. Apparently he's still alive. His motive? Bizarre though it may seem, to cause trouble and work for his colleagues.

As for Freddie Mills, Seabrook concludes that he was murdered and that there was a police cover-up that extended as far as Professor Keith Simpson producing a bogus autopsy report. Was he Jack the Stripper? No. Was he the unnamed victim of the Krays? No. So the mystery remains.

The book is slightly strange: the illustrations aren't captioned - maybe they don't need captions - and there's no index, which is a royal pain when you want to check something Seabrook had said earlier, and, as said, the writing style is a bit odd. Odd, but seductive. As you get into the book it's like listening to someone talk in a bar, giving you the facts but adding a few personal asides as he reaches to scoop some peanuts from a bowl on the bar or sip his Theakstons. It's engaging. The book is also unsatisfying. Freddie Mills was murdered and probably not by the Krays and there was a cover-up. And?

Overall, once you've got into the style, *Jack of Jumps* is unputdownable. It doesn't answer a lot of questions - Freddy Mills's death remains a mystery, the alleged cover-up is largely unexplained and the case against the unnamed copper isn't really any stronger than it was when Baldock advanced it back in the 60s. But the book just grabs you and holds you and gives you a lot to think about.

[Click here to hear an interview with David Seabrook.](#)

Foul Deeds and Suspicious Deaths in London's West End

Geoffrey Howse

Bansley, South Yorkshire: Wharncliffe Books, 2006

Softcover, 192pp, ISBN: 1845630017

£10.99

[BUY NOW](#)

We've all heard about Diddles, the kitten belonging to Elizabeth Prater which awoke her in time to hear Kelly or someone cry 'Murder' and which might have saved Kelly's life or maybe helped catch Jack the Ripper had Prater investigated, but a cat named Topay actually did save a life. It was the life of its mistress, Isabella Amey, whose estranged husband visited her and brutally attacked her. Whilst attempting to throttle the life out of her, he was suddenly attacked by Topay, Isabella's favourite cat, which

leapt upon George Amey, sank its claws into his eyes and its teeth into his cheek, and fiercely resisted his every attempt to remove it. He had to beg his wife to take the cat away, which she did (I imagine more from fear that the cat would be hurt) and her husband fled.

This is just one small story from the fascinating selection of tales with which Geoffrey Howse opens this companion volume to his earlier *Foul Deeds and Suspicious Death's in London's East End*. These stretch from the first known hanging at Tyburn in 1236 through to the murder of WPC Yvonne Fletcher in St James's Square in 1984. There then follow thirteen chapters reciting individual cases, starting with the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 and concluding with the Charing Cross trunk murder in 1927. Only three of the cases are 20th century and none are 21st century.

These slim softcover volumes make excellent reading, but at nearly £11.00 they are on the expensive side.



Kidnapping Ronnie: The Inside Story of the most Spectacular Capers in British Criminal Folklore

Patrick King and Tudor Gates

London: Allison and Busby, 2006

Hardback, 262pp, illus.

ISBN: 0749082976, £16.99

[BUY NOW](#)

Ronnie Biggs was a minor player in the Great Train Robbery, but was catapulted into enduring notoriety when he escaped from prison on 8 July 1965 and fled to Brazil. There was no extradition agreement with Britain, so Biggs was able to live there openly, a minor celebrity and something of a thorn in the side of the British establishment.

In 1981 a group of ex-soldiers attempted to abduct Biggs and return him to Britain in a caper that was possibly bankrolled by the British security services. The escapade was a disaster, but the story behind it makes fascinating reading and in this book the tale is told from the inside by Patrick King who organised the adventure.

See No Evil: The Moors Murders

ITV1, 14 - 15 May 2006

The Moors Murders have been the ultimate taboo for dramatists. Forty years after the trial of Ian Brady and Myra Hindley, ITV finally grasped the nettle with the production of *See No Evil*, which was made with the full co-operation of the victims' families.



Joanne Froggatt as Maureen Hindley

But while Maxine Peake and Sean Harris were disturbingly good as Hindley and Brady, it's doubtful how much *See No Evil* adds to our understanding of events. The unusual thing about this drama was that they were never seen alone together, so we were forced to guess at the true nature of their relationship.

The approach was resolutely unsensational; not until midway through an intense three hours was any violence shown, with the killing of Edward Evans. The production did not feature a single scene involving their victims, or the murders that made their killers so notorious. However, depicting the murder of Evans was necessary as it was to prove their downfall. Brady and Hindley had already killed four children - Lesley Ann Downey, John Kilbride, Keith Bennett and Pauline Read. They would probably have continued their spree had they not invited Maureen Hindley's husband, David Smith, to witness Brady savagely kill Evans with an axe. "Why would they plan a murder and get you to watch?" the police demanded of Smith, who Brady had tried to recruit as an accomplice. "I don't know," he sobbed. It's a question that was never really answered. Like other serial killers, Brady's ego seemed to need the gratification of recognition.

Neil McKay's script was as much about Hindley's sister Maureen (played brilliantly by Joanne Froggatt) and her husband Dave (Michael McNulty) and the consequences they suffered, despite having turned Hindley and Brady in. Maureen Hindley was disowned by her mother; Smith was branded "the third Moors Murderer" and was attacked several times. When Smith was jailed after one fight, a depressed Maureen put her children into care. Having lost, at various points of her life, a baby, her mother, her sister, her children and her husband, eventually Maureen lost her life, aged 34, to a brain haemorrhage.

See No Evil seemed to portray the point when the 1960s lost their innocence - when evil was not only defined, but identified as something that could be in any ordinary British street.

Beautifully photographed, atmospheric, and superbly well-acted, *See No Evil* was about two love affairs; one stricken with tragedy, the other a terrible pact responsible for creating it.

[To view video interviews with Dave and Maureen Smith, click here.](#)



Sean Harris as Brady and Maxine Peake as Hindley

The Ripper Hoaxer: Wearside Jack

Channel 4, 9 May 2006

As is the norm these days when a major news story breaks, it's not long before a documentary appears on television. With BBC2 airing police interview tapes in a hastily-put together programme days after the sentencing of Wearside Jack, Channel 4 might be accused of having missed the boat on this particular subject.

However, the programme makers were attempting to piece together the little-known life story of the Ripper Hoaxer, John Humble. They painstakingly took us through the investigation using archive footage, reconstructions and interviews with police officers and others involved.

On his arrest, it was hard to believe that an unemployed alcoholic living in drunken squalor in a Sunderland housing estate was responsible for one of the greatest criminal hoaxes Britain has ever seen. But Humble's phone calls and letters claiming to be the Yorkshire Ripper led police in the wrong direction, leaving real murderer Peter Sutcliffe free to continue his killing spree.

Despite the programme advancing the theory that Humble pretended to be the killer to 'feel important', his true motive is still a mystery. He told police 'I don't know why I done it. I must have been daft.'

Humble was obsessed with the Yorkshire Ripper's murders. Armed with cuttings and a grudge against police after serving a prison sentence for assaulting a police officer, he fooled the investigation with letters and tapes into thinking the Ripper came from Wearside. Reconstructions showed a young man in his early 20s, poring over TV newsflashes and newspaper reports. While writing his letters, Humble drew heavily from the Jack the Ripper letters of 1888, admitting he used a book on the Ripper from his local library. The reconstruction showed him using Stewart Evans and Keith Skinner's 2001 *Letters From Hell*; this was presumably to enable the actor to display the original letters, rather than an extraordinary mistake on the part of the programme makers!

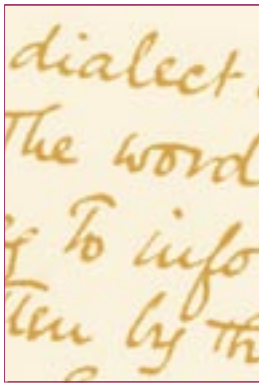
Once Sutcliffe had claimed his 13th victim Humble became guilty and panicked; he contacted the police to reveal the hoax via an anonymous phone call. Unfortunately it was one of many calls they were receiving and wasn't taken seriously. Humble tried to commit suicide by throwing himself off Wearmouth Bridge, but a passing boat broke his 100ft fall and he was fished out of the water by a police launch. He was taken to a police station in Sunderland but said nothing about being the hoaxer and was sent home.

Humble sent no more letters or tapes, but the damage had been done. The police were convinced they were looking for a killer with a Geordie accent, allowing Peter Sutcliffe to strike three more times.

Only a technological breakthrough 25 years later cracked the identity of Wearside Jack. Reopening the file on the hoaxer, the police obtained DNA from an envelope which matched Humble's DNA profile which had been placed on file at the time of his assault arrest.

Compared to the BBC's documentary aired in March, this was a disappointing effort. Perhaps the mix of footage, interviews and reconstructions used was overdone; a dramatised version along the lines of *See No Evil* could tell Humble's story in a much simpler fashion.

The most chilling moment of *The Ripper Hoaxer* came right at the end, in the form of the worded revelation that since being jailed Humble has written to Sutcliffe. Sutcliffe apparently replied, writing: 'You could've saved those three women, John... you have blood on your hands... we have much to talk about...'



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BOOKS

OLDIES BUT GOODIES

NON-FICTION

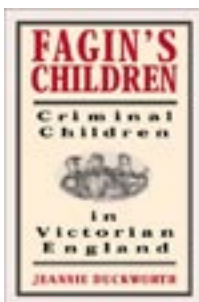


ANTI-SEMITISM AND BRITISH GOTHIC LITERATURE, (Hardcover, 256 pages, Palgrave Macmillan, ISBN: 0333929519, £47.50), by Carol Margaret Davison, examines Gothic Literature's engagement with the Jewish Question and British national identity over the course of a century, from Romanticism to Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), assesses the Count as a crypto-Jew and discusses immigration, syphilis, Jack the Ripper, corporate capitalism and the New Woman as *fin-de-siècle* concerns connected with the assimilation of the Jews.

BY EAR AND EYES: THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS, JACK THE RIPPER AND THE MURDER OF MARY JANE KELLY (Paperback, 320 pages, Longshot Publishing, ISBN: 0955024005, £12.99), by Karyo Magellan.

'If there's any justice at all in our little square-mile corner of historical study, Magellan's book will emerge as the most controversial, if not the most important, book of 2005.' *Ripperologist*.

EYE ON LONDON, (Paperback, 160 pages, Capita Publications, ISBN: 0954868102, £9.99) by Colin Kendell, who chose Jack the Ripper as his specialist subject when he appeared on the BBC programme *Mastermind* ten years ago, deals with famous London landmarks and characters, such as the Tower of London, the Albert Hall, Kensington Palace and - of course - Jack the Ripper.



FAGIN'S CHILDREN: CRIMINAL CHILDREN IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND (Hardcover, 258 pages, Hambledon Continuum, ISBN: 1852853913, £19.99) by Jeannie Duckworth, 'is an account of the reality of child crime in 19th-century England and the reaction of the authorities to it. It reveals the poverty and misery of many children's lives in the growing industrial cities of Britain and explores the changing attitudes of the authorities towards the problem.'

JACK THE RIPPER. MIT CD. PRE-INTERMEDIATE. STEP 4. 9./10. KLASSE (LERNMATERIALIEN), by Peter Foreman. Perfect (2006/01) Langensch. Schulb., Mchn. This book, which comes with a CD and internet exercises, is used as a Pre-Intermediate, Step 4.9. /10 teaching English, history and research skills. At the end of each chapter there are several sections of questions and before each

chapter the reader is asked to listen to the relevant section on the CD and answer questions. 'Overall, this was an impressive little book, good for students as well as teachers.' *Ripperologist*.

LONDON VON SCOTLAND YARD BIS JACK THE RIPPER (Hardback, 240 pp., Eulen Verlag, ISBN: 3891024495) by [Gerald Hagemann](#), is a German-language guide to 350 London crime sites frequented by the likes of Mary Pearcey, the Ripper and Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street.

MARY JANE KELLY: LA DERNIÈRE VICTIME (Paperback, 90 pages, L'Harmattan, Collection: Graveurs de mémoire, ISBN: 2747525244, €9,50) by [Didier Chauvet](#), is a French-language book described as the first biography of Mary Jane Kelly, the last victim of Jack the Ripper.

SEX AND DANGER IN BUENOS AIRES: PROSTITUTION, FAMILY, AND NATION IN ARGENTINA (Cloth, ix, 261 pp. Illus., maps, University of Nebraska Press, ISBN:0-8032-2139-8, \$55; Paperback, 260 pages, University of Nebraska Press, ISBN: 0803270488, \$24.95) by Donna J. Guy, 'is... a very readable analysis of mid-nineteenth- to mid-twentieth-century Argentina from the perspective of the underworld of prostitutes, bordellos, and international white slavery rings.' *Hispanic American Historical Review*. 'Guy's study is a salutary reminder of how deeply prostitution influences the politics of nationalism, of social control and of cultural identity, not just in Argentina but in Europe as well.' *Manchester Guardian*. The period examined in the book, roughly 1850 to 1950, covers the year 1876 and its aftermath, when Hungarian petty criminal Alois Szemeredy killed Caroline Metz in a Buenos Aires hotel, escaped, was captured, stood trial for murder, was acquitted for lack of evidence and went on to a career of crime which some have maintained included the crimes ascribed to Jack the Ripper

SLUMMING: SEXUAL AND SOCIAL POLITICS IN VICTORIAN LONDON (Cloth, 368 pages, illust. 28 halftones, 1 map, Princeton University Press, \$29.95 / £18.95, ISBN: 0-691-11592-3), by Seth Koven, is an account of prominent 19th century Britons who visited, lived, or worked in the London slums in order to see for themselves how the poor lived and acquire the first-hand experience essential for all who claimed to speak authoritatively about social problems. Slumming also allowed many to act on their irresistible 'attraction of repulsion' for the poor and permitted them, with society's approval, to get dirty and express their own 'dirty' desires for intimacy with slum dwellers and, sometimes, with one another.



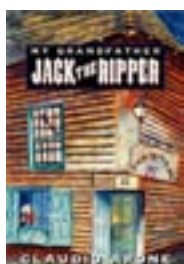
THE AMERICAN MURDERS OF JACK THE RIPPER: TANTALIZING EVIDENCE OF THE GRUESOME AMERICAN INTERLUDE OF THE PRIME RIPPER SUSPECT (Paperback, 240 pages, The Lyons Press, ISBN: 1592286755, illus., \$ 14.95) by R Michael Gordon, posits Severin Klosowski, aka George Chapman, as the Ripper and explores his responsibility for a number of murders committed in the United States.

THE FIRST FAGIN: THE TRUE STORY OF IKEY SOLOMON (Paperback, 192 pp. Illustrated, Acland Press, ISBN 09585576 2 4, \$A27.50) by Judith Sackville O'Donnell, is a biography of Ikey Solomon, the notorious Jewish receiver whose arrest and trial formed the basis for Oliver Twist's Fagin. Solomon, who was reputedly worth £30,000 at the height of his criminal success, escaped custody in broad daylight after his arrest and fled to New York. After learning of his wife's transportation, travelled to Van Diemen's Land, today Tasmania, where he was eventually arrested, returned to London for trial and transported once more to Van Diemen's Land, where he died in 1850. See also *Consider Yourself at Home: Ikey Solomon and the Real Artful Dodgers*, by Stephen Long, in this issue of *Ripperologist*.

WILL THE REAL MARY KELLY...? (Paperback, 154 pages, Christopher Scott, ISBN: 1905277059, £10.99) by Ripperologist's contributing editor Chris Scott, is a definitive take on the Miller's Court victim. 'Without question Will the Real Mary Kelly will become a "must-have" resource for any serious Ripperologist.' Stephen P. Ryder, Exec. Editor, *Casebook: Jack the Ripper*. 'Highly recommended.' Antonio Sironi. 'Best Book of 2005.' Karyo Magellan, *Ripperologist*.

FICTION

FAGIN THE JEW (Paperback, 128 pages, Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group Inc, ISBN: 0385510098, \$ 15.95) by Will Eisner, is a graphic novel retelling the story of Fagin, the villainous character in Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, seen in a sympathetic light.



MY GRANDFATHER JACK THE RIPPER (Hardcover, 208 pages, Herodias, ISBN: 1928746160) by Claudio Apone, was widely acclaimed in its original Italian as an atmospheric thriller aimed at a young adult readership. Young EastEnders Andy Dobson uses his psychic powers to travel to the past and witness Jack the Ripper's grisly murders as well as to detect a modern-day killer. Be warned that a stilted, uncredited translation is often unintentionally hilarious and militates against the author's attempts to build up suspense.

DAS PHANTOM VON LONDON. EINE GESCHICHTE UM JACK THE RIPPER - SCHAUSPIEL (Paperback, 97 pp., Monsenstein und Vannerdat, ISBN: 3865821502, €15) by Mathias Schwappach, is a German-language play based on the Whitechapel Murders.

DEATH AT WHITECHAPEL (Paperback, 288 pages, Berkley, ISBN: 0425173410, \$6,99), by [Robin Paige](#), the pseudonym of a husband-and-wife writing team, deals with a husband-and-wife detective team on the trail of Jack the Ripper. We might not be giving too much away by revealing that the authors have embraced the Masonic conspiracy theory that supposedly reached to the highest levels of the British government.

ERASTE FANDORINE, TOME 5: MISSIONS SPÉCIALES (Softback, 475 pages, 10/18, Collection : Grands détectives, ISBN : 2264036796, €7.80) by Boris Akounine (Boris Akunin) is a French translation of the fifth volume in the best-selling adventures of late nineteenth-century Russian detective Erast Fandorin. So far only three of them have been published in English. The present volume consists of two adventures: in the first one, Fandorin confronts a daring confidence man; in the second one, Jack the Ripper. Reviewed in this issue.

LE RETOUR DE JACK L'ÉVENTREUR (Paperback, 253 pages, Malko - Gérard de Villiers, Collection: *Les Dossiers de Scotland Yard*, ISBN : 2738601952, €5,20), by J B Livingstone, is a French-language thriller where Jack the Ripper returns 50 years after the Whitechapel murders.

STAR LIGHT, STAR BRIGHT (Paperback, Ballantine Books, ISBN: 0345285417) by Stanley Ellin, was translated into German as Jack the Ripper und Van Gogh and into French as Astrologie d'un meurtre (Astrology of a Murder). The Ripper connection is apparently limited to six pages where Ellin's protagonist, private investigator John Milano, establishes a link between Van Gogh and the Whitechapel Murders. The blurb for *Star* goes: "'I am in Hell. You have put me there and you must join me there.'" So read one of the three threatening notes left for Kalos Daskalos, once astrologer to the famous, now coven master to a house party consisting of the actors, producer, director and writer of a forthcoming film of which the self-styled prophet heartily disapproves.' Other blurbs follow. 'A cult leader receives threatening letters. Someone wants him dead! His patron's dog has been killed and the blood encrusted dagger stuck in the front door. Johnny Milano is hired to solve the mystery as the clock ticks away to the murders deadline.' 'Murder threat. Is incest now socially acceptable?' We're still wondering about the dead dog.

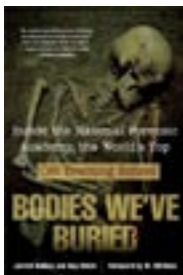
THE POTATO FACTORY (Paperback, 852 pages, Penguin Books Australia Ltd., ISBN: 0140273654, £7.99) by Bryce Courtenay, in the first of a trilogy of novels about early settlers in Australia. The main character of the novel is notorious fence and child gang leader Ikey Solomon, Dickens's inspiration for Fagin in *Oliver Twist*.

THE WHITECHAPEL CONSPIRACY, (Paperback, 352 pages, Ballantine Books, \$6.99, ISBN: 0449006565), by Anne Perry, is an intricate, fast-paced, atmospheric Victorian mystery cum political thriller featuring Inspector Thomas Pitt and his wife, Charlotte. Pitt annoys the powerful Inner Circle and, as a consequence, loses his command of the Bow Street station and must go undercover in the East End slums chasing anarchists. While in the East End, Pitt finds out about the Whitechapel conspiracy and uncovers Jack the Ripper's true identity.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED

NON-FICTION

BLACK BARTY: THE REAL PIRATE OF THE CARIBBEAN (Paperback, 320 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750943122, £8.99) by Aubrey Burl, is the story of Bartholomew Roberts, Black Bart, a tall, good-looking, teetotal and always well dressed pirate who is believed to have been the first to fly the skull and crossbones.

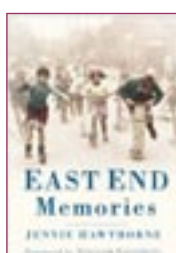
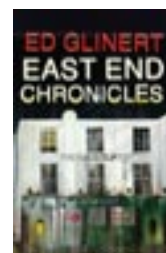


BODIES WE'VE BURIED: INSIDE THE NATIONAL FORENSIC ACADEMY, THE WORLD'S TOP CSI TRAINING SCHOOL, (Hardcover, 286 pages, Berkley Publishing Group, ISBN: 425207528) by Bill Bass (Foreword), *et al.* 'This wonderful book will take you on a fascinating journey through the real world of crime scene investigation and the real people in it... original, informative and delightfully readable.' Patricia Cornwell.

BRITISH OUTLAW TRADITIONS, (Hardcover, University of Wales Press, ISBN: 0708319858, £47) by Helen Phillips (Editor), offers research and critical interpretations about British outlaw traditions and the ways in which rogue-heroes have been imagined and presented in the Middle Ages and the centuries since in literature, film and other areas of popular culture.

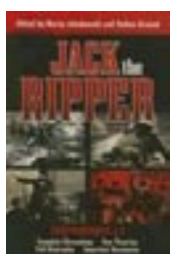
DEBUNKING HISTORY: 152 POPULAR MYTHS EXPLODED (Paperback, 348 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750941510, £8.99), by Ed Rayner and Ron Stapley, presents some of the most popular and enduring myths, legends, fables, folklore, misinformation and misconceptions from the American and French Revolutions to the two world wars and beyond. Arranged within well-defined geographical or thematic sections, and through a mix of short and long entries, each topic is clearly explained and the myth, error or controversy exposed.

EAST END CHRONICLES (Hardcover, 320 pages, Allen Lane/Penguin, ISBN: 0713997745, £20) by [Ed Glinert](#), covers the Silk Weavers of Spitalfields, Docks, Dockers and River Pirates, Murder and Mayhem on the Ratcliffe Highway, Mystics and Myth-Makers, The Blitz and Bombs, The Jewish Ghetto and others. Glinert discerns the influence of 'esoteric measurements' in the location of the Ripper's killings and the murder in 1974 of Alfie Cohen, the owner of a tobacco kiosk in Commercial Road, which were linked by traces of Masonic ritual. '...lively and informative... a fascinating rundown of the colourful history of London's East End, the infamous location of the Whitechapel murders of 1888. While only a small portion of the book, some 15 pages or so, are directly devoted to the Ripper case, scattered references to the crimes occur throughout, and the book overall provides enthralling and sometimes lurid reading. ...highly recommended for those who would like a grounding in East End lore.' *Ripperologist*.



EAST END MEMORIES (Hardcover, 352 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750939966, £14, 99) by Jennie Hawthorne, is an account of the author's early life in the heart of the East End told with passion and humour - even though her drunken father struggles from crisis to crisis and illness and crime are part of everyday life. Her captivating anecdotes, poignant and entertaining, are suffused by the sights, sounds and smells of the East End in the 1920s and 30s.

JACK THE RIPPER - ANATOMIE EINER LEGENDE (Hardcover, 256 Pages, Illus., Miltitzke Verlag, €18, ISBN: 3861897539) by Hendrik Püstow and Thomas Schachner, is the first original German-language book on the Ripper. 'To whom can *Jack the Ripper: Anatomie einer Legende* be recommended? To every German-speaking reader who wants to venture deeper into the case and needs a comprehensive source for his further studies, or to any connoisseur interested in Jack the Ripper books and resources from non-English-speaking countries.' Michaela Kořistová, *Ripperologist*.



JACK THE RIPPER COMPREHENSIVE A-Z (Hardcover, 499 pages, Castle Books, ISBN: 078581616X, £19.98) edited by [Maxim Jakubowski](#) and [Nathan Braund](#), is a re-issue of the *Mammoth Book of Jack the Ripper* first published in paperback in 1999.

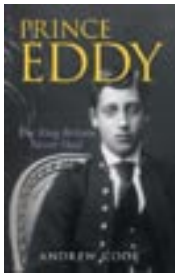
NEWGATE: LONDON'S PROTOTYPE OF HELL (Hardcover, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750938951, £20), by Stephen Halliday, relates the story of the largest and most notorious prison in London. Built during the twelfth century, Newgate held at various times Dick Turpin, Titus Oates, Jack Sheppard, Casanova, Daniel Defoe - and Defoe's fictional heroine Moll Flanders. 'Packed with information and very readable, this is a splendid retelling of our black history and is strongly recommended.' Wilf Gregg, *Crimebeat, Ripperologist*.

OXFORD: CRIME, DEATH AND DEBAUCHERY (Paperback, 192 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 075093820X, £16.99) by Giles Brindley, explores a side of Oxford's past populated with footpads and prostitutes, murderers and conmen, thieves and philanderers. Crime stories based on contemporary court records and newspaper accounts dating from 1750 to 1920 include infamous murders, hangings and dying confessions, grand and daring thefts, escapes from the county gaol, suicide in the name of love and great drinking deaths.

PLAYERS: THE MYSTERIOUS IDENTITY OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (Hardcover, 320 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750943742, £20), by Bertram Fields, questions William Shakespeare of Stratford's authorship of the plays and poems that bear his name. Fields proposes instead 'a magnificent collaboration between two men, a partnership protected for centuries by the greatest conspiracy in literary history.'

PORTRAIT OF A KILLER: JACK THE RIPPER - CASE CLOSED (Paperback, 400 pp., Penguin Group (USA), ISBN: 0425205479, \$15.), by Patricia Cornwell, is a revised edition of her controversial book reportedly including more evidence for her conclusion that the killer was the artist, Walter Sickert. A British edition will follow in September.





PRINCE EDDY: THE KING BRITAIN NEVER HAD (Hardcover, 272 pages, Tempus Publishing Ltd, ISBN: 0752434101, £20) by prolific author [Andrew Cook](#), is a revisionist account of Eddy's life. 'Overall Cook makes a valiant attempt to rehabilitate Prince Albert Edward Victor and deservedly so, and his book is highly readable, even when not discussing the Ripper and Cleveland Street.' *Ripperologist*.

PUBLIC REACTIONS TO JACK THE RIPPER: LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: AUGUST - DECEMBER 1888, Softcover, ca. 250pp. Illustrated with extensive annotations. Index, \$ 23.99), edited by Casebook: Jack the Ripper Founder and Administrator Stephen P Ryder, is a collection of more than 200 Letters to the Editor published in the Victorian press, presented chronologically, extensively annotated and indexed both by author and subject. Anyone interested can [email Stephen](#) to be placed on the list for a signed copy. All proceeds from the sale of the book will directly benefit the *Casebook Press Project*. Reviewed in this issue.



RIPPED FROM THE HEADLINES: BEING THE STORY OF JACK THE RIPPER AS REPORTED IN THE LONDON AND NEW YORK TIMES (Paperback, 139 pages, cover illustration by Gavin L O'Keefe, Ramble House, \$12) is a collection of news items published in The Times and the New York Times in chronological order (1885-1895). 'Although marred by a rather garish and unpleasant cover and the absence of an index, and whilst it would have benefited from an introduction and notes by someone who knows the subject, overall this is a nicely produced little volume.' *Ripperologist*.

RIPPEROLOGY: A STUDY OF THE WORLD'S FIRST SERIAL KILLER AND A LITERARY PHENOMENON (Hardcover, 288 pages, Kent State University Press, US\$24.95/£20.50, ISBN: 0-87338-861-5/978-0-87338-861-0), by veteran Ripper author Robin Odell, with an introduction by Donald Rumbelow. 'Odell covers most of the recent theories at some length, lingers a little over the Macnaghten suspects, and provides what will be seen as sober assessment from an old hand who has been kicking around this field long enough to easily see the gems. And the joy of the book is that it is easy reading, as ideal for the newcomer to Ripper studies who wants the history of the subject in broad brush strokes, as it is for the old hand who'll find Odell's style and approach a joy.' *Ripperologist*.

ROYAL BLOOD: KING RICHARD III AND THE MYSTERY OF THE PRINCES (Paperback, 352 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750943904, £9.99), by Bertram Fields, attempts to answer the intriguing questions inherent in the drama of Richard III, history's most infamous royal villain, and his nephews, the princes in the tower.

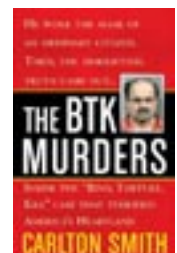


SPARTACUS: THE MYTH AND THE MAN (Hardcover, 256 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750939079, £20), by Ripper author M J Trow, traces the story of Spartacus, through slavery in Rome and training as a gladiator, to the slave rebellion which pitted an army of 3,000 men against the might of Rome and ended with the survivors of Spartacus' defeated army either crucified or returned to slavery.

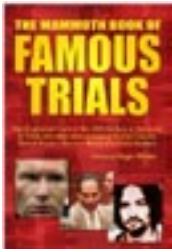
THE BLACK DAHLIA FILES: THE MOB, THE MOGUL AND THE MURDER THAT TRANSFIXED LOS ANGELES (Hardcover, 416 pages, Regan Books, ISBN: 0060582499, \$26.99), by Donald H. Wolfe. The mob is Benjamin 'Bugsy' Siegel, the mogul is Norman Chandler, the publisher of the Los Angeles Times, and the murder that transfixed Los Angeles is the killing of Elizabeth Short, the 'Black Dahlia'.

THE BTK MURDERS: INSIDE THE 'BIND TORTURE KILL' CASE THAT TERRIFIED AMERICA'S HEARTLAND (Mass Market Paperback, 352 pages, St. Martin's True Crime Classics, \$6.99, ISBN: 0312939051), by Carlton Smith, is an account of the criminal career of the recently captured serial killer.

THE COCK LANE GHOST: MURDER, SEX AND HAUNTING IN DR. JOHNSON'S LONDON (Hardcover, 224 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750938692, £14.99), by Paul Chambers, is the true story of William Kent's elopement with Frances Lynes to lodgings in Cock Lane, London, Frances's mysterious death and her alleged return from beyond the grave.



THE HUMAN PREDATOR: A HISTORICAL CHRONICLE OF SERIAL MURDER AND FORENSIC INVESTIGATION (Hardcover, 320 pages, Berkley, ISBN: 042520765X, \$24.95) by [Dr Katherine Ramsland PhD](#), is a detailed and comprehensive anthology of multiple murder events and serial killers from the Dark Ages to the new millennium. Dr Ramsland shows that the darkness that exists in human nature is not the product of modern society.



THE MAMMOTH BOOK OF FAMOUS TRIALS (Paperback, 550 pages, Constable and Robinson, ISBN: 1845293045, £7.99), edited by Roger Wilkes. 'Thirty edited extracts of some of the most notable trials by many famed writers, including Tennyson Jesse, Truman Capote, Rebecca West and William Cooper, to name but a few. Cases covered include Brady & Hindley, Charles Manson and O.J. Simpson. Add to these an excellent introduction by the editor, who also contributes perceptive comments to the entries, and it all results in the bargain of the year.' Wilf Gregg, *Crimebeat*, *Ripperologist*.

THE NEW ANNOTATED SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE NOVELS (A STUDY IN SCARLET, THE SIGN OF FOUR, THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, THE VALLEY OF FEAR) (Hardcover, 992 pages, illust., W. W. Norton, Slipcase edition, ISBN: 039305800X, \$49.95) by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Leslie S Klinger (Editor), is the third book in a series begun in 2004. 'A must-have for any serious mystery fan, this edition will stand as the benchmark for generations to come.' *Publishers' Weekly*.

THE SCIENCE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: FROM BASKERVILLE HALL TO THE VALLEY OF FEAR. THE REAL FORENSICS BEHIND THE GREAT DETECTIVE'S GREATEST CASES (Hardcover, 256 pages, Wiley, ISBN: 471648795, \$24.95. Also available in digital format.) by E J Wagner. 'By using the immortal and well-known Sherlock Holmes stories as her starting point, [forensic expert] Wagner blends familiar examples from Doyle's accounts into a history of the growth of forensic science, pointing out where fiction strayed from fact... While some of the speculations are thin (including a passing suggestion about a new Ripper suspect), Wagner presents a balanced view of the history of forensic science that should appeal to a wide audience.' *Publishers' Weekly*. 'Her accounts of Victorian crimes make Watson's tales pale!' Leslie S. Klinger, Editor, *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes*.

THE THEFT OF THE IRISH CROWN JEWELS: THE UNSOLVED MYSTERY (MOMENTS OF HISTORY S.) (Paperback; 272 pages, ISBN: 1843810077, £11.99), by Tim Coates, investigates the mysterious disappearance from Dublin Castle in July 1907 of the Irish Crown Jewels - the regalia or insignia of the Order of St Patrick - which have never been found.

THE TRIAL OF JACK THE RIPPER: THE CASE OF WILLIAM BURY (1859-89) (Paperback, 192 pages, Mainstream Publishing, ISBN: 1845960114, £9.99) by Euan Macpherson, discusses Ripper suspect William Henry Bury, who was hanged in 1889 in Scotland for the murder of his wife. 'Whether Bury was Jack the Ripper or not, Macpherson's book is a damn good read and a penetrating analysis of a nasty murder by an equally nasty little man.' *Ripperologist*.



THE YELLOW HOUSE: VAN GOGH, GAUGUIN, AND NINE TURBULENT WEEKS IN ARLES (Hardcover, 368 pages, Fig Tree, ISBN: 0670914975, £18.99) by Martin Gayford. The title says almost everything. As is widely known, the cohabitation of Van Gogh and Gauguin ended when the former sliced off his left ear and presented it to a prostitute. Was he inspired by the Ripper's slicing off one of Catherine Eddowes's ears? 'It's a beguiling theory, the severance of the ear and the involvement of a prostitute in both cases suggesting a intentional coincidence, but there is no empirical evidence that Van Gogh ever read the accounts of the Ripper crimes in the newspapers - only two of fifteen reports published actually mentioning the ear-cutting - or that he particularly noted the ear-cutting or was in any way influenced by it. However, since we don't know what influenced Van Gogh, every suggestion is largely hypothetical.' *Ripperologist*.

TO KILL RASPUTIN: THE LIFE AND DEATH OF GREGORI RASPUTIN (Hardcover, 288 pages, Tempus Publishing Ltd, ISBN: 0752434098, £ 20), by [Andrew Cook](#), is a re-investigation of Rasputin's death which reveals for the first time the real masterminds behind the murder of the 'mad monk' who journalist William Le Queux claimed knew the true identity of Jack the Ripper.

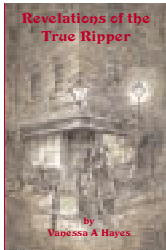
UNCLE JACK, (Paperback, Orion) by Humphrey Price and Tony Williams, is the paperback edition of the controversial book proposing the candidacy of Royal obstetrician Sir John Williams as Jack the Ripper. '...when the primary supporting pillars of the theory tumble like a house of cards there is no real point in examining the equally unreliable minutiae...' *Ripperologist*.

JACK OF JUMPS (Hardcover, 400 pages, Granta Books, ISBN: 1862077703, £18.99), by David Seabrook, is an account of the murders of eight prostitutes in West London between 1959 and 1965 by a serial killer known as Jack the Stripper. In 1970, John du Rose, the detective who had led the enquiry, announced that the police had vowed never to reveal the identity of the killer, who had committed suicide as the net closed round him. Seabrook questions du Rose's assertion and conjures up the disturbing possibility that the killer may still be at large. Reviewed in this issue.

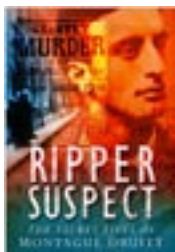


KIDNAPPING RONNIE!: ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR CAPERS IN BRITISH CRIMINAL HISTORY (Hardcover, 288 pages, Allison & Busby, ISBN: 0749082976), Patrick King & Tudor Gates, recounts the story behind of the abduction of Great Train Robber Ronnie Biggs in Brazil in 1981.

MURDER IN HOLLYWOOD: SOLVING A SILENT SCREEN MYSTERY (Hardcover, 208 pages, The University of Wisconsin Press, ISBN: 0299203603), by Charles Higham, scrutinizes the unsolved murder of William Desmond Taylor, a leading silent film director, and the massive cover-up that protected the famous star responsible for Taylor's death.



REVELATIONS OF THE TRUE RIPPER (Paperback, 293 pages, Lulu.com, ISBN: 1411697413), by Vanessa A Hayes, presents a suspect who, according to Ivory Moon literary agents is 'a fully plausible suspect, non-related to the Author or Royalty'. The author adds: 'Although Jack the Ripper has been remembered for over a century I think we should spare a thought for his victims. These women were living day to day trying to escape starvation and death. They did not have a choice how they lived. "Jack" gave them no choice in death. *Revelations of the True Ripper* introduces you to my "Jack the Ripper". I did not choose him, I found him in the detail, hidden behind the history of the times.' So who was he? Reviewed in this Issue.



RIPPER SUSPECT: THE SECRET LIVES OF MONTAGUE DRUIITT (Hardcover, 224 pages, Sutton Publishing, £18.99, ISBN: 0750943297) by D.J. Leighton, explores the life of Montague John Druiitt, barrister, schoolmaster, cricketer, suicide and prime suspect in the Whitechapel murders case, with special emphasis on his intriguing links with Prince Eddy, the Cambridge Apostles, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Virginia Woolf and the cricketing legend Prince Kumar Ranjitsinhji. Reviewed in this Issue.

RONNIE BIGGS (AMAZING STORIES) (Paperback, 128 pages, Altitude Publishing (Canada), ISBN: 1552659046), Art Montague.

UNHOLY MESSENGER: THE LIFE AND CRIMES OF THE BTK SERIAL KILLER (US List Price Hardcover, 304 pages, Scribner Book Company, ISBN: 0743291247, \$23.00), Stephen Singular.

WHO KILLED KING TUT? USING MODERN FORENSICS TO SOLVE A 3,300-YEAR-OLD MYSTERY (Hardcover, 258 pp, Illustrations, Appendices, Index, Prometheus Books, ISBN: 1-59102-183-9, \$25), by Detectives Michael R. King and Gregory M. Cooper, investigates the circumstances of Egyptian Pharaoh Tutankhamen's premature death. Speculation on the cause of his untimely demise has ranged from an infected mosquito bite to a bash on the head, either intentionally inflicted or the result of a fatal chariot accident. After considering natural causes, accident, and suicide, the authors conclude that Tutankhamen was murdered and identify the most probable suspect.

FICTION

AN ACRE OF BARREN GROUND (Paperback, 352 pages, Scribner, ISBN: 0743259726, £7.99) by [Jeremy Gavron](#), is a novel of Brick Lane, Spitalfields, from prehistory to the present. It is divided into some 40 chapters named after the buildings that line Brick Lane and told in different styles. The chapter about Inspector Abberline's hunt for Jack the Ripper reads like a police procedural, Gunther von Hagens's 2002 exhibition of plastinated cadavers at the Old Truman Brewery is evoked through newspaper coverage and a story about hard-edged, hyped-up dotcom entrepreneurs setting up business in the area their grandparents once struggled to leave is told as a graphic novel. In every chapter, real and imaginary characters rub shoulders together and the blurred line between historical record and fiction sometimes makes the latter seem more real. The 'short stories are filled with memories of homelands and dreams for the future, and they pulse with the busy rhythm of everyday London living.' *The Independent*, 12 March 2006.

BLACK BY GASLIGHT (Paperback, 342 pages, Cavalier Press, ISBN: 0974621064, \$ 17.95), by Nene Adams, opens in August 1888 as consulting detective Lady Evangeline St Claire rescues prostitute Rhiannon Moore from the clutches of Jack the Ripper. The two women embark upon an investigation that soon becomes a race against a killer whose only motive is madness and, while trying to save themselves, fall desperately in love.

BLOOD AND FIRE: THE DUKE OF WINDSOR AND THE STRANGE MURDER OF SIR HARRY OAKES (Paperback, 252 pages, LMH Books, ISBN: 9768184957), by John Marquis, is a semi-fictional retelling of the facts and conjectures concerning the death in 1943 of Sir Harry Oakes, who was found, a hole in his head and burnt to death, at his home in Nassau, Bahamas. Although foul play was never proved, suspicions surrounded the circumstances of his death, with speculation that the Duke and Duchess of Windsor were in some way involved.



BROKEN (Paperback, 480 pages, Spectra (Random House Inc), ISBN: 0553588184, \$6.99), by Kelley Armstrong, combines fantasy and suspense as werewolf Elena Michaels, the heroine of the same author's novels Bitten and Stolen (Viking US), discovers she's pregnant. Elena has never heard of another living female werewolf, let alone one who's given birth. At this point, a playful demon prevails upon her to retrieve a stolen letter allegedly written by Jack the Ripper. As a distraction, the job seems simple enough, but the letter contains a portal to Victorian London's underworld which Elena inadvertently triggers unleashing a vicious killer and a pair of zombie thugs. Now Elena must find a way to seal the portal before the unwelcome visitors get what they're looking for: Elena herself.

DEVIL GODDESS: A SUPERNATURAL MYSTERY (Paperback, 484 pages, iUniverse, Inc, ISBN: 0595380670, \$25.95 - also available as a printable e-book in Adobe Reader format from Amazon for \$6), by Robert Amsel, is a thriller concerning a modern-day young schoolteacher living in Manhattan who fears she's being haunted by the ghost of Jack the Ripper. It has been described as a solid mystery unfolding against a background combining the Ripper murders, supernatural phenomena and an ancient cult from India. 'Whoever the real Jack the Ripper was, Ripperologists will whistle at the author's cleverness in making connections between the Ripper's signature crimes and earlier, until now unrelated horrors. This intricately structured horror novel unfolds like a well-layered mystery in which the hapless heroine must fight for both her sanity and her life.' Perry Brass.

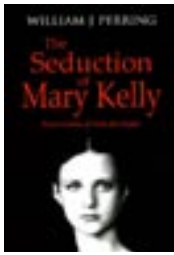


JACK THE RIPPER: A CONFESSION (Paperback, 257 pages, ripperArt, ISBN: 0954660331, £9.99) by Geoff Cooper and Gordon Punter, is (according to the publishers) 'the chilling account on why the murders occurred and why they ceased so abruptly. It also reveals the identity of the man, known as Jack the Ripper, who, towards the end of the nineteenth century, held the entire district of Whitechapel, London, England, in a grip of unparalleled terror.'

JACK THE RIPPER: END OF A LEGEND (Paperback, 316 pages, Athena Press Pub, ISBN: 1844014843, \$15.95) by Calum Reuben Knight, argues that Jack the Ripper wasn't one person but three, including a French woman who successfully masqueraded as the final victim - Mary Jane Kelly. 'The book... does not acknowledge being fiction, which makes it a little difficult to review. As fiction it is everything *The Shroud of the Thwacker* should have been - by which I mean that it isn't brilliant fiction, but that it's a clever, well-written and recommendable spoof. If by some bizarre chance it is meant to be fact, the book is a pretty dismal affair that doesn't exactly make *Portrait of a Killer* and *Uncle Jack* look good by comparison but comes pretty close.' *Ripperologist*.

SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE BIOGRAPHY (Hardback, 240 pp., Atlantic, ISBN: 1843542749, £ 14.99) by Nick Rennison, ventures beyond Holmes's published cases to recount how the great detective prevented Fenian attacks, advised Oscar Wilde to scarp, helped Conan Doyle to solve the Edalji case and almost caught Jack the Ripper. But why wasn't the Ripper case recorded by Watson? As the Ripper skulked about Whitechapel, Mary Morstan, Watson's future wife, made her appearance in the good doctor's life. Watson set forth her story as *The Sign of Four*, but did not think the Ripper case worth chronicling.

SOJOURN (Paperback, 369 pages, Dragon Moon Press, ISBN: 1896944302, \$19.95), by Jana G Oliver, combines science fiction, fantasy and history as Jacynda Lassiter struggles arrives in Victorian London to find an overdue 'tourist' and return him to 2057 before he alters history. As the Whitechapel murders have the city in an uproar, the shape shifters are fretting the hard-to-catch killer might be one of their own. To prevail, Jacynda and Dr Alastair Montrose, a shape shifter who is denying his heritage, must outwit a madman whose legacy will endure for centuries. '*Sojourn's* a rare, well-researched and entertaining tale set against the backdrop of Victorian England and the Whitechapel Murders.' *Casebook: Jack the Ripper*. 'Ms. Oliver has done her research. I had no trouble imagining the vivid settings, from the overly heavy gowns to the rat-infested rotting tenements. And all references to Jack the Ripper are in keeping with historical notations.' [Nanette Littlestone, Amazon.com](#)



THE SEDUCTION OF MARY KELLY: FINAL VICTIM OF JACK THE RIPPER (Hardback, 591 pp, Coulsdon, Surrey: D'Arcy Collection, 2005, www.darcycollection.co.uk, ISBN: 0954977009, £17.95) by William J Perring, is a novel recounting 'the "known" career of Mary Kelly with all the familiar faces emerging as flesh and blood characters instead of the often one-dimensional figures they appear in the non-fiction books... You should like this book and it'll keep you occupied and out of trouble for a while.' *Ripperologist*.

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

SPRING 2006

NON-FICTION

EPIPHANY OF THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS (Hardcover, ISBN:1425934153, Paperback, ISBN: 1425934161) by Karen Trenouth, is a self-published book which purportedly 'details the reasons behind the Whitechapel Murders of 1888, how the murders occurred, who was responsible, and how this series of murders was linked to another infamous scandal that rocked all of England a year later. The identity of "Jack the Ripper" will be revealed as this previously untold story unfolds.' The blurb adds: 'What is the true story of the Whitechapel Murders? You have seen the films; you have read the various books on the subject. Now, 118 years later, is the time for the truth.' According to the book's preface, the truth seems to be somehow related to Alfred Pearson, a 27 year old moulder from Brierley Hill, Kingswinford, who on the evening of 8 October 1888 jumped at a young couple brandishing a trowel and yelling 'Jack the Ripper!!! Jack the Ripper!!!' at the top of his lungs.

DID THEY REALLY DO IT? FROM LIZZIE BORDEN TO THE 20TH HIJACKER (Paperback, 256 pages, Thunder's Mouth Press, ISBN: 1560257741, \$14.95), Fred Rosen.

JACK THE RIPPER (Paperback, 160 pages, Pocket Essentials, ISBN: 1904048692, £4.99), by Mark Whitehead and Miriam Rivett, is described as the Essential Guide to 'Jack the Ripper', contains an introductory essay and considers many of the Ripper's proposed identities, a summary of his crimes, victims and the ill-fated investigation, plus a guide to the Ripper's many fictional outings, from Hitchcock's *The Lodger* to Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's *From Hell*.

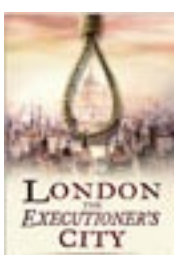
SUMMER 2006

NON-FICTION

ASSASSINS IN THE PARK: MURDER, BETRAYAL AND RETRIBUTION (Paperback, 192 pages, Mercier Press, ISBN: 185635511X), by Senan Molony, deals with the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Thomas Burke in Phoenix Park in May 1882 by men wielding surgical knives, the police investigation and the attempts to infiltrate the Fenians.

BLACK DAHLIA AVENGER: A GENIUS FOR MURDER (Revised edition) (Paperback, 624 pages, Harper Paperbacks, ISBN: 0061139610, \$15.95), by Steve Hodel, identifies the mysterious killer of Elizabeth Short, the Black Dahlia, as the author's own father, Dr George Hodel.

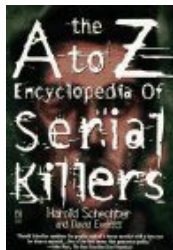
JACK THE RIPPER: THE FACTS (Paperback, 560 pages, Robson Books Ltd, ISBN: 1861058705, £8.99) by *Ripperologist's* Executive Editor Paul Begg, is simply one of the most complete and authoritative books on the subject. A must-have.



LONDON: THE EXECUTIONER'S CITY (Hardcover 256 pages Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 0750940239 £18.99), by David Brandon and Alan Brooke, is described by its publishers as 'a vivid picture of capital punishment in a capital that seems to have thrived on executions.' The book 'reveals the capital as a place where the bodies of criminals defined the boundaries of the city and heads on poles greeted patrons on London Bridge.'

SUPPER WITH THE CRIPPENS (Paperback, 352 pages, Orion (an Imprint of The Orion Publishing Group Ltd) ISBN: 0752877720, £7.99), by David James Smith, looks again into the case of American Dr Hawley Harvey Crippen, his wife, a music-hall artiste who called herself Belle Elmore, and his mistress, Ethel le Neve,

against the background of Edwardian England. Crippen murdered his wife, buried her remains in the cellar and escaped to Canada in an ocean liner with Ethel disguised as a boy. They were arrested on arrival by Inspector Walter Dew, of Whitechapel fame, thanks to the wireless telegraph newly installed on the ship. The lovers went on trial for murder. Ethel was acquitted but Crippen was convicted and hanged .



THE A-Z ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SERIAL KILLERS (Paperback, 341 pages, Pocket Books, ISBN: 0671537911), by Harold Schechter, consists of brief articles examining serial killers, their crimes and victims, and the methods they used to kill people and dispose of their bodies.

THE CAMDEN TOWN MURDER: WALTER RICHARD SICKERT, ROBERT WOOD, EMILY DIMMOCK: ARTISTS, MURDERER AND VICTIM IN ANOTHER NOTORIOUS 'RIPPER' CRIME (Paperback, 250 pages, Mandrake of Oxford, ISBN: 1869928148), John Barber. 'I know the book will be of interest.' Karyo Magellan, *Ripperologist*.

THE FATHER OF FORENSICS: THE GROUNDBREAKING CASES OF SIR BERNARD SPILSBURY AND THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN CSI (Paperback 336 pages Berkley Publishing Group, ISBN: 0425210073, \$14), Colin Evans.

THE MAMMOTH BOOK OF PIRATES (Paperback, 512 pages , Constable and Robinson, ISBN: 1845291158, £7.99) Jon E. Lewis (Editor), contains 28 first-hand memoirs and contemporary reports of such pirates as Blackbeard, Captain Kidd, 'Calico Jack' Rackham, Alexander Exquemelin, Frances Drake, Anne Bonney, Jean Lafitte and the Joassamee Pirates. Tales retold include Francis 'Scourge of Spain' Drake's audacious night treasure raid on Nombre de Dios; the capture of Panama by Henry Morgan; the life of Louis 'Half-Arse' Le Golif, whose buttock was shot away by cannon fire; and Henry Avery's seizure of the Moghul of India's treasure ship.

THE ROBIN HOOD HANDBOOK (Hardcover, 448 pages, Sutton Publishing, ISBN: 075093977X, £25), by Mike Dixon-Kennedy, explores the reality behind the legend of one of the most captivating and controversial of figures. This book provides a comprehensive guide to the characters, places, people, stories and background of this enduring folk hero and strives to present a complete picture of his doings as reflected in ballads, poems, proverbs, films, novels, folklore, musicals and place-names.

FICTION

FRANKENSTEIN: THE SHADOW OF FRANKENSTEIN VOLUME 1 (THE SHADOW OF FRANKENSTEIN) (Paperback, 275 pages, DH Press, ISBN: 1-59582-037-X, \$6.99), by Stefan Petrucha. [Frankenstein meets Jack the Ripper](#). 'Following his lab's explosion, Henry and Elizabeth Frankenstein head to London for a rest (and to avoid possible criminal charges). The monster, still alive, follows, but winds up in the Whitechapel district. There, he's mistaken for a disfigured, mentally disabled man and befriended by local prostitutes. When one of the streetwalkers is horribly murdered, the creature roams the area, hoping to protect the survivors. This brings him in contact with the real killer—Jack the Ripper. After 47 years, he's back in action. The Ripper's string of brutal killings in 1887 [sic] were actually sacrifices, dark rituals that extended his life. Now he's aging again and desperate to remain alive, and sees in the reanimated corpse of the Frankenstein monster a possible new way to live forever. Henry, the monster and Jack the Ripper's fates become entwined as Jack the Ripper hatches a plan to frame the monster for the killings, to force Henry to reveal his secrets of life and death.' DH Press. Frankenstein, the Ripper, London. What could be missing? Old-timers and day-time TV addicts might wish for Abbott and Costello.

SEPTEMBER 2006

NON-FICTION

JACK THE RIPPER: REVEALED AND REVISITED (Hardcover, 224 pages, Express Newspapers Plc, ISBN: 0850793238, £14.99) by John Wilding, is an extensively revised and updated version of the author's 1993 *Jack the Ripper: Revealed*.

PORTRAIT OF A KILLER: JACK THE RIPPER - CASE CLOSED (Paperback, 416 pages, Time Warner Paperbacks, ISBN: 0751537225, £8.99), by Patricia Cornwell, will be the British edition of her revised book.

OCTOBER 2006

NON-FICTION

JACK THE RIPPER: THE COMPLETE INVESTIGATION (Hardback, 320 pp., Sutton Publishing. ISBN: 0750942282. £20), by Stewart P. Evans and Donald Rumbelow. Need we say more? Unquestionably, this is one to buy and treasure.

THE CRIMES OF JACK THE RIPPER: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE WORLD'S MOST INTRIGUING UNSOLVED CASE (Hardcover, 208 pages, Arcturus foulsham, ISBN: 0572032854, £9.99) by Paul Roland. According to the publishers, 'This impartial investigation focuses on the forensic evidence. For the first time, Paul has had access to official police reports. Myth, misconception and speculation are stripped away here. Uniquely, he judges the investigation by our contemporary standards. How would the profilers describe the Ripper today? Which of the usual suspects would they have prosecuted? For the first time in the history of books written about Jack the Ripper, the author is able to make a proper assessment of the forensic evidence that was available at that time. Paul Roland builds up a profile of the most infamous serial killer. By looking at the injuries and mutilations to the various victims, he is able to build up a profile of the killer and make deductions about the weapon and his state of mind at the time. All the evidence is carefully weighed and the case is brought before the reader to act as judge and jury - is the Ripper really an evil psychopath or is he the first modern monster of our times?' We note that the publishers assert that 'For the first time, [the author] has had access to official police reports.' Indeed. We'll see when we'll see.

LATE 2006

THE QUEST FOR JACK THE RIPPER: A LITERARY HISTORY 1888-2000 by Richard Whittington-Egan, has been eagerly expected for quite some time now. *Ripperologist* has been told that the delay has been partly due to the scrupulous checking of all the facts by Mr Whittington-Egan's editor, Tom Kelly, and the minute attention and meticulous research which he has displayed in the construction of a really comprehensive bibliography, taking in for the first time all manner of obscure American book, magazine and newspaper reference sources.

UNCOVERING JACK THE RIPPER'S LONDON, by [Richard Jones](#). Mr Jones's documentary, *On the Trail of Jack the Ripper*, was described by *Ripperologist* as 'Perhaps the best documentary to have been produced in recent years.'

AND DON'T FORGET...

CUATRO MIRADAS SOBRE JACK EL DESTRIPIADOR, a still unscheduled Spanish-language collection of original essays on the Ripper by Juan-Jacobo Bajaría, Juan José Delaney, Christopher-Michael DiGrazia and Eduardo Zinna to be published in Buenos Aires... SHADOW PASTS, a look at Ripperologists and other 'amateur' historians by Professor William D Rubinstein... THE ROYAL LEGACY OF HATE, a further volume of revelations concerning the regal ancestry of Joseph Sickert, who died on 9 January 2003... and journalist Tom Slemen's reportedly finished and being edited book on Charles Reignier Conder. You'll know more about these as soon as we do.

THEATRE

JACK: THE MUSICAL. Based on Jack the Ripper, a man whose deeds have become infamous after the bloody events of 1888. Erik Sitbon's music and Christopher T George's lyrics tell of one possible conclusion to the never-solved case. Contains adult themes. 2pm \$25. Duke Power Theater, Spirit Square, 345 N. College St. (704) 372-1000; www.actorsceneunseen.com. [The Charlotte Observer](#), 12 May 2006. Reviewed in this issue.

FEATURE FILMS

BLACK DAHLIA (USA, 2005) Written, produced and directed by Ramzi Abed, starring Kristen Kerr as Lisa Small/Beth Short, Lizzy Strain as the Black Dahlia/Elizabeth Short and Khris Kaneff as Fatty Arbuckle. The tagline is: 'One woman, two lives. One knife, two halves. The eternal murder mystery...' That's what we call cutting-edge copy. According to [Mr Abed's website](#), *Black Dahlia* is reportedly still in post-production.



ROHTENBURG (Germany, 2006). Also Known As Butterfly: A Grimm Love Story. Directed by Martin Weisz, written by T.S. Faull, starring Thomas Kretschmann, Angelika Bartsch and Thomas Huber, is inspired by the real-life story of cannibal killer Armin Meiwes. The release of this film in Germany was prevented by a court decision resulting from Meiwes's successful lawsuit. Following Meiwes's recent conviction for murder (see *I Beg to Report* in this issue) this decision might be reversed.

THE BLACK DAHLIA (USA, Universal Pictures, 2006). Directed by Brian De Palma, based on the novel by James Ellroy, with a screenplay by Josh Friedman, stars Josh Hartnett as Officer Dwight 'Bucky' Bleichert, Scarlett Johansson as Kay Lake, Hilary Swank as Madeleine Sprague, Aaron Eckhart as Sgt. Leland 'Lee' Blanchard and Mia Kirshner as Elizabeth Short. The Black Dahlia is about two L.A. police officers in the 1940s who investigate the brutal murder of aspiring film actress Elizabeth Short, known as the Black Dahlia. Officer 'Bucky' soon realizes that his girlfriend Kay had ties to the deceased, and soon after that, he begins uncovering corruption and conspiracy within the police department. In an article in the June issue of *Premiere*, director Brian De Palma has been quoted as saying: 'I love dark noir, these femmes fatales, the twisted noir hero. The hero is basically put through hell.' De Palma viewed the gruesome shots of the crime scene, where victim Elizabeth Short's body was discarded. 'The photos of her displayed out in the field, they are all over the Internet,' he said. 'Once you see them, you will never forget them.' Universal has announced that *The Black Dahlia* will open in cinemas in the United States on 13 October 2006 - a Friday.



TORSO (USA, Paramount, 2007). Following *Zodiac*, David Fincher will direct *Torso*, a thriller based on a graphic novel written by Brian Michael Bendis and Marc Andreyko, for Paramount. Ehren Kruger is writing the adaptation, which will be produced by Pandemonium's Bill Mechanic, Angry Films' Don Murphy and comic artist Todd McFarlane. Fincher is expected to start work on *Torso* once he wraps production on Paramount's Benjamin Button adaptation. *Torso* will tell the true but relatively unknown story of Treasury Department agent Eliot Ness after his Al Capone days, when he became Cleveland's director of public safety in 1934. He launched a successful campaign against crime and corruption, but his record was marred by a series of gruesome, motiveless murders. The 'Torso Murderer' was responsible for at least 13 victims, all decapitated and dismembered. Ten of them were never identified. Ness, who had no experience in police work, put together a team of ex-officers to apprehend the serial murderer. Despite their efforts, the killer was never found.

Dark Horizons, 12 January 2006

The Hollywood Reporter, 17 January 2006



V FOR VENDETTA (USA, Warner Brothers, 2005). Directed by James McTeigue, based on the graphic novels by Alan Moore and David Lloyd, written by the Wachowski Brothers. The inspiration for this film was a graphic novel written in the 1980s by Alan Moore of *From Hell* fame in response to Thatcherism. A few years into the future, Britain is ruled by an evil dictator who tramples on individual liberties with the help of the media and a brutal secret police. Under pretence that the country is under attack, religious, cultural and social diversity is suppressed through the incarceration and execution of innocent civilians. In reaction to this oppression, a Shakespeare-quoting caped crusader in a Guy Fawkes mask calls upon citizens to join him in blowing up the Houses of Parliament on 5th

November, the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot. His sidekick is Evey, a young girl whom he rescued from a gang of jobs. Some consider *V* as merely an action film while others believe that it asks pertinent questions about the power of governments and the right of the people to rebel in defence of their freedom through any means available. Natalie Portman plays Evey, Hugo Weaving the masked avenger, John Hurt the evil dictator, Stephen Rea a secret policeman and Stephen Fry a closet homosexual who falls foul of the government.

ZODIAC (USA, Paramount, Warner, 2006). Directed by David Fincher, based on the Robert Graysmith books, with a screenplay by James Vanderbilt, stars Robert Downey Jr. as Paul Avery, Jake Gyllenhaal as Robert Graysmith, Mark Ruffalo as Dave Toschi, Anthony Edwards as Armstrong and Gary Oldman as attorney Melvin Belli. The film deals with the real-life serial killer Zodiac, who terrorized San Francisco with a string of seemingly random murders during the 1960s and 1970s. Its release has been announced for autumn 2006.

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DOCUMENTARIES

JACK THE RIPPER'S SWEDISH VICTIM is a documentary by Daniel Olsson and Wulvarich shot on location in Store Tumlehed, Gothenburg and other places frequented by young Elisabeth Gustafsdotter, better known as Long Liz Stride. It will consist of the following sections: 1. THE LONDON MURDERS, 1888: General Information on the Whitechapel Murders and Jack the Ripper; 2. LIZ: CHILDHOOD AND TEENAGE YEARS: History of Torslanda and Tumlehed. The God Thor and the Cult of Thor. Liz's Birth. Important Events in Sweden, 1843. Liz's Baptism. Connections between the Torslanda Church and the God Thor. Liz's Upbringing. Her Brothers. Ordinary Daily Life in Sweden. Liz's Confirmation. 3. LIZ'S MOVE TO GOTHENBURG. General Information about Gothenburg . King Gustav II Adolf and the Mystic Events which Led to the Birth of the City. Elizabeth Settles in 'Majorna'. Allmanna Vägen: the Name and the Prostitutes. How Liz Learned English in Majorna. Brothels in Allmanna Vägen. 4. PROSTITUTION AND THE 'REGISTERS OF SHAME.' Liz Settles in Gothenburg. Prostitution. Sillgatan Street. Liz's Registration. Pilgatan Street - Where Liz Probably Learned Yiddish. Kurhuset. How Liz Got struck off the Register. 5. LIZ'S MOVE TO LONDON. The Journey. Weather Conditions. 6. LIZ'S MURDER. 7 THEORIES ABOUT JACK THE RIPPER. The original plans for the release of the Swedish and English-language versions of VICTIM have been affected by the health problems currently experienced by its co-director, *Ripperologist's* friend and contributor, Daniel Olsson. As more information becomes available it will be reported in this column.

TELEVISION

SUMMER 2006

LONGFORD, Channel 4 - One-off drama starring Jim Broadbent as the title character battling to win parole for Moors murderess Myra Hindley (played by Samantha Morton). With Andy Serkis as Ian Brady and Lindsay Duncan as Elizabeth Longford. *Longford* is an HBO Films presentation in association with Channel 4 produced by Granada. Directed by Tom Hooper (*Prime Suspect 6*, HBO's upcoming miniseries *Elizabeth I*), written by Peter Morgan (whose credits include *The Deal*, *The Queen*, *Henry VIII*). Andy Harries (*The Queen*, *Prime Suspect 6*) and Peter Morgan produce. The film's original soundtrack will be composed by Rolfe Kent (*About Schmidt*, *Sideways*).

STILL UNSCHEDULED

JACK THE RIPPER, BBC1. EastEnders Shane Richie stars as 'opium-addicted Victorian detective Inspector George Frederick Abberline' in an eight-part drama about the hunt for the Victorian murderer. When? Not known yet. At least the BBC got his name almost right.

JEKYLL, BBC1. James Nesbitt stars in a modern take on the story of Doctor Jekyll and Mr Hyde described as more Spooks than Robert Louis Stevenson. It is 2006 and there's a new Dr Jekyll with an old problem: Mr Hyde. What Hyde doesn't know is that Jekyll is married. The series begins filming in September and is written by Steven Moffat (whose credits include *Coupling*).

DVD

THE MONSTER OF LONDON CITY/SECRET OF THE RED ORCHID (Image Entertainment, Germany, 1964, Black and White, Full Screen, Unrated, \$ 19.95). The first in this double-feature disk is an English-dubbed version of *Das Ungeheuer von London City*, a German film produced by Artur Branek, directed by Edwin Zbonek, starring Hansjörg Felmy, Marianne Koch, [Dietmar Schönherr](#), [Hans Nielsen](#) and [Chariklia Baxevanos](#) as the wonderfully named Betty Ball. *Monster* was scripted by Robert A. Stemmle and Bryan Edgar Wallace, the son of crime-thriller novelist Edgar Wallace. In *Monster*, 'the spirit of Jack the Ripper seems to be very much alive in 1960s London as a series of brutal slayings by the Monster of London City has Scotland Yard baffled. In a macabre coincidence, a new play about the famous murderer is about to become a major West End hit... and the leading man is rapidly becoming the prime suspect!' Shades of Richard Mansfield... Cindy Collins-Smith's *Hollywood Ripper* website adds: '*The Monster of London City* is perhaps more interesting for its "ahead-of-the-curve" use of drug addiction and syphilis as plot elements than for its rather derivative Ripper plot.' The second feature in the DVD, *Secret of the Red Orchid*, stars Christopher Lee as an FBI Captain and Klaus Kinski as an American gangster.

COMPACT DISCS

JACK THE RIPPER, DIE GESCHICHTE EINES MÖRDERS, (Audio-CD, Luebbe Verlagsgruppe, ISBN: 3785711999), by [Frank Gustavus](#), [Dietmar Mues](#), [Dagmar Puchalla](#) and [Heinz Lieven](#), is a German-language account of the murders.

JACK THE RIPPER'S REIGN OF TERROR is a London Audio Walk tour of the murder sites recorded on MP3 or Audio CD which sells for £5.99. The 3-mile (4 km) walk covers from Whitechapel Underground Station to Aldgate, visiting the five murder sites with a stop at the Ten Bells in Commercial Street. Sights include Spitalfields Market and Brick Lane. The full audio lasts 50 minutes and the walk usually takes round 1.5 - 2 hours. Best time to go, anytime, although Spitalfields Market is only open 11- 3 on Sundays whereas it is open 9 - 6 the rest of the week. The tour may be ordered on CD. MP3-player owners may download it straight away from the Internet. The downloads consist of between 17Mb and 18Mb, which should take around five minutes to download on a broadband connection. Those on a slower connection are advised to order the CD instead. For more information visit the [Bluebrolly website](#).

MILLER'S COURT, a two-person drama by James Jeffrey Paul about the Ripper's encounter with his last victim, is available on CD from Actors Scene Unseen, a Live Internet Radio Theatre company broadcasting live from Charlotte, NC, USA. 'The play's dialogue is convincingly written, Mary coming across as a hardened woman of the streets who has a gentle centre - yes, I know that sounds that the cliché-ridden "tart with a golden heart" but author James Jeffrey Paul manages to get round it. The only complaint one really has is Mary's strong Irish accent, which sounds fake to me, and which it's doubtful she would have had if, as she claimed, she'd moved from Ireland to Wales when a child.' *Ripperologist* No. 65 (March 2006). Also available from Actors Scene Unseen is *Saucy Jack*, an original radio drama by James Vita focusing on the Ripper murders originally broadcast on 19 June 2004. To find information on programmes and schedules, to listen to live broadcasts or to buy the CDs, go to the [Actors Scene Unseen website](#).

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CD-ROM

CASEBOOK: JACK THE RIPPER CD-ROM - NEW 2006 EDITION RELEASED. 'Brand new, fully revised and uncensored 2006 Edition of the Casebook CD-Rom! Ever want to take the *Casebook* with you, on the plane, in the car, or to the library? Have a slow internet connection, or hate having to pay per-minute download charges? Know someone who wants to see the Casebook, but doesn't have an internet connection? Now you can purchase a complete copy of *Casebook: Jack the Ripper*, including all message board content, for just \$19.99, plus shipping. You will be able to browse the site in your favorite web browser at your leisure, anywhere you like, without ever having to connect to the internet.' *Casebook*. For more information or to buy it using your Visa, Mastercard, Discover or AMEX credit card via Paypal, go to the *Casebook* at [casebook.org](#)



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CHRISTOPHER-
MICHAEL DIGRAZIA

The Last Word

When we were together last, I made a slight reference to religious eccentric Glenn Voliva, saying that I'd tell you about him later. Right, then - here we go:

Wilbur Glenn Voliva was the leader of a cult of flat-earthers known as the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church. The Church was the brainchild of a Scotsman, John Dowie, who emigrated to America in 1888. He was a devout follower of Samuel Rowbotham, an English inventor who believed that we live on a flat disc centered at the North Pole which is bounded along the southern edge by a wall of ice, and that the sun, moon, other planets and stars hang only a few hundred kilometers above the earth's surface.



Wilbur Glenn Voliva

Dowie, a faith healer, purchased ten square miles of land seventy kilometers north of Chicago, Illinois, and established the theocratic flat-earth enclave of Zion City. Meant to be entirely self-supporting, Zion City had its own factories devoted to the manufacture of lace, candies and furniture. Because Dowie forbade theatres, cinemas or dance halls, there was little for the Zionists to enjoy, save for endless thundering sermons by Dowie in favor of a flat earth and against the evils of sex, oysters and - bizarrely - life insurance. Apparently, long before the *Gospel of Judas*, Dowie found some Scriptural hell reserved for randy bivalve-ingesting insurance salesman, and needed to warn his followers of the dangers these smooth talkers presented.

Dowie was a crank, but an enthusiastic one, and he engaged in a campaign of national evangelization. Unfortunately, he greatly overextended the small financial resources of his Church and in 1905 was forced to turn to his friend and disciple, chocolate biscuit magnate Glenn Voliva, for help. When Voliva examined the Church's books, he discovered that two million dollars had somehow gone astray during Dowie's leadership. Voliva denounced Dowie as a corrupt fraud, banished him, and took over leadership of Zion City.

The some 6,000 Zionists might have thought their lives hard before; in contrast to Voliva's leadership, however, the Dowie years were a riot of luxury. Voliva banned lipstick, swimming suits, high heels, cigarettes and alcohol. He ordered a 10.00pm curfew. He drove out every butcher, doctor and chemist in Zion City. Whistling, singing and humming were verboten, as was driving an automobile any faster than five miles an hour.

How bad was it, you ask? Let's say you were walking down Main Street one afternoon humming *I'm Too Sexy*. It would only be a matter of time before you were taken up by the 'Praetorian Guard', men who wore special uniforms with the word PATIENCE on their caps and miniature Bibles on their belts instead of truncheons. If they didn't fine you on the spot, they would drag you off to Voliva himself, who would make your afternoon a misery with an hour-long pocket Mussolini harangue about your sins.

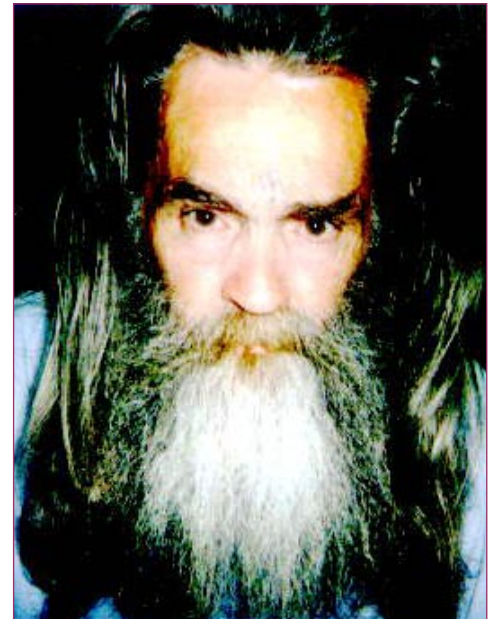
In 1923, Voliva predicted the end of the world. It didn't happen, and from that point on, his power over the Zionists deteriorated. He died in 1942, and the Church collapsed soon afterwards under the weight of financial scandals, though a few diehards still lived in Zion until the 1950s. If you happen to visit Illinois, it's well worth taking a side trip to Zion City. It still exists today, a pleasant suburban community marketing itself as a safe, friendly place to live whose nutty past is gently ridiculed by the local historical society.

So, other than fulfilling a promise, why did I write about Glenn Voliva? Linguistics. Dowie, Voliva and the Zionists called themselves 'Theocrats,' but in light of their self-contained city and despotic ruler, we would be likely to call them 'cultists.'

The word 'cult' has sadly sinister modern associations, bringing to mind the misguided Heaven's Gate community, the followers of Reverend Jim Jones, or even the loathsome 'Family' of Charles Manson. But the Latin cultus simply means 'to cultivate worship,' and in the ancient world was a nominal designation for worshippers of any religion - the cult of Mithras, the Dionysius cult, or even the Christus cult. But the word has shifted in meaning over the years, and now refers to insular belief and single-minded idolatry - dare I speak to you of 'the Ripper cult?'

I have, in the past, jocularly referred to the 'Ripper cult,' by which I mean the obsessive single-minded, for whom every day is important only in that it is the anniversary of an event connected to the Whitechapel Murders, no matter how tenuous ('Abberline skipped out on a bar tab at the Princess Alice this day in 1875!'), or to whom devotion to one aspect or personality connected to the Autumn of Terror is the unhealthy focus of their lives. I'm tempted to think of poor John Morrison and his desperate, psychologically-tortured relationship to Mary Kelly in this context, but Morrison skips so easily over the line separating cultist from lunatic that it's hard to know where to put him!

But while it's tempting to laugh at Morrison or at the witless theories of [insert your own particular *bête noire* here], 'cultism,' in the sense of being stubbornly insulated from outside influence, is still a recurrent feature in the seedier alleys of Ripperology. M J Trow, in *The Road to Hell*, brilliantly sent up the 'pick-a-ripper' industry by making a convoluted, yet alarmingly cohesive, case against philanthropist Frederick Charrington. But what of people like Stephen Knight or Patricia Cornwell - those who were wrong because they didn't listen to contrary evidence? Who ignored inconvenient fact? Who should have known better? Wikipedia web biographies of Prince Eddy routinely stain him as a Ripper suspect, and Walter Sickert finds his posthumous fame soiled by the spatter of the Ripper's knife. Lewis Carroll has been smeared; so too Gladstone, Michael Kidney, John Pizer and an entire galaxy of the famous and anonymous.



Charles Manson

I have mentioned in the past that, because we see the Whitechapel Murders as having been such a singular event in Victorian history, we feel they must have a singular man at the center. Perhaps this is true, and perhaps, despite all the evidence against it, Jack the Ripper might well have been one of the 'great and good.' But let us ensure that, whomever we might believe him to be, we believe it because of sound evidence, motive and opportunity - not because our Ripper cult wishes it so.

In Future Issues...

Future issues of *Ripperologist* will feature...

Antonio Sironi with Jane Coram on Mary Jane Kelly, Robert Linford, David O'Flaherty and John Savage on the office of Coroner in England and Wales, Andy Aliffe on East End actor, troubadour and tailor Alfie Maron, Joe Chetcuti on the Belle of Philadelphia, John Francis Brewer on the *Curse Upon Mitre Square*, Claudia Aliffe on the Wicked Women of Britain, Rob Hills on the Hardiman family, William Michael on the Ripper victims' photographs, Karen Kurt Teal and Louise Raw on the Match-girls' Strike, Karyo Magellan on the Victorian Medico-legal Autopsy, on the blood distribution relative to the neck wounds of Mary Jane Kelly, and on Mortality in Victorian England, Jeffrey Bloomfield on the Charles Bravo murder case, Zoraida Dunne on William Palmer, Christopher T George on Neil Cream, Eduardo Zinna on Buck Ruxton, John Ruffels on *The East End Murderer - I Knew Him*, Howard Brown on Privies and Outhouses in Victorian Times, Tim Mosley on Boris Karloff's 1960s TV Series *Thriller* and *Yours Truly*, *Jack the Ripper*, Nicholas Smith on St Patrick and the Crown Jewels, Leslie A Klinger on Jack the Ripper and Sherlock Holmes, Stanley Dean Reid on the Most Wanted Criminals in World History, John Crawford on Algernon Haskett-Smith, Robert McLaughlin on *Vacher l'Eventreur*, Stepan Poberowski on Russian perceptions of Jack the Ripper...

The Last Word by Christopher-Michael DiGrazia, *Crimebeat* by Wilf Gregg, *Cyberjack* by Monty, *Press Trawl* by Chris Scott, *East End Life* by Adam Wood, Ripper Fiction, In Brief, I Beg to Report, Dear Rip, Ripping Yarns and more, much more... can you afford to miss out on any of it?

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Dr Thomas Horrocks Openshaw:
was he sent a letter by Jill the Ripper?
See I Beg to Report

