

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

# *Ripperologist*

No. 73

November 2006

## By Accident or Design?

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a critical analysis  
of the murder of  
Catherine Eddowes

JANE CORAM takes a  
closer look at the murder  
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CHRIS SCOTT  
DON SOUDEN

WILF GREGG  
ADAM WOOD



# RIPPEROLOGIST MAGAZINE

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## QUOTE FOR NOVEMBER:

"And sometimes we must just say no. Kazakhstan, which claims to be part of Europe because a fraction of its territory lies west of the Ural river, came to London seeking British support for its bid to chair the OSCE in 2009. It would be ridiculous beyond words if a country whose elections have fallen so far short of OSCE standards, as has its record on human rights and media independence, were to be given this position. Think Mel Gibson as chair of Alcoholics Anonymous, Jack the Ripper in charge of marriage counselling - or Borat being responsible for accuracy in journalism." There must be plain speaking at the end of the red carpet, Timothy Garton Ash, *The Guardian*, 23 November 2006.

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We would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance given by the following people in the production of this issue of *Ripperologist*: Paul Begg, Howard Brown, Stewart Evans, Wilf Gregg, Robin Odell, Stephen Ryder, and Eduardo Zinna. Thank you!

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# Internet Ripperology Comes of Age

EDITORIAL by CHRISTOPHER T GEORGE

It is exactly ten years since Stephen P Ryder began the first nascent *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* website in January 1996, and for which Mr Ryder was honoured at the British Ripper convention in Brighton a year ago last month. I actually stumbled upon the website by accident because I was looking for something - anything - on the Web about the suburb of Aigburth in Liverpool near where I grew up, and up popped a listing for *Casebook* to do with the Maybricks and their residence at Battlecrease Mansion on Riversdale road, down the road from my grandparents' house on Aigburth Hall Avenue.

As they say, I have been hooked ever since. Besides getting involved in the *Casebook* forums and not inconsequently linking arms with a couple of two other US-based Ripperologists, Dave Yost and Christopher-Michael DiGrazia, to form a separate entity called *Casebook Productions, Inc*, through which we began the US journal on the Whitechapel murders, *Ripper Notes*, and the US Ripper conventions, I began to learn more about the case through the *Casebook*.

I suppose my experience is not dissimilar to many other numbers of other people who have come to the field in the last decade or so. I remember that one of the first things that I read on the *Casebook* was the report of a field trip to Connecticut to investigate the small town where Florence Maybrick died in old age in 1941. And I began to read more about the controversy about the Maybrick Diary which put James Maybrick into play as a possible Ripper suspect - even though all the indications are that the document itself is a hoax because it is not in Maybrick's known handwriting. Since then the number of original articles as well as transcriptions of press reports, inquest testimony, contemporary articles and images, has been impressive to the extent that *Casebook* has become an invaluable, even essential, resource for anyone doing research on the case.

Mr Ryder reports to me, ten years on from those early beginnings, 'Currently Google has around 14,500 pages indexed from the *Casebook*. There's no precise number really, since forums, etc. create different pages with essentially the same content. But if I had to hazard a guess as to actual pages of content, I'd say in the area of 4,000 on the *Casebook* proper. As of tonight [25 November] we have 2,568 different pages of press reports (one page equals a day of reporting from any one paper, so the actual number of "reports" is much higher).' And as of now, Mr Ryder says there are currently 1,600 members of *Casebook* although he noted that the number was actually reset at zero in January 2006 and that the numbers have been slowly rebuilding since.

One of the things that has impressed me is the growth of the 'Press Project' originally begun by Adrian M Phypers, nicknamed 'Viper.' Adrian, a licensed London tour guide and researcher, who unfortunately passed away in Spring 2003, was to anyone who knew him, a generous soul. Adrian sent me endless amounts of material on his own nickel as we say here in the United States as well as giving me tips on areas to research. For example, my enquiry into the mysterious death of the Jewish former Met policeman Richard Brown, who shot himself in Hyde Park on 16 November 1888, published as an article here in the *Rip (Ripperologist 49, September 2003)*, came from a tip from Viper. In any case, it was the vision of Viper to advise Stephen Ryder to form the 'Press Project' as well as his careful work in choosing volunteers to transcribe the various press reports, that has led to the thousands of press reports now available and that illuminate otherwise unseen areas of the case.

I have to admit that in some ways it is those out-of-the-way crannies and back alleys of the case that fascinate me as much as the undoubted thrill of the chase of trying to find out who the Ripper was. As with so many researchers, I rather think we may never know who the Ripper was. Thus the odd bits of information dug out by various researchers such as the intrepid Chris Scott, A P Wolf, John Savage, Robert Linford and David O'Flaherty (the latter three of course known for the recent 'Coroners' series here at the *Rip*), and freely and openly posted on the message boards at such places as *Casebook* and Howard Brown's *JtRforums.com* show how Internet Ripperology has grown in value and

generosity in the last ten years. Yes, there will always be the forum feuds there have always been (though hopefully properly policed, kept at a minimum), but the free exchange of information marks the real difference between researchers working in isolation, prior to the Internet, and the situation today.

Thus, we reported in the last issue Howard Brown's coup in obtaining the rights to put on his site for the first time, *This Man Was Jack The Ripper*, the 1958 unpublished manuscript written by the late British crime writer and journalist, Bernard O'Donnell. This resource, previously only available or even known to the few, is now freely and openly available for use by all researchers. On the *Casebook* discussion boards, following the publication of the interesting article in *Ripper Notes* 26 by David A Green naming poet John Evelyn Barlas (also known by his writing name of Evelyn Douglas) as a brand new Ripper suspect, numerous contributors added new information on where the suspect lived in 44 Hercules Buildings on the Lambeth Road as well as on his possible gravesite in the Glasgow Necropolis. On Mr Brown's site, a seemingly inconsequential item that Mr Linford posted was the original *Times* advertisement for a secretary for the Police Orphanage, for which suspect Roslyn D'Onston applied. The wording of the ad reveals that each applicant had to put up a bond of £200 to prove their *bona fides*, which lead to discussion of how hard up D'Onston really was if he possibly could come up with such money. Yes, the police orphanage ad is a very small and almost unimportant part of the case, and certainly D'Onston is far from being everyone's favourite suspect, but the more we know about each suspect, the further along the road we are in gaining a full understanding of the case, I think. So, onward and upward with Internet Ripperology!

Casebook: Jack the Ripper as it first appeared

## Casebook: Jack the Ripper

Produced By Stephen Ryder, Mark Dooling & Chris Herbert



WARNING: This site contains reports and photographs that some viewers may find disturbing.

## The Casebook Conference



### THE FACTS

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# By Accident or Design?

## A Critical Analysis of the Murder of Catherine Eddowes

By SAM FLYNN



### Introduction

The horrific injuries inflicted by Jack the Ripper upon Catherine (Kate) Eddowes in the early morning of 30th September 1888 have been the subject of much discussion, and not a little controversy. Whereas some commentators have discerned no medical skill at all on the part of the murderer, it remains the opinion of others that her wounds were structured or conformed to some deliberate pattern. Some take this, together with the manner of Kate's evisceration, as evidence that her killer possessed a degree of surgical skill.

It is curious that this belief has persisted for so long in the specific case of Jack the Ripper, although it is fair to say that the popular media have played their part in sustaining the notion. The cinema, in particular, has kept the flame alive with its forays into Ripper territory, but also, more subtly, by preserving the archetype of the "good boy gone bad" elsewhere. With such iconic characters as Darth Vader, Hannibal Lecter and others achieving mass popularity, it's small wonder that we find the idea of Jack as "lapsed medic" so compelling.

In the case of each of these villains, as with the mythical "Dr Jack", we see considerable skills, power and knowledge diverted from the cause of goodness and redeployed in the service of evil. This is an idea that resonates at the very heart of human experience, the key to its appeal perhaps echoed in the ambivalent role of mother as provider and punisher. Small wonder, then, that we find the notion of Jack the Ripper as "saint-turned-sinner" so seductive, stubborn and widespread.

However ingrained those beliefs may be, a strong case can be made for casting them aside. This article seeks to demonstrate that the Ripper neither needed, nor exhibited any such surgical skill throughout this dreadful sequence of murders. We focus on the Mitre Square murder primarily because it was in this case, uniquely so in the Whitechapel series, that the medical testimony focused on the qualitative aspects of the wounds, and to this extent we are indebted to Dr Frederick Gordon Brown, who saved for posterity the true, vicious horror of the Ripper's technique. It is thus to Dr Brown's meticulous notes that we must first turn.

### Brown's Description of the Facial Wounds

The randomness and savagery of the Ripper's attack on Catherine Eddowes' features are readily apparent when one examines the medical evidence carefully. Dr Frederick Gordon Brown lists nine specific wounds to the face, only one of which lacks detail. Elsewhere, Brown's post-mortem description provides a great deal of information about the nature of the wounds, which enables us to interpret how they were probably inflicted.

A line-by-line examination of Brown's notes is therefore instructive, and they are summarised below:

**BROWN'S DESCRIPTION:** 1) A cut of about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch through the lower left eyelid dividing the structures completely through the upper eyelid on that side, there was a scratch through the skin on the left upper eyelid.

**WHAT WAS DESCRIBED:** What Brown makes clear is that the cuts on both eyelids were of slightly different character. The wound to the left eyelid comprised a vertical cut from the cheekbone upwards, which would have passed close to the vertical centre of the eye, and which trailed off to a mere scratch on the upper left eyelid.



*Facial wounds to Catherine Eddowes ©Jane Coram*

**2) Near to the angle of the nose the right eyelid was cut through to about ½ an inch.**

*In contrast to the above, the cut to the right eyelid seems to have been closer to the edge of the eye, near the bridge of the nose.*

**3) A sharp cut over the bridge of the nose extending from the left border of the nasal bone down near to the angle of the jaw on the right, across the cheek [and] into the bone and divided all the structures of the cheek except the mucous membrane of the mouth.**

*Brown describes a violent slash, drawing an almost-vertical knife with great force across and down Eddowes' face, that force increasing so much that, as the killer pulled from left to right, the tip of his knife penetrated the cheek bone on the right hand side.*

**4) The tip of the nose was quite detached from the nose by an oblique cut from the bottom of the nasal bone to where the wings of the nose join onto the face.**

*This is a separate cut to the nose, possibly the "return-stroke" of the previous diagonal slash from left cheek to right jaw, which goes in the reverse direction of the previous cut.*

**5) A cut from [the area where the wings of the nose join the face] divided the upper lip and extended through the substance of the gum over the right lateral incisor.**

*Brown describes another, smaller, cut to the right side of the face. This cut starts just above the right upper lip and splits it, also penetrating the gum. Again, this is suggestive of a "down-stroke" that once more goes in the opposite direction to the previous cut.*

**6) About 1/2 inch from the top of the nose was another oblique cut.**

*A random, comparatively insignificant, slash this time. Brown gives little detail on this.*

7) A cut on the right angle of the mouth as if by the cut of a point of a knife. The cut extended an inch and a half parallel with the lower lip.

*The way Dr Brown describes this suggests that the knife was inserted at the angle of the right side of the mouth and went forward in parallel with the lip, terminating at the midline of the lip. Note that this is the only suggestion in Brown's entire report that the point of the knife was used.*

8) On each side of the cheek a cut which peeled up the skin forming a triangular flap about an inch and a half.

*These wounds have been the subject of considerable discussion, but Dr Brown merely describes a single cut, one on either side, to the skin above both cheeks, which (NB) "peeled up" a triangular flap of skin.*

## Interpretation of Eddowes' Facial Wounds

From the above analysis, it is worth noting that, of the nine or so cuts to Eddowes' face, *most* appear to have been inflicted completely at random. Only the "inverted Vs" seem to have been deliberately placed, but this is almost certainly artefactual as we shall see. The rest is just so much slashing and scoring, far from symmetrical, and these mutilations aren't in any way delicate or "designed". Indeed, Jack appears to have been experimenting with Eddowes and, savage though they are, her facial wounds appear almost "playful", and certainly lacking in design or forethought.

Many authors have made the "clown's mask" analogy, or similar, to describe the mutilations, but it's very unlikely that Jack set out with any preconceived "pattern" in mind. Indeed, any pattern that emerged could just as easily have occurred by accident. The killer seems largely to have improvised and little of what Dr Brown reports suggests anything particularly controlled or deliberate. On the contrary, the killer was simply hacking across the features, inflicting random cuts and wielding his knife violently in different directions and angles, combining almost side-to-side slashes with a deep, scoring action on those occasions he cut through bone or gum.

The nicks to the eyelids were executed inconsistently and are differently placed—the one to the left eye penetrating the top eyelid and being more-or-less central, the one on the right cutting the lower eyelid only, off-centre and closer to the bridge of the nose. If a "deliberate" placement had been attempted, one would expect the wounds to have been more-or-less equidistant from the bridge of the nose, of somewhat similar length, and achieving a more consistent penetration into the underlying tissues. It is significant that they exhibit none of these qualities. In fact, it is as if Jack merely attempted to close Kate's eyes with the tip of his knife and, in the process, nicked the eyelids to varying degrees.

As to the rest of her facial mutilations, the cuts zigzag everywhere. As a by-product of one such cut, the tip of Eddowes' nose was sliced off. As a by-product of another, her upper lip and gum were cut through. There was a further, isolated, horizontal cut running parallel with the lower lip on the right hand side, but no corresponding cut on the left.

The vast majority of her facial wounds were clearly not placed at all, but randomly slashed into the skin. This is not to deny that the killer deliberately inflicted those wounds—of course he did, but only in the sense that he deliberately intended to mutilate. Beyond that, the manner of execution was almost entirely random and any perceived symmetry was a mere by-product of the natural symmetry and topology of the face.

## The Inverted "V" Wounds

The infamous "inverted V" shapes left by Jack on Eddowes' face are often perceived as purposefully "drawn" on the skin, somehow "deliberately" pointing to Kate's eyes. These, it would seem, pose a challenge to the notion that the attack was entirely random. However, it is almost certain that the cuts were simply an artefact of a single horizontal slice into flesh stretched over a curved bony surface. The wounds clearly did *not* comprise a delicate "/" followed by an equally delicate "\" wrought by the point of a knife, as is sometimes believed. If the killer were simply to slice downwards into both cheeks, it's almost inevitable that an "inverted V" shaped tongue of skin would be peeled up. A similar effect may be demonstrated by cutting into the surface of an apple, or orange, with a very sharp knife.

Dr Brown's description plainly agrees with this view, in that he describes the wounds to the cheeks as "raised flaps of skin". This effect could only be achieved by the knife moving *horizontally* downwards under the skin from the apex to the base of the "inverted V". Given the precision of Brown's description elsewhere, one has no reason to doubt that this is exactly what he saw. Indeed, there may be a clue in the mortuary photographs of Catherine Eddowes, where one notes that the apex of the "V" wounds are *rounded*, and that the cuts to the cheeks are more parabolic than angular. Such wounds would of course appear to point towards the eyes, but appears to be purely coincidental considering the positions of the wounds in question.



*Inverted Vs on Eddowes' face - 'peeled up triangular flaps of skin' ©Jane Coram*

In conclusion, little about Kate's facial wounds provides much compelling evidence that Jack took much time over them and most, if not all, the facial wounds inflicted on Eddowes have been shown to be jagged and frenzied.

### **Similarity of Wounds to Other Murders in the Series**

It is interesting to note that, although none of the medics attending the next murder gave as much detail about the *character* of the wounds as did Dr Brown, it is possible to discern precisely the same frenzied "technique" at work in the murder of Mary Kelly, albeit on a more terrible scale. Whilst I do not wish to enter into the minefield of debating the "canon" of Ripper murders here, it is nonetheless worth exploring briefly some of the similarities between the murders, not least because such a comparison may reveal further detail about the technique employed by the killer at Mitre Square.

There is an important and telling factor (previously overlooked, to my knowledge) linking the murders of Catherine Eddowes and Polly Nichols, which differs from the murders of Annie Chapman and Mary Kelly. The factor in question is the method by which the killer gained access to the abdomen. A careful reading of the medical and police testimony reveals that, whereas Eddowes' and Nichols' abdomens were attacked by means a single vertical cut, those of Chapman and Kelly were accessed by means of *three* detached flaps of flesh, as borne out by the medical evidence:

*Kelly: "The flesh from the abdomen was removed in three large flaps"*

*Chapman: "A flap of flesh from the abdomen was found over the right shoulder...  
Two other abdominal flaps were placed above the left shoulder in a large pool of blood"*



In both the Chapman and Kelly murders, where it is surely significant that the killer had more ambient light at his disposal, the killer chose to remove three “panels” of flesh from the abdomen, laying it completely open and thus more amenable to efficient disembowelment. In contrast, the single vertical long cut inflicted on Eddowes meant that Jack had comparatively little room to manoeuvre within her abdominal cavity. Of course, the amount of light may have been a factor, however the confined space might also partly explain why Jack was less successful in removing the uterus from his victim on this occasion than he had been in the case of Annie Chapman’s murder.

Just as with the Chapman murder, however, we find that Jack threw Eddowes’ small intestines over her shoulder, and whilst it isn’t specified in Chapman’s case, it is almost certain that the intestines lay above the right shoulder on both occasions, the ground above Chapman’s *left* shoulder apparently only containing two flaps of her belly wall in a pool of blood.

That notwithstanding, the known position of the intestines above Kate’s right shoulder is, I maintain, a strong indicator that the *facial mutilations preceded the attack on the abdomen*. As will be seen in the next section, Jack almost certainly needed to align himself with, if slightly beneath, Kate’s right shoulder in order to gain sufficient purchase to inflict the wounds to her face. He would have been severely hampered in such a position if the abdomen had already been emptied, as the intestines would have got in his way.

### Handedness and Positioning of the Killer

The facial and abdominal mutilations clearly indicate that Jack crouched or knelt to the right side of the corpse, with most of the blood having run away from him to Eddowes’ left. It is no coincidence that the trajectory of the main abdominal incision was from left to right, and the deepest cuts to the face, groin and thigh were on the right-hand side, where a right-hander positioned to the right of the body would have had more leverage.

There are significantly more mutilations on the right side of Eddowes’ face compared to the left, which again strongly suggests that Jack was positioned on the right side of the head when the wounds were inflicted. Further evidence of this may be gleaned from the fact that the facial wounds get deeper from left to right, and most of the really deep gashes slope down from cheek to jaw, penetrating the bone on the right cheek and gum.

Such a result would be difficult to achieve if Jack had been a right-hander crouched behind Eddowes’ head, pushing the knife away from him and holding the cranium awkwardly in his left hand to stop the head from rolling around. Logically, the effect becomes much easier to achieve if Jack had been at the right hand side of the body, crouching in line with or just below Eddowes’ shoulders, holding the head steady with his left hand clamped over her forehead.

Moving on to the abdominal incision, we find from Dr Brown’s account that the initial cut commenced below the sternum, went upwards a little (i.e. *upwards from beneath the sternum*), then downwards again, slicing obliquely into the ensiform cartilage (aka the xiphoid cartilage) at the base of the sternum. This detour in itself militates against any skill or deliberation on the part of the murderer—and the uppercut to the sternum appears to have been little more than a slip of the knife. The wound then continued downwards along the axis of the body in an almost straight line, with a little jag to the right, judging by the sketches and photographs, until it reached the navel. It then hooked



A jagged wound rakes from left to right  
©Jane Coram

around the navel (leaving it on a “tongue of skin”) a little towards the left, then continued on a more diagonal course to the right down to the pubic area.

It has been suggested that Jack crouched between Eddowes’ thighs and pulled the knife towards him, but this seems unlikely. Most of the main cut sweeps quite clearly from Eddowes’ left to her right side—i.e. it “shelves” precisely as you’d expect if a right-handed killer were crouching to Eddowes’ right. The tongue of flesh around the navel would have been little more than a slight wiggle of the knife, which (lest we forget) was extremely sharp. That “wiggle” would have been far more difficult to achieve if executed from between the legs.

The rest of the wound’s trajectory, comprising the long cut from navel to right ilium, would have entailed twisting the right hand into an extremely uncomfortable position if Jack were located between Eddowes’ legs whilst inflicting the wound. It would have been far more comfortable if the killer were cutting from his victim’s right side, and the direction taken by the downward cut from the navel would seem totally consistent with that which a right-hander would take.

It has also been suggested that Jack somehow crouched on the *left* side of the body, but there was precious little room between Kate’s left flank and the nearby wall, barely two feet in fact. If Jack had crouched there his position would have been extremely precarious and digging around with a knife would have posed a real risk of his losing his balance.

Furthermore, the removal of the kidney would have been particularly difficult from the left of the body, in that Jack would have had to have reached over the body cavity, with his wrist twisting round to allow him to angle the knife backwards towards the left renal artery. Irrespective of the killer’s handedness, it is clear that wielding the knife would have been extremely awkward in such a position. To compound matters, there was a large puddle of congealing blood that had oozed from the left side of Kate’s throat, which would not only have coated Jack’s feet, but the slippery mass would have made an already cramped position even more precarious. According to the medical evidence, there was some blood-tinged serum pooling to the *right* of Eddowes’ head, but this was neither as slippery nor as potentially footprint-yielding as the gelling, crimson pool on the other side.

In short, why would Jack inconvenience himself in the confined and bloody space to the left of the body, and why would he twist his wrist into all sorts of contortions operating from between her legs, when Jack had a virtually clear path if he was cutting from Kate’s right side? No, all the indications are that Jack was right-handed, and that he was positioned to the right of Kate’s body as he inflicted first the facial and then the abdominal mutilations.

## The Evisceration

Much has been made of the supposed skill evidenced by the evisceration performed on Eddowes, in particular reference to the removal of the kidney. This perception has almost certainly been bolstered by the statement of Dr Brown that the killer must have had “some anatomical knowledge”. However, in deference to Dr Brown, I think it only fair to point out that not once did he state that the killer possessed surgical *skill*. A careful reading of the inquest transcripts and verbatim press reports will confirm that Brown only ever refers to anatomical *knowledge* and any skill that was shown was clearly not of the order required of a medical man. In Dr Brown’s own words, someone “in the habit of cutting up animals” would have known as much.

Despite popular opinion to the contrary, the nephrectomy performed on the left kidney appears to have been pretty crude. There was a tongue-like flap cut into the abdominal aorta (which runs down past the renal arteries), stabs to the liver (part of which lies above the left kidney) and the spleen (directly above the left kidney). Whilst it is true that the kidney is “covered by a membrane”, it is possible that the kidney was a little more exposed, as Dr Brown indicates that the “membrane” (specifically, the peritoneum) may already have been partly cut, perhaps in the process of laying open the abdomen and removing the intestines. Brown’s notes clearly indicate that there were random jabs and stabs into the viscera and vasculature surrounding the region from which the kidney was removed.

It’s impossible to tell with any certainty, but a case could be made for the suggestion that the nephrectomy preceded the removal of the womb, for it will be argued that, in the process of excising the uterus, Jack inadvertently cut the lower end of the large bowel. The piece of colon removed and placed beside the body was in fact the descending colon, which is about two feet long in an adult female, and located on the left hand side of the body running “south” from the region of the left kidney to a point just above the sigmoid flexure and the rectum.

The sigmoid flexure was cut through and Brown’s description of its being “invaginated into the rectum very tightly” suggest a spasm, possibly caused by a contraction of the muscles at the point when Jack severed the colon. The autonomic nervous system continues to function for quite some time after death, and the reflexive contraction of muscles, such as those lining the bowel, is certainly possible. It seems possible, therefore, that when the colon was cut



through the sigmoid flexure simply contracted into the rectum of its own accord.

It is this cutting of the sigmoid colon that suggests that the "hysterectomy" was a bigger mess than might appear at first glance—the implication being that Jack inadvertently cut through the colon in the process of removing Eddowes' womb or its attachments. It is also highly probable that Jack's hands became contaminated by faeces at the point at which the colon was accidentally severed. If so, then it is possible that the kidney was removed before the uterus, as it's fair to assume that Dr Brown would have noted faecal contamination around the peritoneum near the left kidney if any such contaminants had been there.

We now move on to the removal of the uterus itself, which again offers strong clues that militate against the belief that Jack possessed surgical skill. One of the indicators of apparent "expertise" in the earlier Chapman murder was that the cut which removed the uterus and bladder had avoided cutting the rectum, leaving Chapman's colon intact. With Eddowes, however, there was clearly less successful operation on the uterus, which was nowhere near as cleanly removed as it had been in the case of the Hanbury Street murder. Even there, however, it's worth remembering that Jack hacked through two-thirds of the bladder even with better light at his disposal.

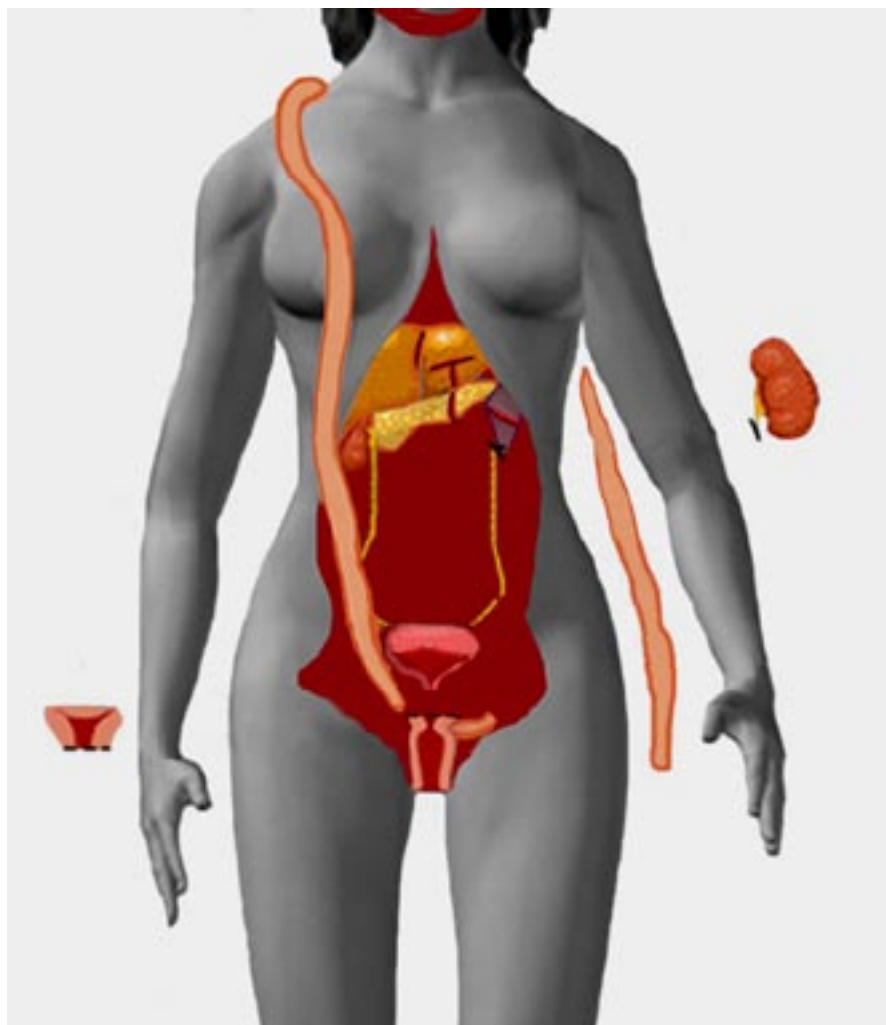
In contrast to the apparent clinical precision evidenced in the Chapman case, where the womb was liberated by a clean cut below the cervix, Eddowes' uterus was removed above the cervix, leaving a small "stump" of the womb still in the body. In the face of such evidence it is small wonder that the sigmoid colon, a bend in the intestine located above the rectum almost directly in line with the cervix, was cut through by accident.

The implication is that Jack's hands were "clean" when he removed the kidney, but became contaminated by faeces *afterwards*, when he botched the removal of the uterus and cut through the sigmoid colon. Perhaps Jack, in a fit of pique, then decided to cut the upper end of the descending colon in order to remove the intestine completely from the body. As we know, he then placed the offending article on the pavement between Kate's left flank and her left arm, in the process of which his hands would have become even more filthy.

### Other Mutilations (or Lack Thereof)

Some have questioned that Eddowes' murderer went on to kill Mary Kelly, pointing out that whereas in the latter case Kelly's arms and breasts were mutilated, we see no such pattern in the Mitre Square murder. However, it is surely significant that all the victims from Nichols through to Eddowes had voluminous quantities of clothing covering those body parts, whereas Kelly's upper body was naked (or at least flimsily-clad, depending on opinion), thus offering Jack his first opportunity to attack a victim's arms and thorax. It therefore comes as little surprise that no such thoracic mutilations were attempted on Katherine Eddowes.

We shouldn't overlook the fact that at least two cuts went down as far as Eddowes' thighs, both of them forming large flaps of skin that included both labia and other parts of the groin. Very similar wounds were later to be inflicted on Mary Kelly, albeit much more extensively and with even greater violence. It is worth considering that these wounds inflicted on Eddowes constituted the Ripper's first attempt at denuding the flesh on the thighs.



*Organs near the kidney jabbed and stabbed, the sigmoid flexure cut...  
the work of a trained hand?  
©Jane Coram*

## Timeline of the Events in Mitre Square

Taking the foregoing into account, a reasonable sequence of events for the night in question might be summarised as follows:

- 01:37:00 ... Lawende *et al* pass Eddowes and Jack outside Church Passage
- 01:38:00 ... Eddowes and Jack enter Mitre Square and walk to "Ripper's Corner"
- 01:39:00 ... Jack kills Eddowes. Crouching just below her right shoulder, he first mutilates her face
- 01:40:00 ... The jagged cut to the abdomen is inflicted, with Jack still positioned to the body's right
- 01:40:30 ... Evisceration starts. The small intestines are lifted over the shoulder
- 01:41:00 ... Perhaps on purpose, perhaps by accident, Jack decides to remove the kidney first
- 01:42:00 ... Jack begins to remove the uterus
- 01:42:30 ... He botches the operation and cuts through the colon by mistake
- 01:43:00 ... Perhaps in a fit of pique, he cuts the rest of the colon away and lays it at Kate's side
- 01:43:30 ... His hands contaminated by faeces, Jack cuts the piece of Kate's apron to wipe his hands
- 01:44:00 ... Perhaps sensing the arrival of PC Watkins, Jack hastily leaves Mitre Square

## Did the Mitre Square Murderer go on to Kill Mary Kelly?

It was Dr Thomas Bond's opinion that all five "canonical" murders had been conducted by the same hand, although some dissenting opinions have been voiced in the century or more since the Whitechapel Murders. Leaving aside the question of whether Jack had previously killed Liz Stride, some intelligent commentators have suggested that, compared to the murders up to and including Eddowes, the mutilations inflicted on Mary Kelly were crude in comparison.

However, in considering the foregoing evidence, it is difficult to argue against the fact that Eddowes *herself* was also crudely mutilated, as were Nichols and Chapman before her. The facial mutilations inflicted on Eddowes betoken little more than slipshod randomness and in their nature and method of execution they are entirely of a piece with the facial mutilations perpetrated on Kelly. If anything, Mary Kelly's killer did an even "better" job than he did on Eddowes, but only in the number of cuts and not, crucially, their style. Kelly's facial mutilations are identical in execution to the swift and crudely perpetrated slashing and scoring that we see in the Mitre Square murder.

Jack the Ripper was not methodical, and neither was he clinically skilled. If the killer had been truly methodical and clinical in each of the murders we'd perhaps expect to have seen only a cut to the throat, a single cut down the abdomen and organs possibly removed. Instead we see totally random cuts to the groin and abdomen, cuts to the upper thighs, stabs to the abdominal viscera remaining in the body, severed intestines, crudely excised organs, cuts to the face, nose, earlobe, and slashed lips and gums.

All these wounds are inflicted in varying combinations from Bucks Row through Miller's Court, getting progressively worse from one murder to another, whether by accident or by dint of circumstantial expediency. It bears repeating that, in each case (excepting the special case that constitutes the Stride murder), all the mutilations were equally crudely done.

As we have seen, it appears that Jack wasn't particularly fussy about the order in which the mutilations proceeded, and there is strong evidence to suggest that in the case of Katherine Eddowes, the face was attacked *first*, then the abdomen. There is a strong probability that such was the case, too, with the mutilation of Mary Kelly, but that will not be discussed here.

There were constraints of location and time in the first four canonical murders that militated against anything other than rapid disembowelment, and the most cursory disfigurement of those parts of the body that were already exposed to the open air—i.e. upper thighs, genitalia and face.

The absence of thoracic mutilations in these earlier murders was surely down to the fact that the other women were fully clothed "from the ribs up", a restriction absent in the case of Kelly. The selfsame logic accounts for the cuts to Kelly's forearms—all the other victims were wearing coat-sleeves. It would have been time-consuming and risky for Jack to remove all his victims' upper clothing in what were ostensibly public rights of way, so he refrained from doing so. In consequence we see no mutilation to the arms or the breasts until we get to Miller's Court, when circumstances permitted such wounds to be inflicted.



In summary, whilst it is clear that an “amateur” killed Mary Kelly, there is no evidence in her case that suggests that this “amateur” hadn’t killed before, and in a like manner, at Mitre Square.

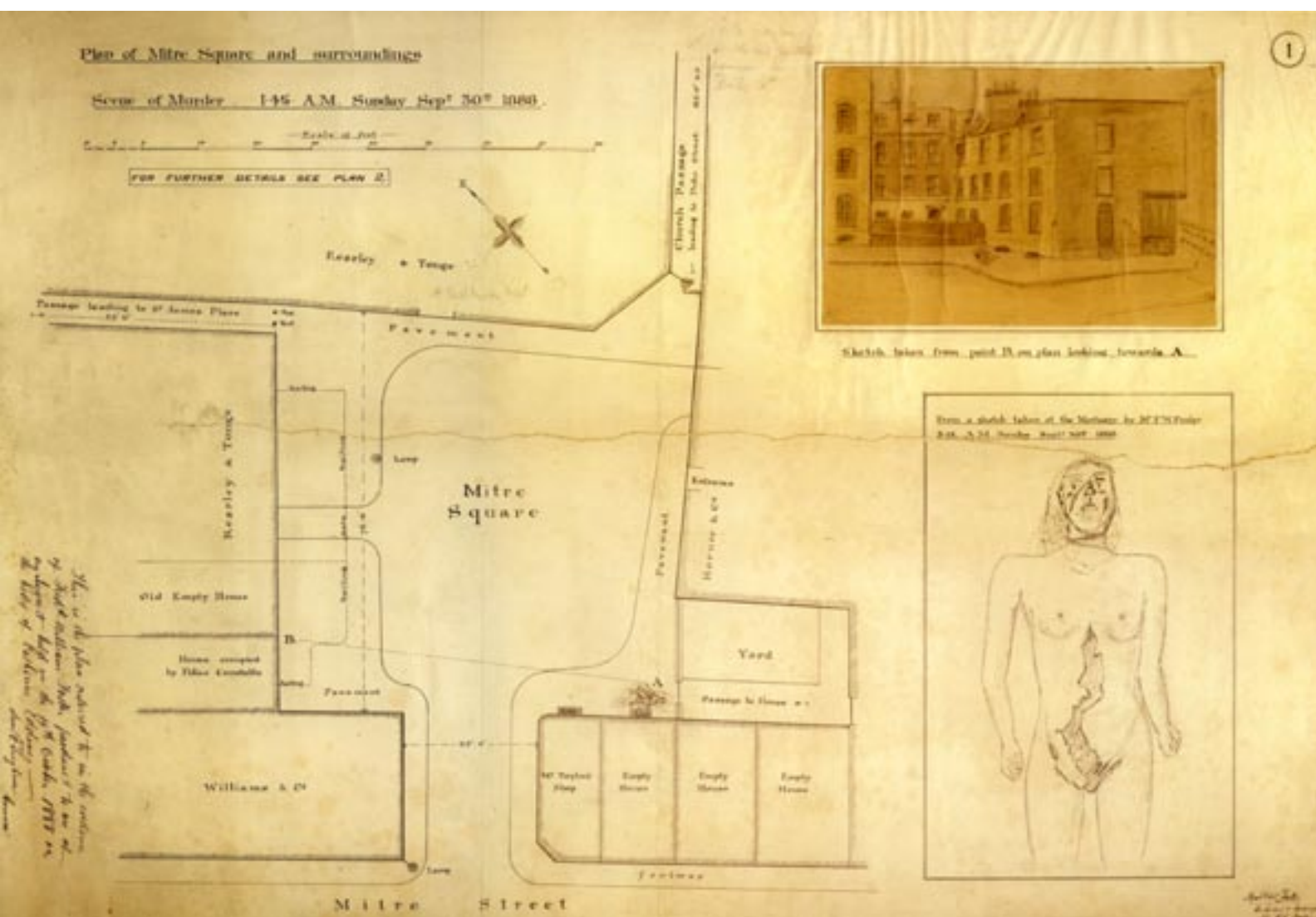
## Conclusion: By Accident or Design?

A close examination of the evidence, preserved for posterity by Dr Frederick Gordon Brown, leads inexorably to the conclusion that the amateur killer of Catherine Eddowes employed methods that were crude in the extreme. There is little or no evidence the killer possessed anything more than a broad knowledge of where the organs were located, and although Dr Brown believed that the killer possessed such knowledge, he never once stated that the killer possessed any surgical skill. To pretend otherwise, to perpetuate the notion that Kate died by the hands of some angel turned devil, or saint turned sinner, is to romanticise her death unnecessarily and seems somehow disrespectful.

Was Catherine Eddowes killed by accident? From her perspective, certainly. However, she was surely selected as a victim of Jack the Ripper by his design, and he clearly intended to mutilate and eviscerate her that night. Beyond that, however, any semblance of design, purpose or skill on the killer's part emphatically ends.

## Acknowledgements

My thanks go to Neil Bell and Donald Souden for their advice and encouragement, and to the many voices on *Casebook.org* for asking me to put this together. I would like to express my gratitude to Jane Coram for her excellent artwork, and for interpreting my rough sketches so well. My thanks also to the authors of the *Jack the Ripper Sourcebook*, and to the dedicated transcribers on the *Casebook* website who have pulled much of the medical and newspaper evidence together in one place. Finally, I'd like to thank Stephen P Ryder for creating the website, which has served as a sounding-board for these and other ideas for a number of years.



*Frederick Foster's sketch of Mitre Square and the injuries to Catherine Eddowes*

# Doing 'Write' by Annie

## A Closer Look at Annie Chapman's Murder

By JANE CORAM

Truthfully, *Portrait Of A Killer* by Patricia Cornwell is probably the only Jack the Ripper book on my shelves that doesn't have creases down the spine, although I do open it once or twice a year to free the odd trapped spider. Surprisingly, though, I did find a snippet in it that piqued my curiosity, although probably not for reasons Ms Cornwell would appreciate.

There have always been a number of unanswered questions concerning Annie Chapman's murder that could perhaps have warranted further investigation. Ms Cornwell seems quite certain of her answers to a couple of these questions, but doesn't appear to have any evidence to support her conclusions. If she had done a little more investigating she would have realised that in fact some of her convictions were not based on any kind of evidence at all.

Nor is Ms Cornwell the only offender—far too many writers have perpetuated mistakes about Chapman's murder. I couldn't help but wonder if there were any definitive answers to these facets of Annie's murder. Thus, I decided to examine what has been written and weigh that against the testimony of those involved. I certainly didn't get all the answers in my quest, but what I did find out was far more intriguing than even I had expected.

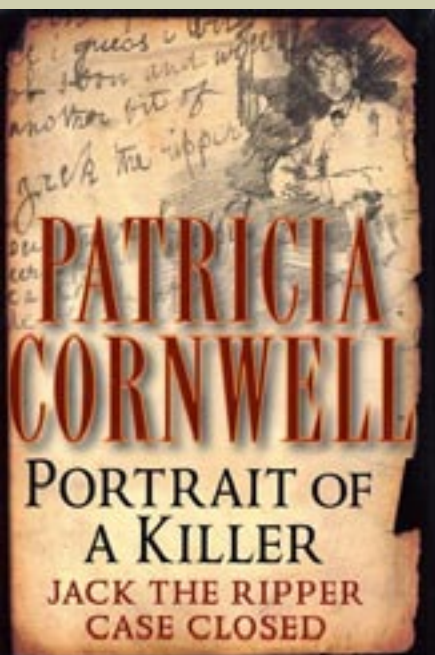
On Page 243 of *Portrait of a Killer* (paperback 2003 edition), Ms Cornwell writes:

*There are only a few statements I can make with certainty about Annie Chapman's murder: She was not 'suffocated' or strangled [sic] into unconsciousness, otherwise she would have had noticeable bruises on her neck; she was still wearing the handkerchief when she was murdered, and had her neck been compressed, the handkerchief most likely would have left an imprint or abrasion; her face may have appeared "swollen" because it was fleshy and puffy. If she died with her mouth open, her tongue may have protruded through the gap caused by her missing front teeth.<sup>1</sup>*

Ms Cornwell has made the confident assertion here that Annie was not suffocated or choked into unconsciousness without giving any independent evidence to support her statement. It also contradicts the medical evidence given at Annie Chapman's inquest by Dr Bagster Phillips, who conducted the post mortem, and the opinion given by the coroner, Mr Wynne Baxter, in his summing up. I thought it was worth investigating to see if there was actually any medical evidence to show that suffocation could be effected without

leaving marks on someone's neck, and if Ms Cornwell did have some grounds for making this bold claim.

Obviously the best place to start looking for an answer to this question would be to look more closely at Dr Bagster Phillips testimony at the inquest, which began on September 10th 1888 at the Working Lads' Institute, Whitechapel Road. Mr Wynne Baxter opened the inquiry into the circumstances attending the death of Annie Chapman, a widow, whose body was found horribly mutilated in the back yard of 29, Hanbury Street, Spitalfields, on 8th September 1888. The Police were represented by Inspector Abberline, of the Criminal Investigation Department, and Inspector Helson, J Division.



<sup>1</sup> *Portrait of a Killer-Jack the Ripper-Case Closed*. Patricia Cornwell-Paperback edition 2003 Time Warner Paperbacks. Page 243. par.3





*Reconstruction of the back yard at 29 Hanbury Street, showing Annie in situ.*

On Day 3, Thursday, September 13th, 1888 Dr Phillips made the following statement:

*The face was swollen and turned on the right side, and the tongue protruded between the front teeth, but not beyond the lips; it was much swollen... From these appearances I am of the opinion that the breathing was interfered with previous to death, and that death arose from syncope, or failure of the heart's action, in consequence of the loss of blood caused by the severance of the throat.*<sup>2</sup>

Now although Dr Phillips does not state specifically here that Annie was suffocated, the coroner, Wynne Baxter, does give more information in his summing up on September 26th, 1888: 'He [her killer] pressed her throat, and while thus preventing the slightest cry, he at the same time produced insensibility and suffocation.'<sup>3</sup>

In fairness to Ms Cornwell, the coroner was giving an opinion here and was not qualified to give medical evidence. Looking at Dr Phillips' testimony as it stands here, he merely says that Annie's breathing was interfered with before death, which could mean a myriad of things. However, the coroner does state quite specifically that Annie's throat was pressed, which caused insensibility and suffocation.

Ms Cornwell was right to highlight the presence of the scarf on Annie's neck as being of importance. According to the testimony of Timothy Donovan, the deputy keeper at Crossingham's Common Lodging House, as given at the inquest, Annie was indeed wearing two scarves when she left the lodging house. '*She bought it (the scarf) of a lodger, and she was wearing it when she left the lodging-house. She was wearing it three-corner ways, placed round her neck, with a black woollen scarf underneath. It was tied in front with one knot.*'

<sup>2</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, Friday, September 14th, 1888, Page 3

<sup>3</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, Thursday, September 27th, 1888, Page 2

It would seem rather odd to me that if she were wearing two scarves (although the muffler is not mentioned again), that they were not used to strangle her if that was her killer's intent. The inquest clearly shows that the tricornered scarf was loose around her neck, but it appears her killer didn't use it as a weapon. Could her killer have had a better method?

The swollen tongue is an extremely important clue here, although Ms Cornwell omits to mention it at all. Thankfully both the coroner and Dr Phillips felt it important enough to highlight it, and it demolishes Ms Cornwell's statement that Annie was not suffocated into unconsciousness.

The Coroner asked at the inquest:

*Q. The thickening of the tongue would be one of the signs of suffocation?*

*A. Dr Phillips: Yes. My impression is that she was partially strangled.' [In some newspaper reports this is rendered as 'suffocated'.]*



*Dr Phillips examines the body*

The phrase 'partially strangled or suffocated' is interesting. Is it possible to partially strangle or suffocate someone? It might seem a contradiction in terms. In fact, one would be inclined to put more credence in those newspaper reports that used suffocated rather than strangled because to strangle means to choke or suffocate to death. One can no more be "partially strangled" than one can be "partially pregnant" and Dr Phillips would have known that.

One method that seems to be quite a good possibility for rendering someone unconscious without leaving marks is the 'Blood Choke', a technique used in martial arts. Does it, though, fulfil the other criteria needed to fit in with Dr Phillips' inquest testimony? *Wikipedia*, the universal antidote for the layman in distress, was invaluable here: 'A blood choke or carotid restraint specifically refers to a chokehold that compresses one or both carotid arteries and/or the jugular veins without compressing the airway, hence causing cerebral ischemia and a temporary hypoxic condition in the brain.' <sup>4</sup>

Basically, the attacker uses his hands or arm to cut off the blood supply to the brain temporarily by compressing the main arteries and vein in the neck, but not the windpipe. That would fit in entirely with Wynne Baxter's statement that Annie's killer pressed her throat to render her unconscious. As described:

*A well-applied blood choke leads to unconsciousness in 8-14 seconds, and if released, the subject regains consciousness spontaneously in 10-20 seconds.* <sup>5</sup>

That sounds like a very likely possibility for one method of interfering with Annie's breathing, but is the chokehold classed as attempted strangulation or suffocation?

Firstly, the same entry points out that in the martial arts field Blood Chokes are considered safe for practice and application. That would suggest that they in themselves do no lasting damage. This would conform completely to there being no marks found on Annie's neck. Also, Dr Phillips' use of the terms he used to describe the phenomenon in Annie's case might seem quite justified, because that same entry points out that the blood choke is classed as suffocation in forensics. It is often used in conjunction with smothering by putting the hand over the victim's nose and mouth, thus hastening the process considerably and rendering the victim even more helpless and terrified.

But what about the phrase 'partial stangulation'?

From *wikipedia* again: 'In most martial arts, the term 'chokehold' or 'choke' is used for all types of grappling holds that strangle... In Judo technical terminology, blood chokes are referred to as 'strangleholds' or 'strangles' while air chokes are called 'chokeholds' or 'chokes'. In forensics the term 'strangle' and 'stranglehold' designate any type of neck compression, while being referred to as 'neck holds' in law-enforcement.' <sup>6</sup>

It also points out that it is quite possible for someone to be 'partially suffocated' and the term is legitimate.

The point is that unconsciousness, which is what we are talking about here, happens in less than 10 seconds. It doesn't say it *might* lead to unconsciousness in under 10 seconds. It *will* lead to it, no ifs or buts. This does seem one viable candidate for the method used to subdue Annie, although of course there are others. It does prove that Ms Cornwell's opinion that Annie was not suffocated or strangled because there were no marks on Annie's neck is completely unacceptable.

<sup>4</sup> Chokehold ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blood\\_choke](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blood_choke))

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid





*Reconstruction showing one possible position that Annie's killer may have been in as he knelt down to slit her throat.  
Note: The position of the tip of the knife is not intended to indicate an insertion point.*

Annie was a very sick woman, so sick in fact that she probably would not have lived more than a few more months. Putting a hand over her mouth and nose or an arm across her throat for far less than a minute would probably have been enough to render her unconscious without any kind of a struggle. Moreover, looking back at that paragraph of Ms Cornwell's it's clear that she has also got it wrong in stating which teeth were missing as well. This totally scuppers her argument about the tongue protruding through the gap because it was unhindered by any teeth.

Dr Phillips at the inquest stated: *'The front teeth were perfect as far as the first molar, top and bottom and very fine teeth they were.'* So there was no gap in the front of Annie's teeth through which a tongue, swollen or otherwise could protrude. In fact her front teeth were in excellent condition.

Ms Cornwell continues:

*The cuts to her throat, severed her windpipe, rendering her unable to make a sound. Within seconds he could have had her on the ground and yanked up her clothing to slice open her abdomen. It takes no time or skill to disembowel a person. It doesn't take a forensic pathologist or surgeon to find the uterus, ovaries, and other internal organs.<sup>7</sup>*

Well I am sure everyone will have their own thoughts on that, but looking at the possibility of Annie's throat being cut whilst standing up, there is ample evidence that this is a total *impossibility*.

If we first look at Dr Phillips' inquest statement and the coroner's summing up again, it is quite clear that Annie's throat was cut whilst on the ground. It doesn't take a forensic pathologist to read a simple inquest statement either. At the inquest, Dr Phillips said:

*The throat was dissevered deeply. I noticed that the incision of the skin was jagged, and reached right round the neck... The incisions of the skin indicated that they had been made from the left side of the neck on a line with the angle of the jaw, carried entirely round and again in front of the neck, and ending at a point about midway between the jaw and the sternum or breast bone on the right hand. There were two distinct clean cuts on the body of the vertebrae on the left side of the spine. They were parallel to each other, and separated by about half an inch. The muscular structures between the side processes of bone of the vertebrae had an appearance as if an attempt had been made to separate the bones of the neck. There are various other mutilations of the body, but I am of the opinion that they occurred subsequently to the death of the woman and to the large escape of blood from the neck... death arose from syncope, or failure of the heart's action, in consequence of the loss of blood caused by the severance of the throat.*

<sup>7</sup> *Portrait of a Killer-Jack the Ripper-Case Closed.* Patricia Cornwell.  
Paperback edition 2003 Time Warner Paperbacks. Page 246. par.1



For someone to suggest that a throat can be cut as severely as this, even scoring the vertebrae, whilst someone is standing up, is quite ludicrous. Just looking at the scenario in more detail, if Annie's killer had cut her throat whilst standing up, she would have collapsed as a dead weight into his arms, blood pouring from the deeply severed throat, whilst he manoeuvred himself to lower her in the confined space between the stone steps and the fence where her body was found.

Suggestions have been put forward that if someone is dead or unconscious the blood flow is lessened to such an extent that hardly any blood escapes from the wound. It is, however, a fallacy that once you render an animal or person unconscious and then cut the throat only a few drops of blood will appear. It will flow out, and if anyone was standing up while having their throat cut blood would flow down the front of them. It would, go everywhere while they were being lowered to the ground. Yet there was no blood down the front of the victim's clothes, as one would have expected if Annie had been killed standing up.

Another point put forward is that if Annie's head had lolled forwards as the throat was cut, then the throat wound would have been sealed by the weight of the head falling forward and no blood would have escaped. If any of these suggestions are viable, there is still one insurmountable drawback. Annie's throat was cut twice—right back to the vertebrae—with such force it almost decapitated her. Just to effect those two cuts is impossible in a standing position, and all the more while trying to support the dead weight of the victim with one free hand.

Of course, one neck-cut of that savage nature would have been enough to kill his victim. Jack obviously made the other cut for some other reason; we will never really know why, but can only guess. One supposition, looking at the evidence, would be that the second cut was part of the mutilations. She was certainly already dead when he inflicted the second cut and of course it's silly to say that he didn't know she was. Her head was practically hanging off. I doubt if anyone would think that she might suddenly revive again and start causing trouble.

Is there any independent evidence to support the inquest testimony that Annie's throat was cut whilst she was on the ground? Ample. If we look at Ms Cornwell's next sentence we have the foundation of one very good piece of evidence that proves Annie's throat was cut whilst she was horizontal. Cornwell writes: *'Someone with a severed neck should lose most of his or her blood—approximately seven or eight pints. Quite a lot of blood could have soaked into Annie's many layers of dark, thick clothing.'*<sup>8</sup>

Only it didn't. We do know that in the case of Mary Ann Nichols, the killer's previous victim, there was a surprisingly small amount of blood under her body; an estimated wineglass full. However, it was found later that much of her blood had soaked into the back of her clothes, to such an extent that the mortuary attendants had to cut the fabric apart because it had congealed together so solidly. This was not the case with Annie Chapman. The one thing that is certain, though, is that Mary Ann Nichol's throat was cut whilst she was lying down, as was Annie's. Like Annie, her throat had been cut twice with terrible severity. There is no question about this as the blood from the arterial spray would have covered the front of her clothes and not the back. Just to confirm this, the evidence given by Inspector Chandler leaves no margin of doubt on the condition of Annie's clothes: *'Deceased wore a black skirt. There was a little blood on the outside. The two petticoats were stained very little; the two bodices were stained with blood round the neck, but they had not been damaged... The stockings were not bloodstained.'*<sup>9</sup>

So it would seem quite apparent that Annie's blood did not soak into her clothing as it had with Mary Ann Nichols. Dr Phillips explains what happened to the large quantity of blood that escaped from Annie's dissevered throat, saying: *'There was a large quantity of blood, with a part of the stomach above the left shoulder... the blood had mainly flowed from the neck, which was well clotted.'*<sup>10</sup>

It is quite clear from this that the blood did not flow from the neck until she was on the ground. There are two possible reasons for the blood collecting under the left shoulder. The first is that Annie's body was leaning to the left when her throat was cut, so of course the flow of blood would have gone to the left of the body. Or, possibly, because the throat was cut from left to right, the blood escaped from that side first and went to the left. Of course it could well have been a combination of the two. There was a marked lack of blood on the front of Annie's clothes. Ms Cornwell seems to have an explanation for this: *'Arterial blood would have spurted and could have soaked into the earth some distance away from her.'*<sup>11</sup>

8 *Portrait of a Killer-Jack the Ripper-Case Closed*. Patricia Cornwell. Paperback edition 2003 Time Warner Paperbacks. Page 247. par.2

9 *The Daily Telegraph*, Friday, September 14th, 1888, Page 3

10 *The Daily Telegraph*, Friday, September 14th, 1888, Page 3

11 *Portrait of a Killer-Jack the Ripper-Case Closed*. Patricia Cornwell. Paperback edition 2003 Time Warner Paperbacks. Page 247, par.2

Presumably, this spurt conveniently avoided the paving stones and slabs covering the whole yard and went only between the cracks; the earth that was there was light coloured and covered with stones. The police didn't report any blood anywhere, even though they examined the yard zealously. There was no blood anywhere in the yard, except a small amount on the wall and fence close to Annie's head at almost ground level.

Do these spots and smears of blood give us any real indication of the position Annie was lying in when her throat was cut? Ms Cornwell leaps to the rescue with some more gems from her treasure trove: *'Since we do not know the number, shape, and size of the blood spatters, we can speculate only that they could not have been caused by arterial bleeding unless Annie was already 'on the ground while her carotid artery or arteries spurted blood.'*<sup>12</sup>

Except that we do know with reasonable accuracy how many blood spots there were and the sizes of them from the ever accommodating Dr Phillips:

*On the back wall of the house, between the steps and the palings, on the left side, about 18in from the ground, there were about six patches of blood, varying in size from a sixpenny piece to a small point, and on the wooden fence there were smears of blood, corresponding to where the head of the deceased laid, and immediately above the part where the blood had mainly flowed from the neck, which was well clotted.*<sup>13</sup>

Inspector Chandler thoughtfully provides even more information: *'The blood-stains at No. 29 were in the immediate neighbourhood of the body only. There were also a few spots of blood on the back wall, near the head of the deceased, 2ft from the ground. The largest spot was of the size of a sixpence. They were all close together.'* Admittedly, he only says 'about', but that is vastly different than the inference that we don't have a clue what they were like. I would say that is a fair description—certainly enough to work on if you know anything about forensics.

This small amount of blood has been attributed to arterial spray caused by the blood's pressure forcing the fluid outwards with some velocity as her throat was cut. As the fence was on the left hand side of Annie's body and the throat was cut from left to right, then it would seem logical that the arterial spray would shoot to the left, as in fact it appears to have done. The small splatters on the back wall of the house could have come either from the actual act of throat-cutting or possibly from the action of her killer's knife post mortem as he inflicted the body mutilations and the blood splashed outwards.

Surely if her throat had been cut whilst standing up and conscious, the blood spray would have been all over the fence, probably over most of the yard, and not confined to the immediate vicinity of the supine body? The small amount of blood on the wall was only two feet or less from the ground. The blood on the fence was only smears, possibly caused as her killer brushed against it whilst performing the mutilations.

This vast amount of material from source documents, newspapers and independent medical experts to support the conclusion that Annie Chapman's throat was indeed cut whilst she was lying down doesn't seem to have impacted greatly on Ms Cornwell, who manages to suspect a great deal for one totally ignoring all the available evidence: *'I suspect she was attacked while she was standing, and the deep cuts to her abdomen were made when she was on her back.'*<sup>14</sup>

Earlier Ms Cornwell said that her throat was cut and then she was lowered to the ground, so unless Annie obliged her killer by making herself a cosy little bed in the alcove and tucking herself in, then she was certainly attacked whilst she was standing—but that doesn't mean that her throat was cut whilst she was vertical. Furthermore, I would have thought that most people might consider trying to surgically remove someone's uterus whilst they were standing up, fully dressed in voluminous layers of clothes, slightly cumbersome to say the least.

Coroner Wynne Baxter confirms that he does not believe Annie Chapman had her throat cut whilst standing up, if any further evidence is needed:

*There is no evidence of any struggle. The clothes are not torn. Even in these preliminaries, the wretch seems to have known how to carry out efficiently his nefarious work. The deceased was then lowered to the ground, and laid on her back; and although in doing so she may have fallen slightly against the fence, this movement was probably effected with care. Her throat was then cut in two places with savage determination, and the injuries to the abdomen commenced.*

Ms Cornwell may have won awards for her writing skill, but I don't think she would get one for research judging by any the above. She has obviously spent the \$10 million allocated for research elsewhere. Perhaps she should have invested in a transcript of the inquest, because all of the needed evidence can be found there.

12 *Portrait of a Killer-Jack the Ripper-Case Closed*. Patricia Cornwell. Paperback edition 2003 Time Warner Paperbacks. Page 248, par.1

13 *The Daily Telegraph*, Friday, September 14th, 1888, Page 3

14 *Portrait of a Killer-Jack the Ripper-Case Closed*. Patricia Cornwell. Paperback edition 2003 Time Warner Paperbacks. Page 248, par.1

That paragraph from *Portrait of a Killer*, though did trigger a string of thoughts about what might have actually happened in those last minutes of Annie Chapman's life, and it did raise another question that I had not considered before. If Annie was rendered unconscious by her assailant pressing her throat to restrict the flow of blood to her brain, then is it possible that she was beginning to return to consciousness when her killer cut her throat? The blood choke and similar techniques seem to render the victim unconscious for somewhere between 15 and 20 seconds—unless the pressure is continued. It would seem unlikely that her killer would have been able to maintain the constriction to her throat whilst he was lowering her down without some difficulty. If he did release the pressure, then 15-20 seconds is not that long a time in which to lower Annie to the ground and cut her throat. Is there any evidence that she might have been aware of what was happening at that time?

If we look at the testimony of James Kent, a packing-case maker who lived at 20, Drew's Blocks, Shadwell, given on Day 2 of the inquest, Wednesday, September 12th, 1888, he provides some very thought-provoking testimony. I personally view James Kent as a very credible witness for several reasons. Here is his testimony from *The Daily News*, 13th September, reporting on the inquest of the 12th. It gives more detail than some of the other accounts:

*Q. The Coroner: Did you see the body of a woman?*

*A. James Kent: I did. She was lying in the yard between the back door steps and the fence. Her head was towards the house but not against it. She was lying flat on the ground. Her clothes were thrown back, and you could see her knees. Her face was visible. I did not go into the yard but I went to look at her twice. I do not think anybody went into the yard until the inspector (Chandler) arrived.*

*Q. Coroner: Could you see she was dead?*

*A. Kent: Yes; she had some kind of handkerchief round her neck which seemed "soaked" into her throat. Her face and hands were smeared with blood, as if she had struggled. She looked as if she had been sprinkled with water or something. I did not touch her.*

*Q. Coroner: What do you mean by a struggle?*

*A. Kent: Well, she looked as if she had fought with her hands while lying on her back—as if she had fought for her throat. Her arms were bent with the hands towards the upper part of her body. There were marks of blood on her legs, but I did not see any running blood.*

*Q. Coroner: Was there running blood on her clothes?*

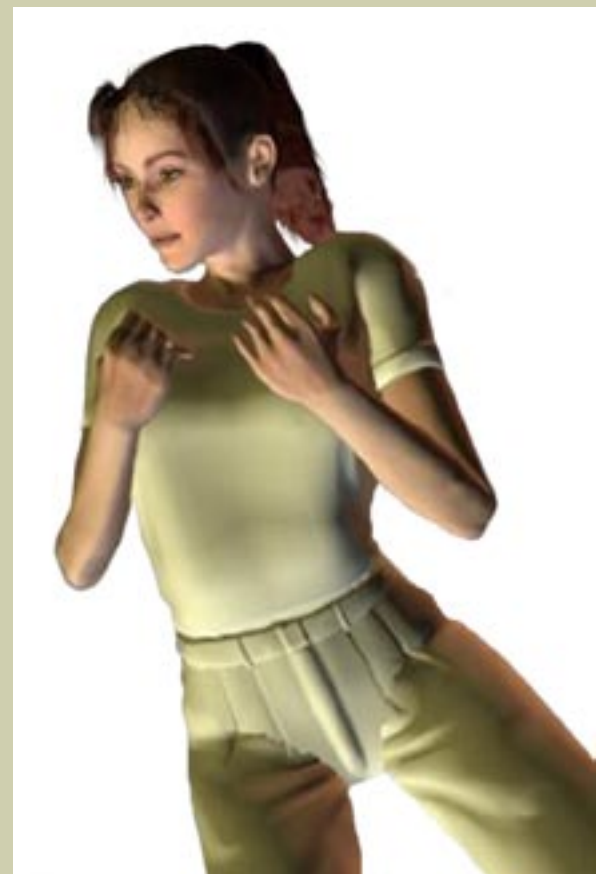
*A. Kent: Well, sir, I did not notice. I was too frightened to look very particularly.*

The first thing I noticed was that Kent looked at Annie's body twice, which would seem to suggest to me that had a good chance to register what he was seeing, even if he didn't wholly understand the full implications of it. He noticed that the handkerchief around her neck had soaked into the wound. The coroner actually asked Kent if there had been a struggle and Kent didn't just put forward an unsolicited opinion, so that part of his testimony was important. The police and coroner obviously thought that it should be included as important.

The next point is that Kent thought it looked as if her body had been sprinkled with something. He obviously saw something, although what it was he saw is uncertain. It seems unlikely that he would make something like that up. It was an observation, plain and simple.

It is clear he couldn't see the abdominal mutilations because her knees were up and the skirt and apron obstructed his view of those, although he did see the intestines over her shoulder. He mistook which shoulder, probably because he was dangling over the top of the steps and not standing beside the body. He couldn't see the blood under her neck, again because he was looking from the wrong angle and it was underneath her.

He was cautious about saying he had seen things that he knew he had not seen, but as far as I can see this account gives him much more credibility as it records the whole conversation and not just reported speech. He was not the only one in the yard at the time. He couldn't lie about it on oath, even if he had wanted to, because there were others there that saw the same thing. It was simply that he was called to testify and they were not, possibly because he seemed the most observant and articulate.



*Reconstruction showing the approximate position of Annie's hand as given in James Kents' testimony (from above)*



This does beggar the question—if Annie was already dead, then what were her hands doing up in that position with blood on them? The answer is unfortunately obvious. She was lowered to the ground insensible, but just started to revive as her killer cut her throat. That was her pathetic attempt to defend herself. Common sense dictates that if someone puts up a struggle for their life, however ineffectual, they are still alive. If Annie's throat had been cut when she was standing up, then she would have been lowered down and her hands would have been at her sides with no blood on them. She certainly wouldn't have put up a fight.

Of course, James Kent only thought it looked to him as if there might have been a (feeble) struggle, feeble simply because there were no signs of a violent one. I think the main point for me, though, is that if her throat had been cut whilst she was standing up, it seems unlikely that her hands would have fallen naturally into the position that Kent describes in his testimony. I find it hard to believe that her fingers would have remained clawed during the throat-cutting and lowering process. However, if her hands were in that position when her throat was cut, it seems very likely that her fingers would have remained clawed for some time after death and perhaps indefinitely once rigor mortis set in.

There are, however, more anomalies surrounding this report by James Kent about the placement of Annie's arms. Annie's hands appear to have moved between the time that Kent saw her and the time that Inspector Chandler and Dr Phillips examined her. There is no question, if the testimonies of James Kent and other witnesses are compared, that her hands had changed position fairly dramatically.

Dr Phillips describes the position of Annie's arms thus on his first examination at the scene of the crime:

*The left arm was across the left breast, and the legs were drawn up, the feet resting on the ground, and the knees turned outwards.* He doesn't mention the position of the right arm at all, but Inspector Chandler does fill in some of the gaps for us. Inspector Chandler stated that: *'Her face was turned on the right side, and her left hand rested on the left breast. The right hand was lying down on the left side.*

Initially, I found this description of Annie's right hand being down by her left side a trifle confusing. How could someone's right hand be down by their left side? Either because it was draped across her waist or just below it, as the hip is the natural place for the hand to fall when draped across the body like that. See reconstruction opposite.

Using the two statements together, it is clear that they do agree on the position of the left hand and it would seem very likely that Annie's right arm was lying down at her left side by the time they examined her. Phillips' expression in describing Annie's left hand is an interesting one. He describes it as being 'placed' over her left breast; Chandler uses the word, 'rested.' Both of which suggest a more peaceful position.



*Reconstruction showing the approximate position of Annie's hands as given in Inspector Chandler's testimony.*

Unless Kent were totally wrong (which is possible of course), then within a few minutes she went from a position that suggested a struggle to one that gives the impression of repose. Obviously, we can only use the witness testimony to decide what we think is correct, and I personally feel that if Kent, Chandler and Phillips were all giving accurate testimony, the hands appear to have been moved for some reason. It would appear to me that the left hand has hardly changed at all; perhaps just dropped downwards slightly onto the breast, making it look more relaxed and less defensive. This is quite easily accounted for just by her elbow slipping slightly as people passed by.

The right arm seems harder to account for, although again it could well be that it simply fell down into that position because of movement around the body. A slight jog could have caused it to fall downwards and naturally it would have ended up where Chandler reports it as being. If the elbow slipped outwards slightly, that is exactly the trajectory it would take. Although Chandler did locate a piece of sacking to cover Annie's body with until Dr Phillips arrived, he made his observation of the position of Annie's arms before he covered her up, so the change in position could not be explained by the sacking causing movement to the arms.

Is there any other information that might shed some light on what could have happened to Annie's arm position? If

we re-read the post mortem report from Phillips, on his first examination of Annie he makes this comment: *'The body was cold, except that there was a certain remaining heat, under the intestines, in the body. Stiffness of the limbs was not marked, but it was commencing.'* So it seems that rigor mortis was starting to set in when Phillips examined Annie, but only the very beginnings of it.

Phillips did not arrive until 6:30am and probably started the examination a few minutes after. The stiffness was only just commencing at that time, which means that when James Kent saw her at about 6:12am it would have been even less noticeable. The position in which he found Annie was obviously the one that she was in at the moment she died, and that would have been obviously pre-rigor mortis, unless rigor mortis set in before she died.

I found some useful information on rigor mortis [on this website](#).

It actually dispelled a great many misconceptions I had about the effects of rigor mortis after death and how it would have affected the position of Annie's arms after death.

Rigor mortis can be used to help estimate time of death. The onset of rigor mortis may range from 10 minutes to several hours, depending on factors including temperature (rapid cooling of a body can inhibit rigor mortis, but it occurs upon thawing). Maximum stiffness is reached around 12-24 hours post mortem. Facial muscles are affected first, with the rigor then spreading to other parts of the body.

It would seem from this that rapid cooling of the body can inhibit rigor mortis, and obviously because of the extent of the damage to Annie's abdomen, her body would have cooled far more rapidly than if she had just been left un mutilated. If the temperature is below 10 degrees C then it will stave off the onset of rigor mortis for a much longer time.

But, even though rigor mortis was just commencing, it would make no difference at all to how the arms might have changed position between Kent seeing her and Phillips' examination, nor does it explain why her hands were in the position they were in when Kent found her.

A document from Dundee University's Department of Forensic Medicine<sup>15</sup> was very helpful indeed, because I had always thought that rigor could cause limbs to move from the position they were in at death. It seems that this is a fallacy and that the body will set in the position it was in except in very exceptional circumstances. The only way the limbs can change position is if they are moved by an outside force, such as another person or movement against the body by some object. This makes a great deal of difference in Annie's case.

At two o'clock that Saturday afternoon Dr Phillips went to the labour-yard of the Whitechapel Union Infirmary to further examine the body and make the usual post mortem investigation. He was surprised to find that the body had been stripped, was lying ready on the table and had been partially washed, which he complained would seriously hampered his work. It was only then that Dr Phillips mentions rigor mortis *per se*, and by then, of course, many hours had elapsed since her death. *'The stiffness of the limbs was then well-marked. The finger nails were turgid. On the left side the stiffness was more noticeable, and especially in the fingers, which were partly closed.'*

James Kent saw the body at just after 6:10 am, and Annie's hands were up at her throat, as if she were reaching for it. He doesn't actually say if the fingers were curled or not at that point, only that she looked as if she were reaching for her throat and had fought with her hands to free herself. However, if Dr Phillips found them to be curled it would seem almost certain that Annie's fingers were curled when she died, or else someone actually curled them after death, which seems rather unlikely.

It is possible that Annie's killer put them in that position for some strange reason after she was dead, but it seems more likely that she was alive and reached up to her throat just as her throat was cut or about to be cut. She regained partial consciousness, just enough to realise what was going on, but tragically, not enough to do anything to prevent her throat being cut. I realised that when in that position the elbows acted as a 'scaffold' for the hands and kept them upright and dangling over the body, in exactly the position Kent described. One slight shift of the elbow, either by accident or by someone moving them, and the whole lot collapsed like a house made of playing cards.

And that brings us to the question of how Annie's arms might have changed position. I think it is possible that one of the bystanders or police jostled the body, causing the arms to fall accidentally; one small bump would be enough to cause the arms to fall down.

However there is one other possibility which is worth exploring, even though it would be quite speculative. Could one of the onlookers have taken Annie's rings, believing them to be gold? Is it possible that someone took Annie's rings from her finger before the police arrived, and let her hand drop down onto her breast when they had finished?

<sup>15</sup> University of Dundee, Department of forensic Medicine. ([www.dundee.ac.uk/forensicmedicine/notes/notes.html](http://www.dundee.ac.uk/forensicmedicine/notes/notes.html))

There are actually good arguments for and against this hypothesis. If we first look at the solid facts, it is clear that Annie's rings were actually stolen at some point. The word 'stolen' has to be used here as they were taken without her consent, whoever took them. We know that she was wearing the rings when she left the lodging house. Eliza Cooper, a close friend, stated at the inquest that Annie was in the habit of wearing cheap brass rings. Cooper stated: '*...she (Annie) was wearing three rings on the middle finger of the left hand. They were all brass.*'

Q. Coroner: Had she ever a gold wedding ring to your knowledge?

A. Cooper: No, not since I have known her.'

Edward Stanley, also known as 'The Pensioner', was a very close friend of Annie's; in fact she shared a bed with him some of the time, although it seems as if Edward had the odd dalliance with Annie's friend Eliza as well. He was, however, in as good a position as any to describe the rings that Annie wore. At the inquest he was quizzed about them by the coroner and his reply was quite illuminating.

Q. Coroner: When did you last see her (Annie) alive? -

A. Stanley: On Sunday, Sept. 2nd, between one and three o'clock in the afternoon.

Q. Coroner: Was she wearing rings when you saw her?

A. Stanley: Yes, I believe two. I could not say on which finger, but they were on one of her fingers.

Q. Coroner: What sort of rings were they—what was the metal?

A. Stanley: Brass, I should think by the look of them.'

Eliza seems fairly certain that there were three, whereas Stanley can't even remember which finger they were on, but says that there were two. What is more important, though, is that he seems to think they were made of brass, 'by the look of them.'

Of course he had seen them on numerous occasions, and even though he couldn't remember the finger they were on or the number, it is quite likely that he would have noticed if they were brass or gold, simply because gold would have been a saleable item in hard times and brass was not. Would that, however, have been readily apparent to a casual observer at a fleeting glance?

A Metropolitan Police Criminal Investigation Department report made on the 19th Sept 1888 (52983)<sup>16</sup> does help to determine whether or not the rings appeared to be valuable or not:

*The deceased was in the habit of wearing two brass rings (a wedding ring and a keeper) these were missing when the body was found and the finger bore marks of their having been removed by force. Special enquiries have been made at all places where they may have been offered for pledge or for sale by a person believing them to be gold, but nothing has resulted therefrom.*

So it would seem that the police thought they could have been taken because they were mistaken for gold. The fact that they were worn as a wedding ring and keeper ring on the ring finger might well have added to the illusion that they were gold.

There is no question that the area at the time was made up of a scrounger society. Charles Cross, who discovered Mary Ann Nichols body, only stopped to take a closer look because he thought the mound of material was a tarpaulin he could salvage. It's questionable if he would have stopped otherwise. There is no doubt that something left lying around for too long would soon disappear. But would that extend to taking the rings from a dead woman's finger in those circumstances?

*The Daily Telegraph*, Wednesday, September 12th, 1888 sheds a little more light on this. '*Strenuous efforts have been made to find the rings torn from Chapman's fingers by the murderer, but not a trace of them has been discovered. It is probable that they have been destroyed, and with them, it is to be feared, disappears the most hopeful means of bringing the miscreant to justice.*'

There is no question that both the police and the coroner, Wynne Baxter, thought that Annie's killer had taken her rings, and there is some good evidence to suggest that this might be the case. The fact that they were wrenched from her fingers makes this a good possibility, as a bystander might risk taking them if they came off easily, but not if they had to be wrenched off with great force. Of course if someone was in a great hurry not to be detected in the theft then it is quite possible they would have used unnecessary force to effect it quickly and get away as fast as they could.

<sup>16</sup> *The Ultimate Jack the Ripper Sourcebook-An Illustrated Encyclopaedia*. Stewart P. Evans & Keith Skinner. Constable and Robinson Hardback edition 2000



The coroner in his summing up gives another possible explanation:

*There are two things missing. Her rings had been wrenched from her fingers and have not been found, and the uterus has been removed. There was an abrasion over the bend of the first joint of the ring finger, and there were distinct markings of a ring or rings - probably the latter. If the object were robbery, these injuries were meaningless, for death had previously resulted from the loss of blood at the neck. Moreover, when we find an easily accomplished theft of some paltry brass rings and such an operation, after, at least, a quarter of an hour's work, and by a skilled person, we are driven to the deduction that the mutilation was the object, and the theft of the rings was only a thin-veiled blind, an attempt to prevent the real intention being discovered.*

Here it seems that the coroner is suggesting the rings were taken to feign a motive for the killing, which seems to be rather an odd remark. He does point out that the theft of the rings was easily accomplished. Does this suggest that the rings were easy to remove from Annie's fingers and would have not required a great deal of force? We are faced with a few anomalies here. If, indeed, her killer did take the rings as a trophy it seems rather incongruous since he had already taken her uterus. Surely that was a far more potent trophy? It might be argued that, of course, the uterus was a transitory trophy which would soon corrupt, and that the rings would be a permanent reminder of his triumph, but it seems very strange that he would take the trouble to lay out the other items close to her body and only take the rings.

Perhaps a more pertinent question is, did anyone other than her killer actually have the opportunity to take the rings even they wanted to? John Davis, a carman employed at Leadenhall Market, was the first to discover the body. He stated at the inquest: 'I did not go into the yard, but left the house by the front door, and called the attention of two men to the circumstances. They work at Mr Bailey's, a packing-case maker, of Hanbury Street. I do not know their names, but I know them by sight.'

So Davis, after discovering Annie's body, did in fact leave the yard unattended. He doesn't mention seeing the rings in his testimony at all, but under the circumstances he just might well have not noticed them. At this time Annie's hands would have been in the position described by James Kent, up towards her throat, so it is possible that the rings were just not visible.

Davis goes on to say: 'They (the two men that he had gone to find) came into the passage, and saw the sight. They did not go into the yard, but ran to find a policeman. We all came out of the house together.'

Henry John Holland, a boxmaker, continues the story:

*As I was passing 29, Hanbury Street, on my way to work in Chiswell-street, at about eight minutes past six on Saturday. I spoke to two of Bailey's men. An elderly man came out of the house and asked us to have a look in his back yard. I went through the passage and saw the deceased lying in the yard by the back door. I did not touch the body. I then went for a policeman in Spitalfields Market. The officer told me he could not come. I went outside and could find no constable. Going back to the house I saw an inspector run up with a young man, at about twenty minutes past six o'clock.*

This would seem to present us with a gap of about 12 minutes between the time Annie's body was discovered and the time that Inspector Chandler arrived. Could anyone have gone into the yard in the interim? Inspector Chandler confirms independently that he arrived at about twenty minutes past six, but more importantly he states that there was no one in the yard when he arrived.

Joseph Chandler, Inspector H Division Metropolitan Police, deposed: 'On Saturday morning, at ten minutes past six, I was on duty in Commercial-street. At the corner of Hanbury Street I saw several men running. I beckoned to them. One of them said, "Another woman has been murdered." I at once went with him to 29, Hanbury Street, and through the passage into the yard. There was no one in the yard.'

Does that mean that no one could have gone into the yard? If we follow the course of events from the time that John Davis found Annie, it would appear that there are significant gaps.

John Davis found Annie at about 5:55 am and went immediately to fetch help. He found two men, James Green and James Kent, who worked at Baileys packing-case makers. We have already seen from James Kent's testimony that he mentions no rings being on Annie's fingers, even though his observations are quite detailed in other respects. James Green, said: 'I arrived in Hanbury-street at ten minutes past six on Saturday morning, and accompanied Kent to the back door of No. 29. I left the premises with him. I saw no one touch the body.'

As James Kent and John Davis were the only people with him at the time, then he is simply stating here that he didn't see either Davies or Kent touch the body, although one does wonder why he felt that he needed to mention this. He doesn't mention any rings, either. Henry Holland saw John Davis come hurtling from the door of 29 Hanbury Street immediately after discovering Annie and he then went in to see what had happened, but again didn't touch the body, although Holland, unlike the others, was bold enough to go down into the yard.



*The body of Annie Chapman*

James Kent stayed behind when they went to fetch the police, and, badly shaken, went into his work shop at Baileys to find a piece of canvas to cover the body. This means, of course that the yard was empty or at least unobserved from the time Davis, Kent and Green left to the time that Inspector Chandler arrived some 12 minutes later. By this time a considerable crowd had congregated in the passage by the back door. It is certainly possible that any one of them could have gone into the yard and relieved Annie of her rings. Human nature being what it is, it seems likely that at least some of these spectators felt the need for a closer look at poor Annie's remains. Locals were actually charging sightseers pennies to view the murder sites throughout the series of murders, and it seems very likely that at least of some of these bystanders were compelled to take a closer look. The *Daily News* of the 10th September reports:

*The excitement has been intense. The house and the mortuary were besieged by people, and it is said that during a part of Saturday people flocked in great numbers to see the blood stained spot in the yard, paying a penny... A wretched waxwork show had some horrible picture out in front, and people were paying their pence to see representations of the murdered women within.*

How much better the real thing? There was no danger of being accused of anything more than being a ghoul if they were discovered hovering over Annie's decimated body by the police.

Mrs Hardiman, a purveyor of horsemeat that lived and sold cats' meat from a room on the right hand side of the passage leading through to the backyard, was woken by her son who rather callously informed her: 'Don't upset yourself mother, it's a woman been killed in the yard.' This does give an idea into the attitude of some of the locals when a corpse was found in their backyard. The passage was literally clogged with spectators, who were more anxious to see the horrendous scene than mourn the dead woman. It has to be said that there was ample opportunity for any one of them to have taken the rings.

There is another explanation for what happened to the rings which might seem plausible at first glance, but on closer examination falls at the first hurdle. Robert Mann, an inmate at the Whitechapel Workhouse, took charge of Annie's body at 7am on the morning of her murder. Later, two nurses from the infirmary came and undressed Annie's body. Mann was not there when they were doing this. It has been suggested that one of these women could have taken the rings from Annie when they were undressing her. That might have seemed like an ideal opportunity for the rings to disappear, but if that is the case then both Dr Phillips and Inspector Chandler failed to notice the rings when they examined Annie's body *in situ*. This would seem to be incredibly unlikely.

The only possible chance for the rings to go missing, if Annie's killer didn't take them, was during that 12 minutes when there was supposedly no one in the yard. Which scenario is the most likely? The police were convinced that Annie's killer took the rings, and they expended a great deal of effort in tracking them down because they thought they might lead to her killer, but is it possible that they were taken by one of the crowd? It has to be a possibility. Annie's hands do appear to have moved between the time James Kent saw her and the time Inspector Chandler and Dr Phillips examined her. Something must have caused her arms to fall. Did it happen when the rings were removed from her hand and the thief gently let her hand drop down to her chest?

There is, however, one final possibility about the rings that could answer most of the arguments raised. Jack may just have removed the rings himself, but rather than take them with him he placed them with the other items at her feet. In this position, lying free on the ground, it would have quite easy for any gawker to snaffle the rings without notice. Indeed, with just a little misdirection—'Gor! Look at 'er face!'—and the rings were gone in a trice as everyone looked at her face on cue.

And that suggestion permits us to move from some of Annie's possessions that went missing to those that certainly never existed. I mean the coins supposedly found at Annie's feet. Author Paul Feldman maintained that they existed against all odds, in his support of his suspect James Maybrick. Unfortunately, Mr Feldman passed away recently and cannot defend his contention, but the evidence is so overwhelming against their existence that it would have been a losing proposition regardless.

The farthings are reported as being present next to Annie's body by the press on the same day as the murder, but the newspaper report is basically in error. In fact, if we look at the official documents it was a pure fabrication. News of the murder soon hit the headlines and the *Evening News*, 8th September 1888, ran a story full of monumental errors. It gives the address of the murder site as No 18 Hanbury Street to begin with; it claims that Annie's killer tied the handkerchief around Annie's neck to keep her near-decapitated head on, and the articles contradict one another even within the same edition. By the time we get to the mention of the farthings in the issue it is clear that not a word of these reports can really be trusted. They did get a few facts right, but that would seem to have been more luck than reportorial assiduity.

Hardly surprising, then, that the following statement needs to be treated with a great deal of caution to say the least. *'In the dress if the dead woman two farthings were found, so brightly polished as to lead to the belief that they were intended to be passed as half-sovereigns, and it is probable that they were given to her by the murderer as an inducement for her to accompany him.'* The *Daily Telegraph*, 10th September 1888, seems to have borrowed freely from the above report and perpetuates the story of the farthings: *'There were also found two farthings polished brightly, and, according to some, these coins had been passed off as half-sovereigns upon the deceased by her murderer.'*

How these reports came to be written is unclear, but newspapers at the time were notorious for getting facts wrong. *The Pall Mall Gazette*, for instance, reporting the same murder, stated that there was a message written in chalk by the murderer in the back yard of Hanbury Street, but this too proved to be completely untrue. The fact is both stories were total fabrication. There never was any writing on the wall in Hanbury Street, and no farthings were found.

The myth was perpetuated by a newspaper article reporting on the death of Alice McKenzie, who was also murdered by having her throat cut in July, 1889. The *Times* was the only newspaper to have a story about McKenzie with a reference to farthings being found near Annie Chapman's body, and it supposedly quoted from official sources... in this case Detective Inspector Edmund Reid. The newspaper reports the event thusly:

*After the body [Alice McKenzie's] had been examined by the doctor it was placed on the police ambulance, and underneath the body of the deceased was found the short clay pipe produced. The pipe was broken and there was blood on it, and in the bowl was some unburnt tobacco. I also found a bronze farthing underneath the clothes of the deceased. There was also blood on the farthing... In another instance of this kind—the Hanbury Street murder—two similar farthings were found.*<sup>17</sup>

The problem is that Detective Inspector Reid was away on leave at the time of Annie's murder, and therefore could only have been reporting hearsay evidence or using an inaccurate newspaper article for information. It has been suggested as a defence of that story that although Reid was on leave at the time of Annie Chapman's murder, it wouldn't necessarily exclude him from having detailed knowledge of that particular incident. He would have had as much access to the case files as any other official, which is probably a fair comment, but the official files say nothing of any farthings, which makes that option a non-starter.

The newspaper reports don't say the coins were next to or underneath her body, either. Where they are specific, they say they were 'in her pocket', or 'in her dress' which is an entirely different matter altogether. As we have already seen, Inspector Joseph Chandler of H Division attended the inquest of Annie Chapman, and his inquest report is in total contradiction to the newspaper report. He first confirms that there were no coins found anywhere in the vicinity of Annie's body, certainly not at her feet with the other objects that are frequently mentioned.

Chandler testified: *'After the body had been taken away I examined the yard, and found a piece of coarse muslin, a small tooth comb, and a pocket hair comb in a case. They were lying near the feet of the woman. A portion of an envelope was found near her head, which contained two pills.'*<sup>18</sup>

No mention whatsoever of farthings or coins.

He goes on to state that he examined Annie Chapman's clothes in detail at the mortuary: *'A large pocket was worn under the skirt (attached by strings), which I produce. It was torn down the front and also at the side, and it was empty.'*

17 *The Times*, Friday, July 19th, 1889, Inspector Reid's testimony at Alice McKenzie's inquest.

18 *The Daily Telegraph*, Friday, September 14th, 1888, Page 3.



It might be prudent here to point out that dresses in those days didn't always have pockets stitched into them and if that was the case, then the woman would wear a pocket tied around her waist to keep personal possessions in. This appears to have been the case with Annie, so when Inspector Chandler speaks about examining the pocket in Annie's clothes, he is actually speaking about a separate pocket as described in the evidence he gave. It also explains why some of the newspapers use the term 'in her dress', and some 'in her pocket', because the pocket was worn under the dress or skirt. Had there been any coins in the pocket or dress, then Chandler's evidence would have actually been false, as he states it was empty quite categorically. You have only to compare the reports with each other, and with the inquest testimony, to see how inaccurate the newspaper reports were.

The full Police reports on the Annie Chapman murder are in the Public Record Office. They list all that was in the yard with Annie's Chapman's body. There is no mention whatsoever of any coins, let alone farthings—polished, battered or bent.

It seems that the myth of the farthings arose from a series of mounting elaborations by various Ripper authors over the years, each building on the exaggerations of the other until fable became established as fact. The first newspaper reports laid the foundation for the coins, and then Dr Phillips provided some extra padding when he said (speaking of the items he did find): 'They had apparently been arranged there.' Putting the two together we get coins/farthings arranged at Annie's feet. The author Donald McCormick perpetuated this myth in his book in 1959<sup>19</sup>, and then author Robin Odell compounded it in 1987 in his book with Colin Wilson, *Jack The Ripper: Summing up and Verdict*. On page 43 he wrote: '*Close to the position of the feet lay two rings, removed from the fingers of the victim, together with some pennies and two new farthings.*'<sup>20</sup> The myth had become complete.

It has been alleged that Paul Feldman used false testimony<sup>21</sup> on Page 40 of his book *The Final Chapter* (hardback edition 1997) to prove the existence of the coins at the crime scene, in order to establish the authenticity of the much debated 'Diary of James Maybrick', who claimed to be 'The Whitechapel Murderer.' The diary became infamous even before it was published as being the confession of Jack the Ripper, but there are a number of inconsistencies in it regarding Annie Chapman that do need some explaining.

Feldman, during the course of his research, was accused by some of manipulating the facts to substantiate questionable entries in the diary, one of them being that there were coins found at Annie's feet. Obviously, if the coins never existed, then the diary was unquestionably a fake. Therefore, Mr Feldman had a need to prove without question that the coins existed. The author Melvyn Harris published several articles exploring the veracity of the diary, and it was in one of these articles he brings up the issue of the coins.

On Page 40 of *The Final Chapter*<sup>22</sup> Mr Feldman states:

*Dr Bagster Phillips arrived and, after examining the body, discovered that Chapman's pocket had been cut open and its contents were lying in a neat pile: two combs, a piece of coarse muslin and two farthings. The neatness of them strongly suggested that they were put there with deliberate intent. Indeed, Dr Bagster Phillips stated at the inquest—according to the Daily Telegraph of 14 September 1888—that they 'had apparently been placed there in order, that is to say arranged there.'*

Harris alleges that the only direct quote from Phillips, in that passage, is spliced in so cunningly that it seems to offer confirmation of the existence of the two farthings, when in fact it does not. What Dr Phillips actually said was: '*I searched the yard and found a small piece of coarse muslin, a small-tooth comb, and a pocket-comb, in a paper case, near the railing. They had apparently been arranged there. I also discovered various other articles, which I handed to the police.*' It seems obvious to say that if Dr Phillips really had given clear evidence that there were farthings found at the scene, then Mr Feldman would not have needed to edit the above paragraph to support his case. He could have just let the evidence speak for itself.

19 *The Identity of Jack the Ripper*. Donald McCormick, Jarrolds, 1959

20 'Facts Please, Not Fallacies!' Melvin Harris ([www.casebook.org/dissertations](http://www.casebook.org/dissertations)). 'By 1929, when Leonard Matters published the first book on the subject, the "trumpery" articles had metamorphosed into "two or three coppers and odds and ends". In 1959, Donald McCormick added two farthings - "Two brass rings, a few pennies and two farthings were neatly laid out in a row at the woman's feet." It only remained for Robin O'Dell, in 1965, to supply the gloss of "two new farthings", and the legend was complete.'

21 *Jack the Ripper-Summing Up and Verdict*. Colin Wilson and Robin Odell. Corgi Books Edition. Paperback Edition 1988. Page 43. par 2 '*Near the spot where the victim's head had lain was found part of an envelope bearing the seal of the Sussex Regiment on the reverse and, on the front, the letter 'M' and the post office franking marked, 'London. 28 Aug, 1888.'* There was also a piece of paper enclosing two pills. *Close to the position of the feet lay two rings, removed from the fingers of the victims, together with some pennies and two new farthings.*'

22 *Jack the Ripper--The Final Chapter*. Paul Feldman. Hardback Edition 1997 Virgin Books.



Artist's impression of Annie Chapman,  
from her mortuary photograph.

The fact is Dr Phillips does not mention farthings. Neither does Chandler or anyone else who was at the crime scene, for the simple reason that they weren't there. There never were any farthings found anywhere near her body and if there were any farthings at 29 Hanbury they were securely in the pockets of spectators who had brought them along with them to the scene.

So what is the truth about what happened to Annie is those few minutes before and after her death? It would seem that Annie's killer went with her, (or her with him) through to the backyard of 29 Hanbury Street willingly. Within a very short space of time, her killer had seized her from behind, used some method to interfere with her breathing that rendered her unconscious, and lowered her in the small alcove between the three stone steps and the fence. There he knelt down beside her and cut her throat savagely—down to the vertebrae—not once but twice.

Was she beginning to regain consciousness as he did this? Quite possibly, if we take James Kent's testimony seriously. Her killer then mutilated her body and left. Did her killer take Annie's rings? Possibly. But there was a gap of some minutes when the yard was empty and spectators were pressing into the passage trying to get a glimpse of the body. Is it possible that one of them took the rings. There was the opportunity, and Annie's hands appear to have moved between the time she was seen by Kent and when she was seen by Dr Phillips and Inspector Chandler.

It would seem, looking at some of the misconceptions and even purposeful omissions of evidence by some writers, that getting to the truth of what did happen—not only to Annie but to the other victims—is extremely difficult. Shirley Harrison, in her book *The Diary of Jack the Ripper*<sup>23</sup>, makes some very serious omissions in presenting evidence in

the chapter on Elizabeth Stride's murder. Had the missing sentences and observations by witnesses been included, it would have completely destroyed her case.

It thus seems that writers generally, and perhaps understandably, will leave out valuable evidence to better promote their suspects. Selective inclusion of evidence seems to have become acceptable to some writers. It does, however, do the reader a great disservice because it sometimes makes it impossible for the average reader to believe anything that they read in a subjective book about Jack the Ripper. The solution? Perhaps we would be better served by eliminating suspects from books all together and just admitting that we haven't got a clue who did it and probably never will. Or demand greater accuracy and accountability from those who chose to write about Jack. Sadly, the former suggestion seems more likely than the latter.

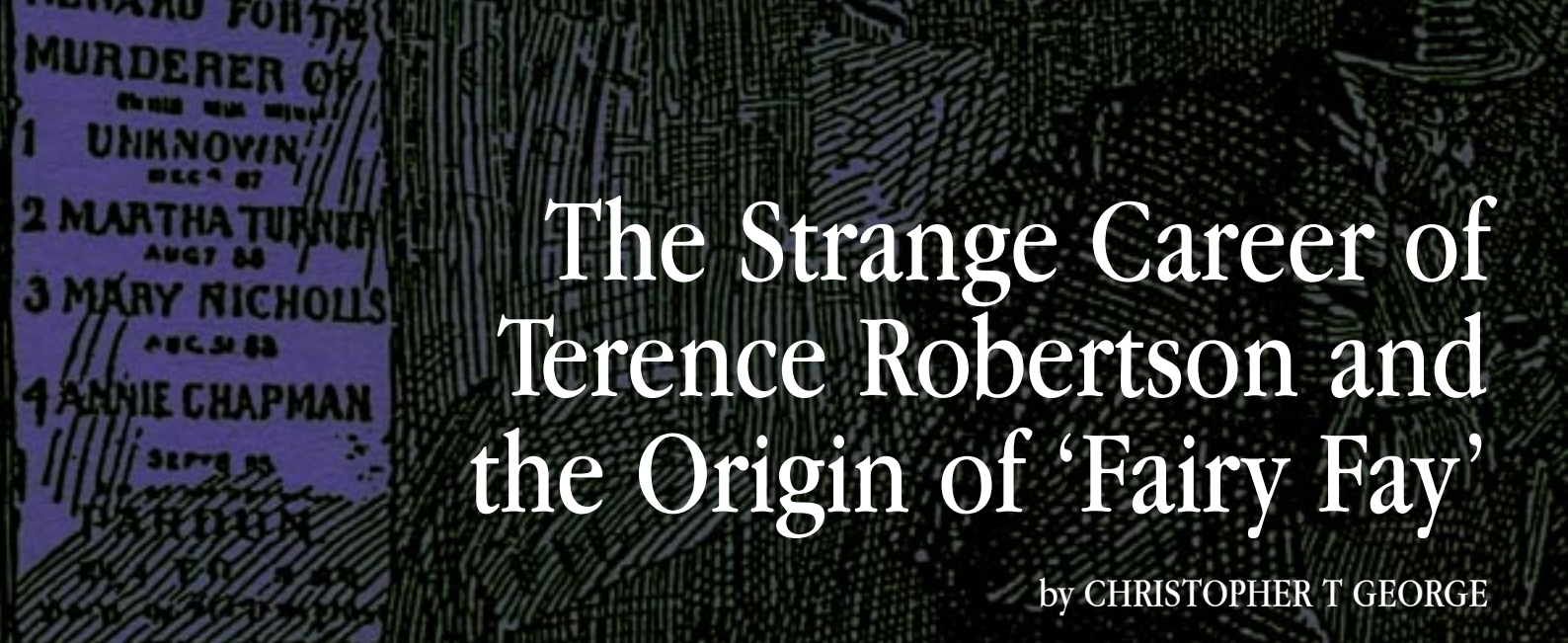
## Acknowledgement

Many thanks to Don Souden for offering the suggestion that the the rings might have been taken by a bystander and left at Annie's feet.

23 *The Diary of Jack the Ripper*. Shirley Harrison. Hardback Edition Eighth Reprint 1996. Edition published by BCA by arrangement with Smith Gryphon Publishers. Pages 72-73. 'The night of September 29th 1888 was miserably wet. At about 11 p.m., 44-year-old Swedish-born Elizabeth Stride, known as Long Liz, was seeking shelter from the rain outside the Bricklayers Arms in Settles Street. She was seen by John Gardner and his friend Best, both labourers, being fondled by a respectably dressed man in a black morning suit and overcoat... Constable William Smith thought he saw Elizabeth Stride at about 12.20 a.m. while on his beat. She was with a well-dressed man, wearing a black coat, hard felt hat and white collar and tie... At about the same time, said Schwartz in his interview with the Star on October 10th, a second man came out of the ale house on the corner of Fairclough Street and stood, silently in the shadows... Schwartz's description of the second man tallies with that of the man seen outside the pub and the man who bought the grapes. Schwartz thought he was about 35 years old, 5 feet 11 inches tall, with light brown hair and moustache. He was dressed in a dark overcoat with a hard, wide-brimmed felt hat, and was carrying a knife.' Whilst all of the following is true, omissions to the descriptions in the section give a false impression to make them appear to be a description of James Maybrick, when in fact Gardner and Best stated quite categorically in their statements, made to the Police, that the man they saw 'had a thick black moustache' which Ms Harrison, not surprisingly, omits. They also say the man was 5ft. 5 ins. and not 5ft. 11ins. as Ms Harrison suggests. Matthew Packer's man was 5ft. 7ins. and between 25-30, with a soft hawker hat; Constable Smith places his suspect at 5ft. 7 ins. and he had no whiskers or moustache at all. Hardly a close match to James Maybrick as Ms. Harrison would have us believe.

## Sources

*The Daily Telegraph* 10th September 1888; *The Daily News* 10th September 1888; *The Daily Telegraph* 12th September 1888; *The Daily Telegraph* 14th September 1888; *The Daily Telegraph* 27th September 1888; *The Daily News* 13th September 1888; *The Times* 19th July 1889; *Estimation of the Post Mortem Period by Multiple-site Temperature Measurements and the Use of a New Algorithm*, Forensic Science International, C, LDM Nokes, J H Williams and B H Knight.



# The Strange Career of Terence Robertson and the Origin of 'Fairy Fay'

by CHRISTOPHER T GEORGE

*Fare thee well, Fare thee well,  
Fare thee well my fairy fay  
For I'm going to Lou'siana for to see my Susyanna  
Sing Polly wolly doodle all the day*

Chorus from *Polly Wolly Doodle All the Day*.

Traditional song, author unknown; full lyrics and tune at [www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/lyrics/polly.htm](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/lyrics/polly.htm)

Is the above traditional American song, *Polly Wolly Doodle All the Day*, the source for the name of the phantom victim, 'Fairy Fay' - the alleged early victim of Jack the Ripper who was supposedly murdered on Boxing Day 1887? This origin has been proposed by Paul Begg.<sup>1</sup> Or, given that there is absolutely no evidence that Fairy Fay or any unnamed woman actually existed and was murdered around Christmas 1887, the story of such a murder being perpetuated in the press and elsewhere in 1888 and later, does the name derive from another source entirely - or out of thin air?

As far as the literature on the Ripper case is concerned, the name 'Fairy Fay' appears to date no further back than British journalist and military historian Terence Robertson, who in *Reynolds News* on 29 October 1950 wrote an article titled 'Madman who Murdered Nine Women.' As Philip Sugden has written, Robertson appears to have 'embroidered' on the story of a supposed unnamed early victim.<sup>2</sup> This nameless victim was, he notes, first mentioned on a verse broadside titled 'Lines on the Terrible Tragedy in Whitechapel' printed in early September 1888 and that mentioned a woman killed 'twelve months ago' - ie, sometime in 1887. Sugden states that the theme was taken up in the *Daily Telegraph* of 10 September 1888, where we read:

*The first of the series of murders was committed so far back as last Christmas, when the body of a woman was discovered with a stick or iron instrument thrust into her body as if she had been interred under the law until recently applicable to suicides, which required a person found guilty of felo de se to be buried at the four cross-roads with a stake driven through the chest. In this case the woman was never identified, and no particular sensation was caused, the death being generally assumed to be the result of a drunken freak on the part of the nameless ruffians who swarm about Whitechapel.*<sup>3</sup>

Quentin L Pittman, following research by Nick Connell and Stewart P Evans in *The Man Who Hunted Jack the Ripper*, suggests that this colourful account appears to be a garbled version of the circumstances of the Easter 1888 assault on Emma Smith, who was attacked in Osborn Street on the night of 4-5 April with a blunt instrument and died the next day. A non-fatal attack on a woman named Margaret Hayes or Hames who testified at the inquest on Smith might also have added to the idea of a 'Ripper' attack in late 1887. Hayes told the coroner that the attack took place 'just before Christmas last'.<sup>4</sup>

1 Paul Begg, *Jack the Ripper: The Facts*. London: Robson Books, 2004, 25.

2 Philip Sugden, *The Complete History of Jack the Ripper*. London: Robinson, 1995, 5.

3 *Daily Telegraph*, 10 September 1888. Available at [www.casebook.org/press\\_reports/daily\\_telegraph/dt880910.html](http://www.casebook.org/press_reports/daily_telegraph/dt880910.html)

4 Nick Connell, Stewart P Evans, *The Man Who Hunted Jack the Ripper*. Cambridge: Rupert Books, 2000, 14-16, and Quentin L. Pittman, 'The Importance of Fairy Fay, and Her Link to Emma Smith,' [www.casebook.org/dissertations/importance-fairy.html](http://www.casebook.org/dissertations/importance-fairy.html) and 'Emma Smith Inquest.' Available at [www.casebook.org/official\\_documents/inquests/inquest\\_smith.html](http://www.casebook.org/official_documents/inquests/inquest_smith.html)



The story of the supposed unnamed victim from Christmas 1887 popped up again in a parliamentary question in November 1888 and is repeated in L Forbes Winslow's 1910 memoir, *Recollections of Forty Years*.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the story was well established in Ripper lore when Terence Robertson wrote in his 1950 newspaper article that a woman called Fairy Fay was murdered on Boxing Night 1887.

### A Journalist's Invention?

Note that the lurid title of Robertson's article, 'Madman who Murdered Nine Women', stretches the number of murders attributed to the killer beyond the canonical five of Nichols, Chapman, Stride, Eddowes, and Kelly - not surprising in a writer of 1950 before the Macnaghten memoranda was rediscovered and made public - and such a count does mirror the commonly held contemporary view that the madman killed and kept right on killing, before and beyond those five most famous murders. Robertson in fact claims that the Ripper began his 'appalling murders' at Christmas 1887 and ended in September 1889, with the discovery of the Pinchin Street torso on 10 September 1889.

In order for Robertson to flesh out his article and make it more colourful, it would thus make sense for the journalist to give the unnamed victim a name, and this apparently is exactly what he did, since he announces, 'First victim in this ghastly parade of death was a woman known as 'Fairy Fay', *for want of a better name.*' (Emphasis added.) As Connell and Evans say, 'Robertson is here clearly stating that he has invented the name.'<sup>6</sup>

Robertson's description of the demise of 'Fairy Fay' reads as follows:

*On the cold Boxing Night of 1887, [Fairy Fay] decided to take a short cut home from a pub in Mitre Square. This decision, which took her through the dim alleyways behind Commercial Road, cost her her life.*

*Two hours after she set out, a constable, on beat [sic] shone his flickering oil lamp into a darkened doorway. At the inquest he said his lamp revealed a sight which sickened him.*

*In its ray was all that was left of 'Fairy Fay.'*

*Inspector Reid of Commercial Road [sic] police station, took charge. His detectives questioned dozens of people who lived in the drab house overlooking the scene of the crime.*

*After a few weeks of vain inquiries, Inspector Reid informed his chief at Metropolitan Police Headquarters, New Scotland Yard [sic] that the case had been shelved.*

*Only brief reports of the murder appeared in the Press, and by February the case was forgotten.<sup>7</sup>*

Of course, there was no public house in Mitre Square. Nor was there any New Scotland Yard as of this date - students of the case will recall that the so-called 'Whitehall torso' was discovered in the basement of the new Metropolitan Police headquarters on 2 October 1888, just over months after Boxing Night 1887, and so in the fall of 1888, New Scotland Yard was just then being built.<sup>8,9</sup> The victim's remains were found in the basement of the uncompleted building. And Inspector Reid worked out of Whitechapel H Division Commercial Street not Commercial Road police station.

All these bloopers reveal a lack of knowledge of the case on the part of Robertson while the purplish 'Penny Dreadful' nature of the prose in the quoted passage suggests that Sugden was right that Robertson 'embroidered.' Sugden states that despite the inclusion by a number of authors of Fairy Fay among the list of victims - and it is interesting to note that probable later-than-1888 inventions such as the controversial and, I believe, hoax 17 September 1888 letter and the Maybrick Diary don't go away - 'Fairy Fay is a phantom, born of sloppy journalism in 1888.'<sup>10</sup> But that aspersion of course is only partly true. 'Fairy Fay' is a direct product of questionable journalism in 1950 as well.



'New Scotland Yard' in the 1890s: The Norman Shaw Building, then headquarters of the Metropolitan Police

5 Sugden, 5.

6 Connell and Evans, 16.

7 Terence Robertson, 'Madman who Murdered Nine Women.' *Reynolds News*, 29 October 1950.

8 Metropolitan Police Service. History of the Metropolitan Police. 'New Scotland Yard.' [www.met.police.uk/history/new\\_scotland\\_yard.htm](http://www.met.police.uk/history/new_scotland_yard.htm)

9 Ibid. 'The Enduring Mystery of Jack the Ripper.' [www.met.police.uk/history/ripper.htm](http://www.met.police.uk/history/ripper.htm)

10 Sugden, 6.

## Out of Thin Air?

Robertson claims in his *Reynolds News* article that for his account of the murders he used the official records 'as far as possible and... quoted from eyewitness accounts chronicled in the columns of *Reynolds News*.' Although we might counter what eyewitness account could he have used for his account of Fairy Fay's last night? What inquest record did he study in which a copper testified that he was 'sickened' when he shone his lantern into a doorway and saw the mutilated remains of the victim? What were the 'brief reports of the [Fairy Fay] murder that appeared in the Press'? Rather, the claim of exhaustive research seems more to bolster the *bona fides* of the article than that Robertson actually did such research, which the details of his account of the demise of Fairy Fay would suggest he did not.

Connell and Evans, however, claim to have definitively ascertained Robertson's source for the name and that the source of the name came from a woman who sometimes went by the name 'Tot Fay.' This woman is mentioned in a *Reynolds Newspaper* article from 15 January 1888 under 'Police News':

*A NOTORIOUS CHARACTER - Lillie Herbert alias Tot Fay, Lilian Rothschild, Florence St John, Mabel Gray, Lilly Cohen, Amy Sinclair, Lillian Rose, Amy Violet, Florence Le Grand, and a score of other fictitious names, was again placed in the dock charged with being disorderly in Besent-street at ten minutes to two on Wednesday morning. Prisoner is one of the most notorious women in London...<sup>11</sup>*

However, the theory that 'Fairy Fay' came from 'Tot Fay' seems a stretch. First, we can readily see that the mention of 'Tot Fay' is buried in a long list of aliases. And why should Robertson pick this particular woman - an infamous woman of her own right - and borrow her alias to give to a Ripper victim killed three weeks before this scarlet woman appeared in court? It does not quite add up.

In addition, how does the 'Tot Fay' explanation account for the 'Fairy' part of the name 'Fairy Fay'? Connell and Evans seem to have literally taken Robertson's word for it that he used official documents and eyewitness accounts published in the *Reynolds News*. The internal evidence of his account of the murder of Fairy Fay would seem to indicate that at least for that part of his article he did not use either official records or the archives of *Reynolds News* but used his own imagination to cook up the tale.

How else do we explain the odd claim that the victim took 'a short cut home from a pub in Mitre Square'? What pub in Mitre Square? The mention of Mitre Square seems added only to pep up the story by manufacturing a link with later victim Kate Eddowes.

The term 'fay' is a word allied in derivation to 'fairy' -

*Faerie: from the Latin term for 'fate' (fata), faeries (or fairies) are a 'host of supernatural beings and spirits who occupy a limbo between earth and heaven' (Guiley). This is in recognition of the skill faeries had in predicting and even controlling human destiny. Faeries could be either good or evil creatures, and at various points in history have been confused with witches and demons.*

*Fay or fey is the archaic term for faerie meaning bewitched or enchanted. This word derives from 'Fays' meaning Fates, and thought to be a broken form of Fatae. 'Fay-erie' was first a state of enchantment or glamour, and was only later used for the fays who wielded those powers of illusion. The state of enchantment is fayerie, which became fairy and faerie.<sup>12</sup>*

Thus, the name 'Fairy Fay' may have been chosen by Robertson either purposely or subconsciously because he knew the woman was ephemeral and did not exist. Or, even if Robertson actually believed there was a victim killed around Christmas 1887 and he was just supplying what he thought were reasonable seeming details consistent with the circumstances of some of the other murders, the name sounds romantic. And with a murder said to have occurred at Christmas - the traditional time of bonhomie and good cheer - these elements could have seemed to him to add up to a great story. In a bizarre way, it might have seemed appropriate to him that the Whitechapel murderer was 'born' at Christmas time.

Terence Robertson died by his own hand in January 1970 in strange circumstances that we will discuss shortly. Thus, it is not possible to ask him where he 'found' the name and to definitively say that, as is assumed, he outright invented the name Fairy Fay, even if he might have been inclined to tell us. I therefore looked elsewhere at some of his other writings and at his life and career to see if there might any other clear examples of such literary invention or a clue as to where he might have derived the name Fairy Fay.

11 'Police News.' *Reynolds Newspaper*, 15 January 1888.

12 'Definition of faeries' at 'Faerie Central' [faerie.monstrous.com/](http://faerie.monstrous.com/)

## Robertson as a Military Author

Terence Robertson is known in Ripper circles as a journalist who happened to write an article on the Ripper case in 1950 and as the man who brought us Fairy Fay - but his biggest claim to fame in the wider world is undoubtedly as the author of military books. In this sense, he benefitted in maturing as a writer in the decade immediately following the Second World War, when he was able to interview many of the veterans who had fought in the war.

Robertson, born in London at the close of the First World War, volunteered to serve as a Naval Reserve officer as early as September 1938 as war clouds broiled over Europe at the time of the Munich Pact concluded between Great Britain, France, and the Axis powers: Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Called up by the Royal Navy in July 1939, Robertson's subsequent service included eighteen months of convoy duty in the Atlantic. As the liner notes for his first major book, *The Golden Horseshoe*, published in 1955,<sup>13</sup> tell it: 'It was during this period that he heard the first rumours of a brilliant and humane German U-boat "ace" called Otto Kretschmer.' The notes give an indication why the journalist might have been drawn to the topic - the sheer audacity of the U-boat commander:



[N]ight surface raiding along the lanes of the convoys was a daring technique, cold-bloodedly evolved and perfected by Otto Kretschmer. But while men spoke with awe of the destructive ability of the U-boat which bore a golden horseshoe on her conning tower, they spoke with respect of her commander who waged war with honour and humanity. Kretschmer would bring his boat alongside life-boats from stricken ships, toss cigarettes, brandy and medical supplies to the occupants and set them on the right course for home.<sup>14</sup>

Does the horseshoe on Kretschmer's conning tower, that age-old safeguard and symbol of luck, much storied in German and other European folk lore,<sup>15</sup> indicate another reason for Robertson's fascination with the German ace and why he chose to title the book, *The Golden Horseshoe* - that he was beguiled by this magical element which evokes ideas similar to the themes the name Fairy Fay infers?

Robertson followed the success of his 1955 book on the U-boat ace with other maritime titles published smartly during the next several years: *Walker, RN: the story of Captain Frederic John Walker, CB, DSO and three bars, RN*; *Ship with Two Captains*; and *Channel Dash: The Drama of Twenty-four Hours of War* (US title, *Channel Dash: The Fantastic Story of the German Battle Fleet's Escape Through the English Channel in Broad Daylight*), each brought out by Evans Brothers Ltd in London and E P Dutton in New York.<sup>16</sup>

Cover of a recent edition of  
Terence Robertson's book,  
*The Golden Horseshoe*, about World War II  
German U-boat commander Otto Kretschmer.

## A Fast Lifestyle

However, Terence Robertson's alcoholism and fast lifestyle threatened to abruptly cut short a promising and useful career as a writer of nonfiction books.

In 1977, seven years after his death, Robertson's widow, Olgalilita, testified in a Canadian law case that she had to contend with his unstable behavior throughout their marriage. She told the court 'that her husband was often drunk and subject to depression.' She said that Robertson often made 'threats [of suicide] for the 18 years of their married life.'<sup>17</sup>

Around 11:00 pm one night in early January 1955, the then 36-year-old writer, at the time living with his wife in Chelsea, arrived for a night out at the Chez Peter Club in Maidenhead, Berkshire, in the company of glamorous 24-year-old model Vicki Martin (real name Valerie Mews), described later by the *Daily Mirror* as a 'friend of the wealthy Maharajah of Cooch Behar.'<sup>18</sup>

13 Terence Robertson, *The Golden Horseshoe*. Foreword by Admiral Sir George Creasy. First edition. London: Evans Brothers Ltd, 1955.

14 Terence Robertson, *The Golden Horseshoe: The Story of Otto Kretschmer, Germany's Top U-boat Ace (Fortunes of War)*. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus Publishing, 2000, dust jacket notes. A US edition of the book was published in New York by E P Dutton in 1956 as *Night Raider of the Atlantic. The Saga of the German Submarine 'The Golden Horseshoe' and Her Daring Commander, Otto Kretschmer*. The book has also been published under the title, *North Raider of the Atlantic: The Saga of U-99*.

15 Robert Means Lawrence, *Magic of the Horseshoe with Other Folk Lore Notes*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1898. Available at [www.sacred-texts.com/etc/mhs/index.htm](http://www.sacred-texts.com/etc/mhs/index.htm)

16 Terence Robertson, *Walker, RN: the story of Captain Frederic John Walker, CB, DSO and three bars, RN*, London: Evans Brothers Ltd, 1956; *Ship with Two Captains*. London: Evans Brothers Ltd, 1957; *Channel Dash: The Drama of Twenty-four Hours of War*. London: Evans Brothers Ltd, 1958.

17 'Publisher fights for dead writer's life insurance,' *Toronto Star*, 22 November 1977, B02.

18 'Drama of the man who can't remember the night of death,' *Daily Mirror*, 3 March 1955, 9.



At this point in the enquiry, coroner Ruffe Thomas banged on his desk declaring, 'I disallow these questions. They are nothing to do with the cause of death.' The coroner directed the seven-man jury that in order to bring in a verdict of manslaughter in the two deaths, they would have to find there was criminal negligence. He stated, 'There is no evidence that Mr Robertson was drunk and the evidence points to a different conclusion.' The jury took only twenty-nine minutes to reach a verdict of accidental death in the cases of both model Vicki Martin and Mr Haig. The foreman of the jury stated on behalf of the seven jurors that they found it unfortunate that there were no witnesses to the early morning accident. The subtitle to the 3 March 1955 *Daily Mirror* article on the enquiry concluded, 'Last Minutes of Vicki Martin Are Still a Riddle...'<sup>19</sup>

## A New Career in Canada: 'The Shame and the Glory'

A year after the publication of his book on U-boat ace Kretschmer and after the Maidenhead inquest on the fatal car crash had found the writer not responsible of criminal negligence, Robertson and his wife moved to Canada.<sup>20</sup> The last three major book projects that he would work upon would have Canadian-related themes and he needed to move to Canada to do the necessary research. In addition to his continued work as a writer of historical nonfiction, he also wrote articles for such publications as the *Toronto Daily Star* and the *Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph*.

The first of these books is probably Terence Robertson's most controversial published book: *Dieppe: The Shame and the Glory*, which first appeared in 1962 in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain.<sup>21</sup> In this book, the writer took a good, hard look at one of the key Allied fiascos of World War II: the failed amphibious landing at the German-held French port of Dieppe in August 1942 which mostly featured thus far untested Canadian forces.



*Article on the inquest on the January 1955 head-on crash near Maidenhead, Berkshire, that cost two lives - that of 24-year-old model Vicki Martin, the lady passenger with whom writer Terence Robertson was driving in the early morning hours after visiting a Maidenhead night club, and that of the other driver, David Haig - and that injured Robertson and Haig's wife. Daily Mirror, 3 March 1955. (Author's collection.)*

19 Ibid.

20 Quoted in 'Journalist-author Terence Robertson dead in New York,' *Toronto Star*, 6 February 1970, 22.

21 Terence Robertson, *Dieppe: The Shame and the Glory*, Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1962. First published in Toronto in 1962 by McClelland and Stewart as *The Shame and the Glory: Dieppe*.

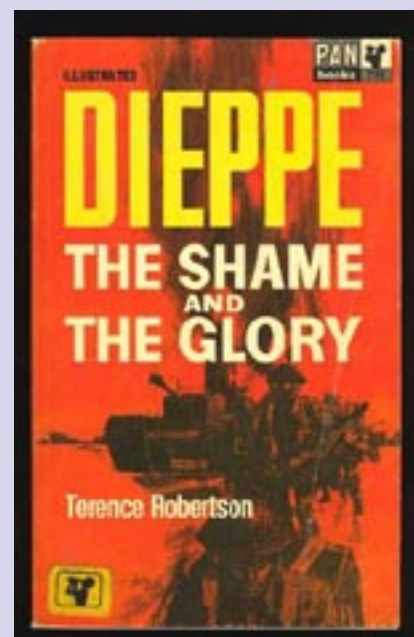
Robertson slammed the British military command and particularly Prime Minister Winston Churchill and the main Allied planner and driving force behind the attack, Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, for poor planning in the operation nicknamed 'Operation Jubilee.' The main purpose of the raid was to provide relief to the Russians fighting on the Eastern Front and to obtain experience for the raw Canadian troops to 'reduce the crime rate among their bored and idle troops' as reviewer Arnold Edinborough put it writing a review of Robertson's book in the *Toronto Daily Star* of 19 September 1962. However, as Edinborough said, the attack was a 'bloody shambles.' For one thing, the Allies made a fatal blunder in broadcasting to the French population the possibility of opening a Western front just before the raid so that German forces were alert to a possible landing at Dieppe. Edinborough noted that 'Of the 5,000 men who went on the raid, 1,000 didn't reach French soil and 3,500 didn't get off.'<sup>22</sup> Some 900 men of the Canadian 2nd Division were killed and nearly 2,000 taken prisoner, the British Royal Air Force lost 160 planes, and the Royal Navy lost 500 officers and ratings killed, wounded, or captured, all compared to German casualties of only 600.

The timing of publication of Robertson's book was brilliant: on the twentieth year anniversary of the unfortunate raid. In a TV interview with host Kingsley Brown on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) *Television News* on 7 September 1962, the author lambasted the military planners for the fiasco.<sup>23</sup>

However, Robertson himself came in for criticism for his handling of the story. In a CBC radio broadcast a month after Robertson's TV spot, Wallace Rayburn faulted the author's analysis. Rayburn was himself a veteran of Dieppe, having served with the South Saskatchewan Regiment (SSR).<sup>24</sup>

Rayburn stated that although he believed Robertson's book to be the best of six books on the raid then available, the author's treatment of the topic was disappointing in several aspects. Specifically, he mentioned that although the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry came in for Robertson's criticism for supposed cowardice under fire, with men having to be forced out of the landing craft at gunpoint, the Royals faced withering fire not faced by the SSR and that they did not have the best leadership during the attack.<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile, reviewer Scarborough found the book to be 'pretentiously' titled and simplistic in that Robertson ascribed the shame to the planners, both British and Canadian, and the glory to the men on the beaches. He pointed out that Robertson found 'no evidence to show that a single planner did anything shameful, except perhaps to make a mistake, and he can hardly spread undiluted glory amongst soldiers some of whom had to be forced out of their landing craft at pistol point and some of whom, in boats commanded by less adamant officers, could not be persuaded to leave at all.' Edinborough also slated Robertson for 'wrapping his narrative in the purplest prose.'<sup>26</sup>



Cover of a paperback copy of Terence Robertson's controversial 1962 book on the 1942 Dieppe Raid.

## The Case of the Trapper Murderer

Terence Robertson's Dieppe book has a dramatic and perhaps significant opening.

We begin with two trappers hunkering down to sleep in the still Canadian wilderness in a summer twilight with its 'unseen armies of insects' making 'a rustle, faint at first but gathering in volume until the earth itself seems to come alive.' One trapper decamps during the night stealing 'six hundred dollars worth of furs, all they had to show for three months spent in the Barren Lands' along with his partner's gun. When the deserted trapper wakes, he finds that despite the theft, he still has sheathed at his belt 'a long, wicked-looking skinner's knife.' Over the next week, he tracks the thief who at the moment of their encounter, terrified, stares for 'a brittle moment' at his cold pale-blue eyes, recognizing death in that instant. The angry trapper's long 'wicked' knife 'flickered briefly in the morning sunlight.'<sup>27</sup> Several months later, the trapper who committed the murder finds himself in Winnipeg awakening from a drunken stupor on 1 September 1939. This of course was the day when Great Britain and its Empire declared war on the Axis powers after Hitler's invasion of Poland.<sup>28</sup> He joins up with the Cameron Highlanders of Canada as a private under the assumed name of 'Stanley Jones.' At Dieppe, Private Jones, the former trapper and murderer, is himself killed by German bullets.<sup>29</sup>

22 Arnold Edinborough, 'Military Molehill' [Review of *The Shame and the Glory: Dieppe* by Terence Robertson], *Toronto Daily Star*, 19 September 1962, 42.

23 CBC Television 'Interview with Terence Robertson'. The CBC Digital Archives Website. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. First broadcast 7 September 1962.

24 Wallace Rayburn, CBC Radio 'Review of "The Shame and the Glory"'. The CBC Digital Archives Website. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. First broadcast 2 October 1962.

25 Ibid.

26 Edinborough, 'Military Molehill,' op cit.

27 Robertson, *Dieppe*, 1-2.

28 Ibid, 2.

29 Ibid, 303.

My question is, could Private Stanley Jones, the trapper-murderer-fallen soldier have been, as it were, the Fairy Fay of Terence Robertson's Dieppe book? That is, could he have been invented the story of Private Jones and his murder to provide a dramatic opening to the book, to portray an average Canadian as fearless ahead of Robertson's contention that some of the Canadians were less than brave under fire? For how could he know the details that he gives at the beginning of the book in somewhat lurid fashion, in a manner reminiscent of his treatment of the story of Fairy Fay a dozen years earlier?

Perhaps countering my suspicion that Private Jones was invented by Robertson just as he apparently conjured up Fairy Fay out of thin air is the fact that, a quarter of the way through the book, Robertson does relate an encounter between a Private John Hallett of the Canadian forces and this Private Jones. Hallett was in reality an Englishman, Captain John Hughes-Hallett, RN, an aide to Lord Mountbatten who had been sent by the British to test the mettle of the Canadian forces ahead of sending them across the Channel for Operation Jubilee, for which Hughes-Hallett would be the operational commander. According to Robertson, the former trapper was able to get Hallett out of a sticky situation in a Wootton pub: a bloody fight with three drunken British Pioneer Corps soldiers who were bad mouthing the Canadians. The cold-eyed former trapper dealt with the Brits by slashing one of them with a knife that 'glittered under the naked electric knife' as Hallett beat a hasty retreat on Jones's instructions to leave. At a pub down the road, according to Robertson, Jones told Hughes-Hallett his secret about the murder he had committed before joining the Cameron Highlanders.<sup>30</sup>

Robertson writes,

*While Jones talked, Hughes-Hallett balanced his duty as a naval officer to have this self-confessed killer arrested, against his responsibility for the fate [of the operation].*

*'There was really no decision to make,' he told me. 'There could hardly have been any question of bringing Stanley to trial for the earlier incident. So far as he was aware, it was unknown to the police, and in any case accused persons are carefully protected from being convicted as a result of their own gossip.'*<sup>31</sup>



*The Canadian Cemetery in Dieppe, France. (Courtesy of John Stephens)*

As if to provide additional proof that my suspicion that Robertson could have invented the Private Jones story is incorrect, the author does also provide a list of acknowledgements at the back of the book showing the names of veterans and military experts whom he stated he asked to read the draft of his book. And one of the names is that of the then still living Vice-Admiral John Hughes-Hallett, CB, DSO, MP.<sup>32</sup> So presumably the admiral concurred with the story - assuming that he read that passage of the book in which Robertson claims Jones confessed to him. After retirement from the Navy, Hughes-Hallett served as the Conservative Member of Parliament for East (later North East) Croydon from 1954 to 1964. He was Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Transport for Shipping and Shipbuilding, 1961-64. He died in 1972. Although Hughes-Hallett drafted memoirs, they remain unpublished.<sup>33</sup>

Incidentally, Admiral John Hughes-Hallett was a relative though not in the same family line as Colonel Francis Charles Hughes-Hallett who claimed some involvement in the Ripper case, in trying to privately track the Whitechapel murderer. Colonel Hughes-Hallett claimed to have trailed the murderer after the George Yard murder<sup>34</sup> and he has featured recently in a number of articles by Joe Chetcuti in which he has speculated that the man being trailed by the colonel could have been suspect Dr Francis Tumblety.<sup>35</sup>

30 Ibid, 98-100.

31 Ibid, 100.

32 Ibid, 420-21.

33 John Hughes-Hallett was born 1 December 1901. His father was Colonel Wyndham Hughes-Hallett. He served as a midshipman in HMS Lion in 1918 during the last year of World War I. At the beginning of World War II, he served in the Norwegian campaign, 1940, aboard HMS Devonshire and was mentioned in despatches. As described in Terence Robertson's Dieppe: The Shame and the Glory, Hughes-Hallett was the Naval Commander during the Dieppe Raid and was Commodore Commanding Channel Assault Force and Naval Chief of Staff (X), 1942 and 1943. He served as Vice-Controller of the Navy in 1950-2 and Flag Officer, Heavy Squadron, Home Fleet, 1952-3. Hughes-Hallett died 5 April 1972. His papers are at the Churchill Archives Centre, Churchill College, Cambridge. See [anus.lib.cam.ac.uk/db/node.xsp?id=EAD%2FGBR%2F0014%2FHHLT](http://anus.lib.cam.ac.uk/db/node.xsp?id=EAD%2FGBR%2F0014%2FHHLT) and article on Admiral John Hughes-Hallett in [Wikipedia.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Hughes-Hallett](http://Wikipedia.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Hughes-Hallett)

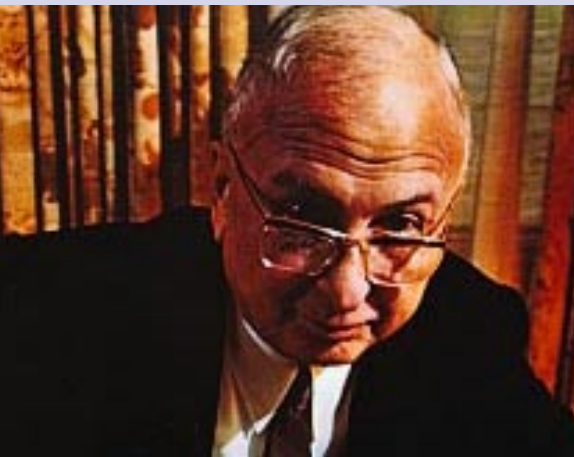
34 'A New Theory Relative to the Whitechapel Murders,' *Reno Evening Gazette*, 8 October 1888. Available at [www.casebook.org/press\\_reports/reno\\_evening\\_gazette/881008.html](http://www.casebook.org/press_reports/reno_evening_gazette/881008.html)

35 See Joe Chetcuti, 'Tumblety in London: Trailing an Infiltrator. Part I,' *Ripperologist* 59, May 2005, 12-18, and 'Tumblety in London: Trailing an Infiltrator. Part II,' *Ripperologist* 60, July 2005, 17-21.



## The Suez Crisis, a Nobel Prize Winner, and a Liquor Magnate

In 1964, Robertson followed his book on the Dieppe debacle with *Suez: The Inside Story of the Suez Conspiracy*,<sup>36</sup> which chronicled the key role played in the Suez crisis of 1956 by Canadian diplomat (and, in 1963-1968, Canadian prime minister) Lester B Pearson, in averting possible war between the great powers over the crisis. Pearson had performed this miracle by working through the United Nations, and for his work he won the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1957. The Nobel Prize committee felt that Pearson had 'saved the world' from nuclear war.<sup>37</sup> For the book, Robertson interviewed Pearson and other key international diplomats and, as the book jacket blurb states, he 'examined previously private and highly confidential documents.' In this way, the blurb tells us, 'he reveals in dramatic behind-the-scenes detail the action that unfolded as international diplomats raced against the clock to avert disaster.'<sup>38</sup> He also interviewed Prime Minister Pearson for the *Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph Weekend Magazine* for an article that appeared in April 1965.<sup>39</sup> At this time also, he held discussions with Falcon Pictures of Canada Ltd to make a motion picture of his Dieppe book to be filmed by British-born cinematographer Ronald Neame known for films as varied as *Blithe Spirit* (1940) and *The Poseidon Adventure* (1972).<sup>40</sup>



Canadian liquor magnate Samuel Bronfman (1891-1971)

In 1966, Robertson landed a commission to write an official history of Samuel Bronfman (1891-1971) and his Montreal-based liquor empire, Seagram's. At the same time, Robertson's Canadian publishers, McClelland and Stewart, took out a \$100,000 insurance policy on his life in case for some reason he was unable to complete the project.<sup>41</sup> This turned out to be a wise move because the project ran into trouble and Robertson took his own life after completing a draft of the book with which the Bronfman family apparently were unsatisfied.

Bronfman, who usually claimed that he was the Canadian-born son of Russian Jewish immigrants was, it is believed by Jewish historian Michael R Marrus, to have been born in a small town in Bessarabia in Czarist Russia and not in Winnipeg as he often claimed, although Bronfman's prairies upbringing was real enough.<sup>42</sup>

Marrus states in his biography of Bronfman that Robertson began the project to write the book brightly enough:

*Work began at the end of 1967, with Robertson interviewing Sam extensively in December and January of the following year. Unfortunately, the project collapsed in 1969 when Robertson became wildly erratic, running up an enormous expense account and even disappearing, for a time, in an alcoholic haze. Robertson ultimately produced a rambling, highly laudatory, and completely unpublishable draft...*<sup>43</sup>

### A Suspicious Death?

On 31 January 1970, Robertson committed suicide by taking an overdose of sleeping pills. Given that it was widely known that Robertson by this time was wildly erratic, the circumstances of his death might or might not have been suspicious. Canadian writer Peter C Newman wrote of Robertson's death in his unauthorized 1978 biography of Samuel Bronfman:

36 Terence Robertson, *Suez: The Inside Story of the Suez Conspiracy*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964. The book was published by Hutchinson in Britain and Anthenium in the United States, both in 1965.

37 Lester B Pearson in [Wikipedia en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lester\\_B.\\_Pearson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lester_B._Pearson)

38 Robertson, *Suez*, dust jacket notes.

39 Terence Robertson, 'A Conversation with the Prime Minister,' *Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph Weekend Magazine*, 3 April 1965.

40 Terence Robertson. Correspondence, 1966-1967, between Robertson and Falcon Pictures of Canada Ltd about the proposed film 'Dieppe; The Shame and the Glory' (with Ronald Neame) based on Robertson's book *The Shame and the Glory: Dieppe* (M&S) 1962. John G. 'Jack' McClelland Papers, Editorial Files, Box 19, The William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collection, McMaster University Library, Hamilton, Ontario. [library.mcmaster.ca/archives/findaids/findaids/m/mcclella.01.htm](http://library.mcmaster.ca/archives/findaids/findaids/m/mcclella.01.htm)

41 'Publisher fights for dead writer's life insurance,' *Toronto Star*, 22 November 1977, B02.

42 Michael R Marrus, *Samuel Bronfman: The Life and Times of Seagram's Mr. Sam*. Hanover, New Hampshire: Brandeis University Press, 1991, 21-22. The manuscript copy of Robertson's unfinished book, *Bronfman*, resides in Box 18 of the Jack MacClelland papers, The William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collection, McMaster University Library, Hamilton, Ontario. Despite opinions about the unfinished quality of the work, recent Bronfmans writer Nicholas Faith uses extensive quotes from Robertson's interviews with Sam Bronfman mined from Robertson's manuscript on the liquor magnate.

43 Marrus, 460.

Terence Robertson... took his own life after completing a rough draft of the [Bronfman] manuscript. During a 1977 trial in which [the Toronto publishing firm of] McClelland and Stewart Ltd sued Mutual Life Assurance Co. to collect the \$100,000 for which Robertson's life had been insured, Roderick Goodman of the Toronto Daily Star's editorial department testified that on January 31, 1970, the author had telephoned him from a New York hotel room to explain that he had been commissioned to write the history of the Bronfman family but that he had 'found out things they don't want me to write about.' Graham Murray Caney, another Star editor, testified that Robertson had told him his life 'had been threatened and we would know who was doing the threatening but that he would do the job himself.' While he was still on the telephone, Caney had the call traced and alerted the New York Police Department. Detectives burst into Terence Robertson's hotel room just minutes before he died of barbiturate poisoning.<sup>44</sup>

To other writers on the Bronfman dynasty, the circumstances were less suspicious than down to Robertson's alcoholic state and clear psychological problems. Nicholas Faith, in his recently published *The Bronfmans: The Rise and Fall of the House of Seagram*, commissioned by the Bronfman family, although relating jokes about Sam Bronfman's public reputation as a supposed bootlegger in his early career and making light of remarks by friends that he (Faith) might receive 'cement galoshes' for accepting a commission to write his book about the Bronfmans,<sup>45</sup> states about Terence Robertson's death that:

*The story [of Robertson's death] has naturally added to the Bronfman legend. But none of even the most vociferous conspiracy theorists has ever found any evidence of foul play, let alone anything damaging to Sam, or indeed any member of the Bronfman family.*<sup>46</sup>

In the trial concerning the life insurance policy in 1977, Robertson's widow stated that she had begun divorce proceedings due to her husband's erratic behavior. Appearing before the Ontario Supreme Court in November of that year, she said that on the night of his death, Robertson phoned her to say, 'This is the end, you won't see me again.' As a result, 'She phoned publisher Jack McClelland who arranged for the New York police to break into his apartment.' The manuscript that Robertson wrote seems less damaging to the Bronfmans than that the Bronfmans were not pleased with it. Robertson was quoted as having told Rod Goodman and Graham Caney of the *Toronto Daily Star* that the family didn't like the manuscript but that he refused to change it.<sup>47</sup> Ultimately, in 1981, the full \$100,000 life insurance money was awarded to the publishers by the judges of the Supreme Court of Canada by a 3-2 decision.<sup>48</sup>



Cover of the recently published book on the Bronfmans by author Nicholas Faith, who sees nothing suspicious in Terence Robertson's death.

## Conclusion

While my investigation does not definitively answer the question of where exactly Terence Robertson obtained the name 'Fairy Fay,' I do agree with Messrs Sugden, Evans, and Connell that it is clear from the wording of Robertson's 1950 *Reynolds News* article on the Whitechapel murders that he did invent the name. I hope that this closer look at Terence Robertson provides a useful detailed examination of the writer and puts his 'contribution' to Ripper literature into perspective in terms of his life and career. Possibly it will provide clues for future researchers to dig into Robertson's career to further elucidate his connection to Fairy Fay and to the Ripper case.

## Acknowledgements

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45 Nicholas Faith, *The Bronfmans: The Rise and Fall of the House of Seagram*. New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2006, 1-2.

46 Faith, 5.

47 'Publisher fights for dead writer's life insurance,' *Toronto Star*, 22 November 1977, B02.

48 Included in 'Crown has burden of proof in smuggling case - court' [round up of Supreme Court of Canada decisions], *Toronto Star*, 23 June 1981, A17.

# The Helpful Healer

A BROTHER CARDFILE ADVENTURE  
by DON SOUDEN



Inspector Frederick George Abberline was not in a good mood this particular morning in early October, 1888, but foul as his mood might be, it was soon to get a lot worse. The Whitechapel murderer, now popularly known as "Jack the Ripper," was still eluding the police and, after a look at the papers on his desk, it was clear that everyone was demanding he do something. Abberline was still fuming when there was knock at his office door.

"Come in," Abberline said gruffly.

"Excuse me, sir," said the sergeant as entered and closed door behind him, "but about these Ripper murders, there's a monk, 'e...."

Abberline slapped his hand on his desk. "Damn that Edgar Allen Poe! I've heard all the jokes I can stand about knife-wielding apes, throat-cutting chimpanzees and organ-grinders' monkeys stealing women's organs! And unless you want to be back pounding a beat you'll remember that Sergeant."

The sergeant was red-faced and sputtering and just managed to speak. "No, sir, not a monkey, please. A monk, one of them fellows in a robe like Friar Tuck, sir."

Abberline's mood changed instantly, and he bade the sergeant to show the monk into the office. To himself, however, Abberline's thoughts were still less than affable. "Damn that meddlesome Home Secretary Henry Matthews. He's such good Catholic, Matthews has to send me this monk from the backwoods somewhere because this monk has had all sorts of success solving petty pastoral crimes. Bah!"

Abberline's thoughts were interrupted when the monk in question entered the room. Indeed, he was dressed in a tattered robe that seemed to swallow up the little man. From what the inspector could see of the monk's head within the cowl, his hair was thinning and white and his face well lined, though it also had a ruddy, almost nut-brown cast that suggested an outdoors life.

"Brother, um, Cardfile, I believe," Abberline. "Please, have a seat."

"Yea, Brother Cardfile I am," said the monk, his speech not only rustic, but faintly archaic as well.

"Ah, yes, the Home Secretary speaks well of you. Sent me a lot of information about you." Abberline rummaged in a drawer and finally brought out some papers. "Oh, yes, here is what I was sent. You're at the Abbey of St. Peter, Paul and Mary, right? And, Brother Cardfile, you would like to help us capture the Ripper, eh?" And Abberline added, under his breath, "Don't they all."

"Wherever I am led to give aid and comfort with my simple talents, I do so willingly." Cardfile spoke quietly, but then raised his voice a bit and added with a gentle smile "I am old Inspector, but not yet deaf and if 'they all' wish to help I can only say that my desires are genuine and my wishes most humble."

Abberline gave an embarrassed "harumpf," and buried himself back in his papers before speaking again.

"Tell me, Brother Cardfile, how much do you know about these, uh, Ripper murders? Have you got any ideas?"

"Oh, the Home Secretary has sent many letters and I wonder, have you pray considered the possibility the murders were committed by a man dressed as a woman—or even a woman dressed as a man?"

"And why would you ask that," queried Abberline testily.

"Only, dear inspector, because so many of the crimes I have unknotted back home involve just that sort of impersonation."



"Right," said Abberline without much enthusiasm. "I noticed that many of your cases had boys dressed as girls and t'other way round. What's wrong with people in your area, can't they tell the difference? It isn't hard you know."

Brother Cardfile sighed before he spoke. "Alas, Inspector, we in Snoozebury by the Styx are a rather simple folk, still living in the 12th century I fear, and most have not yet discovered sex."

"What?" asked Abberline with a snort.

"Oh no, Inspector, I should have said they are still exploring gender. Sex they know all too well. They just haven't quite sorted out male and females—or humans from sheep and ponies for that matter. I have tried to explain it to them, but my flock are still simple and unlearned—and terribly sinful as result."

Abberline listened to the monk with a certain amount of incredulity.

"Yes, well no trouble like that here. We actually tried to dress up a few constables as women, but it didn't work. Oh, some of them actually looked better than a lot of the unfortunates on our streets, especially after they shaved off their beards and moustaches. But they couldn't fool anyone. Lurched around like drunken elephants and kept rubbing their ...well never mind. Anyway, how do you think you can help?"

"I am sure I could help Inspector if I were just to go out upon your streets at nightfall and mingle with the gentle folk of Whitechapel. I have an affinity for making others bare their souls, I am gifted in deductive wiles and as a healer, my powders and herbs may yet save some from the diseases of their ill-wrought lives."

"Oh, they'll bare more than their souls to you, count on that. And as for diseases, you'll have plenty of opportunity to dispense your powders—they do love a quack." Then, sensing he may have gone too far, Abberline grew more conciliatory. "But these streets are dangerous and you seem, well so gentle."

"Do not fear for me. Should it be my time, I am well prepared. And I am also well prepared if it is not my time—should I be accosted I shall mace them."

"Mace? Have we got an anachronism here?"

"I suspicion we do," smiled Cardfile as he reached into his robe and brought forth a great studded iron ball firmly seated on a thick wooden handle. "If anyone should attempt mayhem upon me, my mace will answer for me. Not that I would smite anyone, save to save another soul, but it does look fearsome and would give ample pause to those bent upon bloodshed."

Remembering that Brother Cardfile had been sent by the Home Secretary, Abberline smiled weakly before he answered.

"Very good, Brother Cardfile, I am convinced. Report to the Leman Street police station tonight and I'll have a constable ready to show around the area, if you are willing."

"Bless you, Inspector, I am ready."



rother Cardfile was on the streets of Whitechapel that night, the shepherd himself carefully shepherded by four especially alert and capable constables in plainclothes, as per Abberline's instructions. They were told to give the monk ample opportunity to go about his business, but they had also been warned by the Inspector that should a single hair on Cardfile's head (or the flesh within his tonsure) be harmed not only would they lose their jobs and pensions, but Abberline would personally ensure their physical manhood was gone as well. In short, nothing was to happen to Matthews' chosen instrument of investigation.

Actually, though Brother Cardfile was something of an attention gathering apparition on the streets, he moved among the crowds with surprising ease. Oh, he received many a catcall about his garb and more than a few males—and females—demanded "Show us whatcher got under your 'dress' ducks," but as the scriptures counsel, Cardfile's gentle words did turneth away all wrath.

Indeed, by the end of the first evening, Cardfile had walked through most of the Ripper's supposed turf and had managed to start—and continue—conversations with an amazing number of the women walking the streets. He seemed blessed with an innate ability to first listen and then question the women in a way no policeman or even reporter could hope to emulate. Moreover, he often dispensed a few of his powders and herbs, which were accepted with an eagerness that infirmity physicians could only dream of. What success he might have had finding a murderer the watchful constables could only wonder about, but this strange old monk quickly became a popular figure for those living within the winding alleys and bustling byways of Whitechapel.

It was with great relief that Inspector Abberline read the report waiting for him the next morning about Brother Cardfile's first night in the East End. "So long as the old fool doesn't get hurt," Abberline thought to himself, "all is well. No way he can do what we haven't in tracking that damned Ripper, but he can't hurt and maybe he can even help a few poor souls with his preaching and powders." And with that bit of bother out of the way, Inspector Abberline settled in for his daily grind of reading reports, talking with detectives, and otherwise hoping to find a clue that would end the infernal murderer's death spree.



With each passing day, Abberline grew more and more confident that Brother Cardfile would suffer no harm (and, frankly, became less and less interested in the whole tedious business) as the daily reports took on a predictable and uneventful sameness. Oh, the monk had made a special visit to Mitre Square and conducted some sort of simple rite in the area many considered haunted long before Catharine Eddowes was disemboweled. For the most part, though, Brother Cardfile simply walked the streets at night, spoke to many and hoped to heal a few with his medications.

As a result, it came as something of a surprise when, some eight days after Brother Cardfile was first ushered into his office, Abberline was told that the monk again wished to see him.

"It's that monk—just plain monk and no jokes—I beg to report Inspector," the sergeant was at pains to explain. "Him as is outside and wants to see you again, sir"

Abberline put down the latest bit of "news" sent his way, a report from an elderly woman in the Isle of Wight who was sure "the Ripper was her charwoman's son because he was 'not a nice boy' and besides, she once saw him sharpen a pencil with a penknife." The inspector glared at the report and then said with sigh "Show him in."

If anything, the monk looked to Abberline as if he had aged years in the past week, but then the East End could do that to you. Still, he bustled with the same quiet energy and pent piety he had displayed on their first meeting.

"Brother Cardfile, I am glad to see you. Do you bring news about the Ripper? I understand you have been quite active in the area."

"Sadly Inspector, not enough news I fear. But I must, it seems, return anon to Snoozebury. Not only have I received a message by Palimpsest Express that several apprentices have taken to impersonating sheep," the monk shook his head in sorrow before continuing, "but I have also run out of several of my most important herbs and decoctions. And it is so difficult in London to find any Milkmaiden's myrrh or dried potter's pustules, not to mention *cannabis sativa* or magic mushrooms. Alas, I would not have been able to help heal last night had not some gentle fellow supplied me with a substitute substance."

Abberline was only half-listening and hoped he was hiding his glee that Brother Cardfile would be leaving. And, with his departure, that the headache bestowed upon him by the Home Secretary would be a thing of the past.

"Ah, well, that is too bad," said Abberline. "But I suppose your flock back home need you." Then, to be polite, Abberline asked "Did you come to any conclusions about the Ripper?"

Brother Cardfile was pensive for a moment, his face screwed up in thought before speaking.

"Well, Inspector, only that he is a white male in his 20s or early 30s. Lives in the area and knows it well. Probably a loner in an inconsequential job who hates whores. He may have grown up with a weak or absent father and his mother may have left him or abused him when young. As to organized or disorganized, I'm not sure."

Abberline scowled before asking "Organized or disorganized, what does that mean?"

"I have no idea," Cardfile said with a shrug, "but it sounds important."

"Well, Brother Cardfile, I do appreciate your efforts and I do hope you have success at home with those, um, boys dressing as sheep. Have a safe trip home and I will tell the Home Secretary how much we appreciated your visit."

Then, as an afterthought, part of what Cardfile's said earlier struck him and he called to the monk as he was leaving the office.

"Wait a minute, Brother Cardfile. As a point of interest. You mentioned borrowing some medicine from someone. Another quack...er, healer. Who was that?"

"Oh, a very nice young man who said his powder would have women feeling no pain before sunrise. He is a hairdresser, had a foreign name, like...oh, I remember. Severin Klosowski."

EAST END LIFE

# London's Burning

THE VICTORIAN FIRE BRIGADE  
by ADAM WOOD

*Coroner Wynne Baxter: Can you tell us where you were on Thursday, August 30th?*

*John Pizer (after considering): In the Holloway-road.*

*Baxter: You had better say exactly where you were. It is important to account for your time from that Thursday to the Friday morning.*

*Pizer: What time, may I ask?*

*Baxter: It was the week before you came to Mulberry-street.*

*Pizer: I was staying at a common lodging-house called the Round House, in the Holloway-road.*

*Baxter: Did you sleep the night there?*

*Pizer: Yes.*

*Baxter: At what time did you go in?*

*Pizer: On the night of the London Dock fire I went in about two or a quarter-past. It was on the Friday morning.*

*Baxter: When did you leave the lodging-house?*

*Pizer: At eleven a.m. on the same day. I saw on the placards, "Another Horrible Murder."*

*Baxter: Where were you before two o'clock on Friday morning?*

*Pizer: At eleven p.m. on Thursday I had my supper at the Round House.*

*Baxter: Did you go out?*



*London docks*

*Pizer: Yes, as far as the Seven Sisters-road, and then returned towards Highgate way, down the Holloway-road. Turning, I saw the reflection of a fire. Coming as far as the church in the Holloway-road I saw two constables and the lodging-housekeeper talking together. There might have been one or two constables, I cannot say which. I asked a constable where the fire was, and he said it was a long way off. I asked him where he thought it was, and he replied: "Down by the Albert Docks." It was then about half-past one, to the best of my*

*recollection. I went as far as Highbury Railway Station on the same side of the way, returned, and then went into the lodging house.*



Pizer was referring to the fire at the London Docks, which ultimately gave him his alibi to the murder of Mary Ann Nichols.

Shortly after 8.30pm on 29 August 1888 a fire broke out in the upper floors of a huge warehouse in the centre of the docks, some 150 yards long. The Fire Brigade were not called until 9.00pm, when an alarm was given at the station on Commercial Road. Newspapers report that a more dangerous location for the fire could not have been found; the warehouse was packed with 'colonial produce' on the upper floors, and brandy and gin in the lower floors. By 10.00pm twelve engines were tackling the blaze, until by 11.00pm the fire began to diminish, although the Brigade remained in attendance for many hours. <sup>1</sup>

The firemen fighting the blaze at the docks came from stations all over London, with those in the East End being situated in Whitechapel (27 Commercial Road), Bethnal Green (283 Bethnal Green Road), Bow (Glebe Road), Mile End (263 Mile End Road), Poplar (West India Dock Road), Shadwell, (Glamis Road), West Ferry Road, Isle of Dogs, and in the City at 23 Bishopsgate St Without, and 67-69 Watling Street, Cheapside. <sup>2</sup>

Whitechapel station had been built in 1874 at a cost of £7,215 (£446,216 at today's money using [www.measuringworth.com](http://www.measuringworth.com)). Located at 27 Commercial Road, it was further enlarged in 1909 for £3,750 (£260,354). <sup>3</sup>

The station at 283 Bethnal Green Road, built in 1866, was replaced in 1889 by a new station on 51 Green Street, built at a cost of £13,065 (£962,112). <sup>4</sup>

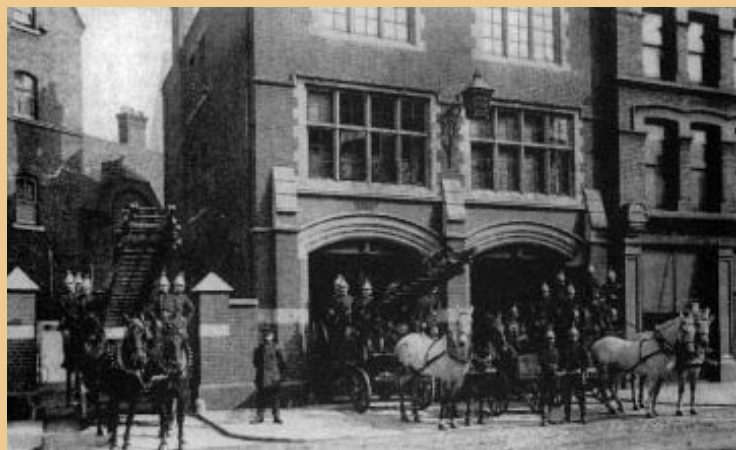
*Dickens's Dictionary* for 1888 lists dozens of 'fire escape stations', with one situated in St James's Place, off Mitre Square. The *Weekly Herald* of 5 October 1888 describes the extent of the fire-fighting facilities at this station:

*Mitre Square is a sort of huge yard about 120 feet square, and there are three entrances to it, the principal being from Mitre Street; which is broad enough to accomodate two vehicles abreast. There is also a short, covered court, about 20 yards long, leading into St. James's Place, another square, popularly known as the "Orange Market," in the centre of which is a public convenience, a street fire station consisting simply of a waggon on wheels, and also a permanent street fire station in course of erection.*

Fire escapes, in the early days of the Brigade, were made by Abraham Wivell, who was responsible for 85 fire escape stations. The fly ladder was swung into position with ropes and a rescued person could be passed down the canvas chute beneath the ladder. This ladder was superseded by the lattice-girder extending fire escape, patented by James Shand in 1880.



Whitechapel fire station c1902. Courtesy firefleet.co.uk



Whitechapel fire station c1909. Courtesy Casebook Image Archive



Goad map showing location of the fire escape station in St James's Place

<sup>1</sup> *East London Advertiser*, 1 September 1888.

<sup>2</sup> *Dickens's Dictionary of London* 1888

<sup>3</sup> [www.firefleet.co.uk](http://www.firefleet.co.uk)

<sup>4</sup> [www.firefleet.co.uk](http://www.firefleet.co.uk)



*The Great Fire of London*

In total, London boasted 55 land fire engine stations, 4 floating or river stations, 27 hose cart stations, 127 fire escape stations, 5 steam fire engines on barges; 45 land steam fire engines, 78 6-inch manual fire engines, 37 under 6-inch manual fire engines, 74 hose carts, 2 self-propelling fire floats, 5 steam tugs, 9 barges; 146 fire escapes, 9 long fire ladders, 9 ladder vans, 2 ladder trucks, 1 trolley for ladders, 1 trolley for engines, 11 hose and coal vans, 10 waggons for street duties, 5 street stations for ditto, 102 watch boxes. There were 591 firemen, including 16 pilots and 67 coachmen; 131 horses, 68 telephones between fire stations, 54 alarm circuits around stations, with 349 call points; 20 telephones to police stations, and 17 bell ringing alarms. At any one time there would be 360 firemen on duty in the course of 24 hours, made up of 115 by day and 245 by night. <sup>5</sup>

Seven years later, 'Uncle Jonathan', in 1895's *Walks in and Around London*, offered revised figures:

*There are 58 fire stations, where 39 steam fire-engines and 115 manual engines, or engines through which the water is pumped by hand, are kept ready to be sent out at a moment's notice to any fire. There are 137 fire-escapes and 575 firemen.*

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade had its roots in the 'Fire-watch' or 'Fire-guard' of London, formed by the Insurance Offices set up a century earlier following the Great Fire of London in 1666. Although these companies retained their separate engine establishments, in 1825 the Sun, Union, and Royal Exchange formed a brigade. In 1832 eight Insurance Companies formed an alliance for assisting each other at fires, which commenced operations in 1833. This was the London Fire Engine Establishment.

The Insurance Companies awarded gratuities to policemen who gave an alarm to the nearest engine-station, and the director or captain of each engine paid strangers or bystanders for aid. It required from twenty to thirty men to work each engine, and at a large fire, 500 strangers were sometimes employed in this way. Sometimes the engines were summoned by electric telegraph, and conveyed by railway to fires in the country. The engines were provided with scaling ladders; a canvas sheet, with handles of rope round the edge, to form a fire-escape; besides ropes, hose, branch-pipes, suction-pipes, a fiat rose, goose-neck, dam-board, boat-hook, saw, shovel, mattock, pole-axe, screw-wrench, crowbar, portable cistern, two dog-tails, strips of sheep-skin, small cord, instruments for opening the fire-plugs, and keys for turning the stop-cocks of the water-mains.

The men wore a dark grey uniform, trimmed with red, black leather waist-belts, and hardened leathern helmets. Also provided was a smoke-proof dress, consisting of a leathern jacket and head covering, fastened at the waist and wrist, so that the interior is smoke-proof, with two glass windows to look through, and a pipe attached to the girdle allowing fresh air to be pumped inside the interior of the jacket.

At that time, the Brigade had 120 skilled workmen, 36 engines, and 18 stations. It was maintained at a cost of around £25,000 (£1.6million) a year by the various insurance offices which contributed, pro rata, £70 per £1,000,000, with a fixed payment of £100 a year. <sup>6</sup>

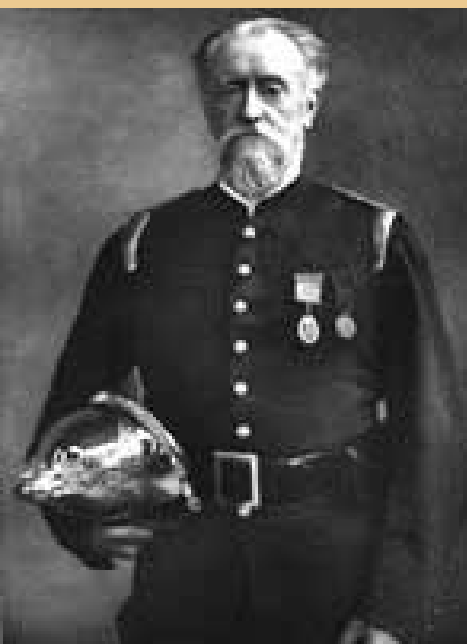


*Tunic of the London Fire Engine Establishment firefighter displayed in the Museum of London. Photo by Adam Wood*

<sup>5</sup> *Dickens's Dictionary of London 1888*

<sup>6</sup> *Cruchley's London in 1865 : A Handbook for Strangers, 1865*





Captain Eyre Massey Shaw

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade, comprising the whole of the force and engines of the London Fire Establishment, was created in 1865 by the passing of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Act. It was headed by Captain Eyre Massey Shaw as Chief Superintendent. Shaw was born in Ireland in 1803 and served as an officer in the British Army before becoming head of the joint police and fire brigade in Belfast. In 1861, following the death of James Braidwood in the line of duty fighting a massive fire in Tooley Street, Shaw was engaged as head of the 'old' Brigade. Was Shaw a Criminologist? *Chambers's Journal* of 25 April 1885 lists the Superintendent as a former visitor to Scotland Yard's Black Museum.<sup>7</sup>

The 'new' Brigade doubled the size of the establishment. John Timbs, in 1867's *Curiosities of London*, records the equipment at the force's disposal:

*The force consists of chiefs and 350 officers and men, 4 steam floating-engines, 4 large land-steamers, 27 small land-steamers, and 37 large manual engines, with horses, drivers, &c. These are distributed among 33 large and 56 small fire-stations, protecting an area of about 117 square miles. Compared with the previous Fire Brigade, the increase is 72 additional stations, 219 extra firemen, 2 large floating and 2 large land-steamers, 21 small land-steamers, and 61 manual engines. The cost of its maintenance is not to exceed 50,000l. per annum, partly contributed by a public rate of 1/2d. in the pound, £10,000 contributed by the various metropolitan fire-insurance companies, and £10,000 from the Government. There are nearly 500 parish engines in*

*the metropolis, but not more than 20 were considered to be sufficiently efficient to be accepted in the new force.*

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade was taken over by the London County Council in 1889; Shaw disagreed with the administration, and resigned in 1891. He was knighted by Queen Victoria on his last day of service.<sup>8</sup>

The Headquarters of the Brigade were at Winchester House, Southwark Bridge Road. A reporter from *The Strand* visited in 1890 and the atmospheric report is worth reading in full:

*Our credentials being in order there is no difficulty experienced in our reception. Nothing can exceed the civility and polite ness of the officials, and of the rank and file of the Brigade. Fine, active, cheerful fellows, all sailors, these firemen are a credit to their organisation and to London. The Superintendent hands us over to a bright young fellow, who is waiting his promotion—we hope he has reached it, if not a death vacancy—and he takes us in charge kindly.*

*Standing in the very entrance, we had already remarked two engines. The folding, automatic doors are closed in front of these machines. One, a steamer, is being nursed by means of a gas tube to keep the fire-box warm. The fire-call rings; there is no time to begin to get up steam. The well-heated interior soon acts in response to the quickly lighted fire as the engine starts, and by the time our steamer reaches its destination steam is generated. A spare steamer is close at hand.*

*Very bright and clean is the machine, which in a way puts its useful ally, the 'manual', in the shade though at present the latter kind are more numerous, in the proportion of seventy-eight to forty-eight. Turning from the engines we notice a row of burnished helmets hanging over tunics and below these, great knee-boots, which are so familiar to the citizen. When the alarm is rung, these are donned rapidly but we opine the gates will occupy some time in the opening.*



Tunic of the 'new' Metropolitan Fire Brigade firefighter displayed in the Museum of London. Photo by Adam Wood

<sup>7</sup> The actual date of the visit was 23 January 1882. Black Museum visitor's book, with thanks to Keith Skinner.

<sup>8</sup> Wikipedia



Our guide smiles, and points out two ropes hanging immediately over the driving seat of each engine.

"When the engine is ready the coach man pulls the rope, and the gates open of their own accord, you may say. See here!"

He turns to the office entrance, where two ropes are hanging side by side. A pull on each, and the doors leading to the back yard open and unfold themselves. The catch drops deftly into an aperture made to receive it, and the portals are thus kept open. About a second and a half is occupied in this manoeuvre.

We consider it unfortunate that we shall not see a "turn out," as alarms by day are not usual. The Superintendent looks quizzical, but says nothing then. He gives instructions to our guide to show us all we want to see, and in this spirit we examine the instrument room close at hand.

Here are fixed a number of telephonic apparatus, labelled with the names of the stations: Manchester-square, Clerkenwell, Whitechapel, and so on, five in number, known by the Brigade as Superintendents' Stations, A, B, C, D, E Districts. By these means immediate communication can be obtained with any portion of the Metropolis, and the condition and requirements of the fires reported. There is also a frame in the outer office, which bears a number of electric bells, which can summon the head of any department, or demand the presence of any officer instantly.

It is extraordinary to see the quiet way in which the work is performed, the ease and freedom of the men, and the strict observance of discipline withal. Very few men are visible as we pass on to the repairing shops. Here the engines are repaired and inspected. There are eleven steamers in the shed, some available for service, and so designated. If an outlying station require a steamer in substitution for its own, here is one ready. The boilers are examined every six months, and tested by water-pressure up to 180 lbs. on the square inch, in order to sustain safely the steam pressure up to 120 lbs when it blows off."



Metropolitan Fire Brigade crews outside the Southwark headquarters c1895. Courtesy London Fire Brigade



From The Illustrated London News, 31 March 1849

Passing down the shed we notice the men—all Brigade men—employed at their various tasks in the forge or carpenters' shop. Thus it will be perceived that the - head-quarters enclose many different artisans, and is self-contained. The men were lifting a boiler when we were present, and our artist "caught them in the act."

Close to the entrance is a high 'shoot' in which hang pendant numerous ropes and many lengths of drying hose. The impression experienced when standing under neath, and gazing upwards, is something - like the feeling one would have while gazing up at the tops of the trees in a pine wood. There is a sense of vastness in this narrow lofty brick enclosure, which is some 70 ft. high. The hose is doubled in its length of 100 ft., and then it drains dry-, for the moisture is apt to conceal itself in the rubber lining, and in the nozzles and head-screws of the hoses.

No precaution is neglected, no point is missed. Vigilant eyes are everywhere bright responsive faces and ready hands are continually in evidence, but unobtrusively.

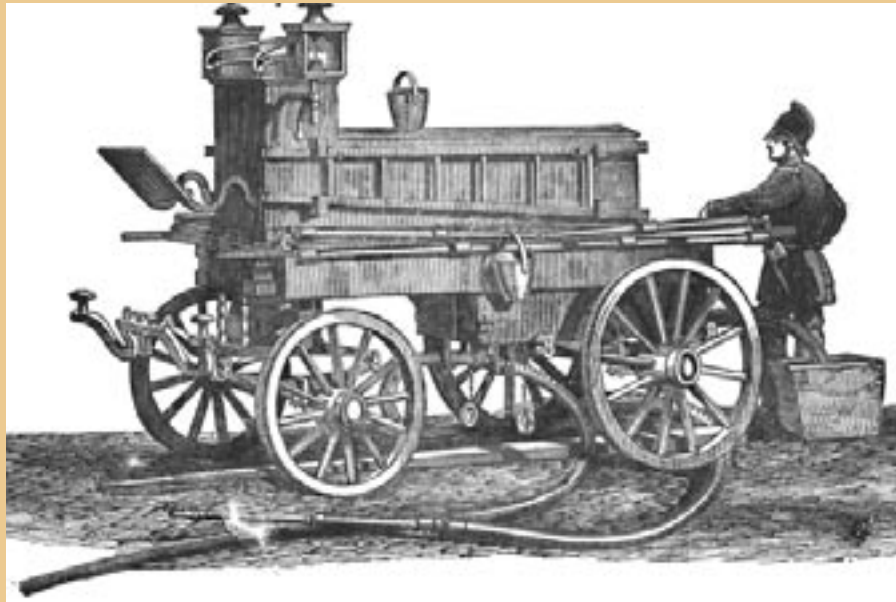
Turning from the repairing shops we proceed to the stables, where we find things in the normal condition of preparedness. - "Be ready " is evidently the watchword of the Brigade. Ready, aye ready Neatness and cleanliness are here scrupulously regarded. Tidiness is the feature of the - stables. A pair of

horses on either side are standing, faces outward, in their stalls. Four handsome, well-groomed, lithe animals they look; and as we enter they regard us – with considerable curiosity, a view which we reciprocate.

Round each horse's neck is suspended his collar. A weight let into the woodwork of the stall holds the harness by means of a lanyard and swivel. When the alarm rings the collar is dropped, and in "half a second" the animals, traces and splinter- bar hanging on their sleek backs and sides, are trotted out and harnessed.

Once more our guide smiles, and passes on through the forage and harness-rooms, where we also find a coachman's room for reading, and waiting on duty.

It is now nearly mid-day, and we turn to see the fire-drill of the recruits, who, clad in lops, practise all the necessary and requisite work which alone can render them fit for the business. They are thus employed from nine o'clock to mid-day, and from two till four p.m. During these five hours the squads are exercised in the art of putting the ladders and escapes on the wagons which convey them to the scene of the fire. The recruit must learn how to raise the heavy machine by his own efforts, by means of a rope rove through a ring-bolt. We had an opportunity to see the recruits raising the machine together to get it off the wagon. The men are practised in leaping up when the vehicle is starting off at a great pace after 'he wheels are manned to give an impetus to the vehicle which carries such a burthen. But the "rescue drill" is still more interesting, and this exhibited the strength and dexterity the firemen in a surprising manner. It is striking to notice the different ways in which the rescue of the male and female sexes is accomplished. The sure-footed fireman rapidly ascends the ladder and leaps upon the parapet. The escape is furnished with a ladder which projects beyond the net. At the bottom a canvas sheet or hammock is suspended so that the rescued shall not suffer from contusions, which formerly were frequent in consequence of the rapid descent.



From The Illustrated London News, July-December 1851

One fireman passes into a garret window and emerges with a man. He makes no pause on the parapet, where already, heedless of glare and smoke and the risk of a fall, he has raised on his shoulders the heavy, apparently inanimate, form, and grasping the man round one leg, his arm inside the thigh, he carries him steadily, like a sack of coals, down the ladder as far as the opening of the bag-net of the escape. Here he halts, and puts the man into the net, perhaps head downwards, he himself following in the same position. The man rescued is then let down easily, the fireman using his elbows and knees as "breaks" to arrest their progress. So the individual is assisted down, and not permitted to go unattended.

The rescue of a female is accomplished in a slightly different manner. She is also carried to the ladder, but the rescuer grasps both her legs below the knees, and when he reaches the net he places her head downwards and grasps her dress tightly round her ankles, holding her thus in a straight position. Thus her dress is undisturbed, and she is received in the folds of the friendly canvas underneath, in safety.

There is also a "jumping drill" from the windows into a sheet held by the other men. This course of instruction is not so popular, for it seems somewhat of a trial to leap in cold blood into a sheet some twenty feet below. The feat of lifting a grown man (weighing perhaps sixteen stone) from the parapet to the right knee, then, by grasping the waist, getting the limp arm around his neck, and then, holding the leg, to rise up and walk on a narrow ledge amid all the terrible surroundings of a fire, requires much nerve and strength. Frequently we hear of deaths and injuries to men of the Brigade, but no landsman can attain proficiency in even double the time that sailors do—the latter are so accustomed to giddy heights, and to precarious footing.

Moreover, the belt, to which a swivel hook is attached, is a safeguard of which Jack takes every advantage. This equipment enables him to hang on to a ladder and swing about like a monkey, having both hands free to save or assist a victim of the fire or one of his mates. There is a death-roll of about five men annually, on the average, and many are injured, if not fatally yet very seriously, by falling walls and such accidents. Drenched and soaked, the men have a terrible time of it at a fire, and they richly deserve the leisure they obtain.



*This leisure is, however, not so pleasant as might be imagined, for the fireman is always on duty; and, no matter how he is occupied, he may be wanted on the engine, and must go.*

*Having inspected the American ladder in its shed, we glanced at the stores and pattern rooms, and at the firemen's quarters. Here the men live with their wives and families, if they are married, and in single blessedness, if Love the Pilgrim has not come their way. Old Winchester House, festooned with creepers, was never put to more worthy use than in sheltering these retiring heroes, who daily risk their lives uncomplainingly.*<sup>9</sup>

Winchester House was the Brigade's headquarter's until 1937, when a new building on the Albert Embankment was opened by George V. It is now the home of the London Fire Brigade Museum.<sup>10</sup>



*From The Illustrated London News, 1843*

By 1887, after 22 years of combatting London's fires, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade was well rehearsed in answering calls for help. That year they received 3,059 calls, of which 528 were false alarms, 168 chimney alarms, with 2,363 being for fires of which just 175 resulted in serious damage and 2,188 resulting in slight damage. 146 of these fires seriously endangered life, and 55 resulted in death. 28 of these were removed from the premises alive but died in hospital later. The number of journeys made by fire engines from the 55 stations was 33,564 (a total distance of 64,294 miles). Some 26,000,000 gallons (117,000 tons) of water was used extinguishing fires, around 57,000 tons taken from the Thames, canals and docks, and the remainder from street pipes.<sup>11</sup>

Had John Pizer completed his trip to Albert Docks on 29 August 1888 and watched the Brigade fighting the huge blaze, he would have witnessed an incredibly impressive force in action.

\* \* \* \* \*

*It is late in the evening, and the streets seem more than usually crowded with passers-by, and with the well-filled 'buses and cabs and other vehicles passing along. There is a constant hum of voices and patter of feet, and the whirr of moving wheels, or the noisier rattling over the stones, as some driver more eager than the rest rushes along. The air is filled with these and the usual sounds of a busy street at the close of day, when from far down the road there comes the hoarse roar of shouts, which we know at once to herald the coming of an engine of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. In the distance we see it speeding on its errand of mercy, and the hoarse cries of 'Hi! Hi!' from the firemen warn the drivers of other vehicles to draw away to the sides of the road, giving a clear space in the middle for the engine to pass quickly on its way.*

*O! How grand they look as they dash by! So quickly did they pass that we had only time enough to catch a glimpse of them, and they were gone. We could just see the driver bending to his horses, urging them along, and the noble and well-trained animals springing forward, seeming scarcely to touch the ground as they bounded on their way. There was a flash as the light of the street lamps fell upon the brass helmets, making them glitter as those fearless men sped by. A shower of sparks, a cloud of smoke, as the engineer put more coal on the engine fire, and 'the roar of voices cheering and shouting 'Fire! Fire!' dies away in the distance, and they are gone.*

*You will, I am sure, say, 'What a noble body of men they are!' and will wish them 'God speed' on all their journeys, when I tell you that in one year, out of 160 people whose lives were in danger, the London Fire Brigade rescued 127.*<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in Gareth Cotterell's *London Scene from the Strand*. With thanks to [www.victorianlondon.org](http://www.victorianlondon.org)

<sup>10</sup> [www.london-fire.gov.uk/about\\_us/our\\_history/visit\\_our\\_museum.asp](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/about_us/our_history/visit_our_museum.asp)

<sup>11</sup> Captain Shaw's report for 1887, published in *Dickens's Dictionary of London 1888*

<sup>12</sup> 'Uncle Jonathan', *Walks in and Around London*, 1895 (3 ed.)





# Louise Brooks: A Centennial Celebration

by EDUARDO ZINNA

To be a rebel is to court extinction.

*Louise Brooks on Orson Welles.*

Are you a variation of Jack the Ripper,  
who finally brings me love that I'm prevented from accepting  
- not by the knife but by old age?

*Louise Brooks to Kenneth Tynan*

A recurrent sequence typifies the cinematic image of Jack the Ripper. In film after film, a woman walks alone down dark, deserted, fog-bound alleys. Her eye is too bright, her face too flushed and her clothes too gaudy for her to be a respectable woman. She must be a show-girl, a dancer or a *fille de joie* - although her looks are unaffected by alcoholism, disease or neglect. As she strolls on, her step a trifle unsteady, she grows uneasy, starting at unexpected sounds and unexplained shadows. An unseen presence seems to lurk just beyond the yellowish pools of light thrown by the lamp-posts, stealthily closing the distance between them. She turns a corner bent low against the freezing wind. Suddenly, a man clad in evening clothes materializes before her. A short dialogue might follow, promises might be made, escape might be attempted. All is in vain. A knife will flash and, within a few moments, the woman will lie dead on the ground, her eyes glassy and her throat bleeding. The Ripper will vanish, often pursued by the shrill whistles of the police, though seldom by the police themselves.

Historians, sociologists and commentators have pointed out that the Ripper's victims have neither past nor future. They exist only for the fleeting moment when they pop up in front of him like so many ducks in a shooting gallery and, once knocked down, are instantly forgotten. They have no identity other than that of victims, powerless before the Ripper. In an essay recently discussed in these pages, Jennifer Pegg has observed that the term Ripperology 'removes from the field of study any reference to the female victims or their suffering'. American author Judith R Walkowitz wrote: 'The Whitechapel murders have continued to provide a common vocabulary of violence against women, a vocabulary now more than one hundred years old. Its persistence owes much to the mass media's exploitation of Ripper iconography. Depictions of female mutilation in mainstream cinema, celebrations of the Ripper as a "hero" of crime intensify fears of male violence and convince women that they are helpless victims.'<sup>1</sup>

Yet one Ripper victim - perhaps the most famous fictional victim of them all - never had truck with helplessness and was never content with being a bit-player in the narrative of her own death. Her story has been told in the theatre, in an opera and in an unforgettable film: *Pandora's Box*. How this film came to be made, in Germany in 1928, and how a young American actress came to incarnate in the screen Lulu, the temptress whose innocence is her deadliest asset, is one of the legends of the cinema.

Louise Brooks was born on 14 November 1906, one hundred years ago this month, in Cherryvale, Kansas. She was descended from sound English farmer stock. Her ancestors had arrived in America at the end of the eighteenth century and settled in Tennessee. Shortly after the Civil War, her great-grandfather moved his whole family to Kansas by covered wagon. Louise's father was a lawyer and her mother a society lady, a wife and a mother - though she was far more interested in her musical and literary endeavours than in the upbringing of her children. Louise was a rebellious,

<sup>1</sup> Walkowitz, Judith R, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992.

assertive, artistic child. She made her debut as a dancer at the age of four, and dance always remained her first love. By the time she was fifteen, she was skilled enough as a dancer for the *avant-garde* Denishawn Dance Company of New York, where she performed alongside Martha Graham. From there she moved to *George White's Scandals*, a show patterned after Ziegfeld's *Follies*, and almost immediately, to the Algonquin Hotel, Dorothy Parker's home away from home. Always attractive to men, particularly wealthy and influential men, Louise combined the pleasures of being wined and dined with the pursuit of her career. In the summer of 1925 she became a specialty dancer at the *Follies*. A role in a film, *The Street of Forgotten Men*, next came her way. She felt almost as though she were slumming, since movies were then considered vastly inferior to the legitimate stage, the theatre. Louise's role, besides, was neither long nor prominent. In truth, she had only one scene. But one glance and one smile sufficed to establish her, unsurprisingly but memorably, as a bad girl. That part should have signalled the beginning of unprecedented stardom and, for a while, it looked as if it would. Somehow, it didn't.

Louise signed a contract with Paramount and quickly rose to playing lead or second-lead roles in a dozen movies with such directors as William Wellman and Howard Hawks and such stars as W C Fields, Adolphe Menjou, Wallace Beery, Richard Arlen and Victor McLaglen. All big stars then, all virtually forgotten today. Louise also did the town, enjoyed a varied and uninhibited love life and bobbed her jet-black hair into a stern, iconic hairdo.



Louise Brooks with Richard Arlen in *Beggars of Life*

In the twenty or thirty years since its beginnings in the last decades of the nineteenth century, silent film had acquired a vocabulary of its own and reached levels comparable to those of any other artistic medium. But the studios, always eager for novelty, kept experimenting with sound. In 1927, Warners hit the spot with *The Jazz Singer*, an otherwise

lachrymose melodrama whose only attraction was the insertion of several songs and a few lines of spoken dialogue by its star, Al Jolson. Many continued to consider sound as just a passing fad. But audiences began to reject silent films and demand sound. Studios everywhere started preparing for the inevitable transition to talkies. In September 1928, Louise was completing work in yet another silent film: *The Canary Murder Case*, where she played the title role - a dancer - and William Powell played detective Philo Vance. B P Schulberg, the head of Paramount, told Louise that he could not offer her the contractual raise due her until she showed that she could act in sound films. He gave her an option: she could stay on at the same salary or she could quit. Louise chose to quit. Within a matter of days, she was on her way to the Berlin studios of Nero-Film to meet film director Georg W Pabst.

German playwright Frank Wedekind was strongly influenced by the ideology of Nietzsche, popular theatre, cabaret, musical revues, the *Grand Guignol*, pantomime and even the circus. In, respectively, 1893 and 1904, he published his masterpieces, the plays titled *Erdgeist* (Earth Spirit), and *Die Büchse der Pandora* (Pandora's Box). Together, they tell the story of Lulu, an 'earth spirit' possessed of animal magnetism, but lacking in all moral sense, who destroys the life of all who surround her and, ultimately, her own. 'Lulu is not a real character,' said Wedekind, 'but the personification of primitive sexuality who inspires evil unaware.' Censors frowned at the raw sensuality of Wedekind's plays and labelled them pornographic. For years the plays remained unperformed, but by 1928 they had motivated Alban Berg to write his twelve-tone opera *Lulu* and inspired four film versions whose protagonists chewed men and the scenery with equal conviction. Five years after the latest of these films, Pabst decided to bring to the screen what he saw as Wedekind's own conception of Lulu.

For months on end, Pabst looked unsuccessfully for an actress who could play Lulu as he imagined her. He interviewed dozens of actresses, considered them all and rejected them all. James Card, the founder of the George Eastman archive, wrote that Pabst 'was well aware of the hazards of casting Teutonic actresses so eager to demonstrate how wicked they could be.' In Wedekind's conception, he added, Lulu was 'an inadvertent femme fatale who could in no way be coquettish or even deliberately seductive.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Card, James, *Seductive Cinema: The Art of Silent Film*, Alfred A Knopf, New York, 1994.



Georg Pabst



Gustav Diessl, 'The Ripper'

Pabst's heart was set on Louise Brooks, whom he had seen in Howard Hawks's *A Girl in Every Port* opposite Victor McLaglen and Robert Armstrong. Louise played Mlle Godiva, the girl from Marseilles. Three other girls hailed respectively from Buenos Aires, Bombay and the South Seas. But, although Pabst bombarded the offices of Paramount Studios with requests for the services of Miss Brooks, no answer was forthcoming. He was resigned to casting Marlene Dietrich - who had not yet starred in *The Blue Angel* - when he received Louise's telegram accepting his offer. Pabst later said: 'Dietrich was too old and too obvious - one sexy look and the picture would become a burlesque.'<sup>3</sup> For him, Lulu's most important trait was her childlike innocence.<sup>4</sup>

As *Pandora's Box* opens, Lulu is the mistress of a respected publisher, Dr Peter Schön (Fritz Kortner). Schön arrives at the well-appointed flat where he keeps her to tell her that he's marrying the daughter of an influential politician. A ragged little man, Schigolch (Carl Goetz), is hiding in the balcony. Lulu introduces him as her 'first patron'. It is never clear whether he is her father, her pimp or her first lover. He may in fact be all three. Schön's son Alwa (Francis Lederer), enthralled with Lulu, offers her the main role in a musical revue he is producing. Countess Anna Geschwitz (Alice Roberts), who is designing the costumes for the revue, also falls hopelessly in love with her. When Schön brings his fiancée to the revue's première, Lulu refuses to perform for her. Schön attempts to force Lulu to go on stage but cannot resist her charms. As they embrace, Alwa and his fiancée walk in. When his fiancée breaks their engagement, Schön marries Lulu. At their wedding, Countess Geschwitz dances with Lulu in the cinema's first openly Lesbian scene. Later, an increasingly bemused Schön finds his bedroom invaded by old Schigolch and his associate, trapeze artist Rodrigo Quast (Krafft-Raschig). Furious, he pulls out a gun and chases them away. When he returns, his son has joined Lulu in the bedroom. Overwhelmed by jealousy and shame, Schön orders her to kill herself with the gun. She refuses and they struggle over the gun, which goes off, killing Schön. Lulu is brought to trial for his murder but escapes with the help of her friends. Accompanied by Alwa and the Countess, Lulu has several adventures and narrowly escapes being sold to an Egyptian brothel by a blackmailing nobleman. The Countess sacrifices herself, killing Rodrigo to save Lulu from giving in to his advances.

Lulu, Alwa and Schigolch arrive in London, where they find shelter in an unheated garret. It's Christmas Eve. Schigolch suggests that Lulu prostitute herself to support them. In the street, a young, handsome

man (Gustav Diessl) stops before a poster warning the public that a killer - Jack the Ripper - is on the loose. The man gives all his money to a lovely Salvation Army volunteer who in return gives him a sprig of mistletoe. Lulu, dressed in tattered, stained clothes - but still infinitely enticing - walks past, looking for a punter. When the young man - who is the Ripper - tells her that he has no money, she says she likes him anyway and invites him back to her room. In her memoir, *Pabst and Lulu*, Louise Brooks wrote: 'It is Christmas Eve and she is about to receive the gift which has been her dream since childhood: death by a sexual maniac.' As they climb the stairs to her room, the Ripper opens a clasp knife behind his back, but drops it when Lulu smiles. Inside, they kiss under the mistletoe. As Lulu sits in his lap, the Ripper catches the glint of a knife on the table. Unable to control himself, he grabs it and kills her. Lulu collapses in the Ripper's deadly embrace. Back in the street, the Ripper crosses Alwa. They exchange a glance. The Ripper vanishes into the fog and Alwa walks on alone.

<sup>3</sup> Cited by Louise Brooks in *Pabst and Lulu, Lulu in Hollywood*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> British critic David Shipman agreed: '...Louise Brooks is not a femme fatale but a child - so delighted with everything, unable to be regretful for long, pleased to be admired.' Shipman, David, *The Story of Cinema*, Vol. One, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1982.





*Lulu under the mistletoe*

This ending, where a young and handsome Jack the Ripper struggles in vain against his passions before killing Lulu, is a radical departure from Wedekind's play. As Louise Brooks wrote in *Pabst and Lulu*, 'There was no complexity in Pabst's direction of the Jack the Ripper scenes. He made them a tender love passage until that terrible moment when Diessl saw the knife on the edge of the table.' By contrast, the last scene of Wedekind's play shows the prolonged, harrowing murder of Lulu and the Countess - who is still with her in his version - by a brutish Jack. All three trash about the stage as the Ripper stabs the Countess and mutilates Lulu, who cries 'Murder! Murder!' at the top of her lungs. The Ripper's last words, as he exits with a small packet wrapped up in newspaper, recall Coroner Baxter's theories about the collecting of organs as a motivation for the Ripper's crimes.<sup>5</sup>

The character of the Ripper is not the only change introduced by Pabst. In his version, Schön's fatal shooting does not result from his struggling with Lulu; it is she who shoots him down rather than submit to his wish that she commit suicide. Angela Carter goes even further in her evaluation of the screen version's subtle alterations. She wrote: '*Pandora's Box* remains one of the great expositions of the cultural myth of the *femme fatale*... which Pabst and his star, Louise Brooks, conspired to both demonstrate irresistibly in action while, at the same time, offering evidence of its manifest absurdity.' She added: 'Desire does not so much transcend its object as ignore it completely in favour of a fantastic recreation of it. Which is the process by which the *femme* gets credited with fatality.'<sup>6</sup> Lulu must die because she is free.

It is worth noting that no effort is made in *Pandora's Box* to offer a realistic representation of the period or the location of the Ripper's crimes. Throughout the film, the characters dress in contemporary clothes and move against contemporary backgrounds recreated in the studio. Like Louise Brooks herself, Lulu is essentially a young woman of the 1920s, a flapper. The film is silent, but if it had had a musical score it would certainly have consisted of American jazz, Argentine tango and Weimar-era cabaret songs.

Pabst was a skilled director, known for cinematic innovations in the use of titles, close-ups and cutting during movement as well as for his aptitude for working with actors. Yet some have wondered whether *Pandora's Box* is its director's film - or its star's. One of Louise's admirers, critic Lotte Eisner, described Pabst's American star's contribution to the film as 'the miracle of Louise Brooks'. She added, rather unfairly to Pabst: '[Louise's] gifts of profound intuition may seem purely passive to an inexperienced audience, yet she succeeded in stimulating an otherwise unequal director's talent to the extreme.' In her view, Louise 'needed no direction, but could move across the screen causing the work of art to be born by her mere presence.'<sup>7</sup>

*Pandora's Box* opened in Berlin on 30 January 1929. The critics thoroughly panned the film and its star. There was apparently resentment in Germany at the choice of a little known American actress to play the main role in an important German play. Besides, Louise's natural acting style led many to assert that she couldn't act, since she didn't emote in the same way as her contemporaries did. More insidiously, the film ran afoul of the censors for its treatment of sexuality: Louise's easy promiscuity, the Countess's lesbianism, Schigolch's readiness to live off women, Alwa's Oedipal fixation with his father's widow. *Pandora's Box* was mutilated in France. In America, where it was rendered obsolete even before it opened by the arrival of sound, its ending was changed to allow Lulu to escape the Ripper's knife and join the Salvation Army.



<sup>5</sup> Wedekind, Frank: *Lulu* [in a new version by Nicholas Wright], Nick Hern Books, London, 2001.

<sup>6</sup> Carter, Angela: *Femmes Fatales*, New Society, 16 March 1978.

<sup>7</sup> Eisner, Lotte H, *The Haunted Screen*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1984.

As soon as the filming of *Pandora's Box* ended Louise returned to America, where she learnt that the Paramount executives were anxious to locate her. They wanted to issue *The Canary Murder Case* as a talkie and needed her desperately for retakes and to dub her voice. But Louise refused adamantly to come to Hollywood. The studio insisted and insisted, offering her more and more money, but she still refused. The threat was not long in coming: 'You'll never work in Hollywood again.' She did, but the humiliation she inflicted on Paramount would signal the decline and eventual end of her American film career. Back in Europe, she made *Diary of a Lost Girl*, another Pabst masterpiece. Next she made *Prix de Beauté* for Italian director Augusto Genina. Once again, she was murdered in the last scene.



Louise Brooks in later life

Louise's steep decline, which oddly paralleled that of Lulu in the last reels of *Pandora's Box*, started with her return to Hollywood in 1930. All she could find was small roles in 'B' movies. Following yet another part in a routine programmer, *Overland Stage Raiders*, a modern-day Western co-starring a then little-known John Wayne, she abandoned films. It was 1938. For a while she was able to market her dancing skills or act on soap operas on the radio, but afterwards she slipped further and further down the social and economic ladder, being reduced to stints as a saleswoman at Saks and, later, to living off the protection of male friends. Some say she worked occasionally as a call girl. Did she, during those years, long for release, for death, as Lulu had?

Miraculously, Louise was rescued from obscurity, alcoholism and decline to emerge as one of the greatest stars of all time, an icon of the cinema. In 1955, Henri Langlois, the founder of the Cinémathèque Française, organised an exhibition of stills and artefacts from sixty years of cinema. At the entrance to the exhibition hung two gigantic photographs of Renée Falconetti in *The Passion of Joan of Arc* and Louise Brooks in *Pandora's Box*. When asked why he had chosen Louise rather than Greta Garbo or Marlene Dietrich, Langlois famously replied: 'There is no Garbo! There is no Dietrich! There is only Louise Brooks!'

In the ensuing years Louise was often honoured for her work in film and started a new career writing with insight and wit for the best film magazines. Her films were shown in cinemas and on television worldwide. At the insistence of James Card, she moved to Rochester, New York. For the remainder of her life, she was a semi-recluse, but often received friends or visitors. In 1977, a book published in France extolled her artistry: *Louise Brooks: Portrait d'une anti-star* (Jaccard, Roland, ed.; Phébus, Paris). In 1979, British critic Kenneth Tynan wrote for the *New Yorker* a seminal article celebrating Louise: *The Girl in the Black Helmet*. In 1982, a collection of her writings on film, *Lulu in Hollywood*, appeared.

Louise Brooks died at the age of 78 on 8 August 1985.





CHRIS SCOTT's

# Press Trawl

*The Evening Standard*  
12 September 1888

## THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS

A discovery, which may prove of importance, was made yesterday afternoon in connection with the recent murder in Whitechapel. A little girl happened to be walking in the back garden, or yard, of the house, 25 Hanbury street, the next house but one to the scene of the murder, when her attention was attracted to peculiar marks on the wall and on the garden path. She communicated her discovery to Detective Inspector Chandler, who had just called at the house to make a plan of the back premises of the three houses, for the use of the Coroner. The yard was then carefully examined, with the result that a bloody trail was found distinctly marked for a distance of five or six feet in the direction of the back door of the house. The appearances suggested that the murderer, after his crime, had passed through or over the dividing fence between Nos. 29 and 27, and thence into the garden of No. 25. On the wall of the last house was a curious mark, between a smear and a sprinkle, as if the murderer, alarmed by the blood soaked state of his coat, had taken it off, and knocked it against the wall. Abutting on the end of the yard of No. 25 are the works of Mr. Bailey, a packing case maker. In the yard of this establishment, on an out of the way corner, the police yesterday afternoon found some crumpled paper, stained, almost saturated, with blood. It is supposed that the murderer found the paper in the yard of No. 25, wiped his hands with it, and threw it over the wall into Mr. Bailey's premises. The house No. 25, like most of the dwellings in the street, is let out in tenements direct from the owner, who does not live on the premises, and has no direct representative therein. The back and front doors are always left either on the latch or wide open, the tenant of each room looking after the safety of his own apartment. The general appearance of the trail of blood and other indications seem to show that the murderer intended to make his way into the street through the house next door but one, being frightened by some noise or light in No. 29 from retreating by the way which he came. On reaching the yard of No. 25, he made for the back door, and then suddenly remembering his blood stained appearance, he must have stopped, and, catching sight of the pieces of paper lying about, he doubtless retraced his steps to the end of the yard, and then performed his gruesome toilet. He might have had some thought of retreating by way of Bailey's premises, but the height of the walls made such a course somewhat perilous, and he finally made his way into Hanbury street through the house. He could have met with no difficulty, as both back and front doors were open, and he could wait in the passage if any one was passing down the street. These matters suggest that the murderer was alive to the risk of detection, and acted with so much circumspection as to dispel the idea that he was a reckless maniac.

A woman named Durrell, who minds carts on market morning in Spitalfields market, stated yesterday that, about half past five o'clock on Saturday morning, she was passing the front door of No. 29 Hanbury street, when she saw a man and a woman standing on the pavement. She heard the man say, "Will you?" and the woman replied, "Yes." They then disappeared. Mrs. Durrell does not think she could identify the couple.

Although no fresh arrests were made yesterday in connection with the Whitechapel murders, the police obtained information which at one time promised to develop into important evidence. It had been intended to liberate John Piser on Monday evening, but at the last moment it was decided to keep him in custody, the police not being quite satisfied upon one or two points in respect to him. Yesterday morning information was received, which, if well founded, would have made out a case of some strength against Piser. On the morning of the murder of Mrs. Chapman a man in Hanbury street noticed a woman in the company of two men. They appeared to be quarrelling, and he heard the men make use of threats. Such an incident is, however, very common in the district, and the man, after taking a good look at the disputants, passed on his way. Yesterday the police resolved to inquire if Piser was one of the men seen in Hanbury



street at the time in question. The man who saw the quarrel was requested to attend at Lemon street Police station. On his arrival about one o'clock, some twenty men, mostly brought in from the adjacent thoroughfare, were paraded before him. The man, without a moment's hesitation, pointed to Piser as the man whom he heard threatening the woman in Hanbury street on the morning of the murder. Piser protested that the man was entirely mistaken, but he was put back in the cells, and more closely watched. The police, during the afternoon and evening, made careful inquiries into the statements made by the man who professed to identify Piser. The manner of this man, who is, apparently, of Spanish blood, and displays a blue ribbon on his coat, did not inspire much confidence in his veracity, and he was severely cross examined by a sort of informal tribunal, consisting of experienced detective officers. The witness added to his first statement that he not only saw the prisoner in Hanbury street on the day of the murder, but that he actually took him by the collar when he was about to strike the woman. The man first volunteered his statement on Monday, and he subsequently displayed anxiety to view the remains of Mrs. Chapman, which, however, was not permitted. Piser's brother declares that he did not leave the house between Thursday and the day of his apprehension, because he had been subjected to annoyance at being followed by people, who called him Leather Apron. Piser is physically a very weak man, and for that reason does not work very closely. He suffers from hernia, is in other ways infirm, and has been under hospital treatment for a long time. From his lodgings the police have carried off five knives, which have been subjected to careful examination. All of them are of the class used in the leather currying trade, having blades about six inches in length, with stout handles, sometimes notched in a peculiar way. There is apparently, no blood either on the blades or the handles, but on some of the blades are marks apparently caused by rust. The examination of the knives led to the conclusion that none of the marks was a blood stain. About eight o'clock last evening the police arrived at the conclusion that the man referred to above had not stated the truth, and that there were no grounds for keeping Piser any longer in custody. He was accordingly set at liberty, and at once proceeded to Mulberry street, where he received the congratulations of his relatives and friends.

Mr. S. Montagu, M.P. for the Whitechapel Division of the Tower Hamlets, has offered £100 as a reward for the capture of the Whitechapel murderer.

A representative of the Central News, who patrolled the streets and alleys of Whitechapel during Monday night and the early hours of yesterday morning, writes:-

The scare, which the disclosure of the fourth and most horrible of the murders occasioned in the district, has considerably subsided. People having become familiar with the details of the tragedy, and being calmed by the knowledge of the active measures adopted for their protection by the police, are returning to their normal condition of mind. This is plainly evidenced by the aspect which Whitechapel road presented on Monday night, and up to an early hour of the morning - a very different one from that of the corresponding period of the previous day. On Sunday night the pavements were almost deserted, but 24 hours later groups of men and women chatted, joked, and boisterously laughed upon the flagstones until long after St. Mary's clock struck one. In passing through the groups of people, the words most frequently heard in their conversation were "Leather Apron." The term has become a byword of the pavement and gutter, and one oftener hears it accompanied by a laugh than whispered in a tone which would indicate any fear of the mysterious individual who is supposed to live under that nickname. Whilst a large number of persons, including many members of the police force, believe in the guilt of "Leather Apron," the talk of the footways convinces the passer-by that a large number of other inhabitants of the East end are sceptical as to his personality. So it may be said with truth that the thoroughfares on Monday night presented their customary appearance. There was the usual percentage of gaudily dressed, loud, and vulgar women at the brightly lighted cross ways; and the still larger proportion of miserable, half fed, dejected creatures of the same sex upon whom hard life, unhealthy habits, and bad spirits have too plainly set their stamp. Soon after one o'clock the better dressed members of the motley company disappeared; but the poor wretches crawled about from lamp to lamp, or from one dark alley's mouth to another, until faint signs of dawn appeared. Off the main road - in such thoroughfares as Commercial street and Brick lane - there was little to attract attention. Constables passed silently by the knots of homeless vagabonds huddled in the recess of some big door way; other constables, whose plain clothes could not prevent their stalwart, well drilled figures from betraying their calling, paraded in couples, now and again emerging from some dimly lighted lane and passing their uniformed comrades with an air of profound ignorance. The streets referred to by the constables in the main thoroughfare, as "round at the back," presented a dismal appearance, the dim yellow flames of the not too numerous public lamps only rendering the darkness of the night more gloomy. Such passages as Edward street, connecting Hanbury and Prince's streets, Flower and Dean street, between Brick lane and Commercial street, which, in daylight, only strike one as very unwholesome and dirty thoroughfares, appear unutterably forlorn and dismal in the darkness of the night. In almost any one of these dark and filthy passages a human being's life might be every night sacrificed were the blow dealt with the terrible suddenness and precision which evidently characterised the last two homicides; and a police force of double the strength of that now employed, and organised under the best possible conditions, might well be baffled in its efforts

to capture the murderers. In the immediate neighbourhood of St. Mary's Church a wide entry presented a deep cavern of intense blackness, into which no lamp shone, and where such an occurrence as that of Saturday morning might easily take place unobserved. In a squalid thoroughfare between Hanbury street and Whitechapel road some houses have been pulled down, the space being now waste ground enclosed by wooden palings. This unilluminated spot is separated by a house or two from an alley which, at a point some yards from the street, turns at right angles apparently towards the unoccupied space mentioned. Into the mouth of this passage a slatternly woman, her face half hidden in a shawl, which formed her only headdress, thrust her head, and in a shrill and angry voice shrieked, "Tuppy!" The cry was answered by the appearance of an evil looking man, with a ragged black beard, who in reply to an impatient question "Where is she?" muttered in a surly tone, "Round there," at the same time jerking his thumb backwards towards the alley. "Well, come 'long 'ome, then. I ain't agoin' to wait for she," replied the woman, who, with the dark man limping after, soon disappeared round the corner of the street. There was no subsequent indication of the presence of a third person. The light from the street was so dim that there was no possibility of recognising the features of the man and women, and certainly if either had borne traces of crime they would have attracted no attention. Such occurrences as the above are, the police say, quite usual, and they neither have, nor wish to have, authority to question any individual whose conduct may attract attention without exciting suspicion.

The St. Jude's Vigilance Association has only been in existence about four weeks. It is largely composed of working men, assisted by some of the members belonging to Toynbee Hall, its operations being confined to that neighbourhood. A member of the Committee stated yesterday that rows are constantly occurring in the district, and that the police force is too small to deal with the disturbers of the peace. The night after the murder in Buck's row, a man and woman disturbed Wentworth street for more than half an hour. Two members of the Committee were present, but no policeman could be found. Another brawl took place yesterday in the same thoroughfare, and one of the Committee, who became aware of it, looked for a constable for twenty minutes before one was found.

At the Lambeth Police court yesterday, John Brennan, 39, labourer, was charged before Mr. Biron with acting in a disorderly manner, and causing a crowd to assemble at Southampton street, Camberwell. On Monday afternoon the prisoner entered the White Hart public house, Southampton street. His coat was torn up the back, and he had a very rough and strange appearance. He began talking about the murder at the East end, and added that they had not yet caught "Leather Apron," who was a pal of his. He proceeded to say that he had the knife. A regular scare followed this, the customers ran out of the place into the street, and in a short time a crowd gathered. The landlady, feeling alarmed at what she heard, locked herself in the bar parlour, leaving the prisoner in possession of the place. In the meantime the story spread, and two women, seeing Police Constable Pillow, told him, and begged him to enter the house. He found a crowd assembled, and managed to get the prisoner out of the house, but as he refused to go away, took him into custody. The prisoner, who treated the whole matter evidently as a good joke, was ordered by Mr. Biron to enter into bail to keep the peace.

### STRANGE DISCOVERY IN THE THAMES

About twenty minutes to one yesterday afternoon, Frederick Moore, a man employed at Messrs. Ward's timber yard, Grosvenor road, had his attention drawn to a curious looking object lying on the mud on the bank of the Thames, immediately opposite where he was working. He procured a ladder, and descended to the bank below the wharf. He was startled to find that the object was a human arm. It was fairly wedged between some timber in the wood dock, belonging to Messrs. Chapple. Moore having secured the limb, carefully examined the immediate vicinity, but failing to find any more human remains, he took up the arm, carried it to the embankment, and handed it over to Police constable Jones, 127B. Jones wrapped up the arm in a paper, and conveyed it to the Gerald row Police station. Inspector Adams, of the B Division, after communicating the discovery to Scotland yard, sent for Dr. Neville, of Pimlico road and Sloane street, the nearest medical man, who soon arrived at the police station, and made a careful examination of the limb. He decided that the arm was that of a well formed, tall young woman, probably about twenty five years of age. It had been cut off at the shoulders with some sharp instrument, and the question naturally arose whether this was the work of a professional anatomist or of a murderer. Dr. Neville did not express a positive opinion either way, but said that the work had been neatly done. Some skill, too, had been shown in the manner in which the limb had been removed from the trunk, but the handiwork was scarcely good enough for a person acquainted with the principles of anatomy. The flesh was comparatively fresh, and was not quite free from blood, but it appears to have been in the water two or three days. The arm had most probably been removed from the trunk after death, and it bore no bruises or signs of violent usage.

As soon as the medical examination had been concluded, Inspector Adams had the arm removed to the mortuary in Millbank street, and then proceeded with his investigations. His first care was to have the whole of the river in the immediate neighbourhood thoroughly dragged. The work was continued until a late hour in the evening, but, according to the police, no more human remains were found. The police records of missing persons were also carefully searched, but they yielded nothing that could be described as a clue. On the 24th of last month a man who was sweeping the

railway station at Guildford came across a parcel containing a human foot and leg, which he at once handed over to the local police. The parcel had apparently been thrown either from a passing train or from a bridge which passes over the railway close to where it was found. But it is not probable that the arm found yesterday had anything to do with the Guildford remains. The limb found yesterday was comparatively fresh; at any rate, it formed part of a living body not more than four days ago. Within the last week there has been reported to the police an average number of disappearances of women; but, as far as can be ascertained, not one of them can be connected with the present case.

It is possible, but not at all probable, that this arm may have been cut from the body of a young married woman, who left her home at Lewisham on the 20th ult., and has not since been heard of. She was twenty three years of age, and tall; but she had threatened to commit suicide, and it is more likely that she carried out her threat than that she was the victim of a murderer. It is possible, also, that the arm may have been placed where found by some medical student, but this view is not shared by the authorities. Inquiries are, however, being made at the various hospitals and private medical schools, the result of which can scarcely be made known until today.

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A man whose name is not given, informed the Whitechapel police yesterday that he saw two men attacking a woman on Saturday morning, near the scene of the murder; and on being shown a number of men, he selected Piser as one of the woman's assailants. But further inquiry convinced the police that the man's statements were not trustworthy, and last evening Piser was released. Mr. Montagu, the local member, has offered a reward of one hundred pounds for the apprehension of the murderer. Yesterday afternoon a little girl called the attention of the police to marks in the yard behind No. 25 Hanbury street, the next door but one to the scene of the murder. Bloodstains were found which indicated that the murderer had crossed two fences, and ultimately made his escape through No. 25.

The arm of a woman was yesterday afternoon found in the mud on the bank of the Thames, near Pimlico. A medical gentleman, who examined it, decided that it had been cut off by some sharp instrument, but he did not express an opinion whether this was done by a professional anatomist or a murderer.

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*The Evening Standard*  
14 September 1888

THE STATE OF WHITECHAPEL.  
TO THE EDITOR OF THE STANDARD.

Sir - Yesterday, at eleven a.m., a gentleman was seized and robbed of everything in Hanbury street. At five p.m., an old man, of seventy years, was attacked and served in the same way in Chicksand street. At ten a.m. today, a man rushed into a baker's shop, at the corner of Hanbury street and King Edward street, and ran off with the till and its contents.

All these occurred within one hundred yards of each other, and midway between the scenes of the last two horrible murders.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J.F.S.

September 13.

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*The Evening Standard*  
17 September 1888

The police at the Commercial street Police station have made another arrest, on suspicion, in connection with the recent murders, and the prisoner is detained at their station. Among the numerous descriptions of suspected persons are several agreeing with that of the man now in custody, but beyond this the police know nothing, at present, against him. throughout Thursday this man's movements are stated to have crested suspicion amongst various persons; but it was not till last night that he was arrested by a constable on duty in the neighbourhood of Flower and Dean street. On his arrival at the police station in Commercial street, the detective officers and Mr. Abberline were communicated with, and an investigation was at once commenced concerning him. On being searched, an odd collection of articles was found upon him - pieces of dress fabric, old and dirty linen, two or three pocket handkerchiefs, one a comparatively clean white one, and a white one with a red spotted border; two worn purses, with several compartments; two small tin boxes, a small cardboard box, a small leather strap, which might serve the purpose of a garter, string, and a spring onion. The prisoner is slightly built, about five feet seven or eight in height, and dressed very shabbily. He has a careworn look. Covering a head of hair, somewhat sandy, with beard and moustache of the same colour, was a cloth skull cap, which did not improve the man's miserable appearance. Suspicion is the sole reason for his detention; for the



police, while making every inquiry about him, do not believe his apprehension to be of any importance.

As to the man Pigott, who was apprehended at Gravesend, nothing has been discovered which can identify him with the murder. The lunatic who was arrested at Holloway has been missing from his friends for some time. The police have been actively prosecuting inquiries concerning him, and it is understood that the result, so far, increases their suspicion. He is at present confined in the asylum at Grove road, Bow.

A woman named Lloyd, living in Heath street, Commercial road, has stated that while standing outside a neighbour's door, about half past ten o'clock, on Monday night, she heard her daughter, who was sitting on the doorstep, scream, and, on looking round, saw a man walk hurriedly away. The daughter states that the man peered into her face, and she perceived a large knife at his side. A lady living opposite states that a similar incident took place outside her house. The man was short of stature, with a sandy beard, and wore a cloth cap. The woman drew that attention of some men who were passing to the strange man, and they pursued him some distance until he turned into a bye street, when, after assuming a threatening attitude, he disappeared. The description of this man exactly agrees with the description of a strange man seen in Flower and Dean street, Whitechapel, on Sunday afternoon, with whom a woman named Lyons went into a neighbouring public house, and whose suspicious behaviour, coupled with the fact that he carried a large knife, led the woman to communicate with the Commercial street police.

The funeral of Annie Chapman took place yesterday morning. The utmost secrecy was observed in the arrangements, and none but the undertaker, police, and relatives of the deceased knew anything about it. Shortly after seven o'clock a hearse drew up outside the mortuary in Montague street, and the body was quickly removed. At nine o'clock a start was made for Manor Park Cemetery, the place selected by the friends of the deceased for the interment, but no coaches followed, as it was desired that public attention should not be attracted. Mr. Smith and other relatives met the body at the cemetery and the service was duly performed in the ordinary manner. The remains of the deceased were enclosed in a black covered elm coffin, which bore the words "Annie Chapman, died September 8, 1888. Aged 48 years."

The bloodstained newspapers which were found in Bailey's yard, close to Hanbury street, and upon which it is conjectured the murderer wiped his hands after committing his crime, have been subjected to analysis, and the stains have been certified to be those of human blood. The police state that the paper was not there when they made the search on Saturday, and, though they have been closely cross examined on this point, they adhere to this statement. It is not clear, moreover, that the murderer could have thrown the newspapers in the spot where they were found from the back yard in Hanbury street; but if he threw the paper, which was rolled up into a round mass, over the wall, it might easily have been blown, or kicked, into the corner in which it was found.

Mr. Cadoche, who lives in the next house to No. 29 Hanbury street, where the murder was committed, has stated that he went to the back of the premises at half past five on the morning of the murder, and as he passed the wooden partition, he heard a woman say, "No, no." On returning he heard a scuffle, and then some one fell heavily against the fence. He heard no cry for help, and so he went into the house.

The Central News says:- "The police were yesterday in communication with the pensioner who was said to have been seen in the company of the murdered woman, Chapman. He has explained his relations with the deceased, and his antecedents. His statements are understood to be entirely satisfactory, and he will be produced as a witness when the inquest is resumed."

---

*The Evening Standard*  
17 September 1888

### THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS

On Saturday night a meeting of one of the recently formed Vigilance Committees was held at the Crown Tavern, Mile end road. The chair was taken by Mr. Aaron, who was supported by many of the leading inhabitants of the district. In opening the proceedings, the Chairman said the Committee had been formed for the purpose of considering what steps should be taken for the detection or prevention of crime in the district, and for strengthening the hands of the police, by individual action on the part of the citizens. A comprehensive circular has been printed and sent round, calling attention to the recent outrages which had alarmed the whole of London, and he had little doubt that, in the course of a few days, the Committee would be in a position to offer a substantial reward for the apprehension and conviction of the murderer or murderers. He wished it to be distinctly understood that he was in no way antagonistic to the police authorities, who were doing their best, as he believed they always did, to bring the culprits to justice; but inasmuch as their efforts had been futile, the time had arrived when the individual exertions of every inhabitant of the district was necessary to bring about the apprehension of the man who was desolating London (hear, hear). No man with the slightest feeling in his bosom could contemplate the recent murders without the keenest horror and indignation, and every woman in London was more or less in a state of trepidation and fear owing to the rapidity with which murder had

succeeded murder in Whitechapel. No one knew where the assassin would commence next, and it therefore behoved every inhabitant to do his best towards the discovery of the wretch in hiding, whose only occupation seemed to be the slaying of his fellow creatures, selecting his victims from the poorest and most wretched female outcasts. He had received many subscriptions to the fund started, and he was glad to say that a letter had just reached him from Mr. Spencer Charrington, of the Brewery close by, which was as follows:-

*"Anchor Brewery, Mile end, London, Sept. 15, 1888.*

*Sir - In reply to your letter, asking for a contribution to the reward fund for discovering the perpetrator of the late dreadful murders, I enclose you a cheque for five pounds, and remain yours truly,*

*Spencer Charrington."*

He had also received a similar sum from Mr. Lusk, the builder, and he himself had subscribed a like amount, and several guineas, half guineas, and other sums had been cheerfully paid (cheers). There was one important matter in connection with his canvass, which, he thought, the Press should know, and that was the fact that every one he saw, whether a donor or not, expressed a decided opinion that the Government were entirely wrong in declining to offer any reward for information leading to the conviction of an escaped murderer.

Mr. Rogers, one of the Committee, said he could quite endorse the latter remark, for, without exception, he had found every one upon whom he had called thoroughly at variance with the Home Office on the matter; and, in many instances, where he had expected to obtain £5 or £10 without demur, he found that his friends, though willing at all times to give generously to any charitable object, declined to subscribe to the present fund, on the ground that it was the imperative duty of the Home Secretary to issue notification of a reward.

Other gentlemen having addressed the meeting, the Chairman pointed out that the reward would be given to any person, policeman or others, who should get hold of the desired clue, and he felt sure that the successful man would be well rewarded in other quarters. In the event of the money subscribed not being utilised for the purpose in view, it had been arranged to hand it over to the funds of the London Hospital or some other charity.

The proceedings terminated in the usual manner.

\* \* \* \* \*

A great deal of alarm is still felt in the district, and it has not been mitigated by the publicity given to the story of Mrs. Lloyd, of Heath street, Commercial road, who has repeated it with further details. According to her statement, on Monday, about eleven p.m., a man, whom she considered mad, ran down Heath street, a narrow thoroughfare, pursued by some youths. They called out to her, "Look what he has behind him." Mrs. Lloyd ran indoors and armed herself with a poker; but her daughter, a girl of about 15 years of age, who remained on the step, saw that the man, who crossed the street and peered in her face, held a knife behind him. He was followed by the youths into Commercial road, and was there lost to view. It is stated that this individual corresponds with a man who was seen on Sunday afternoon, in Flower and Dean street, by a woman, who says that he carried a large knife. He was short in stature, with a sandy beard, and wore a cloth cap, and he behaved very strangely. On Friday night a man named Edward M'Kenna, answering almost exactly to this description, was apprehended by the police and taken to Commercial street Police station. The man gave an address at 16 Brick lane, Whitechapel. The most suspicious article found upon him was small table knife, rather the worse for wear, which M'Kenna asserts he uses for the purpose of cutting his food. According to his own statement, which is fairly detailed, the man has recently been on tramp in Kent, and has only just returned to London. He gains a living by peddling laces and other small articles. M'Kenna also resembles the man seen by the potman at the Ten Bells public house to put his head inside the door and angrily call a woman out of the bar on the morning of the murder. He was also like the man followed by Taylor into Bishopsgate street from the Prince Albert after the murder. Mrs. Lloyd and her daughter, therefore, were summoned to the Commercial street Police station on Saturday morning, where Mrs. Lloyd was confronted with M'Kenna, but failed to recognise him as the man she had seen. In the afternoon a detective made inquiries at 15 Brick lane, a common lodging house, and it was found beyond a doubt that M'Kenna slept there on Friday night; accordingly he was liberated. Inquiries were also prosecuted regarding the man who was arrested in Holloway, with the result that he, too, was discharged, it being maintained that he was a harmless lunatic.

The attention of the police is being directed to the elucidation of another suspicious incident. About ten o'clock on Friday night a man passed through the Tower Subway from the Surrey to the Middlesex side, and said to the caretaker, "Have you caught any of the Whitechapel murderers yet?" He then produced a knife, about a foot in length, with a curved blade, and remarked, "This will do for them." He was followed, but ran away, and was lost sight of near Tooley street. The following is a description of the man:- Age, about 30; height, 5ft 3in; complexion and hair dark, with moustache and false whiskers, which he pulled off while running away. Dress, new black diagonal suit and light overcoat, and dark cloth double peak cap.

## WOOLWICH

A labourer, named Edward Quinn, aged 35, was placed in the dock, before Mr. Fenwick, charged, nominally, with being drunk at the police station. His face and hands were much bruised, and, when charged, he was much bloodstained. The Magistrate was about disposing of the case briefly, when the Prisoner remarked that he had a complaint to make, and he stated it as follows:-

On Saturday I was at a bar down by the Arsenal, at Woolwich, having a drink. I had stumbled over something in the street just before, and had cut my face and knuckles, as you see, and I had bled a good lot. While at the bar a big, tall man came in and sat beside me, and looked at me. He got m in tow, and gave me some beer and tobacco, and than he said, "I mean to charge you with the Whitechapel murders." I thought it was a joke, and laughed; but he said he was serious, and pointed to the blood about me. I said, "Nonsense; is that all the clue you have got?" He then dropped the subject, and took me for a walk until we got to the police station, where he charged me with the Whitechapel murders.

Mr. Fenwick: Were you not drunk?

Quinn: Certainly not, sir.

Mr. Fenwick: You will be remanded until tomorrow.

Quinn: This is rather rough. I am dragged a mile to the station, and looked up, and I am to wait another day with all this suspicion of murder hanging over my head.

Mr. Fenwick: I will take your own bail in £5 for your reappearance.

Quinn: I object to the whole thing. Me murder a woman! I could not murder a cat (laughter).

The Prisoner was then release on his recognisances.



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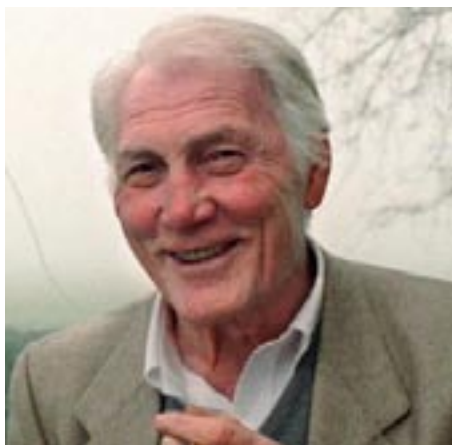
Williams/Price *Uncle Jack* hb/dw new signed label, both authors £12

Wolff (Camille) compiled by: *Who Was Jack the Ripper?* new hb/dw with 16 signatures including Colin Wilson £130



# Obituary: Jack Palance

Actor; 18 February 1919 - 10 November 2006



Craggy-faced Hollywood actor Jack Palance, who made a career out of playing bad and sinister characters, died 10 November of natural causes at his home in Montecito, California. A spokesman said the actor, who was aged 87, died surrounded by family. Palance is probably best known for his work as a gunman in the classic 1953 western *Shane* and in the 1991 Billy Crystal comedy *City Slickers*. In the 1953 film *Man in the Attic*, based on Marie Belloc Lowndes' novel, *The Lodger*, the actor won accolades in an otherwise pedestrian retelling of the Lowndes story by playing the quiet but menacing research pathologist Slade who may or may not have been Jack the Ripper.

Palance, real name Volodymir Ivanovich (Walter Jack) Palahnuik, was born in Lattimer Mines, Pennsylvania, USA - coalmining country - on 18 February 1919, the third of five children of Ukrainian immigrants. His father worked as a coal miner for 39 years until he died of black lung disease in 1955. The boy Palance grew to be six feet four inches tall and 210 pounds. After a short stint in the mines, his athleticism would offer a way out of the type of career that would kill his father. The boy won a football scholarship to the University of North Carolina. He left there to become a prize fighter, accounting for his broken nose that would serve him well in his acting career. He then served in the Army Air Force but was invalided out after he was injured in an airplane crash. Palance then tried his luck on Broadway, making his debut in the play *The Big Two* in 1947. He made his film debut in 1950, as a murderer named Blackie in *Panic in the Streets*. After appearing in the Second World War feature, *Halls of Montezuma*, in which he played a boxing Marine, he earned first Academy Award nomination for supporting actor for his portrayal of an ardent lover pursuing the terrified Joan Crawford in *Sudden Fear* (1952).

The following year brought his second nomination when he portrayed Jack Wilson, the swaggering gunslinger who bullies peace-loving Alan Ladd into a barroom duel in *Shane*. It would be the keynote role that would cement Palance's reputation as an actor with menace and gravity. On the back of that success, he went on to appear as the Ripper in *Man in the Attic*, as an Apache in *Arrowhead*, Atilla the Hun in *Sign of the Pagan* and as a fictional rival to Christ in *The Silver Chalice*.

In addition to his film work, he and his daughter Holly Palance hosted the television oddity show *Ripley's Believe It or Not* and he starred in the short-lived TV series *The Greatest Show on Earth* and *Bronk*.

For his work in the Billy Crystal comedy *City Slickers*, Palance won a supporting actor's Academy Award in the 1992 Hollywood ceremony and he delighted the audience by performing one-handed pushups when he bounced onto the stage to receive the statuette. Ironically, the *City Slickers* role saw him playing a tough cowboy ranch hand that amounted to a parody of his earlier roles as a tough guy in dozens of movies. Less known about the actor is that he had a sensitive and artistic side that belied his tough guy image, and that he pursued a lifelong passion for poetry, fiction, and painting. Palance is survived by his daughter Holly Palance; second wife, Elaine Rogers Palance; another daughter, Brook Palance Wilding; grandchildren Lily and Spencer Spottiswoode and Tarquin Wilding; his brother, John Palance, and sister Anne Despiva. A memorial service for Palance is slated for 16 December.

[Legacy.com](http://Legacy.com)

[Jack Palance: Internet Movie Database](http://Jack Palance: Internet Movie Database)

[The Man in the Attic \(1953\): Internet Movie Database](http://The Man in the Attic (1953): Internet Movie Database)



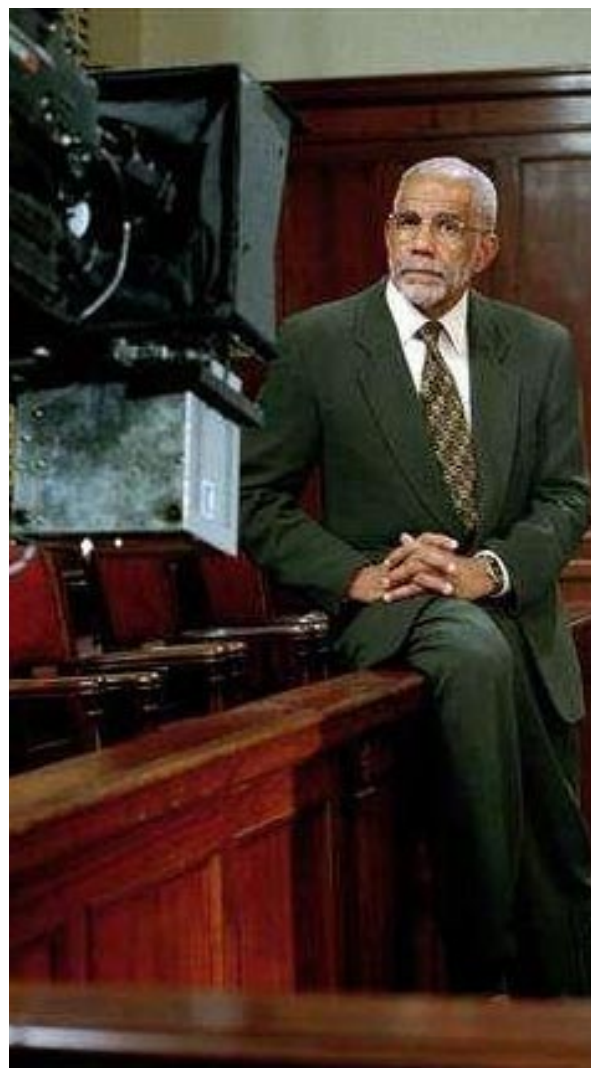
# Obituary: Ed Bradley

Broadcaster; 22 June 1941 - 9 November 2006

Veteran CBS Television journalist Ed Bradley of *60 Minutes* died of leukaemia at New York's Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. This season was Bradley's 25th year with *60 Minutes* and he had been a groundbreaking African American making inroads in the white male-dominated world of US TV news.

One of the stories that Bradley covered as a journalist for the show in 1993 was the Maybrick Diary which introduced American viewers to the controversial document allegedly written by Liverpool cottonbroker James Maybrick and signed 'Yours truly, Jack the Ripper'. Dated this third day of May 1889' - supposedly within days of Maybrick's demise from arsenic poisoning. For the story, Bradley interviewed Shirley Harrison, author of *The Diary of Jack the Ripper* (Hyperion, 1993), as well as Anne and Mike Barrett, and he was shown touring the interior of the Maybrick mansion, Battlecrease House, on Riversdale Road, Liverpool.

Ed Bradley grew up in Philadelphia, and broke into radio broadcasting as a reporter for Philadelphia's WDAS-FM radio. In 1967, he was hired as a reporter for WCBS radio in New York. In 1971, he joined CBS News as a stringer in its Paris bureau. The following year, he began work at the Saigon bureau, which helped to establish his reputation as a no-nonsense correspondent in covering the Vietnam war. Bradley joined *60 Minutes* during the 1981-82 season. Among the 19 Emmy Awards he won during his career was one for a report on the reopening of the 50-year-old racial murder case of Emmett Till. Bradley later stated, 'Emmett Till and I were the same age when he was killed, and that was my introduction to the reality of life in this country for a black person in the mid 50's.' Although not known for his prowess as a singer, Bradley in his free time would appear with singer Jimmy Buffett and he also befriended other musicians such as Wynton Marsalis. Both Marsalis and Buffett spoke during a special *60 Minutes* tribute to the late newsman that aired in the United States on 12 November. Bradley is survived by his wife, Patricia Blanchet.



[Ed Bradley: Internet Movie Database](#)

[International Herald Tribune](#)

[CBS News](#)

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

# I Beg to Report

FACE UP TO IT. The news that Scotland Yard has come up with an 'e-fit' likeness of how experts believe Jack the Ripper looked rocketed round the world. The story was reported by media internationally as a main story. Just goes to prove that old Jack can make a splash and that the Ripper case remains newsworthy. The e-fit, done by the Yard in cooperation with a BBC Channel 5 documentary (see separate story) ignited interest in all major media outlets. The *New York Daily News* on 22 November's headline stated, 'Hi-tec tracks Jack the Ripper' and lead off with the statement, 'Scotland Yard never found Jack the Ripper when he terrorized London 118 years ago, but now cops think modern techniques could reveal his true identity.' *The Courier Mail* of Queensland, Australia, asked, 'Is this Jack the Ripper?' and began its coverage, 'Notorious English serial killer Jack the Ripper was "frighteningly normal", a profile published yesterday using state-of-the-art technology suggests...' The *Deseret Morning News* out of Utah, USA, on 21 November headlined, 'Science puts face to Jack the Ripper.' Another American media outlet, WSTM-TV NBC 3 of Syracuse, New York, using the wire services headline, asked the same day, 'Did Jack the Ripper look like this?' as did the *Arizona Republic*. 'British analysts have created a composite police drawing of Jack the Ripper, depicting the notorious Victorian serial killer with a mustache, a receding hairline and bushy eyebrows...'

CHAPMAN DUN IT! Blogger Larisa Alexandrovna uses the newly developed e-fit to confirm her long-held theory that the Ripper was none other than immigrant barber (and at least rudimentarily trained surgeon) George Chapman (*aka* Severin Klosowsky). Really, Larisa? A lot of informed opinion seems to think that late Queen lead singer Freddie Mercury fits the bill! Besides the facial similarity to the Yard experts' face, Alexandrovna cites the Polish-born suspect's well-known misogyny but then she repeats the oft-heard old saw that Chapman was reportedly Chief Inspector Abberline's favourite suspect.



William Friedkin

TOP DIRECTOR TO ATTEND MAYBRICK EVENT. Hollywood director William Friedkin, the man responsible for *The Exorcist* and *The French Connection*, will attend the Maybrick Trial upcoming at the Liverpool Cricket Club, 19-20 May 2007, reports Catherine Jones in 'A Ripper Case for Movie Mogul'.

Event organiser Chris Jones said: 'One of the reasons why William Friedkin is to attend the trial next May is that he's planning to make a film about Florence [Maybrick]'s life story.' Mr Jones also says that the price for the Liverpool Maybrick weekend has been reduced from £43 to £38 and that there have been arranged a number of add-on activities such as a tour of the Maybrick mansion and a trip to Anfield Cemetery to see James Maybrick's grave. Venue: Liverpool Cricket Club, 19-20 May 2007. Call Chris Jones on 07932 642344 or [email](#).

In fact, Mr Friedkin has been wrestling with the idea of making such a film for a decade and it is not clear where his plans currently stand. The *Rip*'s attempt to contact his agent to find out the current plans was unsuccessful.

The history of the mooted film as we understand it is as follows:

Mr Friedkin's film on the Maybrick Diary went into development at New Line studios in the mid-1990s under two different titles: *Battlecrease* (the Maybricks' house was called Battlecrease), and the more straightforward *Ripper Diaries* or *Ripper Diary*. The film was to have been scripted by Christopher Devore (co-scriptwriter for *The Elephant Man* starring Anthony Hopkins as Sir Frederick Treves) and directed by Friedkin. Hopkins was to have played Maybrick but dropped out early in the process. Mr Hopkins was reported to have said he'd already played too many evil types.



Eventually, though, Friedkin's project was dropped by New Line in favor of the Hughes brothers' adaptation of Alan Moore's graphic novel about the Ripper killings, *From Hell*, which started life at Disney. Mr Friedkin sued New Line over the work he had put into the project, saying that New Line strung him along for two years and didn't pay for his work on his Ripper project and now wouldn't put it in 'turnaround.' According to Hollywood terminology, a project in 'turnaround' has been abandoned by one studio and can be shopped to another. Mr Friedkin's project then landed at 20th-Century Fox, and *From Hell* went into turnaround. Fox picked it up, and subsequently dumped the Friedkin project. At the time of an [Independent article](#) of 2000, Michael Gambon was reported to be the actor to play James Maybrick, and Paramount had the project.

At some point we believe script writer Bruce Robinson was brought in to work on the script for Friedkin instead of or along with Mr Devore. It seems he got interested instead in the possibility that Michael Maybrick rather than James Maybrick could have been the Ripper and that when the film project fell through he started work instead on the book on the Ripper case mentioned in a *Daily Express* article of 2003.

THE UNKINDEST HAIRCUT? "Forget Jack the Ripper. The first site that horror aficionados should head for in London is 186 Fleet St, "the very same address where you could have been shaved by that sinister proto-slasher himself, Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street," " Marcelo says. A slim red-bricked building in the shadow of [St. Dunstan-in-the-West Church](#), it now houses a "Kall Kwik" copy-and-printer shop. So bring your nightmarish imagination.'

Cited in '10 great places to feel a shiver up your spine,' [USA Today](#), 26 October 2006

MORE ON SICKERT'S FISTULA. Patricia Cornwell's favoured Ripper suspect, Walter Sickert, was a patient at the Fistula Infirmary in City Road, Finsbury, London EC1, according to a new book, *Walking London's Medical History*, by Nick Black, professor of health services research at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, reports Jane Elliott, health reporter for [BBC News online](#). As she explains, 'the Fistula Infirmary [was] originally sited in Aldersgate Street, in 1835, where Lord Mayor of London William Copeland and Charles Dickens were treated for anal fistulas - a complication from an abscess. By 1853 the infirmary had moved to City Road, where one of those to benefit from treatment was Jack the Ripper suspect, artist Walter Sickert.'

Professor Black stated that the evidence is that Sickert 'suffered from an anal fistula and not, as those who believe he was Jack the Ripper have alleged, a penile fistula - which would have rendered him impotent and therefore, they claim, more likely to be a serial killer of women.'

In the book, Professor Black explains how events such as the Napoleonic wars were the catalysts for the development of hospital services in London. He relates arcane facts such as that the London Smallpox Hospital and the London Fever Hospital were both demolished in 1848 to make way for the Great Northern Hotel in King's Cross. In fact, this has been part of a pattern, that medical facilities have been either demolished or converted to other uses. His walking tour shows that 'former health care buildings are increasingly converted into hotels, offices, homes and shops with public knowledge of their original function in danger of being lost,' he says. The book is an effort to preserve memory of London's medical past.

Professor Black's *Walking London's Medical History* is published by the Royal Society of Medicine Press, price £14.95.

EARLY RIPPER BOOK TO BE REPRINTED. Thomas Schachner, webmaster of the German language Jack the Ripper website [jacktheripper.de](#), announces that he is reprinting the rare 1889 book, *Jack the Ripper; Or, the Crimes of London*, published in Chicago by H A Hamlin. In fact, Herr Schachner purchased what he believes to be the one and only copy of this book for an undisclosed (undoubtedly phenomenal) price. Back in Spring 2002, the book was auctioned for a staggering \$2,325 US (£1,302) and, at that time, in our April 2002 issue, we labeled the book as 'the rarest and most valuable Ripper book in the world.'



*St Dunstan-in-the-West Church*



The first copies of the book will be a limited run and Herr Schachner is giving Ripperologists the chance to be in on the ground level, which will entitle them to have their names included in a list of sponsors at the end of the book. He states that the reprint of *Jack the Ripper; Or, the Crimes of London* with an introduction by Stephen P Ryder will be done in full colour 'using top-of-the-line photoduplication techniques to create a complete and faithful reprint for the reading public. Anyone who makes it to the pre-order list before the cut-off date will have their names printed at the back of the book, in a "Subscriber's List", similar to how many Victorian-era books were published.' Persons who wish to be placed on the pre-order list can contact him directly at [Thomas@jacktheripper.de](mailto:Thomas@jacktheripper.de)

Herr Schachner also sent us the following data about [jacktheripper.de](http://jacktheripper.de), which he inaugurated on Christmas Day, 2002. *'Currently the monthly exposure is 20,000 to 25,000 visitors on the website itself, but way more on our discussion boards. The discussion board itself has currently 123 regular members (we usually have much more, but I delete non-posters on a regular monthly basis). The whole website has approximately 500 pages, our discussion boards (with 9,612 posts) not included.'*

Prior to beginning his own website, Thomas Schachner helped with Stephen Ryder's US-based *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* website. It is nice to see such a top quality website flourishing in another language and thus adding to the discussion of the continuing worldwide discussion of the Whitechapel murders! Herr Schachner recently published his own book on the murders with co-author Hendrik Püstow, titled *Jack the Ripper - Anatomie einer Legende* and available through his website ([jacktheripper.de/presse/index.php](http://jacktheripper.de/presse/index.php)).

**NEW JERSEY PROSTITUTE MURDERS.** The favored target of Jack the Ripper - prostitutes - is the topic of an [Associated Press](#) story out of Atlantic City, New Jersey, USA. The article quotes James Alan Fox, a professor of criminal justice at Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts, and the author of five books about serial and mass murderers. 'Prostitutes are not only in the world's oldest profession, but are among the world's oldest murder victims,' Fox says.

Professor Fox was quoted in the wake of the 21 November discovery of the bodies of four women in a ditch in Egg Harbor Township. According to the story, the bodies were found 'near a row of seedy, discount motels just outside of Atlantic City and within view of the resort city's skyline of glimmering casino hotel towers. Authorities are looking into whether the women were prostitutes - the one who has been identified, Kim Raffo, is reported to have been - and whether they were the victims of a serial killer.'

Professor Fox stated, 'Prostitutes - especially streetwalkers who work in areas such as the one where the four women's bodies were found - ...are vulnerable. And because the women are selling sex, the killers may think of their victims as immoral. In their eyes, these women are sex machines. They're not as worthy as others,' he said. 'When you devalue people, it becomes easier to kill them.'

Fox said that authorities do not always respond quickly when a prostitute is reported missing. Often, he said, because many prostitutes are transient, police will believe she has simply moved on.

Gregg McCrary, a retired FBI profiler who helped track serial killers, said most homicides are committed by people who know one another - giving investigators a smaller group of possible suspects to start with. To crack the cases, police have to rely on help from other prostitutes, who are often wary of the law. Another key tool of investigators - DNA testing - does not always work as well when the victims are prostitutes. 'If you get semen, what does that mean?' McCrary said. 'It might not be related to the killer. Foreign hairs and fibers may mean absolutely nothing.' The technology can be helpful, however, if the same man's genetic fingerprints turn up on the bodies of multiple victims.

## In Future Issues...

Future issues of *Ripperologist* will feature... William Michael's Ripper victims' photographs, John Ruffels on *The East End Murderer - I Knew Him*, Colin Roberts's geo-political divisions of Jack the Ripper's territory: Civil and Ecclesiastical Parishes, Parliamentary Boroughs and Metropolitan Police Force Divisions, Karyo Magellan on the Victorian Medico-legal Autopsy, Claudia Aliffe on the Wicked Women of Britain, Jeffrey Bloomfield on the Charles Bravo murder case, Howard Brown on Privies and Outhouses in Victorian Times, Nicholas Smith on St Patrick and the Crown Jewels, Leslie A Klinger on Jack the Ripper and Sherlock Holmes, John Crawford on Algernon Haskett-Smith, Stepan Poberowski on Russian perceptions of Jack the Ripper.

# “Powerless people seek to take power back”

A REVIEW OF JACK THE RIPPER: THE FIRST SERIAL KILLER by ADAM WOOD

On 21 November UK's Channel 5 ran the first episode in a new series of its *Revealed* programme; this eagerly-awaited *Jack the Ripper: The First Serial Killer*.

Leaving aside the strict accuracy of the title, this documentary promoted the use of 21st century police methods in an attempt to solve a 19th century riddle.

Laura Richards, Behaviour Psychologist of New Scotland Yard's Violent Crime Directorate, has 10 years' experience studying killers and rapists from Fred West to Ian Huntley. She has compiled a vast database of violent and serial offenders, tracking back their behaviour to their childhood in attempt to see motivation for their crimes through any trauma suffered. As Laura said at one point: "Powerless people seek to take power back."

As with all documentaries on the Ripper, the socio-historic background to the killings had to be set, and biographies of the victims supplied. In *The First Serial Killer* however, the desire to bring Ms Richards's expertise to the fore meant that this was handled in a clumsy and halfhearted manner.

The question as to whether the killer had any medical training was labelled by Ms Richards as a distraction from the main point: what was the psychological drive required to commit the amount of damage on a person seen in the Ripper murders?

Perhaps the same could be said of the dramatisations of street scenes and inquest testimony from 1888; a distraction from the main point, the 21st century police methods. Even the Ripper experts, Don Rumbelow and Neal Sheldon, were criminally underused.

Kosminski, described as eating from the gutter, was named as a prime contemporary suspect, presumably to illustrate the idea that the Ripper was a rambling lunatic; later theories such as the Royal conspiracy were highlighted, possibly to make this modern day investigation appear all the better.

Ms Richards focussed on the basic facts, such as what type of person the killer was, and why he chose Whitechapel. Was he what criminal psychologists call a 'Poacher', coming from outside the area, visiting Whitechapel in order to hunt? Or was he a 'Marauder', a local man, attacking on his own patch?

To answer this question, Ms Richards enlisted the help of Dr Kim Rossmo of the Department of Criminal Justice, Texas. A former policeman and mathematician, Dr Rossmo developed geographic profiling to calculate the most likely location of a perpetrator's base. This has been used successfully in the case of the Mardi Gras Bomber.

Dr Rossmo's profile was supposedly based on the murder sites of the canonical five victims, but on-screen George Yard appeared on the list; were the results faulty? The most likely area for the killer's base - described on the documentary as his home - was Flower and Dean Street, Thrawl Street, and Fashion Street. Flower and Dean Street was named as the street where the Ripper lived; was he questioned during the police house-to-house search in 1888? Interestingly, Dr Rossmo's calculations indicated Middlesex Street as an equally likely location - pinpointed by David Cantor the 2003 Liverpool Conference - but this was not mentioned. Why not?

Peter Dean, a Coroner and current Police Surgeon for the area where the murders took place, is an expert in interpreting wounds. He informed Ms Richards that the Ripper attacked in phases: firstly, controlling his victim, then the murder itself. These stages would have to be achieved quickly, before he could move to the main reason for the murders, the mutilations.

This is where he gained his excitement and pleasure. As the narrator memorably said: "The Ripper didn't cut in order to kill, he killed in order to cut."



Ms Richards's experience told her that the Ripper knew the risk of getting caught, meaning he either couldn't resist his urges, regardless of the consequences, or that he was disciplined and organised. The behaviour of Annie Chapman - going willingly to the backyard of 29 Hanbury Street - revealed that he was calm and calculating, masking his true intentions until the last minute. This means he was capable of interacting with women on a social level.

The way in which the bodies were left indicated to Ms Richards that they were put 'on display' - a deliberate attempt to shock people, prolonging the thrill. This point was also made in relation to the Lusk letter, where the mention of cannibalism was purely to extend the public's frightened state. Interestingly, Ms Richards concluded that by sending a communication to George Lusk, a local leader rather than a national figure, the killer revealed himself as a local man. Whitechapel was his focus.

Ms Richards's mentor, former Deputy Assistant Commission John Grieve, made an appearance and brought with him the infamous 'Eddowes Shawl', described by narrator Stephen Rashbrook as a 'new development'. Mr Grieve explained that the authenticity of the shawl was far from certain, and that this was an opportunity to determine once and for all its provenance by means of DNA testing. Rather ludicrously, the claim was then made that should DNA from the shawl match that of Eddowes's descendants, any other DNA material found would have to be retained for future testing as it would almost certainly be that of the killer. How many people have handled and contaminated any samples on the shawl over the years? There may even be my own DNA present after my handling of the artefact at the 2001 Bournemouth Conference. The results of the test were returned with the conclusion that any DNA had been either destroyed over time or contaminated.

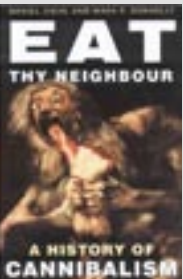
Mr Grieve was undeterred; he suggested a pooling of 13 various witness statements to see if a composite description of the Ripper could be prepared. The results of this were of a man 25-35 years old, 5ft 5in to 5ft 7in tall. He would have looked like the eFit opposite; can a similarity to the well-dressed man seen by George Hutchinson be detected?



Jack the Ripper: The First Serial Killer was, to be brutally frank, an interesting concept, but a disjointed production. The factual errors, and wayward depiction of victims and witnesses, can be forgiven as dramatic licence for a non-hardcore Ripper viewing public. But if the producers were willing to go down that route, why not make proper use of the talents of Messrs Rumbelow and Sheldon and reveal the background to the case properly? Ms Richards's expertise and conclusions are without doubt of great interest, but perhaps would be better served in print, stripped of dramatisation.

# On the Crimebeat

WILF GREGG reviews this month's additions to the True Crime bookshelf



## EAT THY NEIGHBOUR A History of Cannibalism

Daniel Diehl and Mark P. Donnelly

H/B, 246 pp., Illus., Sutton Publishing, £20.00.

This book is divided into two parts. The first outlines Cultural Cannibalism, tracing it from mythology through history, ritualistically and geographically. This is very well done, although perhaps when dealing with what they call *cannibalism in extremis* it is surprising that the references to the Mignonette case and the survivors of the Andes plane crash are somewhat curtailed.

The main part of the book is given over to case studies of more modern day cannibals. These include the legendary Sawney Beane family and Sweeney Todd. There are also such worthies as Al Packer, Albert Fish, Chikatilo, Issei Sagawa, Jeffrey Dahmer, and the latest - the internet cannibal - Armin Meiwes to name but a few. I found their chapter on Nicolas Claux, of whom I knew comparatively little, particularly interesting. Claux, grave robber turned murderer, has apparently become something of a celebrity after completing his sentence rather like Sagawa in his native Japan.

Some readers may find these case studies rather stomach churning as the activities are described in detail but it is a gruesome subject and if sanitised would lose the point altogether. Grisly but at the same time fascinating.



## UNDER AND ALONE

William Queen

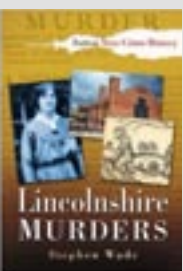
S/B, 267 pp., Illus. Mainstream Publishing, £9.99

Queen, a veteran police officer, went undercover with the aim of infiltrating the San Fernando Mongols, one of America's most feared and violent motorcycle gangs.

In order to gain acceptance by the Mongols he had to take part fully in their activities, including drug taking and dealing, robbery and active participation in violence against their opponents.

Perhaps in my declining years I am beginning to be rather disheartened by books with a litany of violence, but no doubt this was a way of life of the Mongols. The most interesting part of their life certainly showed that there was a definite camaraderie and bonding amid all the criminal violence. Strange!

Eventually, William Queen completed his undercover assignment and appeared as lead witness in multiple trials (including one of murder), and punitive prison terms were imposed on the Mongols.



## LINCOLNSHIRE MURDERS

Stephen Wade

S/B, 147 pp., Illus. Sutton Publishing, £12.99

Another in the excellent series from Sutton. Twelve cases from the county with a timespan from 1805 to 1969 plus a Miscellany. The cases include Mary Lefley, Priscilla Biggadike and Ethel Major, all three convicted and executed for the murders of their husbands, although as Mr Wade points out, doubts were later raised about Lefley and Biggadike.

The other cases are perhaps less well known but none the less interesting for that. It is a treat for a jaded palette like mine to read something new and the book has a genuine rural feel to it in spite of the subject being murder. I have always refrained from nit picking on books but I have to say that I did come across an error which in no way affected this fine account of Lincolnshire Murders. Strongly recommended.

# Ripping Yarns

BOOK NEWS AND VIEWS

## REVIEWS



### REVELATIONS OF THE TRUE RIPPER

Vanessa A Hayes

[www.Lulu.com](http://www.Lulu.com) 2006

softcover, 291pp, illus

ISBN: 978-1-4116-9741-6

\$20.40 Softcover

In *Revelations of the True Ripper*, author Vanessa A Hayes offers a book-long examination of Thomas John Barnardo (1845-1905), founder of the children's charity Dr Barnardo's, as a possible Ripper suspect. Barnardo has been suggested before as a suspect but prior to Ms Hayes' book his candidacy has never received a book length treatment.

Gillian Wagner, Barnardo's biographer (*Barnardo*, Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1979), admits that the East End-based philanthropist and social worker came under local suspicion at the time of the Whitechapel murders. Barnardo's incessant local wanderings, visiting local doss-houses and various East End streets and courts in search for destitute children, almost inevitably would put him under suspicion from the local populace - if not from the police.

Where Ms Hayes takes the investigation further is in her conclusion that the hostility that Barnardo sometimes received from 'Unfortunates' may have caused him to want to slaughter them, perhaps also to draw official attention to the squalid conditions in the East End. She puts much emphasis on his training as a surgeon. The suspect entered London Hospital as a student in 1867, received a licentiate from the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh in 1876, and was elected a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in London in 1879, so he possessed the skill to carry out the mutilations done on the victims (p 26).

However, of course, opinion varies about how skilled the killer would have had to have been to carry out the abdominal mutilations done on a number of the victims, as well as the wholesale 'demolition' job done on the unfortunate Mary Jane Kelly. The odd way the left kidney of Catherine Eddowes was removed, by going through the stomach, instead of through the back as a surgeon likely would perform such an excision, might indicate the killer lacked 'surgical' skill. Although it is also true that official medical opinion on the skill shown by the killer changed significantly after the medical press ignited in a firestorm of indignation that a doctor could possibly be involved, following Coroner Wynne Baxter's imputations during the Chapman inquest of medical involvement in the killings.

Ms Hayes paints a fair picture of the degradation and poverty in the East End, although her grasp of the facts is not always secure. For example she declares (p 10) that the only way of going to the toilet was the use of a chamber pot, and moreover that there was no running water. She seems unaware that the courts of the day had outside privies, usually at the far end of the court, as well as hand-operated waterpumps - Miller's Court had such a pump right alongside the murder room of no. 13 Miller's Court.

The author's knowledge of the Ripper case is also somewhat shaky despite the vast number of titles in the field that she lists in her bibliography. She states (p 7) correctly that contemporary opinions and later observers vary as to which murders were by the Ripper. It suits her theory to state that Polly Nichols not Martha Tabram was the first Ripper victim. But then she states that Sir Robert Anderson, a lifelong friend of the suspect, expressly said that Martha Tabram, killed 7 August 1888, was a Ripper victim, implying that she was killed by the same hand responsible for the other murders. In his autobiography, *The Lighter Side of My Official Life*, Anderson wrote, 'The second of the crimes known as the Whitechapel murders was committed the night before I took office...' Anderson began as Assistant Commissioner for Crime at Scotland Yard on 31 August, but in making this statement in his autobiography he is not stating definitively that Tabram was part of his personal count of Whitechapel victims and nor that he believed she was killed by the same murderer. He might well have believed both those things but his published statement does not allow us to state that is



what he thought. Her thesis that Barnardo met Mary Jane Kelly at a ragged school near Miller's Court is pure speculation without any offered evidence.

Dr Barnardo makes a fair possibility as a suspect since the Ripper possibly had something about him that set the women at ease so they would go with him, and thus a social worker such as Barnardo would qualify. Although the stated hatred he had of prostitutes that Ms Hayes cites, broiling within him because of the hostility the good doctor received from such Unfortunates, would seem to make that setting at ease less a possibility in his case. Also wouldn't the potential that he would be caught red handed negate all the work he had done to build up his charity?

Ms Hayes' books contains a number of glaring and annoying typographical errors, something that she could possibly correct later as her publisher, Lulu, is an on-demand publisher. Her book is largely made up of Inquest testimony which seems directly copied from *Casebook: Jack the Ripper*. To some readers this might be sufficient to have in book form and also to own a title that explores the possibility of one more Ripper suspect.



## RIPPER NOTES ISSUE #26

Dan Norder, editor

One year/four issues \$40 US, \$45 Canada & UK, \$50 elsewhere

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This issue of *Ripper Notes* contains a bountiful variety of articles, leading off from the colour cover by Jane Coram which shows landlord John McCarthy and his rent collector Thomas 'Indian Harry' Bowyer repulsed when they look into the murder room at 13 Miller's Court. Associated with the cover are articles on McCarthy by Tom Wescott and Donald Souden, who ably provide valuable discussions, respectively, of the problems of sorting out McCarthy's genealogy and the mystifying gap in time between Bowyer's initial discovery of the body and the reporting of the crime to the police.

Vexing to Ripperologists is the question of identifying the correct John McCarthy who owned the room at 13 Miller's Court where the last victim, Mary Jane Kelly, was murdered. Unfortunately, in the 1891 census, there are two middle-aged John McCarthys, apparently of two distinct and separate families, living at the same address, 27 Dorset Street in Spitalfields. Ripperologists have been trying for some time to determine which one owned the property where Kelly lived. In 'The McCarthys of Dorset Street,' author Tom Wescott gives credit to the numerous researchers who have been trying to elucidate whether the McCarthy who was Kelly's landlord was the Dieppe, France, born grocer shown in the 1891 census as age 42, with a wife, Elizabeth, age 38, born in Shoreditch and four daughters aged 15 to 1, the two elder born in St Georges-in-the-East, and the younger two in Spitalfields. Or whether it was the Spitalfields-born John McCarthy aged 42 listed as a shopkeeper with wife Ann age 38, Spitalfields-born, and a son George, age 16, also born in the area. The dilemma of sorting out the two individuals is perplexing although as Mr Wescott points out, there are some clues as to which McCarthy we should focus upon as the correct man who was Mary Jane's landlord.

Indeed, the consensus appears to be that the owner of the room at 13 Miller's Court was the Dieppe-born McCarthy whose parents seem to have been temporarily in France before returning to England. This is the same man who had theatrical connections - his granddaughter was the actress Kay Kendall. Wescott makes the reasonable assumption that this was also the man who got up at a public meeting on 22 July 1901 to protest an article by newsman Fred A McKenzie in the *Daily Mail* of 16 July 1901 that labeled Dorset Street 'The Worst Street in London'. This man, described as 'Jack McCarthy' in a pamphlet published at the time ([available](#) along with the offending McKenzie article at 'Casebook: Jack the Ripper') spoke for a whole hour and fifty minutes without notes. His command of the English language is quite evident from the speech as transcribed. Wescott points to internal evidence in the talk which seems to show that McCarthy was the same man who owned furnished rooms in Dorset street which McKenzie found wanting. Mr Wescott also valuably has located a passage in the book *Our English Cousins* (1894) by American journalist Richard Harding Davis in which the author meets a common lodging house attendant named McCarthy who appears to be the other McCarthy who lived at 27 Dorset Street. This man was not well spoken at all - at least as described by Harding - although we must admit that an American ear might hear things differently than the writer of a polemical pamphlet meant to show up a seedy journalist and who desired to show the local firebrand who protested the news feature in a good light. Nonetheless, and perhaps with justification, Wescott concludes that the man who showed the American visitor around was not the same man who got up to protest the *Daily Mail* article, and therefore that he was not the man who owned 13 Miller's Court.

And so to the other McCarthy mystery. In “Time Is On My Side”, author Don Souden riffs on the old Rolling Stones song to try to determine the reason for the lag in time between the finding of Kelly’s body by Thomas Bowyer and the reporting by Bowyer and McCarthy of their grim discovery. Bowyer’s initial discovery occurred circa 10:30-10:45am on the morning of Saturday, 9 November 1888, and yet the police at nearby Commercial Street police station were not informed of it until after 11:00am. Why the gap in time when supposedly, we might expect, McCarthy and Bowyer were law-abiding citizens who wished to report the crime as soon as possible? Kelly was said to have been 29 shillings in arrears at the time of her demise, amounting to nearly seven weeks’ back rent and there is a strong school of thought that, Kelly being a prostitute, McCarthy was living on her immoral earnings and for that reason had allowed her to build up the backlog of rent owed. Souden believes that the gap in time occurred because McCarthy was attempting to get his story straight with Bowyer about his employee coming round to collect the money, which was not rent as they later said but the previous night’s proceeds. That is, Souden strongly believes what happened was that Bowyer was coming to collect Kelly’s earnings and that the landlord and his man needed to hide that fact. Testimony by Kelly’s ex-lover, Joseph Barnett, shows that Kelly had been in the habit of letting other women use the room, and Souden hypothesises that McCarthy might have been acting as a pimp receiving the money the women were earning. Souden also thinks the 29 shillings back rent might have included the cost of the broken window caused in a fight between Barnett and Kelly and incidentals for additional possible damage in the room.

In the article, ‘In Hours of Red Desire’, new information is presented by David A Green as he proposes a brand new suspect: the poet John Evelyn Barlas (1860-1914), who wrote under the pen name of Evelyn Douglas. Mr Green is to be congratulated for the detective work he undertook to identify Barlas as a suspect. His identification derives from a *New York Times* article of 24 October 1897, which says in a longer piece about Joseph Vacher:

*‘In connection with this subject, I have been informed on perfectly trustworthy authority that the perpetrator of the Whitechapel murders is known to the police, having been finally identified with a certain lunatic, who is now confined in a madhouse in Scotland. The murderer is an Oxford graduate, and made a certain reputation some ten years ago as a minor poet. He bears a distinguished name, which has been repeated to me, and is famous in Scottish history in connection with a young woman who saved a King’s life in a heroic way. The “Ripper” had a wife who was descended from a very famous English Admiral. His latest delusion is that he is the grandson of Napoleon the Great.’*

In most respects, Barlas seems to correspond to this description. He took a classics degree at New College, Oxford. He also married the great-grandniece of Admiral Lord Nelson (and fourth daughter of H Nelson Davies) while he was still an undergraduate at the university. And he had the necessary mental derangement mentioned in that description, for Barlas died in a Scottish insane asylum. The suspect’s use of the pseudonym Evelyn Douglas is thought to derive from the same story told in Rossetti’s ‘King’s Tragedy’ - as noted in a review of Rossetti in *The Times*, of 4 November 1881:

*‘The subject [Rossetti] has chosen for his “King’s Tragedy” is the murder of James I, of Scotland, the poet king and friend of the people, by his rebellious barons. The story is told by Catherine Douglas, one of the Queen’s waiting women, who received the popular name of Barlass, perpetuated in the Barlas family, because she barred the door with her arm against the murderers of her Sovereign.’*

This is of course not quite the saving of the king’s life as stated in the *New York Times* piece but the lady in waiting did try to save the life of the monarch, so we might say that the circumstances are close enough to match the situation described in the 1897 American newspaper article. Green does not though point out the distinction in the text of his article and only does so in a footnote. Similarly, while in the text of his article, Mr Green tells us that memoirist R Thurston Hopkins’ describes in his book, *Life and Death at the Old Bailey*, spending evenings with Barlas in the Bun House Tavern in the Strand and that Hopkins made a ‘tentative identification of the Ripper as a “poor devil-driven poet” who haunted the East End and mixed with prostitutes’, it is only when we go to Mr Green’s footnotes that we discover that the suspect, dubbed by Hopkins as ‘Mr Moring’, was almost certainly the poet Ernest Dowson not Barlas.

A rampant socialist (or, more correctly, a communist anarchist), John Barlas was injured in the head by a policeman’s baton during the 1886 Trafalgar Square demonstrations organised by the Social Democrats (not during Bloody Sunday of November 1887 as is sometimes asserted). He was a friend of Oscar Wilde, who stood bail for the young man when he discharged several pistol shots at the Houses of Parliament on the morning of New Year’s Eve, 1891 - part of a pattern of increasingly bizarre behaviour. In his final years, Barlas was confined at different periods in a succession of Scottish lunatic asylums, finally dying on 5 August 1914 in Gartnavel Royal Asylum outside of Glasgow of valvular disease of the heart.

David A Green has identified a most interesting suspect and it will be fascinating to see where his investigation into Barlas will take him next. Possibly, and hopefully, a book on Barlas is in the works.

*Ripper Notes* 26 also contains an article by Julie Stangeland, 'Say Cheese, Mr Abberline', which gives her thoughts about the group photograph of H Division police published in Neil Storey's *A Grim Almanac of Jack the Ripper's London 1870-1900* (Sutton Publishing, 2004). Her discussion of the speculation that Chief Inspector Abberline might be among the plainclothes officers depicted in the photograph is worthwhile. The possibility that Abberline is among the men pictured appears to come down to two men with whiskers in the left front foreground of the photograph, both of whom vaguely correspond to the illustration in *Toby* magazine of 1888 showing Inspector Abberline, discovered by Nick Connell and published by Connell and co-author Stewart P Evans in their book *The Man Who Hunted Jack the Ripper* about Inspector Edmund Reid. The identification of either of these two men as Abberline must remain 'undecided' since neither seems to exactly correspond to the other known illustrations of the detective chief inspector who ran the Ripper investigation, and who clearly had Dundreary whiskers and an amicable though bold expression in those available sketches of him, unlike the men seen in the Leman Street photograph, who as well, perhaps, don't seem as portly as Abberline has been described.

Another useful contribution in the issue is an article by John Bennett on 'The 17th September Letter: A Closer Look.' Bennett takes a detailed look at the circumstances surrounding the discovery of the controversial 17 September 1888 'Jack the Ripper' letter by researcher Peter McClelland while looking through the Ripper files at the Public Record Office (now the National Archives) in the late 1980s. Since this was around the time of the Centennial of the case, the letter is dismissed out of hand by many as a hoax slipped into the official files by a prankster. Among those who dismiss the letter is Stewart P Evans, whose authoritative *Jack the Ripper: Letters from Hell* (Sutton Publishing, 2001), coauthored with Keith Skinner, does not even include the letter. Evans points out that the letter, written on dirty yellow paper in a scrawly hand, does not exhibit the official Scotland Yard and PRO markings that the genuine - if themselves hoax - 'Ripper' letters of 1888 exhibit. It is also true that the wording of the letter appears to be a rehash of phrases in the 'Dear Boss' and 'From Hell' letters. Nonetheless, other writers on the case, including Paul H Feldman and John J Eddleston, have chosen to view the letter as an authentic letter written in 1888, a week before the Dear Boss letter (the latter being dated '25 Sept. 1888') or the 24 September letter that preceded Dear Boss and in which the letter writer claimed to be a 'slaughterer' presumably who lived locally and who worked at an abattoir.

It would seem that Mr McClelland was the innocent party in finding the letter and that he was not the prankster who might have inserted the letter in the official files, if indeed the 17 September letter is a hoax. He reported that he came upon what he thought was a single piece of brown card that on further examination turned out to be a folder that had got stuck at the edges. He used a thumbnail to crack open the folder and found the letter inside. Bennett explains that the 17 September letter is designated '103B' and is found in the official files between two larger documents, namely, 'the front cover of a file designated '103A' and a letter to Sir Charles Warren listed as '104.' The letter to Warren is from Geoffrey Lushington dated 15 October 1888, the same date as the file cover. Both would seem to refer to a letter implicating someone in the murders that had been received upon a warrant from the Secretary of State and that then had to be returned to the post office after Sir Charles had read it. Thus neither the file cover nor the Lushington letter would seem to have any connection to the 17 September letter, despite the close proximity of the numbering of the documents. Bennett does not take a stand on whether the 17 September letter is authentic except to say that the spidery writing shows traits that are unlikely to have resulted from the use of a ballpoint pen, as has been asserted. More likely the blue ink was applied with a quill, he believes. Bennett also thinks that the apparent borrowing of phrases from the better known 'Ripper' letters makes a hoax less likely than likely.

Dr Vance McLaughlin, professor in the Department of Criminal Justice at Florida's Jacksonville State University writing in 'The Proof is in the Penmanship. Convicting Three of America's Earliest Serial Murders' provides an interesting sidelight on the matter of the 'Ripper' correspondence. H H Holmes (aka Herman Webster Mudgett), he of the notorious murder castle in Chicago of the 1890s, Albert Fish, and J Frank Hickey each came unstuck, as it were, through letters. As Dr McLaughlin ably points out, Holmes' end was 'hastened' by discovery of letters written by one of his victims, 15-year-old Alice Pitezel. Both Hamilton 'Albert' Fish and Hickey wrote communications that implicated themselves in their crimes. Fish bragged about killing and eating 6-year-old Grace Budd in a 1934 letter to her mother. Hickey was, Dr McLaughlin states, 'a prolific writer of anonymous correspondence, usually in the form of postcards.' He sent a postcard signed 'KIDDER' to the father of 7-year-old Joey Joseph and also wrote taunting notes to the chiefs of the Lackawanna and Buffalo, New York, police departments. Publication of photographs of the postcards on the front page of the Buffalo Evening Times in November 1912 proved the beginning of the end for Hickey.

Returning to more mainstream Ripper fare, *Ripper Notes* 26 also contains a long and informative article by Tom Wescott on 'Old Wounds: Re-examining the Buck's Row Murder.' He begins with the problem that has haunted all authors who seek to discuss the 31 August 1888 murder of Polly Nichols, that the report of Dr Rees Ralph Llewellyn is woefully inadequate to give us a true assessment of the mutilations done to Polly Nichols. It is hard to tell from Dr Llewellyn's report of the savagery done to Nichols' abdomen in terms of the reported haphazard 'jagged manner' of the cuts how



different the killer's mutilations were to the other victims. As Wescott states, Llewellyn's limited description has led some researchers to conclude that the cuts were not similar to the later victims. For example, Wolf Vanderlinden was moved to conclude that the cuts done to Nichols were 'extraneous' and thus more like those done to Martha Tabram three weeks earlier, which would seem to have been done in a frenzied rather than careful manner. Wescott cites the lack of consensus among Ripper authors as the reason for his having a closer look at Nichols' murder. He thus supplements Llewellyn's meagre medical testimony with the report by Inspector Spratling who reported information that he had received from the doctor and with the report of Superintendent Donald Swanson. He issues a couple of caveats about Spratling's report in that he finds that the inspector's description appears to indicate Nichols' spinal cord was cut completely through, which was not the case, and that he says she was missing three teeth when she was in fact missing five. Swanson's report is seen to be copied almost verbatim from Spratling's, except that the superintendent makes it clear the head was nearly severed from the body but not completely so. Wescott then looks carefully at the newspaper reports of the murder and makes an analysis of the wording of those descriptions. He concludes that contrary to Vanderlinden's deduction, the mutilations were carefully done and not done in a frenzied manner, and thus of a piece with the later mutilations to Chapman and Eddowes. Wescott also reaches the conclusion that the only difference between the 31 August murder of Nichols and those later murders was that there was no removal of organs, and he believes that the arrival on the scene of carman Charles Cross probably disturbed the killer before he could remove any organs.

*Ripper Notes* 26 also contains a useful contributions by editor Dan Norder on the problem of identifying the picture known as 'The Fisherman's Widow' that was reported to be hanging over Mary Jane Kelly's mantelpiece; a selection of letters excerpted by Stephen Ryder from his new book, *Public Reactions to Jack the Ripper* (which is also reviewed in the issue), focusing expressly 'On Brothels and Bullies' and including the views of such correspondents as Albert Bachert (later head of the local vigilance committee) and the philanthropist and brewer Frederick N Charrington; a selection of press accounts on different suspects edited by Wolf Vanderlinden, rating the suspects as 'Major', 'Medium', and 'Minor' - as Vanderlinden says, 'The vast majority'; a report by Wolf Vanderlinden on the US convention held on 21-23 April in Baltimore; a review by Kelly Robinson of the musical by Chris George and Erik Sitbon, *Jack the Musical - the Ripper Pursued*, as performed by Actors Scene Unseen in Charlotte, North Carolina, in May; book and DVD reviews; and an editorial by Dan Norder, which discusses new developments at *Ripper Notes* including the new web supplement to the print magazine, 'Ripper Notes Extra' - the inaugural issue of which we discuss below.

## RIPPER NOTES EXTRA ISSUE #1

Alan Sharp, Editor  
[extra.rippernotes.com](http://extra.rippernotes.com)

In early November, *Ripper Notes* added a web presence known as 'Ripper Notes Extra' in which, as new *RN* associate editor (and on-line editor) Alan Sharp puts it, the team could keep subscribers up to date with time-dependent news.

Thus, included in *RN Extra* no. 1 is a listing of what readers can expect in the next print issue, *Ripper Notes* 27, to be titled 'Jack the Slasher.' The issue takes its title from an article by associate editor Wolf Vanderlinden on an 1892 criminal named Henry G Dowd who terrorized New Yorkers. Other promised goodies are 'The Berner Street Mystery Part II: The Where, the How and the Why' by Tom Wescott; 'The Vienna Ripper' by ESM, examining a series of solved murders that occurred in Vienna, Austria, in 1899, which, much like the Whitechapel murders, included mutilation and organ removal; and 'Bloody Mary: A Ripper Victim in the Mirror?' by Dan Norder. The issue sounds promising...

The 'main news story' covers the donation to Scotland Yard's Black Museum by Neville Swanson of his great grandfather, Detective Superintendent Donald Swanson's copy of Sir Robert Anderson's autobiography, *The Lighter Side of My Official Life*, containing Swanson's thoughts on the Ripper suspect Anderson discussed, noting that the person was 'Kosminski.' Editor Sharp comments, 'And so it was that in July the case was solved yet again, this time by the newspapers of Great Britain who announced that startling new evidence had been discovered which conclusively revealed the culprit's identity.' Of course as we reported in the *Rip*, and as Mr Sharp notes, this was not new news at all but had been known since the 1980s. Ho hum.

A general news round up of things Ripper-related follows the story on Swanson's notes. A 'blogpoll' follows whereby visitors can vote on the blokes in the Leman Street photograph discussed in *Ripper Notes* 26 and whether Chief Inspector Abberline is really pictured in the group photo. The consensus when we visited is that yes, he is, although opinions obviously vary as to which gent is him and whether he is in the photo at all. Next, Dan Norder discusses yet another candidate for the picture in Kelly's room, this time, 'No Tidings from the Sea' by Frank Hall, a painting specially commissioned by Her Majesty Queen Victoria in 1871 and exhibited in the Royal Academy the same year. Reviews of books, movies, TV and stage shows follow, some of the book reviews at least duplicating what is to be found in the

print issue, as Mr Sharp notes. Still this provides a useful guide for those who wish to know 'what is out there' among the dizzying number of titles coming on the market. A listing of forthcoming events is also given.

Mr Sharp ends this first issue in this promising RN web site with an 'End Piece' discussion of electronic media versus good old fashioned print. The ending sentence sounds this ominous note: 'Are any of our electronic writings still going to exist in two and a half thousand years time? Or will we simply have vanished as if we had never been?' The irony though of course is that the editors of *Ripper Notes* met on line, through *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* and that both *Ripper Notes* and Mr Sharp himself ([www.alansharp.34sp.com/weblog/](http://www.alansharp.34sp.com/weblog/)) feel the need to have a web presence rather than just the print magazine. And *Casebook: Jack the Ripper* - as we note in this month's *Rip* editorial - is now ten years old, so perhaps electronic publishing is going to last.

## BOOK NEWS

### THE BEST OF RIPPEROLOGIST

Twelve years in the making, *The Best of Ripperologist* is to be published in March 2007 by Constable Robinson in the UK and by Barnes & Noble in the US. The Editors of the *Rip* recently drew up a shortlist of the best articles to have appeared in our previous 72 issues, which is currently with the publishers for final selection. We'll be in touch with the authors of these essays shortly, and will supply more information as soon as we have it.



### OUT NOW

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. It consists of two adventures: in the first one, Fandorin confronts a daring confidence man; in the second one, 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 Moscow. 'As of now, only four of [Akunin's] 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.' *Ripperologist*.

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.

MY GRANDFATHER JACK THE RIPPER (Hardcover, 208 pages, Herodias, ISBN: 1928746160) by Claudio Apone, was widely acclaimed in its original Italian as an atmospheric thriller aimed at a young adult readership. Young EastEnder Andy Dobson uses his psychic powers to travel to the past - were he witnesses Jack the Ripper's grisly murders - and 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.

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

undercover in the East End slums chasing anarchists, finding out about the Whitechapel conspiracy and uncovering Jack the Ripper's true identity.

PRINCE EDDY: THE KING BRITAIN NEVER HAD (Hardcover, 272 pages, Tempus Publishing Ltd, ISBN: 0752434101, £20) by 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, Inklings Press. 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*. '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... 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.' *Ripperologist*.

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*.

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.'

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.

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*.





The face of the Ripper?  
eFit based on witness descriptions produced for  
Channel 5's *Jack the Ripper: First Serial Killer* documentary