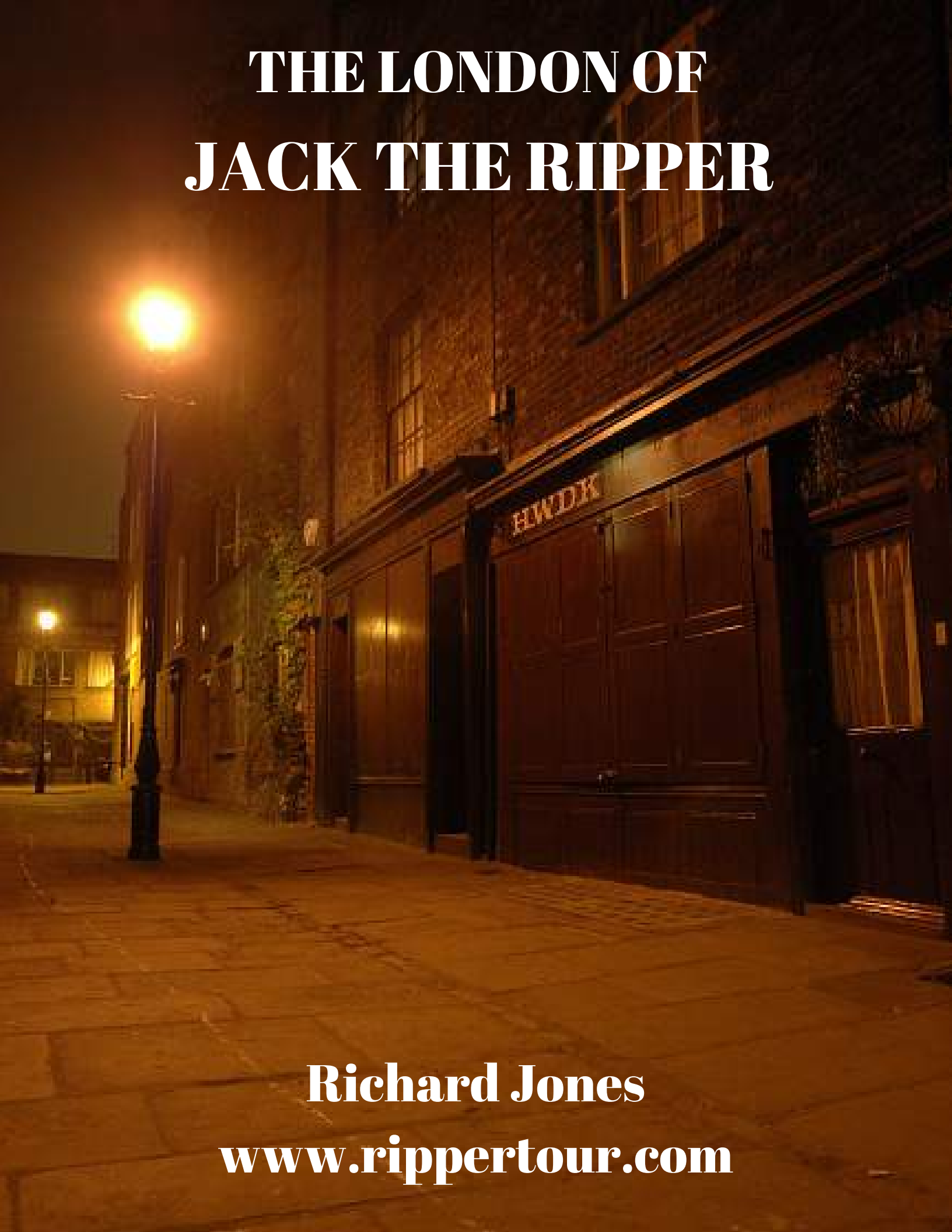
THE LONDON OF
JACK THE RIPPER



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CONTENTS

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

BY RICHARD JONES

In the autumn of 1888 a series of brutal murders in the East End of London sent shock waves reverberating around the civilised world, and caused a scandal that penetrated right to the heart of the British establishment.

Officially, the killer was never caught, so his identity was never known for certain. However, at the height of the panic that the murders generated, a letter was received by a news agency in central London; and, thanks to the signature on that missive, the killer was given a name that would catapult him into the realm of legend - Jack the Ripper.

This book is the story of the murders and of the Victorian police's attempt to catch the killer. It is the story of the social conditions that, in many people's minds, had made it so easy for the perpetrator to be able to murder his victims and then melt away into the night, unseen and unheard. It is the story of how the newspapers spotted the opportunity afforded by crimes to increase their sales and, in so doing, helped turn the atrocities into an international phenomenon.

I have endeavoured to convey the atmosphere in the area where the Jack the Ripper murders occurred and to provide an idea of what it was like to live in the East End of London during the so-called "autumn of terror."

I have also tried to steer clear of sensationalism by trying to play the came of "track the ripper" but have concentrated instead on piecing the story of the crimes as it unfolded.

So join me on a journey back to 1888, and let us explore the London of Jack the Ripper.

Chapter One

LONDON 1888

"In London there is an East End and a West End. In the West End are those fortunate ones who are sent into the world with a kiss. In the East End are the others. Here live the poor, the shamed, those whom Fate, seeing how shrunken and bent they are as they creep through the gates of life, spat in their face for good measure. In this East End a corner has been set aside where, not content with the spittle, Fate sends the poor on their way with a blow, a kick, and their hats shoved over their eyes. In this spot, with the holy name Whitechapel…we would have to sink or swim, survive or go under, find bread, or if we could not, find death."

Jacob Adler
(1855 - 1926)

On 21st June 1887 Queen Victoria celebrated fifty “glorious” years as monarch, and her subjects marked the occasion with feasting and public ceremonies.

The middle classes had particular cause to celebrate since the past half century had seen them rise to become masters of industry, finance and international trade.

Fortunes were there for the making and the taking, and the middle classes embraced the philosophy of unencumbered self enrichment with a vengeance.

The British Empire was ever expanding, and core British values such as justice, truth and harmony were being exported throughout Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

The City of London, the financial boiler-room that powered the empire and its expansion reflected the supreme confidence of the age, and the majority of its workers enjoyed reasonable affluence whilst increasing numbers of them led life styles of wealth and privilege.

Yet, beneath this facade there lay a feeling of extreme and general unease.

For, by the 1880’s, the ordered society which the middle and upper classes had come to see as their very birthright was under threat like never before.

Many of them were casting nervous glances towards the East End where a huge underclass of dispossessed and displaced citizenry was beginning to bare its teeth and demand a fair share of the profits, benefits and spoils of the Empire.

The term “East End,” used to describe the area that lay beyond the City of London’s eastern fringe, had in fact been a recent invention of the early 1880’s.

But it soon caught on and was enthusiastically embraced by the popular press who used it to create a universal image of the area as a hot bed of villainy, vice and degradation.

As one commentator has put it:-

“A shabby man from Paddington, St. Marylebone or Battersea might pass muster as one of the respectable poor.

But the same man coming from Bethnal Green, Shadwell or Wapping was an “East Ender”; the box of Keating’s bug powder must be reached for, and the spoons locked up… it became a concentrated reminder to the public conscience that nothing to be found in the East End should be tolerated in a Christian country.”

Indeed, throughout the 1880's, the more "respectable" citizens of the West End had woken up to the poverty that lay just a few miles to the east, and they were constantly being reminded of its presence by newspapers and pamphleteers.

In 1883 the Reverend Andrew Mearns had shocked the delicate sensibilities of the English middle classes with *The Bitter Cry Of Outcast London: An Inquiry into the Condition of the Abject Poor.*

This comparatively small publication, confronted the bourgeoisie with the grim reality of everyday life in London’s slum lands, and warned them that they ignored this festering underclass at their peril:-

"Whilst we have been building our churches and solacing ourselves with our religion and dreaming that the millennium was coming, the poor have been growing poorer, the wretched more miserable, and the immoral more corrupt; the gulf has been daily widening which separates the lowest classes of our community from our churches and chapels, and from all decency and civilisation…how can those places [in which they live] be called homes…To get into them you have to penetrate courts reeking with poisonous and malodorous gases arising from the accumulations of sewage and refuse scattered in all directions and often flowing beneath your feet…walls and ceilings are black with the accretions of filth which have gathered upon them through years of neglect. It is exuding through cracks in the boards overhead; it is running down the walls. It is everywhere…

Every room in these rotten and reeking tenements houses a family, often two. In one cellar a sanitary inspector reports finding a father, mother, three children and four pigs! In another room a missionary found a man ill with small-pox, his wife just recovering from her eighth confinement, and the children running about half naked and covered with dirt. Here are seven people living in one underground kitchen and a little dead child lying in the same room. Elsewhere is a poor widow, her three children, and a child who had been dead thirteen days…Where there are beds they are simply heaps of dirty rags, shavings or straw, but for the most part these miserable beings find rest only upon the filthy boards…"

Commercial Street , Spitalfields

Brunswick Street, Spitalfields

Whitechapel High Street - 1889

Although the Victorian metropolis had many slum areas, it was on those of the East End that public attention began to focus. Whitechapel had the capital's worst slums, worst overcrowding and highest death rates.

One of its least salubrious neighbourhoods lay to the west and the east of Commercial Street.

Here. the dregs of Victorian society were crammed into the Common Lodging Houses, many of which were little more than breeding grounds for crime and vice.

Inspector Walter Dew, a local detective who began his career at Commercial Street police station in 1887, would later write in his memoirs that:-

"even before the advent of Jack the Ripper [the district] had a reputation for vice and villainy unequalled anywhere else in the British Isles."

In addition the area was the place of last resort to huge numbers of homeless drifters, who if they couldn't find shelter behind the decaying walls of a common lodging house, would either tramp the streets all night long, or else attempt to sleep in dark corners of dark passageways, on the landings and stairwells of tenement buildings, or in some cases, on the stairs or in the hallways of those houses where the anti social hours worked by the lodgers necessitated the front doors being left open throughout the night.

The East End had long been equated with lawlessness and immorality in the minds of the more 'respectable' middle and upper class west end citizens.

Whitechapel High Street - 1887

According to Professor Julian Huxley, who was no doubt expressing widely held bourgeois sentiments and prejudices:-

“I have seen the Polynesian…in his primitive condition, before the missionary…got at him. With all his savaging, he was not half so savage, so unclean, so irreclaimable, as the tenant of a tenement in an East London slum.”

Some social commentators were well aware of the consequences that could easily ensue should this trampled underclass be pushed beyond endurance and decide to fight back.Indeed, for many years prior to the appearance of Jack the Ripper on the streets of the district, numerous writers had been focusing on the festering cesspit, that they perceived the East End of London to be, and had been lecturing and warning readers of what they might be forced to confront should the situation not improve.

In her book, *In Darkest London,* Margaret Harkness, writing under the pseudonym John Law, warned:-

"The whole of the East End is starving.

The West End is bad, or mad, not to see that if things go on like this we must have a revolution.

One fine day the people about here will go desperate, and they will walk westwards, cutting throats and hurling brickbats, until they are shot down by the military…”

Yet the conditions in the East End had largely been brought about by powers that were turning a blind eye to the misery, poverty and dreadful overcrowding that was endemic there. Even when the authorities tried to appease their critics by appearing to do something their measures proved woefully inadequate and often demonstrated an incompetence that bordered on the comical.

In 1875 "The Artisans and Labourers Dwelling Act"was passed by Parliament to:-

"allow and to encourage…the purchase and demolition…of large areas of 'unfit' property."

The proximity of Whitechapel and Spitalfields to the wealthier parts of London, coupled with the alarming fact that 80% of the poor were living in so-called 'unfit' properties, ensured that the district was one of the first to be earmarked for demolition and regeneration.

Thus the slum clearances began and almost immediately ran into the problem of philanthropy versus blatant profiteering.

Parliament may have been keen to eradicate the problem of overcrowding, but it was also emphatic that redevelopment was not to be financed from the public purse.

It therefore fell to the private sector to provide the funding, with the necessary incentive for investors being a return on investment that, quite evidently, was not going to be generated by building houses for the poor.

Thus the rents for the new model dwellings that began to appear about the streets of Spitalfields and Whitechapel were well beyond the means of the very people that the government had intended them to accommodate.

These indigenous poor were forced into an ever decreasing number of slum houses where the laws of supply and demand, coupled with the compensation for lost rents that those who owned the properties could look forward to when these too were eventually demolished, ensured that as many people as possible – men, women and children - were crammed together under horrendous conditions as their landlords eagerly sought to wring as much profit as possible from these decaying dens of iniquity.

As Joseph Loane, Medical Officer of Health for the Whitechapel District reported:-

"..The matter of house accommodation? Let me state the case. A large area is cleared of wretched hovels to make way for the large piles of cleanly-looking buildings.

What has become of the people who were dislodged? Are they re-housed in the new Model Dwellings?

Certainly not. In the first place the rents demanded are above their means and in the second place the caretakers overlook them in their careful plan of selection.

It follows that they must drift into other rooms in houses, perhaps already sufficiently occupied. It is thus clear that the very class of persons requiring most urgently some better accommodation is the class for which the large building trusts have not provided…It is useless to expect that the rents which this class could afford would pay for lands and buildings and then enable a four per cent dividend to be declared…"

The plight of the area's poor had been further highlighted in May 1887 when Charles Booth, a wealthy shipping magnate turned philanthropist and social reporter, presented a paper to the Royal Statistical Society outlining the grim reality for many who lived in the East End.

Out of a population of some 456,877 people he estimated that 22% of them were living on the poverty line; whilst 13% of them were struggling against conditions in which "decent life was not imaginable."

Put simply 60,000 East End men, women and children lived their daily lives on the brink of starvation and found themselves crammed into overcrowded accommodation where disease, hunger or neglect would claim the lives of one in four children before they reached the age of five.

The harshness of their living conditions served to dehumanise those whose lot it was to wallow in the filth and degradation of everyday life in the East End. Most of the children, or at least those who survived their early years, had lost all innocence by the time they reached their teens.

As *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London* grimly lectured its readers:

"That people condemned to exist under such conditions take to drink and fall into sin is surely a matter for little surprise… Who can wonder that young girls wander off into a life of immorality, which promises release from such conditions? The vilest practices are looked upon with the most matter-of-fact indifference…Entire courts are filled with thieves, prostitutes and liberated convicts. In one street are 35 houses, 32 of which are known to be brothels. In another district are 43 of these houses, and 428 fallen women and girls, many of them not more than 12 years old…"

Fear of the huge underclass that dwelt beyond the City of London's eastern border had reached a crescendo by 1888.

Many West End citizens were casting nervous glances eastward, fearful of a perceived inevitably of a coming revolution.

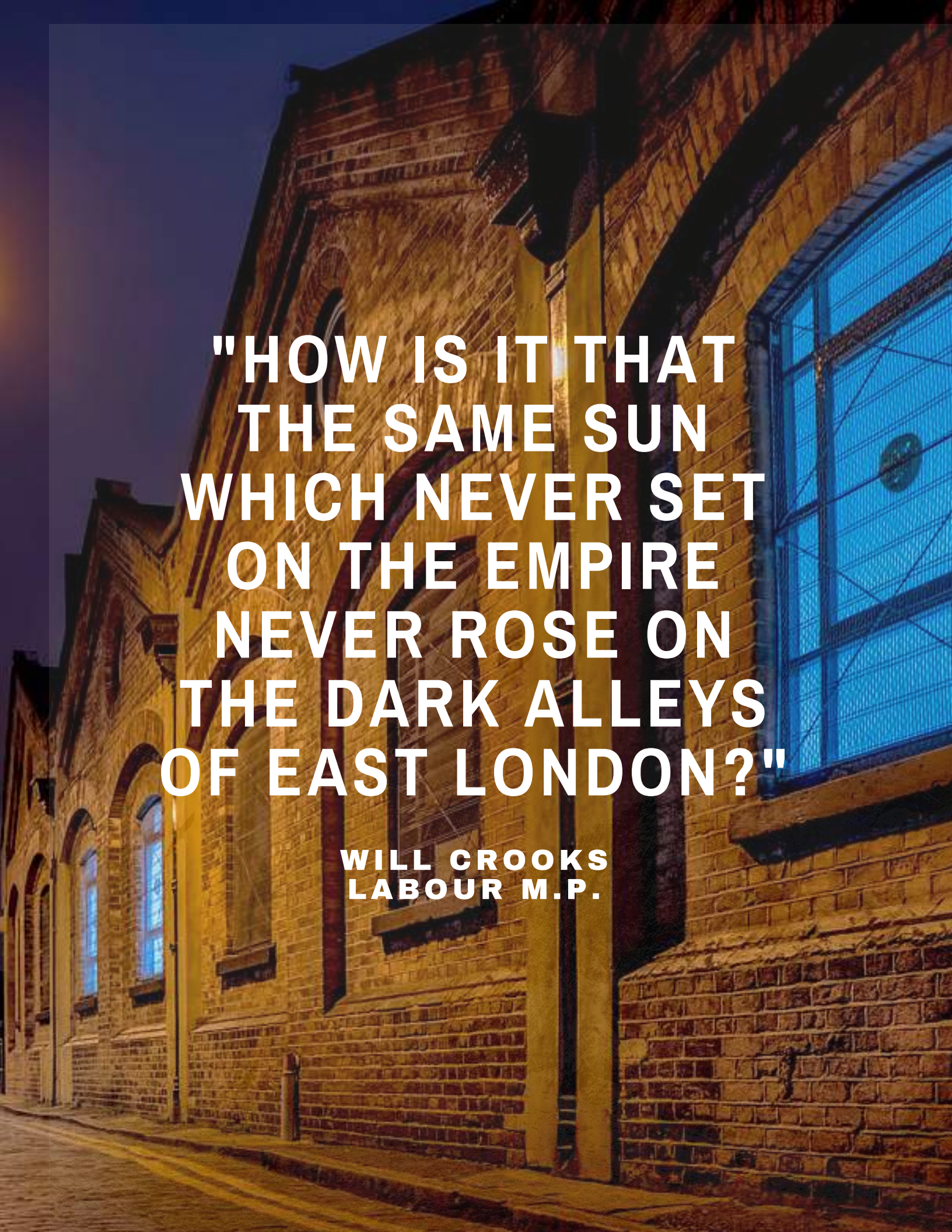
A series of West End riots in 1886 and 1887, of which the poor of the East End of London had been seen as the main instigators and participants had convinced the middle and upper classes that something - perhaps the dreaded revolution - was imminent.

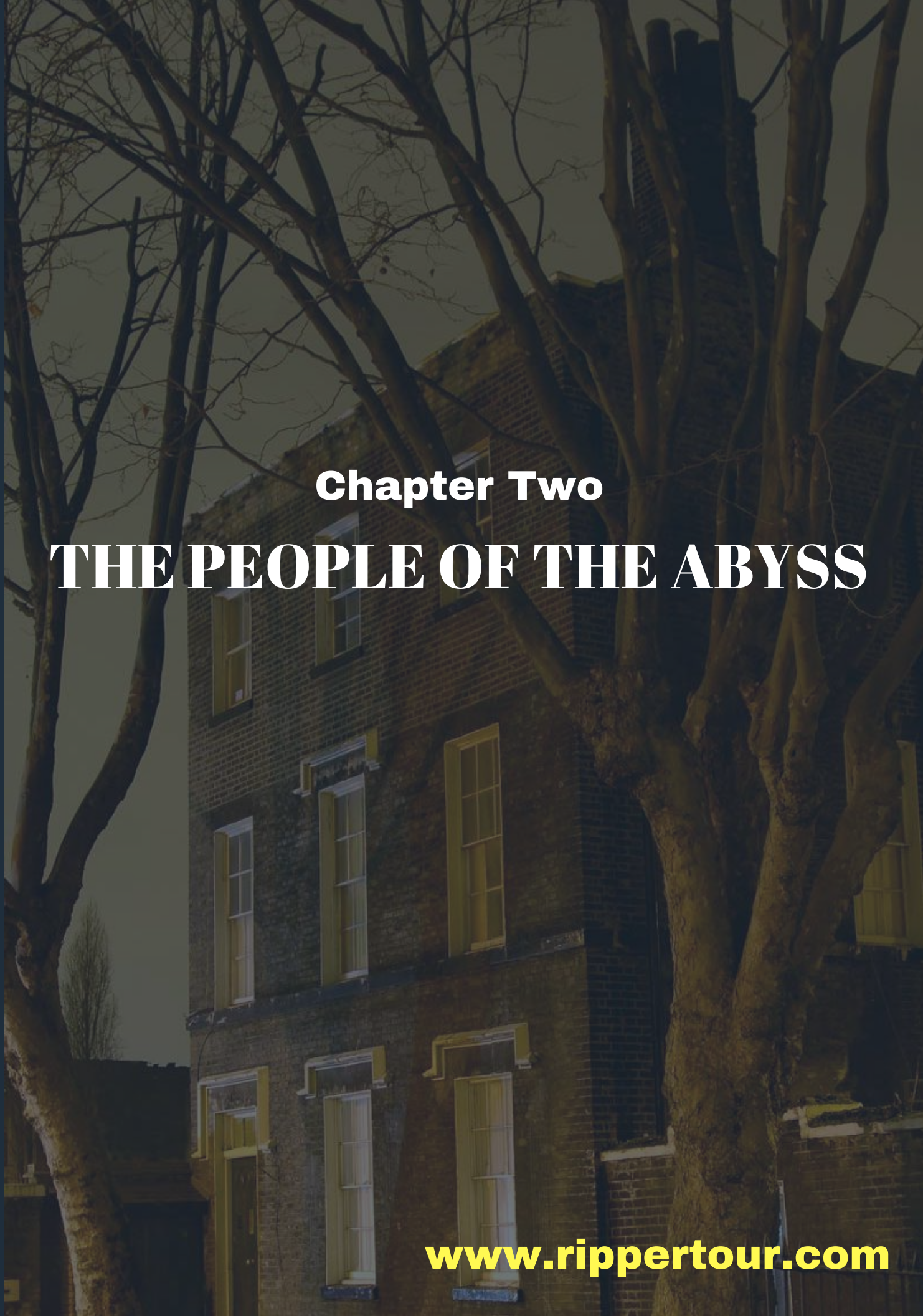
Whatever that *something* was, there was a general consensus that it would come out of the streets of Whitechapel and Spitalfields, and thus the eyes of many were looking towards the area.

It was against this backdrop, of fear and apprehension, that an unknown miscreant launched a campaign of terror in the very streets of which the better off classes were already feeling very wary.

And, in so doing, the killer, who would become known as "Jack the Ripper" became the very personification of all these nebulous fears and prejudices that the middle and upper classes shared about the East End of London.

As a result, the murders impacted on Victorian society as a whole, and they ensured that, for several months in 1888, the eyes of the world were focused upon a tiny enclave of the 19th century metropolis, and an international spotlight began to illuminate the conditions of vice, poverty and squalor that, as far as many were concerned, had given birth to a monster of the slums.


"HOW IS IT THAT THE SAME SUN WHICH NEVER SET ON THE EMPIRE NEVER ROSE ON THE DARK ALLEYS OF EAST LONDON?"
WILL CROOKS
LABOUR M.P.



Chapter Two

THE PEOPLE OF THE ABYSS

The people who lived in the area that the American author Jack London would later dub “the Abyss” comprised were made up of a cross section of Victorian society.

The 19th century had seen a steady flow of economic migrants drifting into London from the region of East Anglia.

Essex, which had been decimated by the decay of its cloth and farming industries, and which was one of the poorest counties in England, noted for its huge number of workhouses, had seen a huge migration of its surplus population into East London.

Irish immigrants had started arriving with the potato famines of 1846 and later. Many of these were reluctant immigrants who had not wanted to end up amidst the squalor of East London, but had ended up marooned there when their attempts to find ultimate redemption in America had failed.

They settled into areas around riverside, and made their living by their physical strength, the majority of them finding work in the docks. They were not particularly well liked and violence amongst this section of the East End community, especially when drunk, was commonplace.

By far the largest immigration into the East End had been that of the Jews who had begun arriving in increasing numbers from 1881 onwards fleeing persecution or economic hardship in Russia, Poland and Germany. By 1888 the Jewish Population of Whitechapel had grown to between 45,000 and 50,000.

At first these Jewish immigrants had settled into the streets to the south of Spitalfields. But, by 1888, they had begun expanding eastwards towards Mile End and Bow, and southwards into the streets of St George’s in the Fields

Charles Booth recorded how:-

“The newcomers have gradually replaced the English population in whole districts… Formerly in Whitechapel, Commercial Street roughly divided the Jewish haunts of Petticoat Lane and Goulston Street from the rougher English quarter lying in the East [this would have been the area of Wentworth Street and Brick Lane]. Now the Jews have flowed across the line; Hanbury Street, Fashion Street, Pelham Street, Booth Street, Old Montague Street, and many streets and lanes and alleys have fallen before them; they fill whole blocks of model dwellings; they have introduced new trades as well as new habits and they live and crowd together and work and meet their fate independent of the great stream of London life surging around them.”

At first the Jewish immigrants were received with a certain amount of sympathy. But as the decade wore on and an economic depression saw spectre of mass unemployment sweep across the East End attitudes began to change.

In February 1886 *The Pall Mall Gazette* had informed its readers that:-

“the foreign Jews of no nationality whatever are becoming a pest and a menace to the poor native born East Ender.”

By 1888, high local unemployment, combined with an acute housing shortage in the East End, had focused national attention on the immigrant problem and two Select committees were formed to look into it.

The first in the House of Commons met between 27th July and the 8th August, and focussed on alien immigration.

The other met in the House of Lords investigated the so-called Sweating system in the East End, whereby employees crammed into tiny, stinking and unwholesome workshops, would work anything up to twenty hours a day for wages that amounted to little more than a pittance.This was seen as being particularly prevalent amongst the newly arrived Jewish immigrants, or ‘greenies,’ many of whom also slept in the rooms in which they worked.

Arnold White, imperialist, author and arch mover in the anti alienist campaign told the committee, in terms sadly reminiscent of sentiments that still surface from time to time in our own century, albeit towards different scapegoats:-

“The poor Russian Jew laughs at what he hears of English poverty and scanty fare. He has a false notion that the English artisan is generally overfed, and easily discontented, and that the Jew can live easily where an Englishman would starve!”

White’s prejudices were debunked by several prominent Anglo-Jewish M.P’s, most notably East End M.P Samuel Montagu. The Committee was then addressed by Charles Freake

Secretary of the Shoemaker Society, a trade that was synonymous with Whitechapel who let loose a nasty little piece of xenophobia:-

“These Jew foreigners work in our trade at this common work 16 or 18 hours a day, and the consequence is that they make a lot of cheap and nasty stuff that destroys the market and injures us.” He went on to accuse the Jewish immigrants of frustrating English workmen in their battle to attain higher wages by blacklegging during disputes and taking “work out at any price.”

Gentile hostility was bad enough, but the immigrants were also criticised by fellow Jews, including Henry de Jonge, and English Jew of Dutch descent, who despite being retained as Yiddish interpreter and legal adviser for the aliens, felt compelled to enlighten the committee about populist gentile views and prejudices against the Jews.

They had, he claimed, displaced native tradesmen who were now only able to gain “a precarious living compared with what they were in the habit of getting.”

By way of illustration he explained how “Wages in tailoring, shoe-making and cabinet making, which had once stood at £2 a week had now dropped by half to £1 and £1 5s.”

The committees would ultimately vindicate the immigrants, but their prolonged deliberations ensured that the matter was in the public eye through the first eight months of 1888.

The *East London Advertiser* kept a wary and critical watch on the immigrant problem throughout the year, lamenting on the 30th June 1888, that the local poor were hard driven with high rents and the competition from “foreign Jews.”

In her book *Out of Work*, John Law, aka Margaret Harkness, had the wife of a radical carpenter express the sentiments of many in the East End of London.

“Why should they come here I'd like to know? London ain't what it used to be; it's just like a foreign city. The food ain't English; the talk ain't English. Why should all them foreigners come here to take our food out of our mouths, and live on victuals we wouldn't give to pigs?'

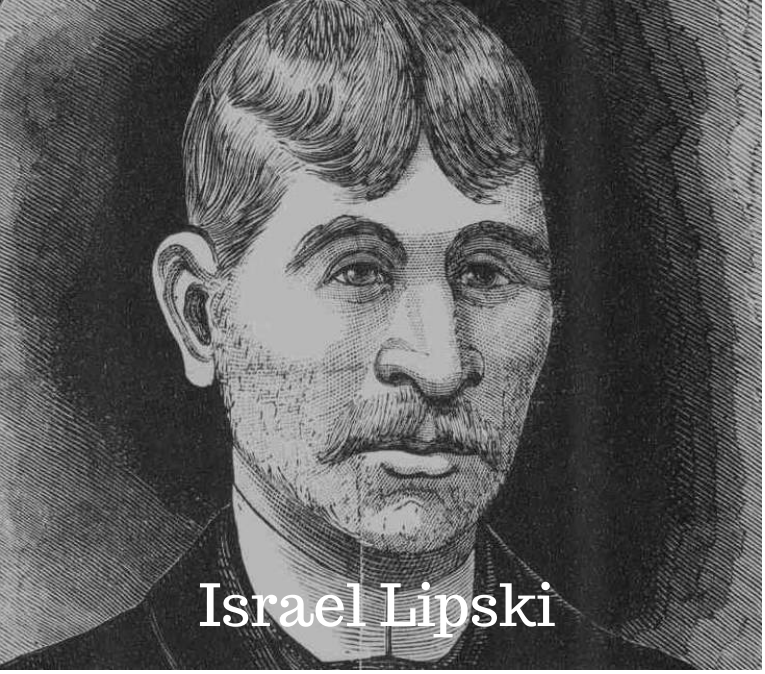
One fact that went unnoticed, or at least un-remarked on, by the alienists and more xenophobic elements of the press, was the fact that by and large when the Jewish immigrants moved into a neighbourhood they tended to have a remarkably civilising effect on their surroundings.

Social workers, reformers and even the police were quick to observe how an influx of Jews into a particular neighbourhood would soon raise the standards and behaviour in some of the worst parts of London. Streets and blocks notorious for violence and crime became comparatively well behaved after Jewish families moved in.

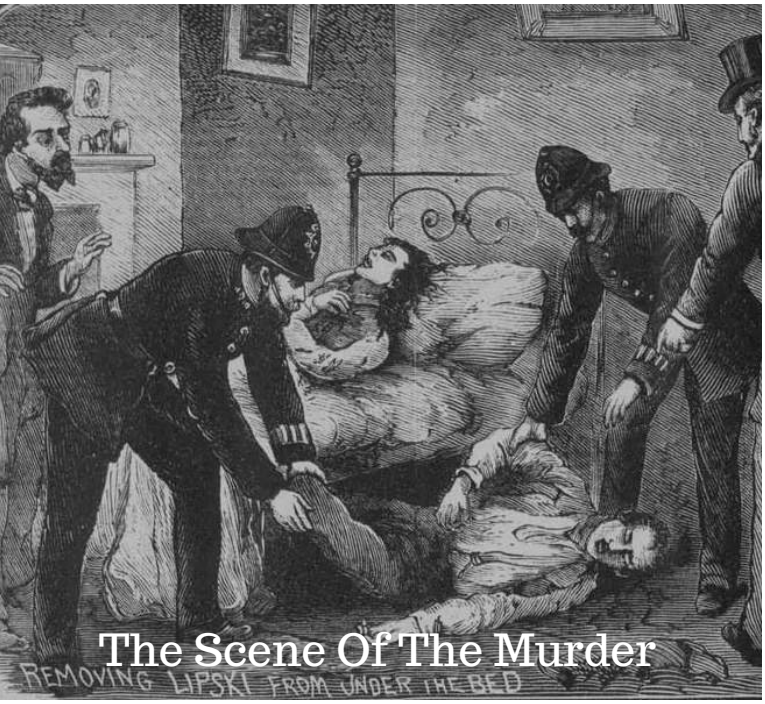
However, this was not a view shared by a large number of East End inhabitants, and the significance of the spotlight being turned on the Jewish immigrants throughout the first half of 1888 was that, by the end of the summer, many in the neighbourhood genuinely believed that the Jews were capable of anything.

The situation had been exacerbated by a notorious East End murder that had taken place in June 1887 in which both the victim and the perpetrator were Jewish immigrants.

Israel Lipski, a lodger at 16 Batty Street, off Commercial Road, had murdered a fellow lodger, Miriam Angel, by forcing nitric acid down her throat.



Israel Lipski



The Scene Of The Murder

16 Batty Street

Although Lipski had been hanged for the crime. the newspaper reports of it had fulled anti-Semitic feeling in the district, and, by 1888, the term "Lipski" was being used as a racial slur by Gentiles wishing to insult members of the Jewish population.

The Lipski murder, coupled with the press reporting on the "alien problem", led to open hostility towards the community throughout 1888.

So, when the Whitechapel murders confronted the East End of London with a new type of crime, unprecedented in its barbarity, the gentile population were only too willing to blame the murders on the immigrant community.

Spurred on by press xenophobia, they came to the conclusion that an Englishman could not be responsible and were more than happy to seek vengeance against the community that had already become their scapegoats for virtually all the other ills that blighted their every day lives.

As a piece of racist graffito would put it at the height of the jack the Ripper panic:-

“The Juwes are the men that will not be blamed for nothing.”

Chapter Three

COMMON LODGING HOUSES

The victims of Jack the Ripper all lived in a knot of streets off Commercial Street in an area that was known as “The wicked quarter mile.”

Here were situated the common lodging houses that provided the last refuge, before either the workhouse or the streets, for many of the areas indigenous poor.

By law every one of these common lodging houses had to be licensed and was subjected to strict police supervision.

Each one had to display a placard in a prominent position stating the number of beds for which it was licensed, a number that was calculated on the basis of a minimum allowance of space per person. Bed linen had to be changed weekly, and the windows had to be thrown open daily at 10am to ensure that the rooms were well ventilated.

Charles Dickens (son of the author of the same name) in his Dictionary of London for 1888 treated his readers to a rose tinted picture of these establishments that is strangely at odds with the descriptions given by the majority of commentators who visited them:-

“In its way there are few things more striking, than the comparative sweetness of these dormitories, even when crowded with tramps and thieves of the lowest class.”

Dickens does, however, concede that:-

“The common sitting-rooms on the ground floor are not, it must be confessed, always equally above reproach.”

Men and women’s dormitories were meant to be separate, and rooms for married couples were meant to be partitioned off in, according to Dickens, “the fashion of the old square-pewed churches.”

Every lodging house had a common kitchen where the lodgers would gather and cook whatever food they had managed to buy, beg, steal or scavenge in the course of the day.

The reality, particularly in the streets of Spitalfields, was somewhat different and a recurrent theme that cropped up time and again in the reams of newspaper articles and official reports written throughout and in the wake of Jack the Ripper's murderous reign, was the need to rid the district of the cancer of these common lodging houses.

It didn't go unnoticed that two of Jack the Ripper's victims,

Mary Nichols and Annie Chapman, had effectively been sent to their deaths as a result of their being evicted from the lodging houses at which they were staying because they lacked the four pence or eight pence to pay for their beds.

Three of Jack the Ripper's victims had, at one time or another, lived in the same lodging house in Flower and Dean Street, one of a group of adjacent thoroughfares known as the blackest of the black streets where vice, violence and villainy flourished, and all three of these were widely regarded as being synonymous with everyday life in the common lodging houses.

Most of the lodging houses were owned by middle-class entrepreneurs and investors the majority of whom lived well outside the area and entrusted the day to day running of the businesses to "wardens" or "keepers."

Many of these had criminal backgrounds and operated on the periphery of the law.

They would turn a blind eye, probably in return for a share of the proceeds, to illegal activity and blatantly flouted the regulation stating that men and women, unless married, must be kept separate.

A case at Worship Street Police Court that was reported in the East End News on the 5th October 1888 casts light on both the immorality and violence that was endemic in these establishments.

Mary M'Carthy, 'a powerful young woman' was charged with stabbing Ann Neason, the deputy keeper of the Spitalfields lodging house at which she was staying, in the face.

The Magistrate, Mr. Montagu Williams Q.C, used his questioning of Ann Neason to launch a blistering attack on the common lodging houses:-

Mr. Williams: Is it one of the common lodging-houses one hears of?

Witness: Yes, sir.

Mr. Williams: Then tell me this - How many beds do you make up there?

Witness: Twenty-eight singles, and twenty-four doubles.

Mr. Williams: By ''doubles'' you mean for a man and a woman?

Witness: Yes, sir.

Mr. Williams: And the woman can take any man she likes? You don't know if the couples are married or not?

Witness: No, sir. We don't ask them.

Mr. Williams: Precisely what I thought. And the sooner these lodging-houses are put down the better.

They are the haunt of the burglar, the home of the pickpocket, and the hotbed of prostitution.

I don't think I can put it stronger than that. It is time the owners of these places, who reap large profits from them, were looked after.

Witness then continued her evidence and said that because the prisoner had become quarrelsome the ''missus'' told her (the witness) to refuse the prisoner's money for the future, and the prisoner, out of spite, stabbed witness in the face and neck with a piece of a skewer.

Mr. Williams: Who's the ''missus'' you mention?

Witness: Mrs. Wilmot.

Mr. Williams: Oh, a woman. She is the owner, then. But she doesn't live there?

Witness: No, sir, in Brick-lane.

Mr. Williams: What is she?

Witness: A baker.

Mr. Williams: Has she any more of these common lodging-houses?

Witness: Yes, sir, two in Wentworth-street, close by where I am in George-yard.

Mr. Williams: And how many beds does she provide there?

The prisoner: Sixty or seventy, sir.

Mr. Williams: What is the price of a bed?

Witness: Fourpence and eightpence.

Mr. Williams: Eightpence for a double. Was she a double or single?

Witness: Double.

Mr. Williams: Is she married?

Witness: No, I don't think so.

Mr. Williams: Then the place is a brothel.

The inspector on duty in the court said that the beds were let for the night.

Mr. Williams: That makes no difference.

The witness says that any woman can take any man in there, and so long as eightpence is paid no question is asked.

What is that but a house carried on for immoral accommodation?

Mr. Enoch Walker, vestry clerk of Shoreditch, said that he had had a good deal of experience with such places, but they could only be touched by one section of the Criminal Law Amendment Act.

Mr. Williams: Then I hope they will not be exempt from future legislation.

They are places where, according to the witness, the thief or the criminal can hide all day for the payment of fourpence or eightpence for a bed each night.

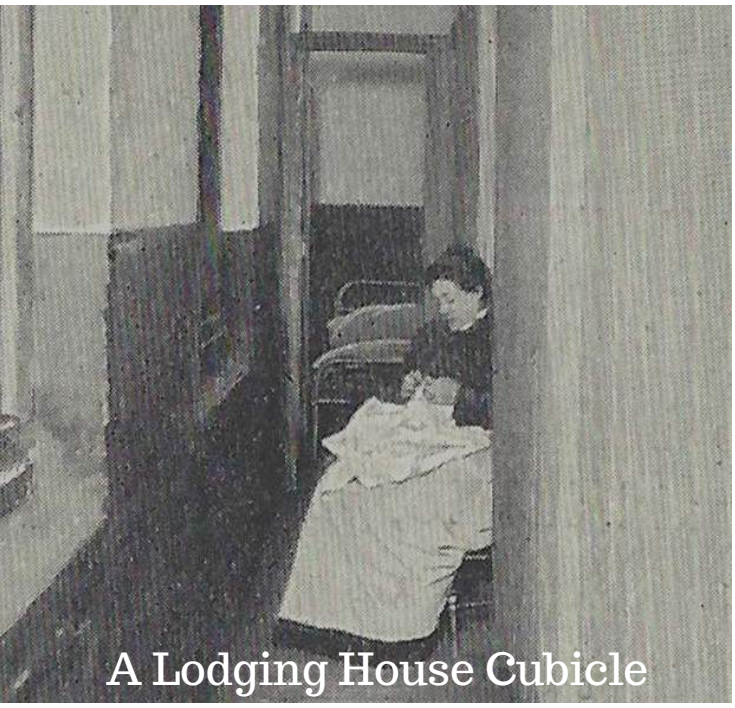
As a magistrate I have made it my business to go over some of these places, and I say that the sooner they are put down the better.

In my humble judgment they are about as unwholesome and unhealthy, as well as dangerous to the community, as can well be.

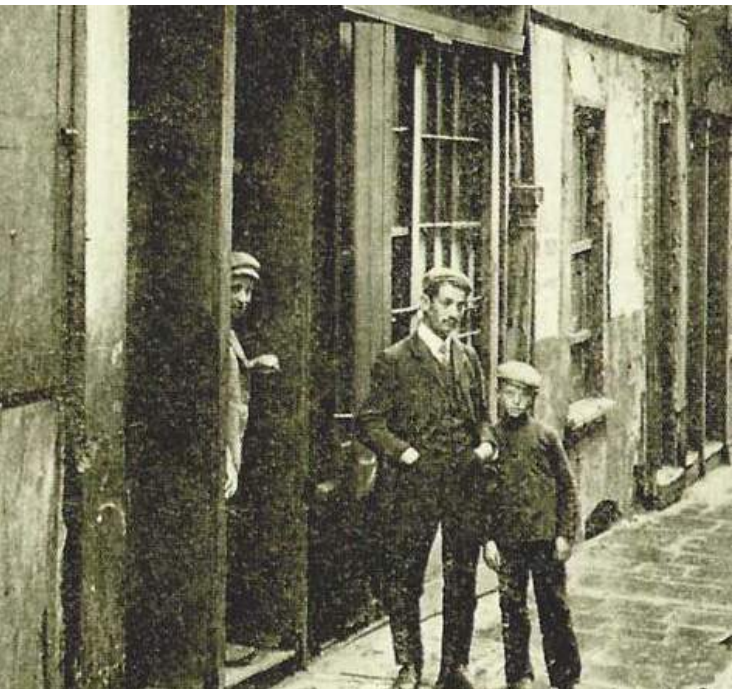
There are places among them where the police dare not enter, and where the criminal hides all day long.

I have seen so much that I hope what I have said will do something to call attention to them.

A Lodging House Kitchen



A Lodging House Cubicle



In a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* on 21st September, 1888, a correspondent who signed himself 'Ratepayer' highlighted the problem.

Referring to Thrawl Street, where Mary Nichols, Jack the Ripper's first victim, was lodging at the time of her murder, he wrote:-

"The population is of such a class that robberies and scenes of violence are of common occurrence. It is a risk for any respectable person to venture down the turning even in the open day. Thieves, loose women, and bad characters abound, and, although the police are not subject, perhaps, to quite the same dangers as they were a few years ago, there is still reason to believe that a constable will avoid, as far as he can, this part of his beat, unless accompanied by a brother officer."

His letter also revealed just how numerous the common Lodging houses were throughout the relatively small area that was bounded by Baker's Row to the east, Middlesex Street to the west and Whitechapel Road to the south:-

"There are no less than 146 registered lodging-houses, with a number of beds exceeding 6,000.

Of these 1,150 are in Flower and Dean-street alone, and nearly 700 in Dorset-street. Some of the houses contain as few as four beds, whilst others have as many as 350.

At a few of these men only are received, and at others women only, but in the majority there are what are known as 'double-doss beds.' ... there is little room to doubt the truth of the assertion that when these double beds are let no questions are asked, and the door is opened for the most frightful immorality."

Chapter Four

WHITECHAPEL UNFORTUNATES

In 1885 Parliament passed the Criminal Law Amendment Act, which was intended as:-

“An Act to make further provision for the Protection of Women and Girls, the suppression of brothels, and other purposes.”

Two of the more far reaching aspects of the Act were the raising of the age of consent from thirteen to sixteen and the criminalization of male homosexuality, which would remain criminalized until the 1960’s

Of immediate impact on the victims of Jack the Ripper was the Act's tougher stance on brothels and prostitution.

Combined efforts by Social Purists and the National Vigilance Association saw a determined effort to bring into operation and give effect to the Criminal Law Amendment Act, in particular with respect to discovering and checking "...the causes of criminal vice..." and "to prosecute offences against the law, and to expose offenders to public censure..."

The attitude of these organizations was that by working the streets and other locales frequented by "respectable" citizens prostitutes made life intolerable for the community in which they plied their trade.

As a result the consensus was that they should be treated as public nuisances.

One observer complained of:-

“the fearful prevalence...of a gross state of street prostitution attended by features of a very disgusting character, particularly between the hours of 10 and 12 at which it is not fit for any respectable female to walk

about and young men cannot do so without molestation...”

Another commented that:-

“...there is only one remedy - repression. By the joint action of policeman and citizen, it can be repressed.”

Although the purists and the Vigilance Associations were dependent on the police to enforce the law, the police themselves were often reluctant to do so.

If a particular organization suspected a house was being used as a brothel they would report their suspicion to the local Parish Vestry who in turn would instruct the police to keep the premises under surveillance in order to obtain the necessary evidence to prosecute the owners.

However, when Sir Charles Warren became Metropolitan Police Commissioner he decided that, since watching known brothels was not officially part of their duty, his men were no longer to undertake this activity for the Parish Vestries.

Warren's main objection was that deploying policemen to watch houses of ill-repute was effectively a waste of both the time and resources of his force as it diverted officers away from crime prevention and the detection of serious crimes.

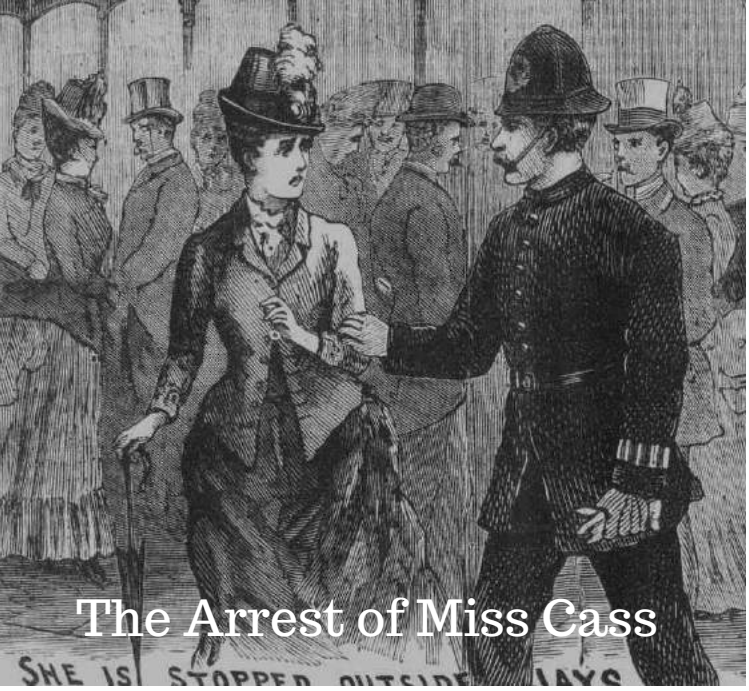
Furthermore, he noted that when the Vestries were given information by the police their response was often to caution rather than prosecute the brothel keepers, who in turn simply moved elsewhere.

Warren's belief was that it was better to contain rather than repress prostitution. In a letter to St. George's Vestry Clerk dated October 31st 1888 Warren complained that the vigilance societies were:-

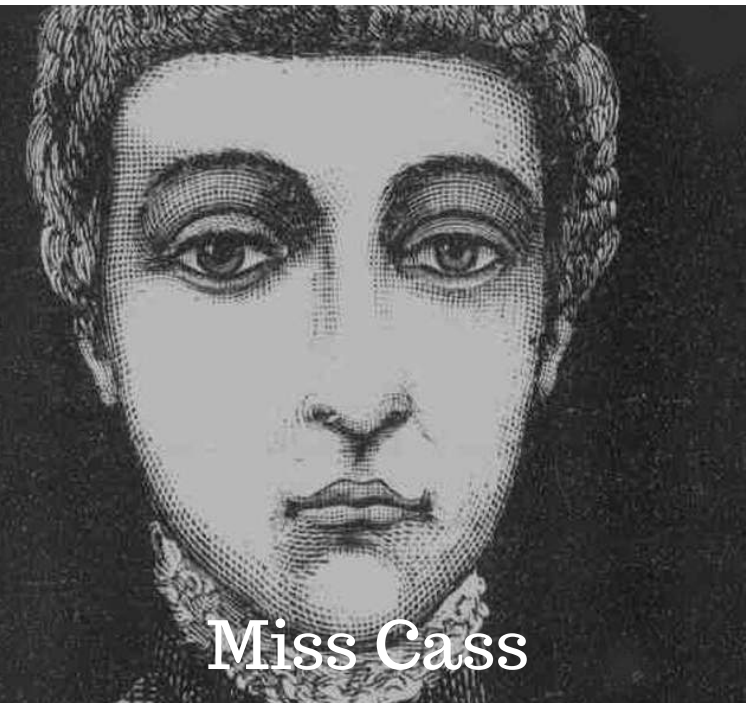
“...in the habit of routing out the brothels from the back slums and driving them into respectable places...and as long as there is a demand for prostitutes on the part of the public there is no doubt they will exist in spite of the Vestries and Vigilance Societies, and the more they are driven out of their brothels back slums, the worse it becomes for law and order and decency...”

By adopting a policy of containment the Metropolitan Police believed that they could confine the problem to an area they would be able to police effectively.

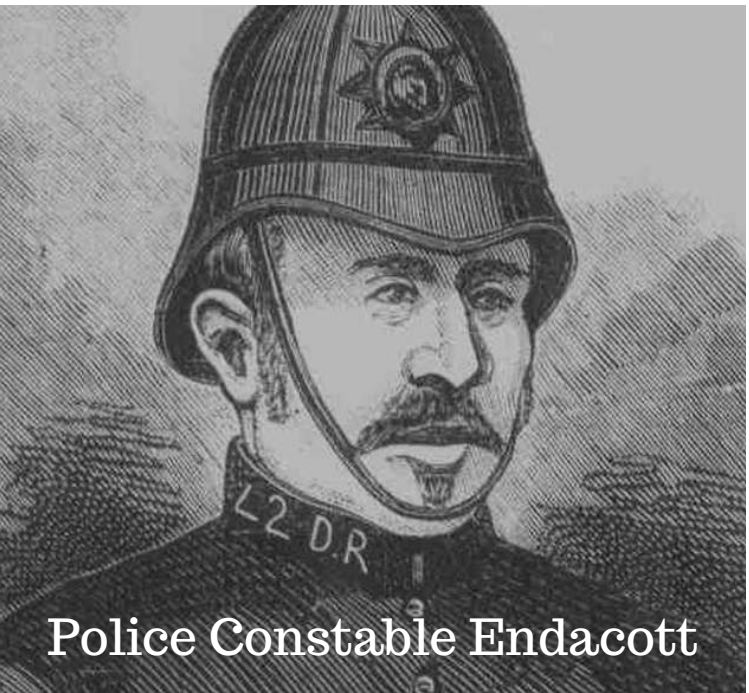
As for prosecuting individual prostitutes for soliciting, the police found themselves restricted by the constraints of the law, since prostitution in itself was not an offence. Soliciting was, but to prove that a woman had been soliciting was extremely difficult. Magistrates proved suspicious of convicting on the uncorroborated evidence of a police constable. As a result, the arrest, charging and convicting of a prostitute on a charge of soliciting, as far as individual constables were



The Arrest of Miss Cass



Miss Cass



Police Constable Endacott

concerned, was problem laden.

As one confidential police report stated:-

"...Action is attended by much trouble, by very likely a scuffle, by cross-examination by the Station Inspector, by the necessity of making out a written report, by the loss of at least four hours rest next day at the police court, by risk of blame by the magistrate and of other consequences...excessive zeal in this direction would at one arouse the suspicion of his superiors that he was paying too much attention to this class of case to the neglect of other duties."

Constables genuinely feared the consequences on both their reputation and career prospects and thus refused to arrest a prostitute unless absolutely compelled to do so.

In June 1887 the press had had a field day over a sensational case involving a respectable milliner by the name of Miss Elizabeth Cass. Police Constable Endacott had arrested 23 year old Miss Cass on Regent Street and charged her with soliciting.

Although the Magistrate, Mr. Newton, discharged her, he noted her occupation as prostitute and cautioned her about her future conduct. He observed that no respectable woman should be walking on Regent Street at 9pm in the evening!

Supported by her employer Miss Cass protested her innocence and insisted she was merely on her way to purchase a pair of gloves.

Indignant Members of Parliament and the Press took up her case and the resultant publicity ensured a humiliating censure of both the Police and the Home Secretary when the case against her was overturned.

Sir Charles Warren's reaction to the Cass case was to issue an order prohibiting his officers from arresting street walkers unless a direct complaint had been made by a member of the public or without corroborating evidence.

The direct result of this order was that police arrests of street prostitutes declined dramatically between 1887 and 1889.

As far as individual constables were concerned it was safer to ignore prostitutes than to attempt to repress them.

Thus by 1888 street walkers had become so emboldened by this official attitude that it became almost impossible to walk along certain London streets without being constantly and publicly solicited.

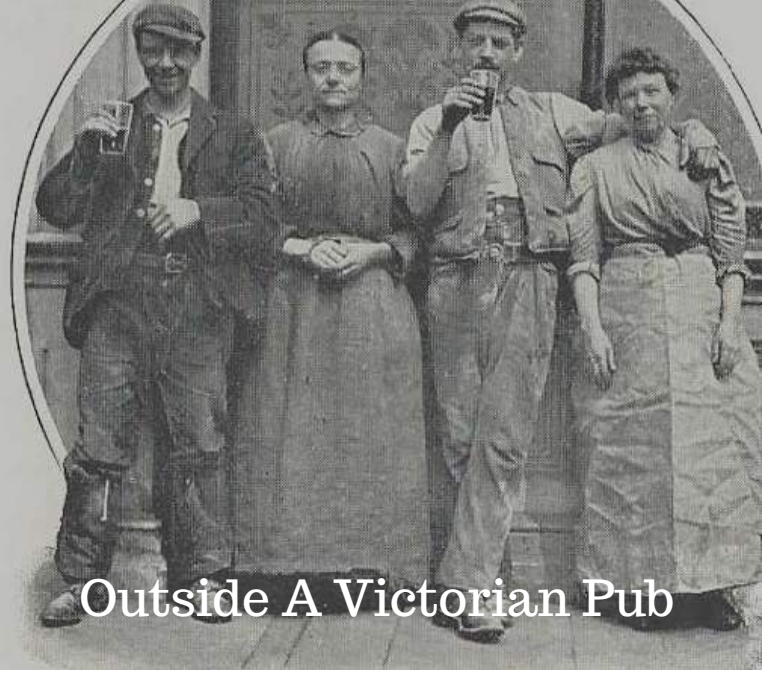
Even the National Vigilance Association was forced into a climb-down complaining that, since the Metropolitan Police were withholding any assistance and were doing so little to suppress street prostitution, curbing it was now an impossible task.

When, just over a year later, Jack the Ripper began his killing spree the everyday beat constables in the area had long been turning a blind eye to the presence of prostitutes on the streets, and thus little attention was paid to them as they attempted to eek out a living by soliciting strangers to go with them into the dark corners and passageways of Whitechapel and Spitalfields.

All Jack the Ripper's victims belonged to a class of prostitutes that were known as "unfortunates."

This was a term used to described low class prostitutes who sold their services on the streets of London for a pittance.

The lives of each one of his victims shared similar tragic and depressing downward spirals



Outside A Victorian Pub

A Homeless Lady

Women At Work

into poverty and vice, mostly resulting from alcoholism.

But, it must be said, in many cases, prostitution was seen as a preferable means of earning money than some of the alternatives.

For the women of the area there were few career opportunities, and those that were available entailed working long hours, in dreadful conditions for a pittance, that often amounted to as little as 5 pence a day.

As Margaret Harkness observed about one group of sweat shop workers:

"A more miserable set of girls it would be difficult to find anywhere. They had only just escaped from the Board School, but many had faces wise with wickedness, and eyes out of which all traces of maidenhood had vanished."

To many of the girls and women casual prostitution offered at best a way out of the drudgery and a worst a means of survival by which they could support their families.

It not only offered a quick and easy escape, but was often the only way that many of the area's women could find the money to pay for food, lodging and, more importantly, drink to help them forget the grinding drudgery of their day to day existences.

As Beatrice Potter astutely observed:-

"Miserable wages, long hours and a vibrated atmosphere tainted no less by foul words and coarse language than by fetid air are apparently the lot of the sweaters girl… You cannot accuse them of immorality for they have no consciousness of sin…"

To a select few, prostitution offered a mean), of escape from the grinding poverty.

Some of the more fortunate girls might find work in brothels in the West End of London or some times in Paris. But, for the majority, escape from the area was simply not an option and, in times of extreme economic hardship, when men found it almost impossible to get work, many an East End slum family's very survival depended on a wife or daughter prostituting herself on the streets.

William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, spoke of a “large standing army” of prostitutes “whose numbers no-one can calculate.”

He did, however, state that the “ordinary figure given for London is 60,000 to 80,000.”

Whereas this was probably an exaggerated figure, including as it did those that Booth referred to as “all habitually unchaste women,” the fact remains that many of the East End’s females saw prostitution as a means whereby they could earn more in one night than they could in a whole week working in a sweatshop, whilst thousands more were forced into it out of necessity rather than choice.

However, the promise of easy money was an illusion, for the streets soon exacted a terrible price for the “wages of sin.”

As General Booth wrote:-

"This life induced insanity, rheumatism, consumption and all forms of syphilis. Rheumatism and gout are the commonest of these evils.

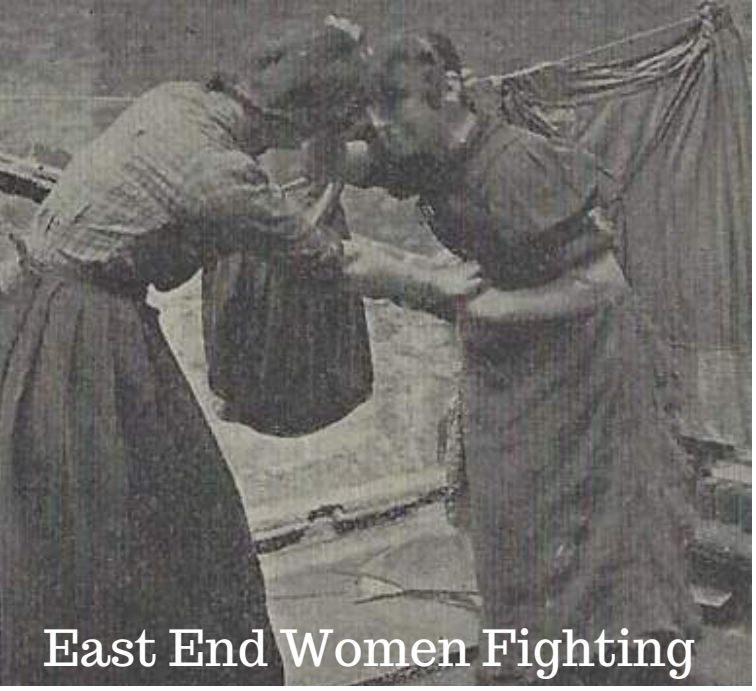
Some were quite crippled by both - young though they were.

Consumption sows its seeds broadcast…We have found girls at midnight who are continually prostrated by haemorrhage yet who have no other way of life open.

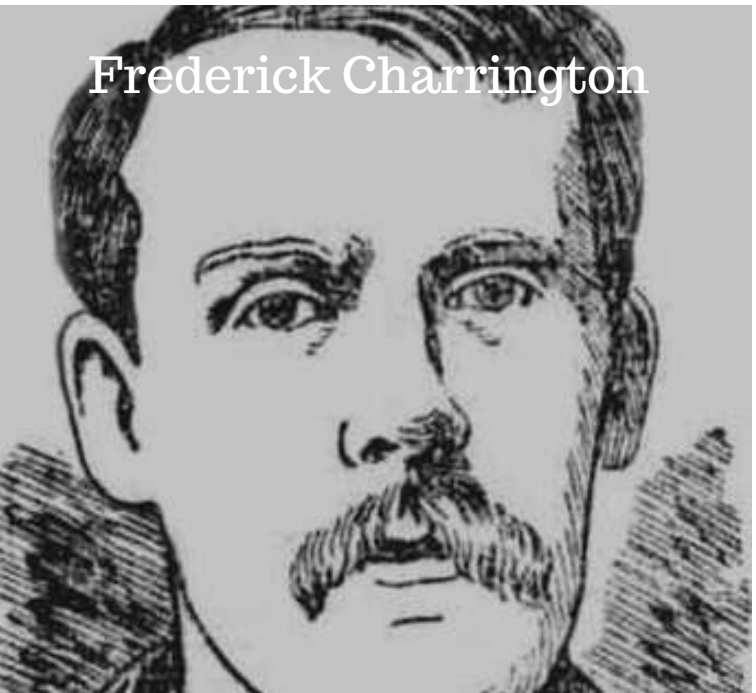
In the hospitals it is a known fact that these girls are not treated at all like other cases; they inspire disgust, and are most frequently discharged before being really cured.

Scorned by their relations, and ashamed to make their case known even to those who would help them, unable longer to struggle out on the streets to earn the bread of shame, there are girls lying in many a dark hole in this big city positively rotting away and maintained by their old companions on the streets."

Their clients were made up of a cross section of Victorian society. The nearby docks provided a steady stream of sailors from all over the world who came ashore with money to spend. The hay market on Whitechapel Road and Whitechapel High Street brought in clients from the agricultural provinces.



East End Women Fighting



Frederick Charrington

Sons of middle and upper class families were also drawn by the allure of cheap sex that was available on East End streets.

The blatant hypocrisy of many of these young men, who were applauded in polite circles for the self-imposed chastity that their later marriages supposedly entailed, attracted the opprobrium of a writer for *Justice* who fumed:-

"The young men of the middle and upper classes are commended... for being more prudent and provident than those of the working class because they marry late in life; these expounders and eulogisers of the present system... conveniently ignore that these prudent and provident young men usually gratify their passions by ruining the daughters of the working class, which economic conditions offer as a vicarious sacrifice for the ladies of the wealthy classes to whom these popinjays of society ultimately unite themselves."

Many of the women thus ruined had little choice but to embrace their roles as 'unfortunates' and would attach themselves to a 'bully' or pimp, who would invariably treat them abominably.

Domestic violence was commonplace, as was violence from their clients.

Yet even the seemingly well-meaning activities of reformers could have an adverse affect upon them.

Throughout the winter of 1887-88 Frederick Charrington, heir to the local brewing dynasty (in 'fact he had abandoned his right to inherit, but had kept the income), was spearheading a determined campaign to rid the East End of vice.

He abhorred the number of brothels in the area and used the Criminal Law Amendment Act of

1885 - under which a citizen could report any house suspected of operating as a brothel to the police in return for a reward - to launch his own private crusade to close them down.

Armed with a large black book to note down suspect houses, Charrington cut a swathe through the East End flesh trade that saw brothel after brothel close.

His biographer, Guy Thorne, observed how:-

"the bullies [pimps], the keepers of evil houses, the horrible folk who battened on shame, and enriched themselves with the wages of sin, feared Frederick Charrington as they feared no policeman, no inspector, no other living thing."

His campaign against the 'foulest sinks of iniquity' resulted in at least one startling revelation for Charrington himself.

He had learnt that a girl was being kept against her will at a certain brothel, and he set out to rescue her in the company of two detectives who were disguised as water inspectors.

They quickly gained admittance to the property and the girl was duly saved.

But, on searching the rest of the house, he was astonished to find a large portrait of himself staring down from the wall of the main reception room.

The detectives informed him that every brothel in the East End possessed a similar portrait, as the keepers wished to be able to identify the man who was doing their trade so much harm!

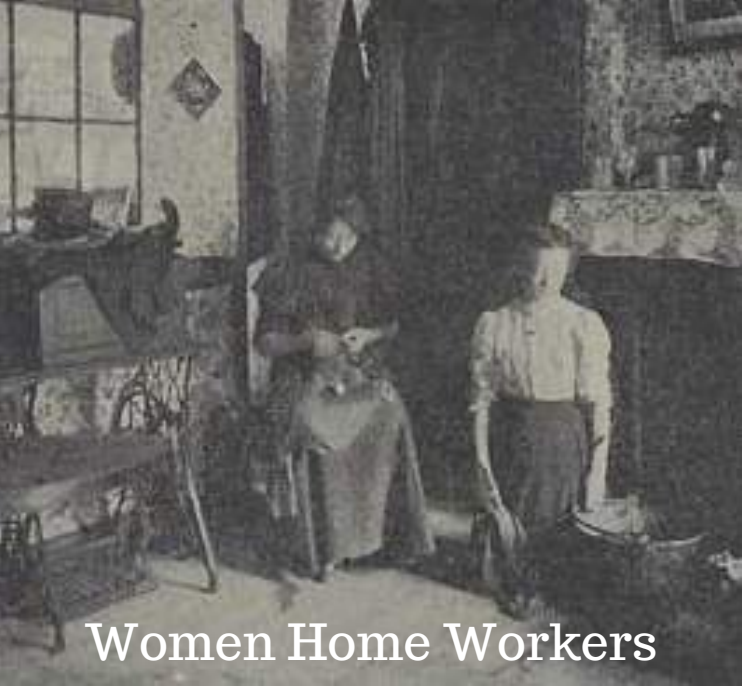
According to Thorne, Charrington's raids resulted in the closure of 200 brothels in the area.

But his campaign, however well meaning, had dire consequences for the displaced prostitutes, who had little choice but to move to other areas - thus, as one newspaper correspondent put it, 'spreading the moral contagion' - or else solicit on the streets in all weathers.

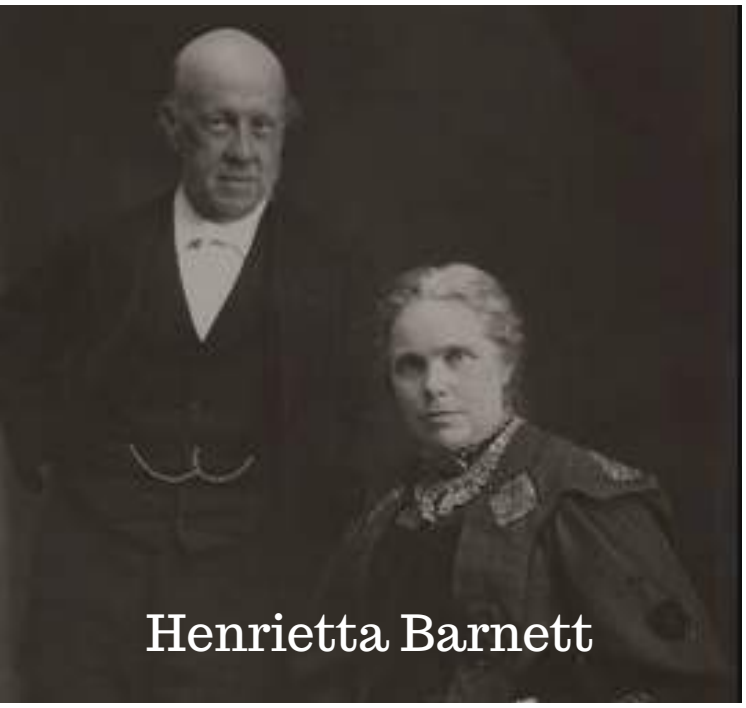
The latter generated a great deal of criticism in the letter columns of the local newspapers. Charrington was accused of adding to the misfortune of women who had already been 'gravely wronged by men.

His evangelical endeavours would be one of the reasons why so many women were forced to risk their lives on the streets of the East End in the autumn of 1888; since the brothels, however bad the majority might have been, would at least have afforded them some protection from the threat of being butchered by Jack the Ripper.

All Jack the Ripper's victims were drawn from the 'unfortunate' classes of the East End, and all of them led transitory lives around the common lodging houses of Spitalfields and Whitechapel.



Women Home Workers



Henrietta Barnett

The subject of the common lodging houses and their links to prostitution cropped up time and and time again in newspaper reports on the Whitechapel murders, albeit there was a great deal of discrepancy in the reports as to exactly how many active prostitutes there were in the area.

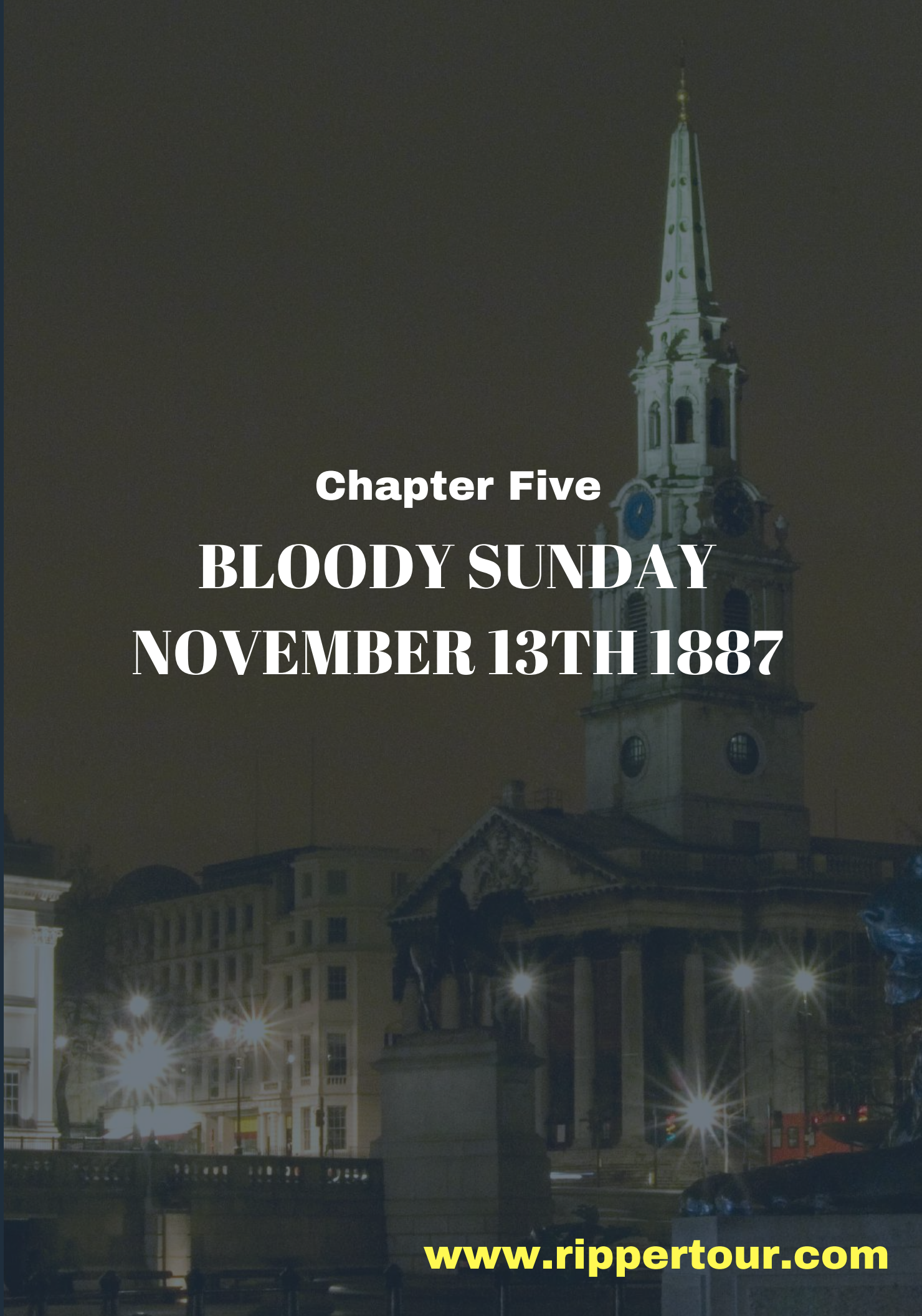
On 10th October, 1888, at the height of the Ripper scare, Henrietta Barnett, wife of the Reverend Barnett of St Jude's Church, Commercial Street, forwarded a petition signed by 4,000 'Women of Whitechapel' to Queen Victoria begging her to prevail upon 'your servants in authority' to close down the common lodging houses.

The petition was passed to the Home Office, which asked the police to provide information on East End prostitution, brothels and the common lodging houses.

Based on the observations of the H Division constables, whose beats took in the district to the west and east of Commercial Street, the police set the number of common lodging houses at 233, the number of residents at 8,530 and the number of brothels at 62. The police reply also stated that 'we have no means of ascertaining what women are prostitutes and who are not, but there is an impression that there are about 1200 prostitutes, mostly of a very low condition.

The sheer number of women forced to prostitute themselves on the streets ensured that Jack the Ripper had little difficulty in finding victims. Furthermore, the fact that those women would go with him into pitch-black courtyards, alleyways and passageways made it a simple matter for him to kill them and then melt away into the night without been seen.

Either by choice or luck, Jack the Ripper had settled upon the perfect area in which to carry out his murderous reign of terror.



Chapter Five

BLOODY SUNDAY NOVEMBER 13TH 1887

The Jack the Ripper murders were predominantly investigated by the Metropolitan Police.

Their headquarters were at 4 Whitehall Place, and their Commissioner was Sir Charles Warren who had been appointed to the post in January 1886.

In the century and more since the murders occurred Warren has been subjected to a barrage of largely undeserved criticism and ridicule, most of which is based on several misconceptions and outright inaccuracies about his handling of the case.

An ex-military man, he took up office with high hopes of bringing much-needed discipline to the police and appears to have won the respect and loyalty of most of the rank and file officers.

The Times applauded him as being:-

"…precisely the man whom sensible Londoners would have chosen to preside over the Police Force of the Metropolis… there are few officials…who have had more varied experience. He is at once a man of science and a man of action…"

However, by the time of the Jack the Ripper murders, Warren had become extremely unpopular with some elements of the press, and with the radical press in particular, and he faced daily criticism in the pages of some newspapers.

An event that often gets cited to account for his unpopularity is "Bloody Sunday", which had occurred on the 13th of November 1887.

But, what actually happened on that day, and what were the circumstances that behind a day of rioting that would still be fresh in the minds of many Eastenders in the autumn of 1888?

During the summer of 1887, large numbers of destitute unemployed had begun using Trafalgar Square as campground and meeting place.

As a result, the Square had become a hotbed of political agitation, and Warren, fearing that this growing disquiet might soon place London at the mercy of the mob, requested that the Home Secretary, Henry Matthews, ban all meetings in Trafalgar Square.

Matthews, a typical career politician prevaricated for almost two months, forcing Warren to send 2,000 policemen into the Square at weekends to maintain public order.

In early November Matthews finally made a decision, and Warren was authorised to veto further meeting in the Square.

Up until that point the left wing press had seen Warren as an intellectual progressive and had afforded him a reasonable amount of respect.

But they now saw the ban as being done at his behest and, feeling it to be unlawful, the Metropolitan Radical Association decided to challenge it by calling a meeting in the Square for 2.30pm on Sunday 13th November 1887, ostensibly to demand the release from prison of several Irish politicians.

Warren stuck to his guns and expressly forbade any procession from entering the Square at the appointed time.

The stage was set for a confrontation and, as 20,000 protesters (the police estimated twice that number, the organisers half) converged on the Square, the mood grew tense.

In its edition of 19th November 1887, *The Illustrated London News* reported on Warren's reaction to the challenge:-

"Sir Charles Warren, on Sunday, occupied the square with a picket of police at nine in the morning, surrounded it with police at eleven, and at one had 1300 police in position.

There were 100 men in single file along the parapet on each side of the square outside, and inside 120 in double file; at the head of each of the steps leading into the square stood 100 constables in fours, while fifty more covered the corners at each end, standing two deep.

In front the face of the square was held by fully 750 men standing four deep.The mounted police patrolled all sides of the square in couples. A further 3,000 were kept in readiness, and a battalion of Grenadier Guard foot soldiers, plus a regiment of mounted Life Guards were kept on standby.

Altogether there were 1500 policemen in the square; 2500 were employed in breaking up processions and in reserve; 300 of the Grenadiers were behind the National Gallery until four, when they were brought out with fixed bayonets to line the parapet in front of the National Gallery."

Throughout the afternoon there were various skirmishes between the police and the protesters in the streets around the Square.

Then, at four o'clock in the afternoon, the three leaders of the Social Democratic Federation, Henry Mayers Hyndman, John Burns and Robert Bontine Cunninghame Graham, linked arms and vowed to breach the circle.

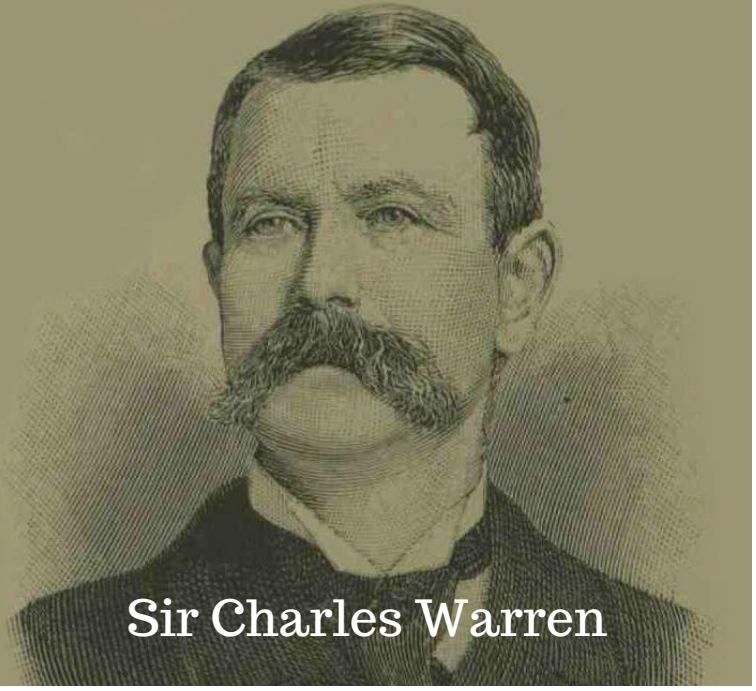
The Illustrated London News reported what happened next:-

"Just before four o'clock, an excited movement was visible among the crowd at the Strand entrance to the square; and a column of about four hundred men advanced, led by a gentleman without his hat and by another person.These turned out to be Mr. Cuninghame Graham, M.P., and Mr. Burns, the well-known Socialist, who had come with the avowed intention of testing the legality of Sir Charles Warren's proclamation.

Mr. Graham is alleged to have made a determined rush at the police at the corner of the square, and to have assaulted some of the constables in an attempt to get through the files. He had no stick in his hand, but is said to have used his fists freely.

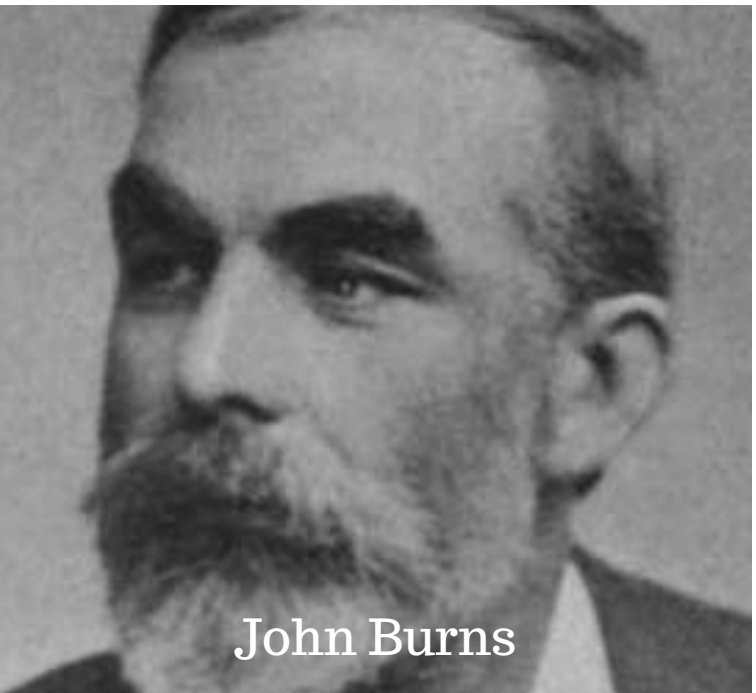
In the struggle, the police used their batons, and Mr. Graham received a blow on the head, inflicting a wound which bled freely.

Mr. Burns' arrest was effected without interchange of blows. The two prisoners were taken within the cordon of police to the centre of the square, where Mr. Graham's wound was attended to by the surgeon. Later, the two gentlemen were taken to Bow-street, charged with riot and assault on the police."



Sir Charles Warren

Robert Cunninghame Graham



John Burns

Socialist poet, Edward Carpenter was in the Square and witnessed the carnage that followed:-

"…The order had gone forth that we were to be kept moving. To keep a crowd moving is, I believe, a technical term for the process of riding roughshod in all directions, scattering, frightening and batoning the people…"

Socialist artist Walter Crane, who was also present, commented that:-

"I never saw anything more like real warfare in my life - only the attack was all on one side.

The police, in spite of their numbers, apparently thought they could not cope with the crowd.

They had certainly exasperated them, and could not disperse them, as after every charge - and some of these drove the people right against the shutters in the shops in the Strand - they returned again."

Ultimately the clash would claim two lives, and their was general surprise that the harsh treatment meted out by the police had not resulted in more deaths.

The general carnage that resulted from the melee was summed up by *The Illustrated London News:-*

"More than 150 persons were conducted to the neighbouring hospitals for surgical treatment, seventy-five at the Charing-cross Hospital.

Nearly 300 rioters were taken prisoners; and, on Monday, above forty were charged at Bow-street Police-Court.Some were sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour, for one, two, three, or six months."

By the end of the week, seventy five charges of brutality had been lodged against the police.

As far as the authorities were concerned Sir Charles Warren was the hero of the day and had made a decisive stands against both the mob and the threat posed by public order by socialism.

To the radicals, however, he had become an autocrat and from that point on they sought any opportunity to attack and undermine him.

The attacks began almost immediately, with the radical-leaning *Pall Mall Gazette* calling for his dismissal, and that of the Home Secretary, on Monday 14th November 1887:-

"The net result of yesterday's coup d'état will be the ejection of her Majesty's Ministers from office and the establishment in their places of men who will not prepare to deluge London with blood in order to commit an illegal act for sheer caprice.

Sir Charles Warren also will have to go, and Mr. Matthews first of all.

But the Government is doomed.

Not all the Queen's horses and all the Queen's men will be able to re-establish the Government in the position from which they fell when they laid lawless hands on the most cherished liberties of freeborn Englishmen.

It is difficult, not to say impossible, at this early hour to gauge the intensity of the indignation and horror with which the news of yesterday's coup d'état will be received throughout the country.

There is not a Tory candidate who will not seem to our people to be smirched with the blood which streamed yesterday from the heads of many a loyal and peaceable citizen.

Liberty has been outraged: in its most sacred citadel, and the vindication will somewhat surprise those confident gentlemen who are so loudly congratulating the police for suppressing a public meeting in the heart of London."

Despite the calls for the resignations of Warren and Matthews, both men would remain in office into 1888.

However, from this point on the radical press, and *The Pall Mall Gazette* in particular, was on the look out for any opportunity that might present itself for them to attack Sir Charles Warren.

What they could not have realised at the time was that, in less the twelve months, and in the very district from which many of the Bloody Sunday protesters had hailed, a lone assassin, would provide them with more ammunition than they could ever have hoped for in the aftermath of the events of Sunday 13th November 1887.

Chapter Six

ON THE TRAIL OF JACK THE RIPPER

Sir Charles Warren may not have been the bungling Colonel Blimp that many commentators have portrayed him as, but he certainly had a fiery temper and decidedly fixed ideas about who should have ultimate control over his police force.

This made it difficult for him to easily assume the role of subordinate, which in turn brought him into confrontation with his superior, the Home Secretary, Henry Matthews.

Ultimately one of these confrontations would lead to him resigning his post at the height of the Ripper panic.

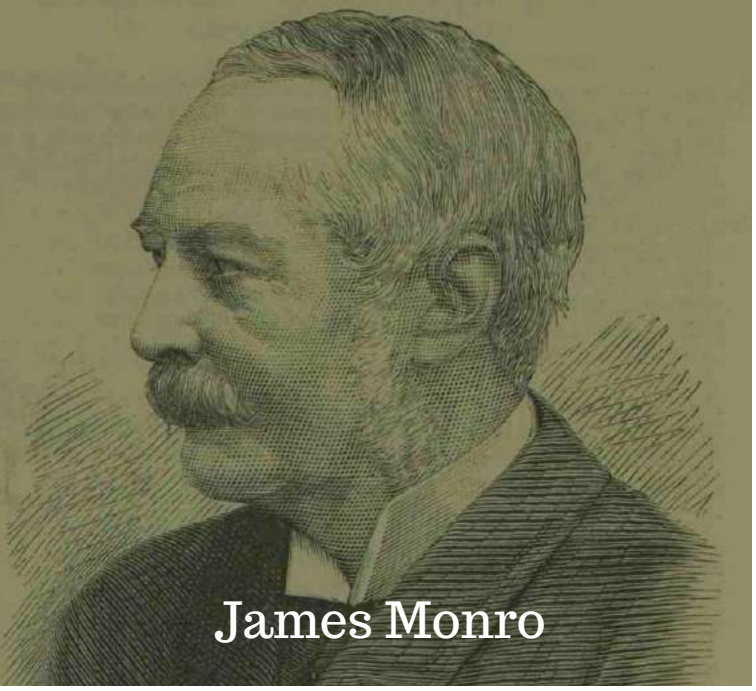
At the start of the Whitechapel Murders Warren's Assistant Commissioner in charge of the Criminal Investigation, or detective, Department, was James Monro.

In addition Monro was in charge of the Metropolitan Police's Secret Department, known as 'Section D.'

This department, was directly responsible to the Home Secretary, not the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, leaving Warren in the untenable position of having a subordinate officer over some of whose duties he had neither authority nor influence.

In November 1887, Monro complained to Warren that he was overworked, and suggested that a new post, that of Assistant Chief Constable, be created to relieve the strain he was under.

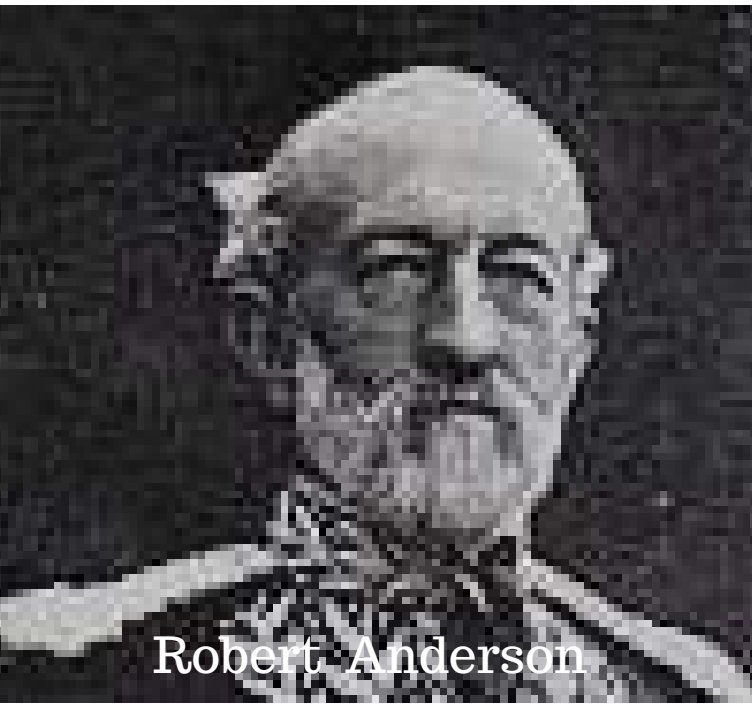
Warren, perhaps understandably, suggested that Monro give up his *Section D* Duties. Relations between the two men deteriorated at an alarming rate over the next seven months, and by August 1888 Monro had tendered his resignation as head of the Criminal Investigation Department.


James Monro

Monro's resignation became effective as of 31st August 1888, coincidentally the date of what is now considered the first Jack the Ripper murder, that of Mary Nichols.

His replacement was Dr. Robert Anderson, a Dublin born lawyer who had been brought to London in 1876 as part of an intelligence branch to combat the threat of Fenian terrorism.

When the branch was closed, Anderson had remained behind as a Home Office "Advisor in matters relating to political crime."

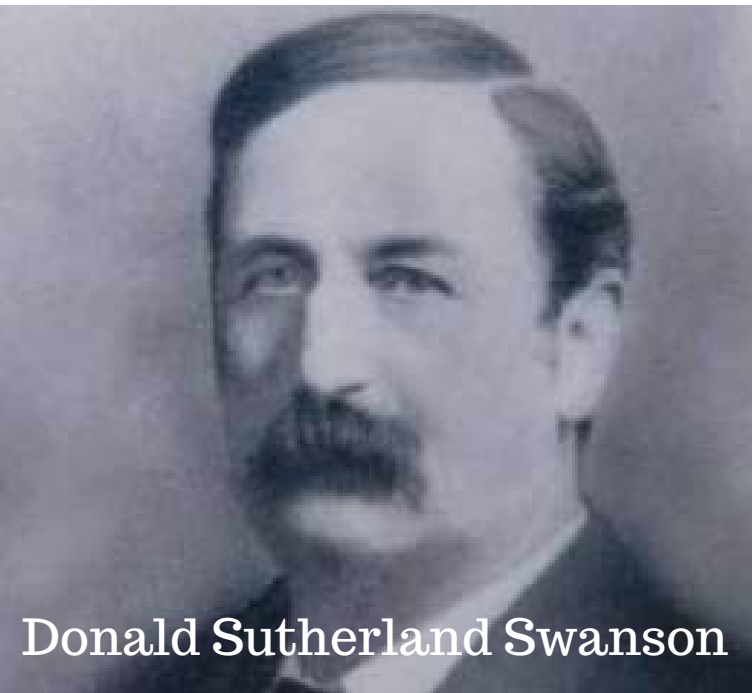

Robert Anderson

He also controlled the spy Thomas Miller Beech who had successfully infiltrated the Fenian movement.

Anderson was relieved of all duties, except controlling Beech, by the then Home Secretary, Hugh Childers, in 1886, and become Secretary of the Prison Commissioners when he was offered the post of Assistant Commissioner CID in August 1888.

As such he was the highest ranking of the investigative officers on the Jack the Ripper case

However, Anderson came to his post suffering from exhaustion, and his doctor instructed that he take a recuperative break.


Donald Sutherland Swanson

His chair at Scotland Yard was barely warm when on the 8th September, the day of the second Jack the Ripper Murder, that of Annie Chapman, Anderson left London for Switzerland, effectively leaving the detective department of the Metropolitan Police leaderless at a time when they were about to face the biggest challenge in their history.

Warren was away on holiday himself during the first week of September and returned on the 7th September.

On his return he evidently realised that for the hunt for the killer to be successful one man had to take over all charge of the investigation. “I am convinced that the Whitechapel murder case…can be successfully grappled with if it systematically taken in hand,” he dictated in a memo to the Home Office on 15th September. “I go so far as to say that I could myself unravel the mystery provided I could spare the time & give individual attention to it.

I feel therefore the utmost importance to be attached to putting the whole Central Office work in this case in the hands of one man who will have nothing else to concern himself with.”

The man chosen was Chief Inspector Donald Sutherland Swanson, whom one contemporary described as being “one of the best class of officers…”

According to Warren’s instructions Swanson was to be given his own office and “every paper, every document, every report, every telegram must pass through his hands. He must be consulted on every subject…”

As the officer with overall responsibility for the case (at least until Anderson’s return from holiday in early October, after he was the desk officer under Anderson) Swanson read and assessed all the information to do with the crimes, and as such gained an unrivalled knowledge of the Jack the Ripper murders.

Swanson, Anderson and Warren were, however, based in Whitehall.

The murders, with one exception were East End affairs and the on the ground investigation into the killing’s was handled by two divisions of the Metropolitan Police.

That of Mary Nichols was carried out by officers of the Metropolitan Police’s ‘J’ Division, amongst them Inspectors Spratling and Helson.

Those of Annie Chapman, Elizabeth Stride and Mary Kelly came within the jurisdiction of H division, the head of which was Superintendent Thomas Arnold, although he too was absent on leave at the time of the first two Jack the Ripper murders, and his post was being filled by Acting Superintendent West.

In charge of the Criminal Investigation Department of H Division was Inspector Edmund Reid, “one of the most remarkable men of the century” as the *Weekly Despatch* described him.

Indeed, Reid seems to have impressed just about everybody he came into contact with (criminals excepted!) and at the height of the Whitechapel Murders, when press criticism against the police was mounting and merciless, the satirical magazine *Toby* opined that “were it not for a little individuality displayed by some officers, few criminals would be brought to justice.”

The article was accompanied by a cartoon depicting “a clever East End detective Inspector Reid” astride a donkey which was intended to represent Scotland Yard.

It was decided early on in the case, however, that the local detective force would benefit from the involvement of experienced officers from Scotland Yard.

Walter Dew, who was a young detective officer with H division at the time of the murders, and who time would rise through the ranks and achieve fame as the man who arrested wife murderer Dr. Hawley, Harvey Crippen, was based throughout the murders at Commercial Street Police Station.

In his memoirs *I Caught Crippen.* Dew mentioned how Chief Inspector Moore, Inspector Abberline and Inspector Andrews were sent from Scotland Yard to head the on the ground investigation, “assisted, of course, by a large number of officers of subordinate rank.”

Dew’s memory appears to have been a little faulty, as at the time Moore was only a detective inspector.

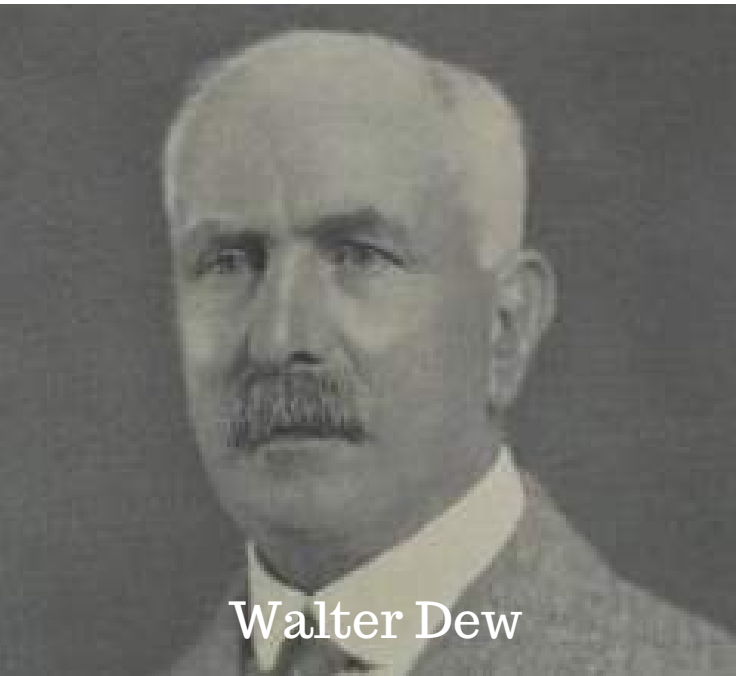
The senior officer of the three was in fact Inspector Abberline, and it was he who was in overall charge of the on the ground investigation.

In his memoirs Dew had this to say about his old boss:-

"*Inspector Abberline was portly and gentle speaking. The type of police officer - and there have been many - who might easily have been mistaken for the manager of a bank or a solicitor. He also was a man who had proved himself in many previous big cases.*
His strong suit was his knowledge of crime and

Inspector Reid

Inspector Abberline



Walter Dew

criminals in the East End, for he had been for many years the detective-inspector of the Whitechapel Division, or as it was called then the "Local Inspector".

Inspector Abberline was my chief when I first went to Whitechapel. He left only on promotion to the Yard, to the great regret of myself and others who had served under him. No question at all of Inspector Abberline's abilities as a criminal hunter.

Inspector Frederick George Abberline was 45 years old in 1888, a portly and balding officer who wore a thick moustache and bushy side whiskers. He had already spent fourteen years as a detective with H division and had gained an unrivalled knowledge of the area's streets and criminals, and had earned the respect of many in the area.

The satirical magazine *Toby* praised him as:-

"A well known East Ender…[to whom] scores of persons are indebted…He has a decent amount of curiosity, and has been known to stop gentlemen at the most unholy times and places and enquire about their health and work – questions which are often settled by a magistrate, generally in Mr Abberline's favour."

The previous year Abberline's dedication and service were recognised with a promotion to Central Office at Scotland Yard, and a farewell dinner was held for him in December 1887 at the Unicorn Tavern, on Shoreditch High Street. But he had barely settled in to his new position when it was decided that his knowledge of the East End villains was just what was needed to help catch the Whitechapel Murderer, and so in early September 1888, he found himself recalled to his old stomping ground of Spitalfields and Whitechapel.

There is one other officer whose involvement in the case, particularly in the early days of the investigation, was such that his name is worth a brief mention.

Sergeant William Thicke spent virtually all his police career with H Division.

Walter Dew remembered him as “a holy terror to the local lawbreakers” and mentioned that the nickname “Johnny Upright” had been bestowed upon him “because he was upright both in his walk and in his methods.”

His knowledge of the district certainly impressed those newspaper reporters who met him, as did his striking check suits and blonde moustache.

One other police force investigated the Jack the Ripper murders.

The killing of Catherine Eddowes in Mitre Square occurred within the City of London, the financial Square Mile.

This meant that her murder came within the jurisdiction of the City of London Police.

In charge at the time was Acting Commissioner Major Henry Smith, a popular chief who received a far better press than Sir Charles Warren, largely because the men of his force appeared to show more willingness than the Metropolitan Police to talk to journalists.

The head of the City Police's detective department was Inspector James McWilliam, whose principle talent lay in investigating complex financial fraud.

Following the murder of Catherine Eddowes, McWilliam Liaised with Chief Inspector Swanson on a daily basis; but his report to the Home Office on the murder, although long and drawn out, contained so Little actual information that Home Secretary Henry Matthews was moved to scrawl a note remarking, 'They evidently want to tell us nothing."

There were, of course, hundreds of police officers on the Jack the Ripper case.

But these are the ones whose names will crop up time and again in the pages that follow, and several of them, such as Abberline and Swanson, would in their own way come to know more about the murders than anyone else.

However, all of them, in the autumn of 1888, would find themselves pitting their wits against a seemingly new breed of criminal, and many found themselves vilified by the press and public alike for their apparent inability to catch him.

Chapter Seven

WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST TRACE

It is generally accepted today that Jack the Ripper had five victims.

But the Whitechapel Murders File, under the generic heading of which the Jack the Ripper murders are included, actually has eleven murders on it.

Two of these occurred before the murder of the acknowledged first victim, Mary Nichols, on August 31st 1888, and four of them took place after the murder of Mary Kelly, on 9th November 1888, which, it is generally agreed, was the ripper's final crime.

However, it is rare for a serial killer to just emerge suddenly and embark upon a killing spree. There is often a pattern whereby the killer graduates via attacks and assaults to full blown murder, wherein the distinctive *modus operandi* is established by which individual killings can be identified as the work of a particular murderer. There is a high probability that he would have committed earlier crimes such as assaults on women or even murder.

As it happens, the newspapers of the time had long realised that murderous attacks made good copy, and so papers such as the *East London Advertiser, East London Observer,* and *Illustrated Police News* went out of their way to bring their readers the salacious details of violent and murderous assaults that occurred in the East End in the years and months leading up to the start of the Jack the Ripper murders.

One thing that becomes apparent when trawling through the vast amounts of column inches dedicated to crime in the area at the time is just how widespread violent assaults were. Attacks on women were disturbingly commonplace, and several of these certainly bore elements that could be described as Jack the Ripper's early work.

On Saturday, February 25th 1888 a thirty-eight-year-old widow named Annie Millwood, who lived in White's Row, Spitalfields, was admitted to the Whitechapel Workhouse Infirmary suffering from stab wounds to her legs and the lower part of her abdomen.

According to the 7th April edition of the East London Post and City Chronicle Annie Millwood:-

"…stated that she had been attacked by a man who she did not know, and who stabbed her with a clasp knife which he took from his pocket. No one appears to have seen the attack, and as far as at present is ascertained there is only the woman's statement to bear out the allegations of an attack, though that she had been stabbed cannot be denied. After her admission to the infirmary deceased progressed favourably, and was sent to the South Grove Workhouse, but while engaged in some occupation at the rear of the building she was observed to fall, and on assistance being given it was found that she was dead."

At her subsequent inquest it was apparent that her death was not related to the injuries she had sustained in the assault, and the jury returned a verdict of death from natural causes.

That does not, however, preclude her from being an early victim of Jack the Ripper.

Her attacker had certainly targeted her lower abdominal region as would happen with Martha Tabram, a later victim of a viscious and fatal attack, and as would happen with three of the later canonical victims.

The problem is that the information concerning the attack on Annie Millwood is sparse and what we know of it is based solely on her own account, an account which, it has been suggested, may have been a fiction intended to conceal the fact that her injuries were self inflicted.

Just over a month later, another attack on a woman was reported by the newspapers.

A little after midnight on March 28 1888, thirty-nine-year-old Ada Wilson, a dress maker, was sitting in her room at 9 Maidman Street, Mile End, when there was a knock on the door.

Opening it, she found a man aged about thirty, who was around five foot six in height, and who had a fair moustache and a sunburnt face standing outside.

His clothes consisted of a dark coat, light trousers and a wide-awake hat. The man threatened to kill her if she didn't give him money.

When Ada refused, he took out a clasp-knife and stabbed her twice in the throat.

Her screams disturbed her upstairs neighbour, Rose Bierman, who came down to investigate, and found Ada Wilson in a state of near collapse in the hallway. "Stop that man for cutting my throat," Ada shouted, as a "fair young man" rushed to the front door, unlocked

it and disappeared into the street.

“I don’t know what kind of wound Mrs Wilson received,” Rose Bierman later told the *Eastern Post*, “but it must have been deep, I should say, from the quantity of blood in the passage.”

Despite a newspaper report that Ada Wilson was in a “dangerous condition“ and it was “thought impossible she can recover,” she did in fact make a full recovery and was able to tell the police what had occurred, as well as provide them with a description of her would-be murderer.

It is highly probable that Ada Wilson was a working prostitute who was attacked by one of her clients. Whether that client later became Jack the Ripper is open to debate. Some argue that the attack occurred too far east of the area where his acknowledged victims were murdered for there to be a connection.

But then who’s to say that, as with his Modus Operandi, the killer didn’t explore different neighbourhoods until he settled on one where the maze like complexity of the alleyways and passageways made for an easy and unobserved escape from the scenes of his crimes?

Others argue that the motive for the attack on Ada Wilson was quite clearly robbery, and that Jack the Ripper was not interested in stealing from his victims. It should, however, be remembered that we only have Ada Wilson’s testimony that robbery was indeed the motive, and given the fact that she was almost

certainly a working prostitute who, according to her neighbour, Rose Bierman, “often had visitors to see her,” she may well have invented the demand for cash in an attempt to keep her prostitution secret.

Her attack, however, did bear certain similarities with the later attacks of Jack the Ripper.

She was undoubtedly a prostitute, and Jack the Ripper would later exclusively target prostitutes.

The description of her attacker resembles some later descriptions given by witnesses who may have seen the ripper with his victims.

Ada’s assailant not only used a knife, but also targeted her throat, just as the Ripper would with his acknowledged victims.

Given these similarities it is possible that the violent assault on Ada Wilson may have been an early attack by Jack the Ripper carried out before he progressed to the horrific mutilations that were the hallmark of his later crimes.

That said, it seems unlikely that the police and press at the time would not also have made the connection and it would be interesting to know why they apparently didn’t think of her as an early victim at the height of the Ripper scare.

It was a month later, in April 1888, that attitudes began to change.

In the early hours of the morning on the 3rd April 1888, a prostitute named Emma Smith was viciously attacked by a gang at the Wentworth Street junction of Osborn Street, the “dirty, narrow entrance to Brick Lane,” according to John Henry Mackay, in The Anarchist, written in 1891.

They robbed her of all the money she had, subjected her to a savage beating, and violently thrust a blunt object into her vagina.

As with Ada Wilson and Annie Millwood, Emma Smith survived her initial attack and even managed to stagger back to her nearby lodging house at 18 George Street.

Here several of her fellow lodgers became alarmed by her bleeding face, cut ear, and evident distress.

They persuaded her to go with them to the London Hospital on Whitechapel Road.

Unfortunately the assault had been extremely viscous, and although Emma was able to give the doctor who attended her a detailed account of what had happened, Peritonitis soon set in and she died at 9am on 4th April 1888.

The first the police knew of the murder was on the 6th April when they were informed by the Coroner’s Office that an inquest into Emma Smith’s death was to be held the next day.

At that inquest Chief Inspector West, of the Metropolitan Police's H Division, stated that he had no official information on the subject, and was only aware of the case "through the daily papers."

He had, he said, questioned the constables on the beat, but none of them appeared to be any wiser than he was.

The Coroner, Mr Wynne E, Baxter, decreed that the woman had been "barbarously murdered" and opined to the jury that it was his suggestion that they should bring in an immediate verdict of "Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown."

."The jury willingly followed his suggestion that they should bring in an immediate verdict of "Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown."

Osborn Street

Emma Smith probably wasn't a victim of Jack the Ripper, indeed the fact that she was able to tell the attending doctor that she had been attacked by a group of men, suggests she was attacked by one of the so-called High-Rip gangs that preyed on the district's prostitutes.

This was evidently the conclusion that the police came to at the time, and this belief would influence their line of enquiry in the early days of the hunt for Jack the Ripper.

But the death of Emma Smith was significant in one major respect. It was with her killing that the police opened their file on the Whitechapel Murders, a file that would, by the end of that year, encompass the crimes that have passed into history as the Jack the Ripper Murders.

The first name on that list of victims was Emma Elizabeth Smith who, therefore has the dubious historical distinction of being the first Whitechapel Murders victim.

Despite initial press repulsion at the cold and savage attack that had been carried out on a defenceless woman. Emma Smith's murder was soon forgotten, as the people of the East End returned to the hardships of their everyday lives and battles for survival.

But, in early August 1888, a similar murder would occur, a mere few minutes walk from the very spot where the attack on Emma Smith had occurred; and the public reaction would be one of similar revulsion, but this time it would be tinged with apprehension as people began to wonder if the slums of Whitechapel had, as had been predicted, given birth to a monster.

Chapter Eight

THE MURDER OF MARTHA TABRAM AUGUST 7TH 1888

On the Bank Holiday Monday of 6th August 1888, Martha Tabram, a local prostitute in her late thirties went soliciting on Whitechapel Road with Mary Ann Connolly, another prostitute who a was better known in the area as “Pearly Poll.”

They met with two guardsmen, a corporal and a private, and went drinking with them in several pubs along the Whitechapel Road.
At some stage between 11.30pm and 11.45pm the group split into couples, and Martha took her client, the private, through the arch that led into George Yard (today known as Gunthorpe Street), whilst Pearly Poll led her client into the next alley along, Angel Alley.

According to the East London Advertiser George Yard was “…one of the most dangerous streets in the locality…”

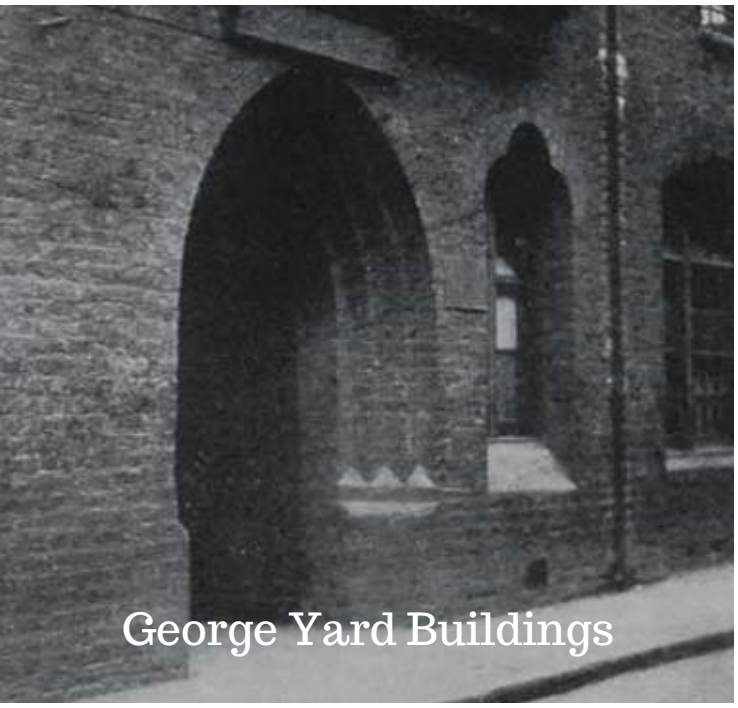
But for a seasoned street walker it offered a reasonable amount of privacy in which to conduct sordid sex acts known as four-penny knee tremblers with their clients.

Towards the top of George Yard on the left there stood a block of cheap tenement apartments, known as George Yard Buildings.

When its staircase lights had been extinguished at 11pm, the dark landings made an ideal spot for use by prostitutes and their clients, and Martha evidently led either the soldier, or possibly a later client, to what she knew would be a quiet and deserted location.

At around 2am Mrs Elizabeth Mahony and her husband came home to George Yard Buildings, having been out with some friends to celebrate the Bank Holiday. She afterwards went out again to buy some supper at a chandler's shop in nearby Thrawl Street.

George Yard - 1890



George Yard Buildings

Martha Tabram

She was back within ten minutes and, as she ascended the stairs, she noticed nothing untoward or suspicious, although she did state that the stairs were unlit, so she may not have noticed a body lying there.

She and her husband, she said, slept soundly and heard no noise in the night.

At half-past three in the morning Alfred George Crow, a cab-driver, of 35, George Yard Buildings, returned home from work and, on his way upstairs, saw somebody lying on the first-floor landing.

However, since it was quite common for people to sleep on the building's landings, he thought nothing of it, and went home to bed.

A little after 5am John Saunders Reeves, a dock-labourer. left his home in George Yard Buildings and came down the stairs. He too noticed the prone form, but as it was now getting light, he saw that it was, in fact, a woman lying on her back in a pool of blood.

He raced off to find a policeman and moments later had returned with Constable T. Barrett, whom he had encountered patrolling in the vicinity of George-Yard.

Barrett sent Reeves for local medic Dr Killeen, who having carried out an examination of the woman, pronounced life extinct and gave it as his opinion that she had been brutally murdered.

The viciousness of the killing, coupled with that fact that it had been carried out without anyone hearing anything, caused considerable disquiet in the area.

As the East London Advertiser commented:-

"The circumstances of this awful tragedy are not only surrounded with the deepest mystery, but there is also a feeling of insecurity to think that in a great city like London, the streets of which are continually patrolled by police, a woman could be foully and horribly killed almost next to the citizens peacefully sleeping in their beds, without a trace or clue being left of the villain who did the deed. There appears to be not the slightest trace of the murderer, and no clue has at present been found."

The Coroner at Martha Tabram's inquest summed up the feelings of many who lived in the area when he called the crime "…one of the most dreadful murders anyone could imagine" and said of the perpetrator, "The man must have been a perfect savage to inflict such a number of wounds on a defenceless woman in such a way."

Today there is considerable debate as to whether or not Martha Tabram was a victim of Jack the Ripper.

The investigating officers at the time certainly seem to have believed that she was. Inspector Walter Dew, who had been transferred to the Metropolitan Police's H Division in 1887, and was one of the detectives who worked on the case, later stated in his autobiography:-

"…Whatever may be said about the death of Emma Smith, there can be no doubt that the August Bank Holiday murder, which took place in George Yard Buildings… was the handiwork of the dread Ripper…"

The truth is that, with the passage of more than a hundred years, and the disappearance of so much of the evidence, the only thing we can say for certain about the Jack the Ripper Murders is that nothing is certain.

On the face of it Martha Tabram's injuries were not consistent with the mutilations sustained by the later victims, who are now generally bandied about as being the canonical five victims of Jack the Ripper.

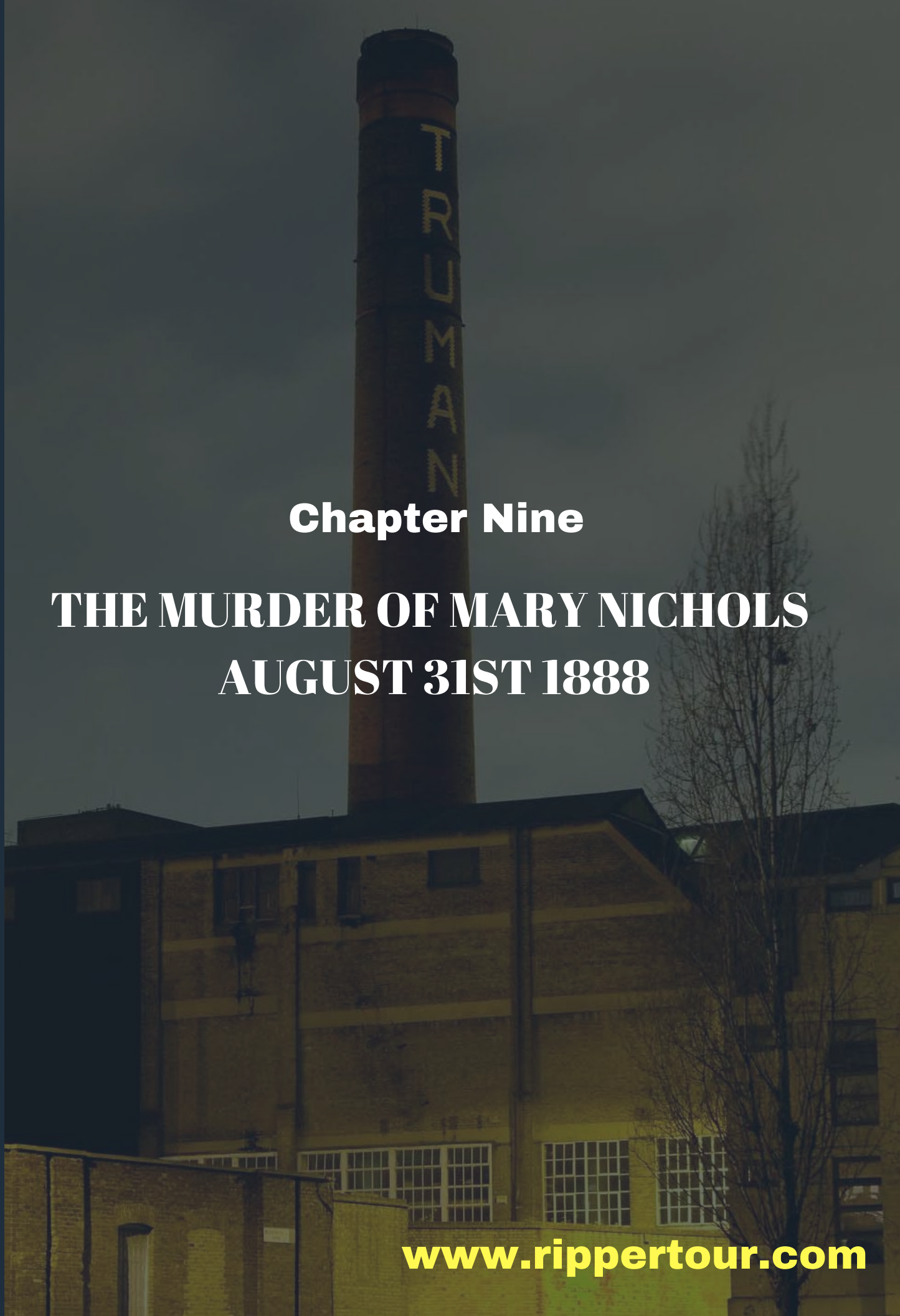
Yet, significantly, her killer had targeted Martha's throat and lower abdomen, just as the Ripper would do with his later victims.

It is, therefore, possible that Martha Tabram, murdered in the early hours of August 7th 1888 on the dark, first-floor landing of George Yard Buildings, was the first victim to die at the hands of Jack the Ripper.

The significance of her murder, however, cannot be underestimated, for it began to focus the minds of the police, press and public at large that something decidedly untoward was occurring in Whitechapel and waves of general unease began rippling through the district.

Thus, when only three weeks later, the mutilated body of another woman was found, a little less than half a mile away from George yard, the realisation began to dawn - prematurely as it transpired - that a repeat killer was on the loose in the streets of the Est End.

For the people of Victorian London, their autumn of terror was about to begin.



Chapter Nine

THE MURDER OF MARY NICHOLS AUGUST 31ST 1888

At around 3.40am on August 31st 1888, a carter named Charles Cross was making his way to work along Bucks Row - a narrow, cobbled Whitechapel street that was lined on one side by dark imposing warehouse buildings, and on the other by a row of two-storey houses.

As Cross approached the looming bulk of the 1876 Board School that dominated (and still dominates) the western end of Bucks Row, he noticed a dark bundle lying in a gateway on the left side of the street.

Like so many of the district's alleyways and passageways, street lighting in Bucks Row was minimal, so at first Cross could not be sure what exactly the bundle was. It looked something like a discarded tarpaulin, and thinking that it might prove useful for his job, Cross went to inspect it. But as he drew closer he realised it was in fact the prone form of a woman, who was either dead or drunk.

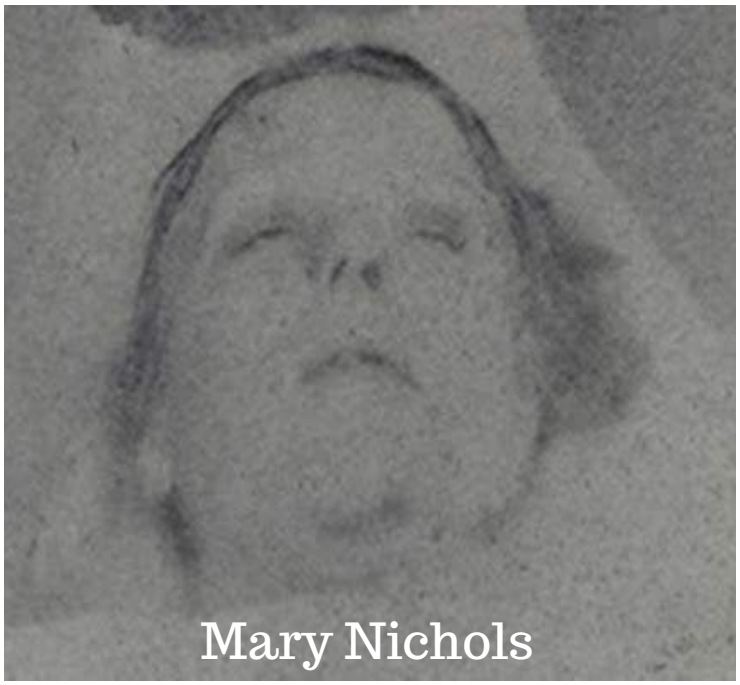
As Cross stood rooted to the spot, unsure of what to do next, he heard footsteps behind him. Turning, he saw another carter, Robert Paul, walking towards him. "Come and look over here" Cross called, "there is a woman lying on the pavement."

The two men stepped gingerly over the road and stooped down over her. She was lying on her back, her legs straight out, and her skirts were raised almost over her waist. Charles Cross reached out and touched her face, which was warm, and her hands, which were cold and limp. "I believe she is dead," he observed. Robert Paul, meanwhile, placed his hand on the woman's chest, and thought he felt a slight movement. "I think she's breathing," he said, "but very little if she is." Paul suggested that they sit the woman up, but Cross refused to touch her again.

So, deciding, perhaps somewhat callously, that they were late for work and had done as much as they could, they pulled her skirts

The Murder Site

Buck's Row



Mary Nichols

and set off for their respective places of employment, agreeing to tell the first police man they encountered of their find.

But what neither man had noticed in the pitch darkness of Bucks Row was that the woman's throat had been slashed so savagely that her head had almost been cut from her body.

That discovery was made by beat officer Police Constable John Neil, who turned into Bucks Row and proceeded to walk past the Board School shortly after Cross and Paul had left the scene.

"There was not a soul about," he later told the inquest into the woman's death. "I had been round there half an hour previously, and saw no one then. I was on the right side…when I noticed a figure lying in the street. It was dark at the time…I examined the body by the aid of my lamp, and noticed blood oozing from a wound in the throat. She was lying on her back, with her clothes disarranged. I felt her arm, which was quite warm from the joints upwards. Her eyes were wide open. Her bonnet was off and lying at her side."

As Neil stooped down over the body, he noticed PC John Thain passing the end of the street and flashed his lantern to attract his attention. "Here's a woman with her throat cut", he called to his approaching colleague, "run at once for Dr Llewellyn."

As Thain hurried off to fetch the medic, PC Mizen, who had been alerted by Cross and Paul, arrived at the scene. Neil sent him to bring reinforcements and asked him to fetch the police ambulance.

When Dr Llewellyn arrived at around 4am, he carried out a cursory examination of the body and, noting the severity of the wounds to the throat, pronounced life extinct.

On closer examination he also observed that the deceased's body and legs were still warm, although her hands and wrists were quite cold.

This led him to surmise that she could not have been dead for more than half an hour.

As Llewellyn went about his grim business, news of the murder was beginning to filter through the immediate neighbourhood.

In adjacent Winthrop Street there stood a horse slaughterers yard where three slaughter-men, Harry Tomkins, James Mumford and Charles Britten had been working throughout the night. They had heard nothing, and knew nothing of the murder until informed of it by PC Thain as he passed their premises en route to fetch Dr Llewellyn.

They had gone round to view the body and remained at the scene until the woman was removed to the mortuary.

The three men would later find themselves under suspicion and were interrogated separately by the police before being eliminated as suspects.

They were joined at the murder site by Patrick Mulshaw, a night watchman, who was working at the nearby sewer works. Although he did confess that he sometimes dozed on duty, he was emphatic that he had been awake between 3am and 4am, and that he had not seen or heard anything suspicious.

But, at around twenty minutes to five O'clock, a passing stranger had told him, "Watchman, old man, I believe somebody is murdered down the street," and he immediately went round to Buck's Row.

The police appear to have made attempts to trace Mulshaw's mystery informant but their enquiries proved unsuccessful.

Dr Llewellyn was by now becoming a little disconcerted at the number of sightseers arriving at the scene, and he ordered that the body be removed to the mortuary where he would make a further examination.

Thain and Neil duly lifted the body onto the police ambulance, in reality little more than a wooden handcart.

As they did so, Thain noticed that the back of the woman's clothing was soaked with blood, which he presumed had run down from the neck wound. He also observed a mass of congealed blood underneath the body, which was around six inches in diameter and which had begun to run towards the gutter.

The relatively small amount of blood found at the scene, coupled with the fact that no-one in the vicinity had heard a sound would, by the end of the day, lead to speculation that the murder had been carried out elsewhere and the body simply dumped where it was found.

As The Times informed its readers:_

"*…it seemed difficult to believe that the woman received her death wounds there…If the woman was murdered on the spot where the body was found, it is impossible to believe she would not have aroused the neighborhood by her screams, Bucks-row being a street tenanted all down one side by a respectable class of people…*"

This theory was given some consideration at the subsequent inquest into the woman's death but the Coroner was quick to dismiss it in his summing up:-

"The condition of the body appeared to prove conclusively that the deceased was killed on the exact spot in which she was found. There was not a trace of blood anywhere, except at the spot where her neck was lying, this circumstance being sufficient to justify the assumption that the injuries to the throat were committed when the woman was on the ground, whilst the state of her clothing and the absence of any blood about her legs suggested that the abdominal injuries were inflicted whilst she was still in the same position."

Evidently most of the blood had been absorbed into the clothing, a fact that was all too apparent to PC Thain, whose hands became covered in the stuff as he lifted her onto the ambulance.

When Inspector Spratling arrived at the scene at around 4.30am, the body had already been removed, and the blood was being washed away by one of the local residents.

Spratling headed round to the mortuary in nearby Old Montague Street, which was in reality little more than a brick shed, and there began taking down a description of the deceased.

At first he noticed only the neck wounds previously noted by Dr Llewellyn. But on closer inspection, he discovered something that had so far eluded everyone. Beneath her bloodstained clothing a deep gash ran all the way along the woman's abdomen, she had been disembowelled. Jack the Ripper's reign of terror had begun.

Spratling sent immediately for Dr Llwelleyn in order that he might comment on the newly discovered injuries. But before the medic had arrived and could carry out a more detailed

inspection, two senile workhouse paupers, Robert Mann and James Hatfield, stripped the body of its clothing and proceeded to wash it down, dumping the garments in an untidy pile in the mortuary yard. The Coroner would later criticize the police for allowing this to happen, whereas the police were adamant that they had given instructions that the body was not to be disturbed until Llwelleyn had conducted a full and detailed post-mortem examination.

At first the police had no idea who the victim was. So they began canvassing the area in an attempt to discover her identity.

Soon several women had come forward and identified her as a woman known as “Polly” who had been living at a nearby lodging house at number 18 Thrawl Street.

Meanwhile, Inspector Spratling had noticed the mark of the Lambeth Workhouse upon her petticoats, and later that day a resident of the workhouse, Mary Ann Monk, was brought to the Mortuary and shown the victim’s body. She immediately recognized her as, Mary Nichols, a fellow resident at the workhouse up until May 1888.

Mary, or “Polly” Nichols, was a 43 year old prostitute who had begun the morning of her death drinking in the Frying Pan on the corner of Thrawl Street, where she was seen at 12.30am. From there she had walked along Thrawl Street and, a little the worse for drink, had tried to get a bed in the lodging house at number 18 Thrawl Street. But she didn’t have the required four-pence, so the deputy keeper turned her away. “I’ll soon get my doss money,” she told him as she left, “see what I jolly bonnet I’m wearing.” Evidently she intended to resort to prostitution to raise the necessary money and considered that the bonnet would be an irresistible draw to customers.

Her belief may not have been ill-founded, for she seems to have had reasonable success.

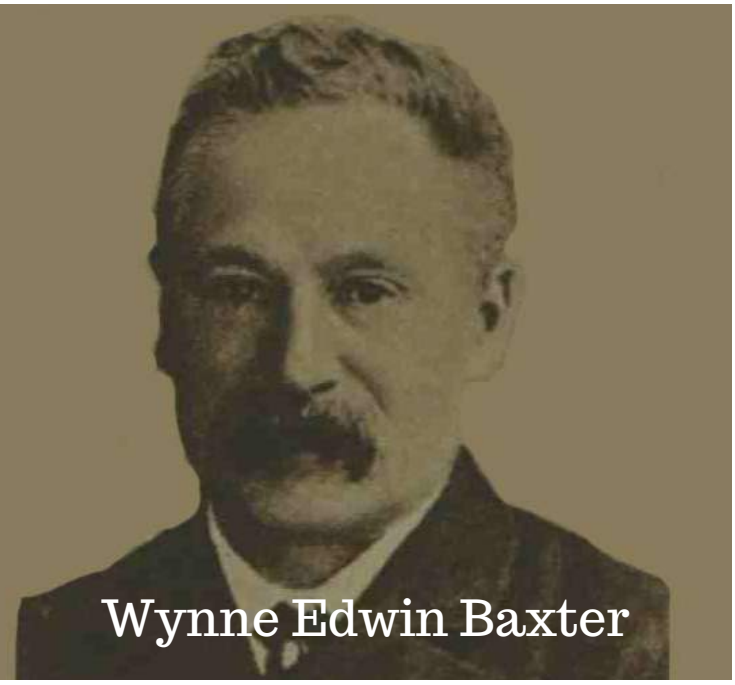
The last person to see her alive, apart from the murderer, was her good friend Mrs Emily Holland, who met her at 2.30am outside a grocers shop at the junction of Osborne Street and Whitechapel Road.

Mary was obviously drunk and was leaning against the wall. Emily Holland tried to persuade her to return to the lodging house, but Nichols refused, boasting that she had made her lodging house money three times over but had spent it. She was off, she said, to make it one last time. “It won’t be long before I’m back,” she told her friend and, so-saying, staggered unsteadily off into the night.

At some stage in the next hour and fifteen minutes, Mary Nichols would meet her murderer and go with him to the dark gateway towards the top of Bucks Row. There he would suddenly clasp his hand across her mouth, somehow force her onto the ground and then cut her throat with a strong bladed knife. And despite the fact that several people were either sleeping or lying awake in premises that either adjoined or stood opposite the site, none of them would hear a thing or even be aware of the final moments of Polly Nichols.

The Board School

Whitechapel Road



Wynne Edwin Baxter

Not Mr Purkess, the manager of Essex Wharf that stood on the opposite side of the street directly across from the murder site. Not his wife who had spent a restless night and who may well have been pacing up and down their bedroom, the window of which looked over at the gateway, when the murder occurred. Not Mrs Emma Green who was, by her own admission a light sleeper, but who had slept on, undisturbed, until awoken by the police in the aftermath of the discovery of the body. Not the keeper of the Board School, the towering walls of which still gaze down on the now vanished site of the murder, the only remnant in the vicinity from that long ago night. Not even the Police Constable who had been on duty at the gate of the Great Eastern Railway Yard, some fifty yards from where the body was found.

The killer had committed his crime with ruthless and silent efficiency, and had then melted, unseen and undetected, into the night.

He had probably skirted the Board School into Winthorpe Street, and dived down one of the narrow passageways that headed out onto the busy Whitechapel Road. Here he could lose himself in the crowds that thronged it, even at that early hour.

As the Coroner, Wynne Edwin Baxter, observed in his summing up at the inquest:-

"It seems astonishing at first thought that the culprit should have escaped detection, for there must surely have been marks of blood about his person.

If, however, blood was principally on his hands, the presence of so many slaughter-houses in the neighbourhood would make the frequenters of this spot familiar with blood- stained clothes and hands, and his appearance might in that way have failed to attract attention while he passed from Buck's-row in the twilight into Whitechapel-road, and was lost sight of in the morning's market traffic."

Durward Street - Formerly Buck's Row

As the day progressed the police continued their investigations throughout the district, desperate for a breakthrough. There appears to have been a general consensus amongst the police, press and public throughout that Saturday that the murder was the work of one of the local gangs, and that the same gang had been responsible for the previous murders of Emma Smith and Martha Tabram.

The Evening News informed its readers that:-

"…these gangs, who make their appearance during the early hours of the morning, are in the habit of blackmailing these poor unfortunate creatures, and when their demands are refused, violence follows, and in order to avoid their deeds being brought to light they put away their victims. They have been under the observation of the police for some time past, and it is believed that with the prospect of a reward and a free pardon, some of them might be persuaded to turn Queen's evidence, when some startling revelations might be expected…"

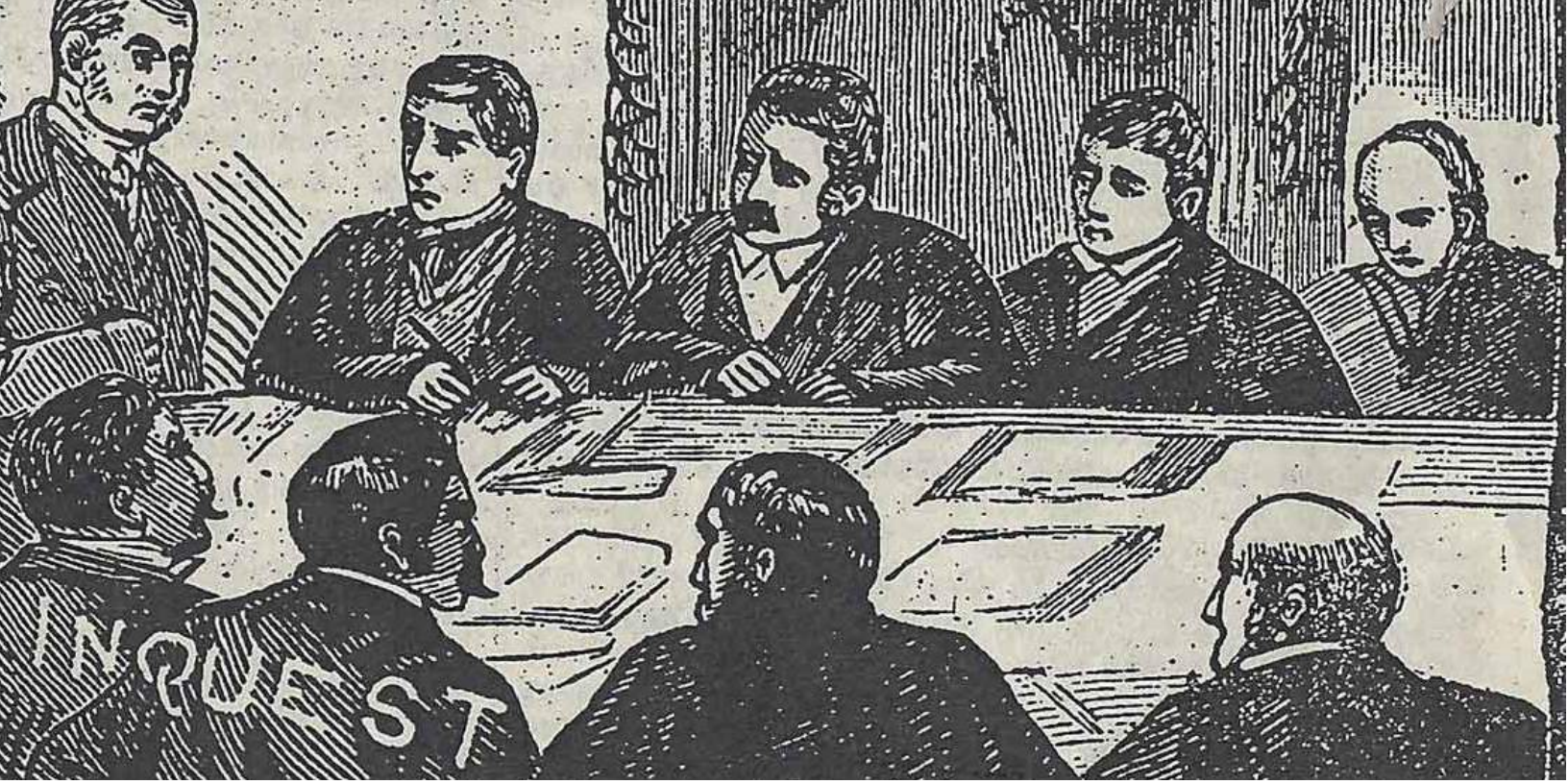
Meanwhile the police had also been busy tracing relatives of the deceased, and had located her father, Edward Walker, as well as her estranged husband, John Nichols.

In the early hours of the 1st of September, John Nichols was taken to the Old Montague Street Workhouse to view his wife's body.

Genuinely distressed by what he saw, he shook his head disbelievingly and whispered to her "I forgive you, as you are, for what you have been to me."

Chapter Ten

THE HUNT FOR JACK THE RIPPER BEGINS



Coroner Wynne Baxter, freshly returned from a holiday in Scandinavia, opened the inquest into the death of Mary Nichols on 1st September 1888 at the Working Lads Institute on Whitechapel Road.

The newspapers were evidently most impressed by his sartorial elegance and the East London Observer commented that he “appeared at the inquest in a pair of black and white checked trousers, a dazzling white waistcoat, a crimson scarf and a dark coat.”

Coroner Baxter would ultimately preside over the inquests into three of Jack the Ripper’s victims, plus two later murder victims who are not generally believed to have been killed by Jack the Ripper.

From the outset he demonstrated definite hostility towards the police, criticising them, for example, for not noticing Mary Nichols abdominal injuries sooner. The inquest would in fact become a battle of wills between Coroner Baxter and various police inspectors who, quite naturally, were anxious to keep their lines of enquiry from becoming public knowledge lest suspects be alerted.

Baxter had other ideas, and at times seems to have used the inquests as his own personal sounding board.

The result was that the inquests over which he presided became protracted and drawn out affairs.

This enabled the newspapers to bring a huge amount of detail to the public at large which, almost from the outset, turned the Whitechapel murders into media circus.

As Baxter’s long-winded inquest into the murder of Mary Nichols ground into action, the police began their laborious search for the perpetrator of the crime in the streets of Whitechapel and Spitalfields.

They focussed their attention on the area of Common Lodging Houses where Nichols, Tabram and Smith had been staying at the times of their deaths.

Officers also began making enquiries amongst the local prostitutes to see if they could shed any light on the killer's identity.

Meanwhile, the local people appear to have realised very early on that there was something decidedly different about these recent killings, and crowds began gathering at the murder sites where they would chat nervously about recent events and air their suspicions about who was responsible.

According to the *Daily News*:-

"People in the neighbourhood seem very much divided in opinion as to the probability of its being the work of one person or several. The women, for the most part, appear to incline to the belief that it is a gang that has done this and the other murders, and the shuddering dread of being abroad in the streets after nightfall, expressed by the more nervous of them, is pitiable. "Thank God! I needn't be out after dark," ejaculated one woman. "No more needn't I," said another; "but my two girls have got to come home latish, and I'm all of a fidget till they comes."

Not everyone, however, was convinced that the crimes were gang related. "That's a got up yarn," one man told a *Daily News* reporter, "…I rather wish it was true. If there was a gang like that, one or t'other of 'em'd split before long, and it'd all come out. Bet your money this ain't been done that way."

Meanwhile, police enquiries amongst the local prostitutes had yielded up a likely sounding suspect in the form of a man whom the local streetwalkers had nicknamed "Leather Apron."

Unfortunately, they could tell the police very little about him, other than that he habitually wore a

leather apron - hence their nickname for him - that he sometimes wore a deerstalker hat, and that he was running an extortion racket, demanding money off the prostitutes, and beating up those who refused.

Sergeant William Thick was adamant that whenever the people of the area spoke about “Leather Apron” they were referring to a man named John, or Jack, Pizer.

So the police set about trying to find him, to either prove his guilt or else eliminate him as a suspect.

Unfortunately, within days their investigation suffered an almighty set back when, either through the unguarded comments of police officers, or more probably from the local tittle-tattle that appears to have been doing the rounds of the lodging houses and hostelries of the district, the newspapers found out about their main suspect.

On 5th September *The Star* newspaper ran the first of several articles that alarmed local residents and frustrated the police, who had hoped to keep their suspicions a closely guarded secret lest they alert the suspect to the fact that they were looking for him.

LEATHER APRON THE ONLY NAME LINKED WITH THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS.

THE STRANGE CHARACTER WHO PROWLS ABOUT AFTER MIDNIGHT. UNIVERSAL FEAR AMONG WOMEN - SLIPPERED FEET AND A SHARP LEATHER-KNIFE.

In two articles *The Star* provided its readers with a description of this sinister character.

"*He is five feet four or five inches in height and wears a dark close-fitting cap. He is thickset, and has an unusually thick neck. His hair is black and closely clipped, his age being about 38 or 40. He has a small black moustache. The distinguishing feature of his costume is a leather apron, which he always wears, and from which he gets his nickname.*

His expression is sinister, and seems to be full of terror for the women who describe it. His eyes are small and glittering. His lips are usually parted in a grin which is not only not reassuring, but excessively repellant. He is a slipper maker by trade, but does not work. His business is blackmailing women late at night. A number of men in Whitechapel follow this interesting profession. He has never cut anybody so far as known, but always carries a leather knife, presumably as sharp as leather knives are wont to be. This knife a number of the women have seen. His name nobody knows, but all are united in the belief that he is a Jew or of Jewish parentage, his face being of a marked Hebrew type. But the most singular characteristic of the man, and one which tends to identify him closely with last Friday night's work, is the universal statement that in moving about

HE NEVER MAKES ANY NOISE

What he wears on his feet the women do not know, but they all agree that he moves noiselessly.

His uncanny peculiarity to them is that they never see him or know of his presence until he is close by them.

When two of the Philpott-street women directed the Star reporter to Commercial-street, opposite the Princess Alice Tavern, as the most likely place to find him, she added that it would be necessary to look into all the shadows, as if he was there he would surely be out of sight.

This locality, it may be remarked, is but a few steps from the model dwellinghouse in George's-Yard, where the murdered woman of four weeks ago was found."

The Star's campaign to alert the populace to the noiseless menace in their midst had two effects.

The first was that John Pizer learnt of the police's suspicions through it, and the prospect of falling victim to a baying mob, now that he was public enemy number one, so terrified him that he promptly went into hiding amongst his relatives.

The second effect was to have a far more sinister impact on the neighbourhood, and its repercussions would ultimately influence the way in which the police investigation was handled as the murders increased and the panic amongst the local residents intensified.

The leather apron was synonymous with the Jewish workers in the area, and the Star's singling out the suspect's Hebrew appearance fed a growing belief amongst the gentile population that no Englishman could be capable of such brutal and gruesome crimes.

Thus the anti-Semitism, which had been gaining momentum in the area for several years, began to increase dramatically, and the police became suddenly alarmed that the press speculation concerning the murderer's ethnic origin might easily erupt into full-scale anti-Jewish rioting.

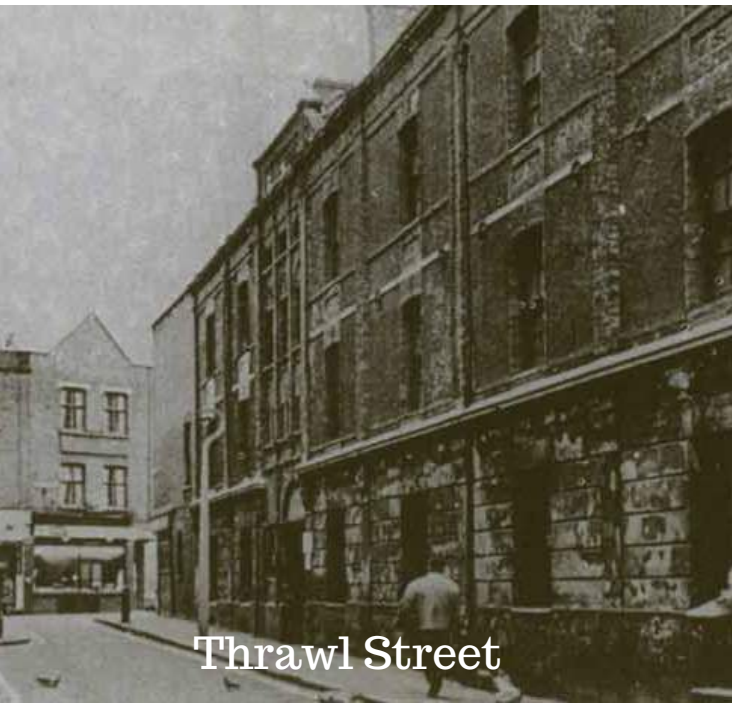
Such a prospect ensured that later witness statements describing possible suspects as "Jewish looking" would several times be changed by the police to the more universal "foreign-looking" when disseminated to the public at large, and would lead the Metropolitan Police Commissioner himself to order the destruction of a potentially important clue that directly implicated the Jews in the murders.

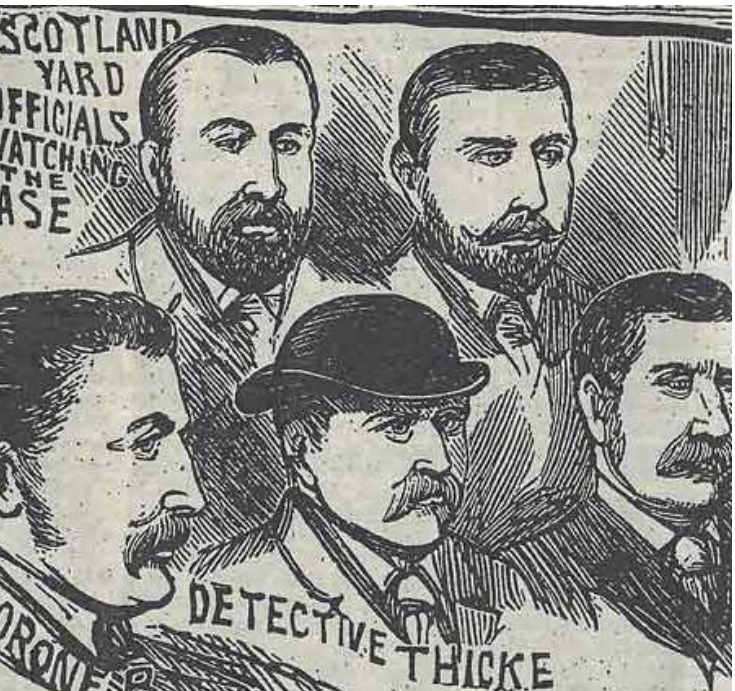
Meanwhile, *The Star* was stepping up its campaign to terrify the local people off the streets. "THE MAN IS UNQUESTIONABLY MAD," it told its readers on the 6th September:-

"And…anybody who met him face to face would know it… his eyes are never still, but are always shifting uneasily, and he never looks anybody in the eye."

The article also provided a contemporary insight into living conditions in Thrawl Street, where Mary Nichols had been living at the time of her death:-


Thrawl Street


Thrawl Street



"One of our reporters visited one of the single women's lodging-houses last night.

It is in Thrawl-street, one of the darkest and most terrible-looking spots in Whitechapel. The house keeps open till one o'clock in the morning, and reopens again at five. In the house nightly are 66 women, who get their bed for 4d.

The proprietor of the place, who is also the owner of several other houses of a similar character in the neighbourhood, told some gruesome stories of the man who has now come to be regarded as the terror of the East-end.

Night after night, he said, had women come in in a fainting condition after being knocked about by "Leather-Apron."

He himself would never be out in the neighbourhood after twelve o'clock at night except with a loaded revolver.

The "terror," he said, would go to a public-house or coffee-room, and peep in through the window to see if a particular woman was there.

He would then vanish, lying in wait for his victim at some convenient corner, hidden from the view of everybody."

The police attempted to dampen the rampant speculation by making it known that there was only suspicion against him.

But *The Star* was enjoying its particularly nasty anti-Semitic campaign and reported how:-

"The hunt for "Leather Apron" began in earnest last evening (5th September). Constables 43 and 173, J Division…were detailed to accompany Detective Ewright, of the J Division, in a search through all the quarters where the crazy Jew was likely to be.

They began at half-past ten in Church-street, in Shoreditch, rumor having located the suspected man there.

They went through lodging-houses, into "pubs," down side streets, threw their bull's-eyes into every shadow, and searched the quarter thoroughly, but without result."

The effect that the newspapers' demonising of Leather Apron had on, not just the local populace but on the country as a whole, is amply illustrated in a highly critical commentary by George Simms for the Sunday *Referee* in mid-September:-

"It is only the careful observer, the close student of our insular everyday life, the professional expert, who can thoroughly gauge the extent to which Leather Apron has impressed himself upon the public mind.

Up to a few days ago the mere mention of Leather Apron's name was sufficient to cause a panic. All England was murmuring his name with bated breath.

In one instance, which is duly recorded in the police reports, a man merely went into a public-house and said that he knew Leather Apron, and the customers, leaving their drinks unfinished, fled en masse, while the landlady, speechless with terror, bolted out of a back door and ran to the police-station, leaving the grim humorist in sole possession of the establishment, till and all. Never since the days of Burke and Hare has a name borne such fearful significance."

The fact that the police seemed helpless in their endeavours to catch the killer brought increased criticism from the local residents, several of whom voiced their concerns in angry letters to the newspapers.

Mr. Henry T. Tibbatts, of 24 Artillery Lane, Bishopsgate street wrote to the *Daily News* on 3rd September bemoaning the fact that as an:-

"East end man, having business premises within a stone's throw of Whitechapel Church, [I contend that] our police protection is shamefully [in] adequate, and that the scenes that hourly and daily are enacted in this locality are a disgrace to our vaunted progress.

I myself have witnessed street fights amounting almost to murder in the neighbourhood of Osborn Street, Fashion Street, &c., and never at any of these critical periods are the police to be found.

Only within the last few days has a most disgraceful scene been enacted close to my own gates in Spitalfields, but then as ever the police were conspicuous by their absence, and such things are of common occurrence. It is quite time someone spoke out plainly…"

Several local residents had in fact already begun their own endeavors to bring order to the area where the murders were occurring. In the aftermath of Martha Tabram's murder a meeting of about 70 men residing in the buildings in the immediate neighbourhood of George Yard had been held. Following a brief

discussion a committee of twelve was appointed to act as watchers, whose duties should be to observe the state of certain streets, chiefly between the hours of 11 and 1, and not only try to support the action of the police, when the necessity arose, but also take careful note of disorderly houses and causes of disturbance.

This committee, the St Jude's Vigilance Committee operated out of Toynbee Hall on Commercial Street, and was the first of several such vigilance committees to be formed by local residents.

In addition, many men were venturing out into the streets of Whitechapel and Spitalfields hoping to catch the killer themselves. "…No less a personage than a director of the Bank of England", reported *Echo* "is so possessed by personal conviction that he had disguised himself as a day labourer, and is exploring the public houses, the common lodging houses, and other likely places to find the murderer."

These vigilance patrols and amateur detectives would ultimately prove more of a bane than a blessing to the police.

For example, the ordinary beat officers sometimes found it difficult to distinguish between the indigenous cranks and crackpots that habitually wandered the streets by night and these newcomers, several of whom were, to say the least, decidedly odd.

In addition, the information they provided, however well-meaning, had the effect of almost overwhelming the police with a deluge of duff clues and bogus suspects.

A correspondent to the St James Gazette summed up the problems caused to the police by amateur patrols, and warned that the murderer had probably already spotted the opportunities offered by them:-

"…and it is well known to the police, that…the extraordinary proceedings

of the amateur detectives who nightly patrol Whitechapel are of great help - to the murderer in evading discovery.

Every wrongful arrest and every wild goose chase after the murderer's cousin on which the police are sent tends distinctly in the murderer's favour.

You cannot play the fool in these ways with men, however efficient, without lessening their efficiency.

And, unfortunately, just at present, the police dare not, as they should, tell the amateur detectives to go home, and the murderer's cousin to make his confession, if he has any to make, at the nearest police station.

If the murderer be possessed, as I imagine he is, with the usual cunning of lunacy, I should think it probable that he was one of the first to enrol himself amongst the amateur detectives."

In the wake of Mary Nichols murder the police themselves began increasing their patrols in the district.

Meanwhile, the local people had little choice but to go about their daily business, ever mindful that another atrocity was inevitable.

On the 7th September a journalist on the East London Advertiser set about penning his copy for the next day's edition.

Writing of the apparent inevitability that the murderer would strike again, he opined that:-

"If, as we imagine, there be a murderous lunatic concealed in the slums of Whitechapel, who issues forth at night…to prey upon the defenceless women of the "unfortunate" class, we have little doubt that he will be captured.

The cunning of the lunatic, especially of the criminal lunatic, is well-known; but a lunatic of this sort can scarcely remain at large for any length of time in the teeming neighbourhood of Whitechapel.

The terror which, since Thursday last, has inspired every man and woman in the district, will keep every eye on the watch.

A watch should be kept indeed behind the windows in every street in Whitechapel.

The murderer must creep out from somewhere; he must patrol the streets in search of his victims. Doubtless he is out night by night.

Three successful murders will have the effect of whetting his appetite still further, and unless a watch of the strictest be kept, the murder of Thursday will certainly be followed by a fourth."

It was a prophetic piece of journalism.

For, by the time the first edition of the newspaper was hitting the streets on the morning of the 8th September, the people of Whitechapel were already awakening to the news that the killer had struck again.

Chapter Eleven

THE MURDER OF ANNIE CHAPMAN 8TH SEPTEMBER 1888

Like Mary Nichols, Martha Tabram and Emma Smith; Annie Chapman, led a somewhat nomadic existence around Spitalfields.

She was 45 years old, a short plump, ashen-faced consumptive who for four or so months prior to her death had been living at Crossingham's lodging house at number 35 Dorset Street where she paid eight pence a night for a double bed.

She appears to have enjoyed a cordial relationship with the other tenants and the deputy keeper, Timothy Donovan, remembered her as being an inoffensive soul whose main weakness was a fondness for drink.

Like many of women in the area, Annie supplemented the meagre income she obtained from crochet work and making and selling artificial flowers with prostitution.

She appears to have had two regular clients, one known as Harry the Hawker, and the other, a man named Ted Stanley, a supposed retired soldier who was known to her fellow lodgers as "the Pensioner."

As it later transpired, Stanley was neither a retired soldier nor a pensioner, but was, in fact, a bricklayer's labourer who lived at number 1 Osborn Place, Whitechapel. According to Timothy Donovan, Stanley would frequently spend Saturdays to Mondays with Annie at Crossingham's.

He also claimed that Stanley had told him to turn Annie away should she ever arrive at the lodging house with other men. Stanley vehemently denied this and claimed to have visited Annie only once or twice.

Whatever Annie's relationship with the "Pensioner" he seems to have been the cause of the only trouble that Timothy Donovan could remember her being involved in during all her time at Crossingham's.

At some stage in the month before her death, (different witnesses remembered different dates) there had been a fracas between Annie and fellow lodger Eliza Cooper.

The full details of the argument, as told by the different witnesses, are confusing and contradictory, with some even claiming that Harry the Hawker was the cause.

According to Eliza Cooper in her inquest testimony, she had loaned Annie Chapman a bar of soap, which Annie had given to Ted Stanley who then went to wash with it.

Over the next few days, Eliza asked several times for the return of the soap, only to be dismissed by Annie who on one occasion contemptuously tossed a ha'penny onto the lodging house kitchen table and told her to "Go and get a halfpenny of soap."

The animosity was still evident when the two women met a few days later in the Britannia pub on the eastern corner of Dorset Street.

However, on this occasion, Annie slapped Eliza across the face screaming as she did so, "think yourself lucky I don't do more." Eliza retaliated by punching Annie in the eye and then hard across the chest.

Annie appears to have come off worse from the exchange of blows and the bruises she sustained were still evident to Dr Phillips when he carried out her post-mortem.

Of course, it should be remembered that this is the account given by Eliza Cooper at Annie Chapman's inquest and she was no doubt anxious to portray herself as the injured party.

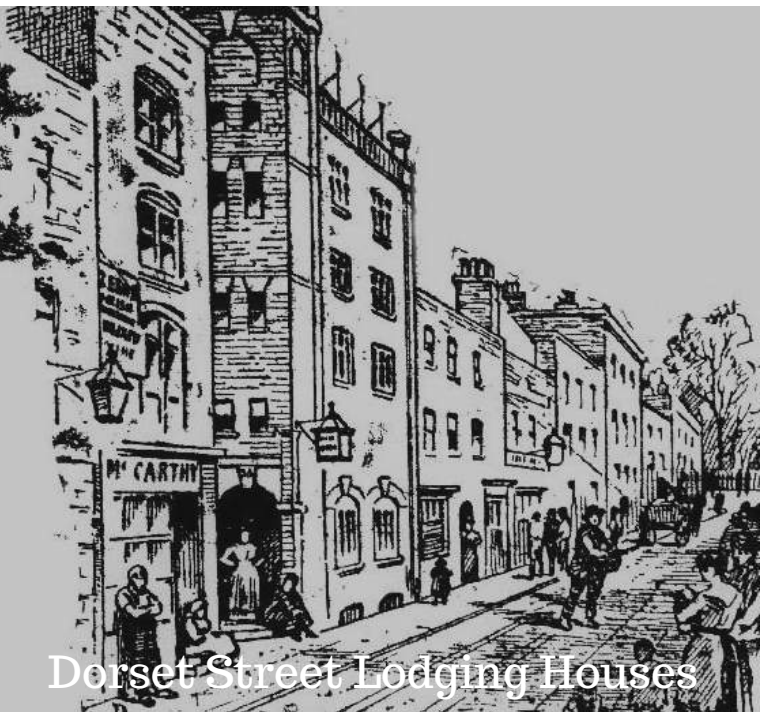
Whatever the cause of the argument, Annie Chapman's last days were spent bruised and in pain, her health rapidly failing.

On Monday 3rd September, when she met her friend Amelia Palmer on Dorset Street, the bruising to her right temple was more than evident. "How did you get that?" Amelia Palmer asked. Annie's response was to open her dress and show her the bruising on her chest.

Amelia bumped into Annie again the next day close to Spitalfields church and commented on how pale she looked. Annie told her that she felt no better and that she might admit herself to the casual ward for a few days. When Amelia asked if she had had anything to eat that day Annie replied: "No, I haven't had a cup of tea today." Amelia handed her two pence to buy some food and warned her not to spend it on rum.

Three days later, at around 5pm on 7th September, Amelia again saw Annie in Dorset Street. She looked even worse and complained of feeling "too ill to do anything." She was still standing in the same place when Amelia passed her again ten minutes later, although she was now trying desperately to rally her spirits. "It's no use giving way, I must pull myself together and get some money or I shall have no lodgings" were the last words Amelia Palmer heard Annie Chapman speak.

Dorset Street, Spitalfields



Dorset Street Lodging Houses

Ejected From The Lodging House

At around 7 pm Annie turned up at Crossingham's lodging house and asked Timothy Donovan if she could sit in the kitchen.

Since he hadn't seen her for a few days he asked where she had been. "In the infirmary" she replied. He allowed her to go to the kitchen where she remained until the early hours of the next morning.

Shortly after midnight, Donovan sent John Evans to the kitchen to collect the money for her bed. He found her eating potatoes and a little the worse for drink. When he asked her for the money for her bed she wearily replied, "I haven't got it. I am weak and ill and have been in the infirmary." She went up to the office and tried to persuade Donovan to let her stay a little longer. Donovan told her bluntly, "You can find money for your beer but you can't find money for your bed." Shaking his head, he told her that if she couldn't pay, she couldn't stay.

Realizing that further discussion was futile, Annie turned to leave, but as she did so she asked him to save the bed adding that "I shall not be long before I am in." She stood for a few minutes in the doorway and reiterated her point "I shall soon be back, don't let the bed."

John Evans escorted her off the premises and watched her as she went, observing later that she was not drunk, but was slightly the worse for drink.

She headed through Little Paternoster Row, turned right along Brushfield Street and walked towards the looming, almost sinister, bulk of Spitalfields Church.

'Dark Annie,' as she was known locally, was evidently confident that she could quickly earn the money from prostitution, but her movements

Hanbury Street - 1920's

over the next three or so hours have never been established.

Later that day one of the bar staff at the Ten Bells pub, at the junction of Commercial Street and Church Street (today's Fournier Street), told a journalist that a woman answering Annie Chapman's description had stopped in for a drink at around 5am, when a man in a "little skull cap" popped his head round the door and called her out. The veracity of this sighting is difficult to ascertain.

What is certain is that by 5.30am Annie Chapman had made her way to Hanbury Street, just a short distance away from the Ten Bells.

The four-storey houses that lined Hanbury Street had front doors that opened into narrow passageways which squeezed past the staircases, and led directly to the backyards. The rooms were let out to individual tenants and their families. Since many of them worked all hours of the day and night, the front doors tended to remain open all night long, a fact that didn't go unnoticed by the local prostitutes who frequently led their clients either into the backyards of the houses, or even used the hallways and landings for what the Coroner at Annie Chapman's inquest described as "immoral purposes."

Number 29 was typical of the houses that lined the street, and seventeen occupants were crowded into its eight rooms.

At between 4.40am and 4.45am John Richardson, son of Amelia Richardson one of the residents at number 29 Hanbury Street who also ran a packing case business from the premises, stopped off at the building on his way to work to check the yard from which his mother operated her business. A few months previously someone had broken the padlock on the cellar door in the backyard and ever since he had regularly visited the premises to check that all

was well.

On this particular morning, one of his boots was pinching his toe so he sat down on the step to trim off some of the leather with a table knife. From where he was sitting he could see that the padlock on the cellar door was intact, and, standing up again, he set off for work. He later estimated that he had sat on the step for two or so minutes and had been aware of nothing suspicious or out of the ordinary.

At some stage between 5.15a.m and 5.32am, Albert Cadoche, a carpenter who lived at number 27 Hanbury Street, went out into the backyard of his premises. As he returned towards the back door he heard a woman's voice say "No." He couldn't be certain exactly where it had come from, but thought it was from the yard of No. 29 next door.

Cadoche went indoors, but returned to the yard three or four minutes later at which time he heard something fall against the fence that divided the yards of numbers 27 and 29. "It seemed as if something touched the fence suddenly," he told the inquest. He did not, however, look over the fence but, instead, he went back through the house and set off for work along Hanbury Street at the end of which he turned right along Commercial Street, where he looked up at the clock of Christchurch Spitalfields and saw that it was 5.32am.

Just after the nearby brewery clock chimed 5.30am, Mrs Elizabeth Long, also referred to as Elizabeth Darrell, turned out of Brick Lane and walked along Hanbury Street en route for Spitalfields Market.

She noticed a man and a woman talking on the right-hand pavement a little before she reached the door of number 29. She didn't see the man's face, only his back, but she described him as being of foreign appearance with a dark complexion. He was of shabby-genteel appearance, aged about forty, and not much more than five foot in height. He had on a dark overcoat, and wore a brown deerstalker hat.

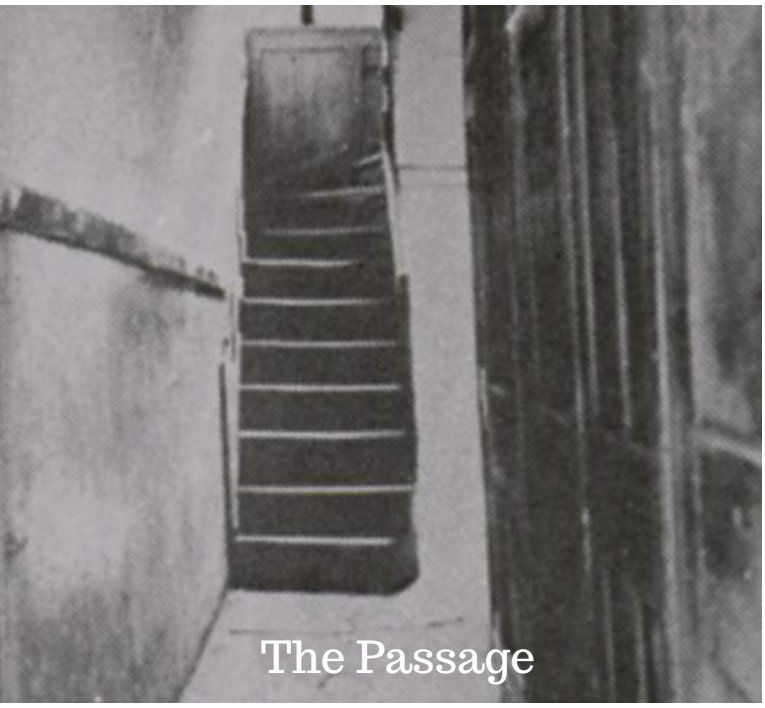
Since the woman was facing her, she saw more of her and, when taken to see Annie Chapman's body at the mortuary, was certain that she was the woman.

Mrs Long later told the inquest that the couple "…were talking pretty loudly…" and so she overheard the man say in a foreign accent, "Will you?" To which the woman replied, "Yes." But since, as she later told the Coroner, it was quite common for her to see couples "standing there in the morning," Mrs Long found nothing suspicious about the couple, and continued on her way.

A little before 6am John Davis, an elderly resident of 29 Hanbury Street came downstairs, walked along the narrow passageway and opened the back door.

The sight that met his eyes sent him reeling back in horror. Moments later two workmen walking along Hanbury Street were suddenly startled when the door of number 29 burst

29 Hanbury Street


The Passage


The Backyard

open and a wild-eyed old man stumbled into the street. “Men”, he cried, “come here.”

Nervously they followed him along the passageway and looking into the yard saw the mutilated body of Annie Chapman, lying on the ground between the steps and the wooden fence.

Her head was turned towards the house and her clothes had been tugged up above her waist exposing her red and white striped stockings. A handkerchief was tied around her throat (she had been wearing this when the killer cut her throat and it had not, as has often been asserted, been tied by her murderer to “stop the head from rolling away”). Her face and hands were covered in blood, and her hands were raised and bent with the palms towards the upper portion of her body giving James Kent the impression that she had “been struggling…[and] had fought for her throat.”

After a few moments of stunned silence, the three men sprang into action, and, racing out of the house, they set off in different directions to find a policeman. The horror of what he had witnessed immediately began to sink in with James Kent, causing him to abandon his search and go instead for a brandy to steady his nerves. Henry Holland raced up to Commercial Street and headed across to Spitalfields Market where he encountered a constable on fixed point duty. Holland panted out news of their find and was somewhat taken aback when the officer curtly informed him that it was against procedure for him to leave his post. He was so angered by the officer’s officious attitude that he later made and an official complaint to Commercial Street Police Station, only to be told that the officer had been correct to follow procedure and not leave his post!

John Davis, meanwhile, had headed to Commercial Street Police Station and bursting in through its doors, breathlessly demanded to see a senior officer.

29 Hanbury Street

Moments later Inspector Joseph Chandler was hurrying along Commercial Street.

Turning along Hanbury Street, he forced his way through the spectators who were already gathering in the passage of number 29.

He ordered that the vicinity be cleared of all sightseers and then sent a constable back to Commercial Street Police Station, instructing him to bring as many reinforcements as possible in order that the crowds might be contained.

Another officer was dispatched to fetch Dr George Bagster Phillips, the Divisional Police Surgeon. Chandler then acquired some sacking from one of the neighbours and used it to cover the body until the arrival of the Police Surgeon.

By the time Phillips arrived at around 6.30am the crowd outside the house was some several hundred strong. Casting a cursory glance down at the body it was more than obvious to him that the woman was beyond medical help.

His testimony at the inquest recalled what he saw:-

"The left arm was placed across the left breast. The legs were drawn up, the feet resting on the ground, and the knees turned outwards. The face was swollen and turned on the right side. The tongue protruded between the front teeth, but not beyond the lips. The tongue was evidently much swollen. The front teeth were perfect as far as the first molar, top and bottom and very fine teeth they were. The body was terribly mutilated...the stiffness of the limbs was not marked, but was evidently commencing. He noticed that the throat was dissevered deeply; that the incisions through the skin were jagged and reached right round the neck...On the wooden paling between the yard in question,

and the next smears of blood, corresponding to where the head of the deceased lay, were to be seen. These were about 14 inches from the ground, and immediately above the part where the blood from the neck lay."

Later that day the post-mortem would reveal that the killer had deftly cut out Annie Chapman's womb and had gone off with it.

But at that hour of the morning there was little more that Dr. Phillips could do at the scene so, having pronounced the woman dead, he ordered that she be removed to the Whitechapel Workhouse Infirmary, in Eagle Street, off Old Montague Street.

Watched by the agitated crowd, a battered coffin was carried from the building and placed on the police ambulance, which set off eastwards along Hanbury Street then turned right onto Brick Lane. A little before 7a.m it pulled up outside the mortuary gates where Robert Mann, whose unauthorized stripping and washing down the body of Mary Nichols was, no doubt, still fresh in the minds of the Police, was waiting to receive it.

When Inspector Chandler turned up a few minutes later he took one look at Mann and made it clear that nobody was to touch the corpse until Dr Phillips had completed his post mortem examination. Satisfied that his instructions had been understood, Chandler placed PC Barnes in charge, and headed back to Commercial Street Police Station. Both he and Dr Phillips were furious to later discover that within two hours of his departure two nurses, acting on instructions from the Clerk of the Workhouse Guardians had once more stripped and washed the body before a post-mortem could be carried out.

Meanwhile, a search of the yard of number 29 Hanbury Street was being carried out. It had been evident that the woman's brass rings had been wrenched from a finger, and believing that the killer may have mistaken them for gold, the police made enquiries at pawnbrokers and jewellers shops, but to no avail.

Several of the woman's possessions consisting of a small piece of coarse muslin and a comb in a paper case had been taken from the torn pocket around her waist and laid out at her feet in a way that had suggested to Dr Phillips that the killer had taken the trouble to "arrange" them.

This has since led to an erroneous yet oft-quoted piece of misinformation that her killer carefully laid Annie Chapman's coins and rings around her feet in a neat crescent, as though suggesting that the murder was some form of ritualistic or even satanic killing.

Two Pills, possibly part of the medication prescribed during Annie's period in the infirmary, were also discovered, along with part of a torn envelope bearing the crest of the Sussex Regiment. On it was a handwritten 'M' and a postmark, 'London, 28 Aug 1888'.

Sensing a potential clue to the killer's

identity and occupation, Inspector Chandler instigated extensive enquiries to find both the sender and recipient of the letter.

Only when they interviewed a lodger at Crossingham's Lodging House, William Stevens, did the police learn that the envelope had been lying on the lodging house mantelpiece for several days.

According to Stevens he had watched Annie pick the envelope up in the early hours of the morning of her murder, transfer some pills into it, and leave the room.

Stevens statement ruled out the possibility that the killer had dropped the envelope during the attack, and meant that a promising line of enquiry was abandoned.

Another find, however, was to have far more sinister repercussions amongst the local populace. For in the corner of the yard, close to the body, lay a freshly washed leather apron.

As it transpired it belonged to John Richardson and had been washed and left to dry by his mother, Amelia, a few days earlier.

But, when some newspapers learnt of its discovery, they were quick to link it to the earlier scare stories concerning the suspect known as "Leather Apron," and the anti-Semitism that had been smouldering in the area for the past week suddenly erupted into anti Jewish unrest that saw gentile mobs attacking innocent Jews on the streets of the East End.

*The East London Advertise*r reported:-

A RIOT AGAINST THE JEWS

"On Saturday in several quarters of East London the crowds who had assembled in the streets began to assume a very threatening attitude towards the Hebrew population of the district. It was repeatedly asserted that no Englishman could have perpetrated such a horrible crime as that of Hanbury-street, and that it must have been done by a Jew - and forthwith the crowds proceeded to threaten and abuse such of the unfortunate Hebrews as they found in the streets. Happily, the presence of the large number of police in the streets prevented a riot actually taking place. "If the panic-stricken people who cry 'Down with the Jews' because they imagine that a Jew has committed the horrible and revolting crimes which have made Whitechapel a place to be dreaded knew anything at all of the Jewish horror of blood itself, writes a correspondent, they would pause before they invoked destruction on the head of a peaceful and law-abiding people…That the beast that has made East London a terror is not a Jew I feel assured. There is something too horrible, too unnatural, too un-Jewish, I would say, in the terrible series of murders for an Israelite to be the murderer. *There never was a Jew yet who could have steeped himself in such loathsome horrors as those to which publicity has been given. His nature revolts at blood-guiltiness, and the whole theory and practical working of the Whitechapel butchery are opposed to Jewish character".*

Annie Chapman - Mortuary Photo

The Murder Site

Police At The Scene

Notwithstanding *The East London Advertiser's* reservations and observances about the law-abiding Jewish immigrants, the mob was in need of scapegoats, and egged on by the lurid anti-Semitism being peddled by other newspapers, widespread intimidation of innocent Jews gathered pace, and the police were faced with the alarming possibility that a full-scale pogrom was about to occur in the East End of London.

In an attempt to forestall such an eventuality, hundreds of uniformed officers were drafted into the area from other parts of the metropolis, and the mob's agitation was, to an extent, contained.

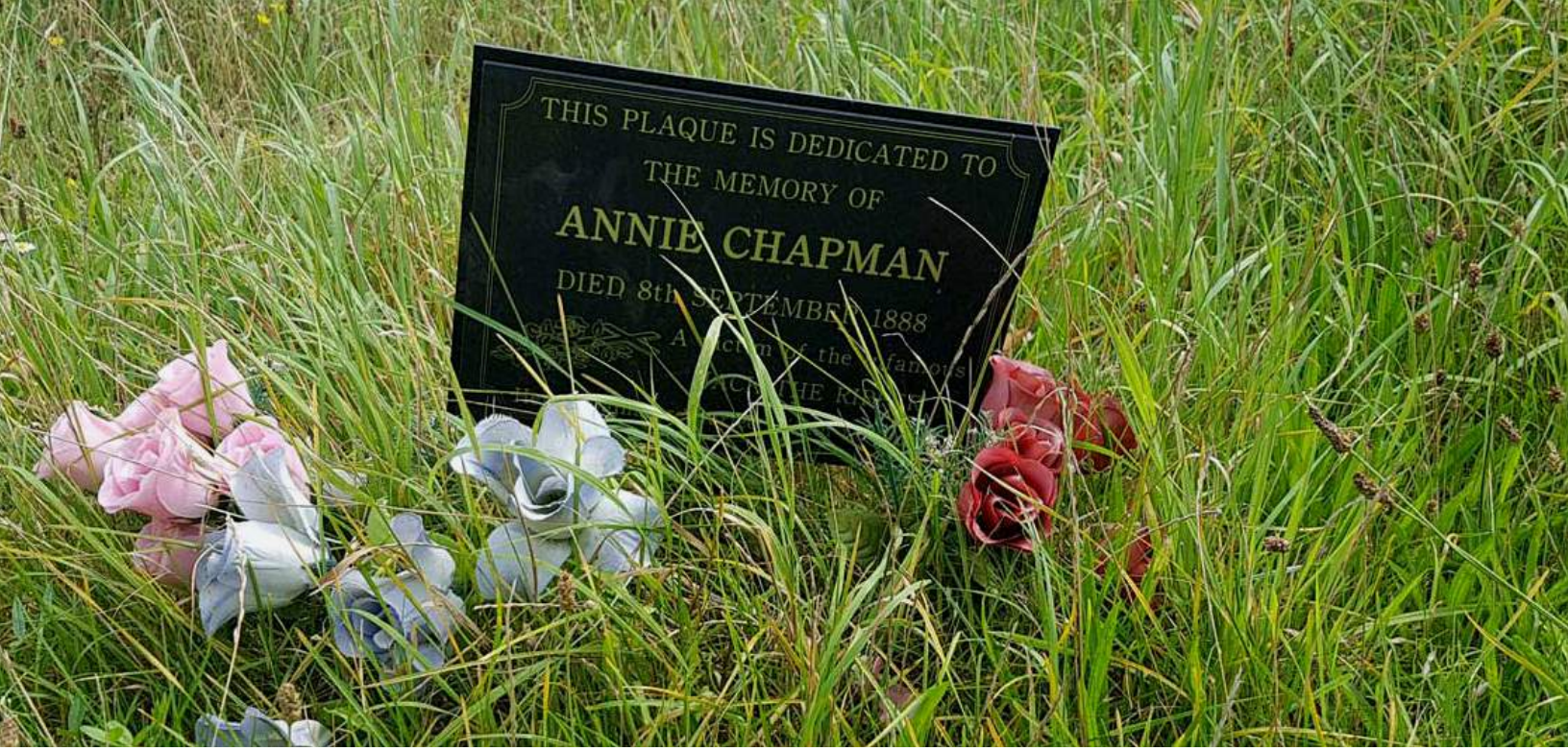
Meanwhile, crowds continued to flock into Hanbury Street throughout the 8th of September, desperate to learn as much as they could about the latest atrocity and get as close as they could to the murder scene.

A woman living next door was assuring anyone who would listen that the killer had scrawled on the door of Number 29, the alarming message, "This is the fourth, I will murder sixteen more and then give myself up."

The mob were ready to turn their fear and frustration on any unfortunate man they thought might be responsible, a fact illustrated by a special edition of *The Star* published later that day and which reported how:-

"Two men were arrested for trifling offences this morning, and, on each occasion, a maddened crowd ran after the police shouting, "The murderer's caught!"

Another man, injured in a quarrel and carried to the police-station on a stretcher, received similar attention, the crowd fairly mobbing the station and declining to disperse.



A man for whom there has been a warrant out for some time was arrested. In an instant the news spread like wild-fire. From every street, from every court, from the market stands, from the public-houses, rushed forth men and women, all trying to get at the unfortunate captive, declaring he was "one of the gang," and they meant to lynch him.

Thousands gathered, and the police and a private detective had all their work to prevent the man being torn to pieces.

The police barrack doors were closed the moment their prisoner had been brought in, and a number of constables did duty outside to prevent the mad onrush of the furious crowd. The inspector in charge informed our reporter the man was arrested for an assault on the police.

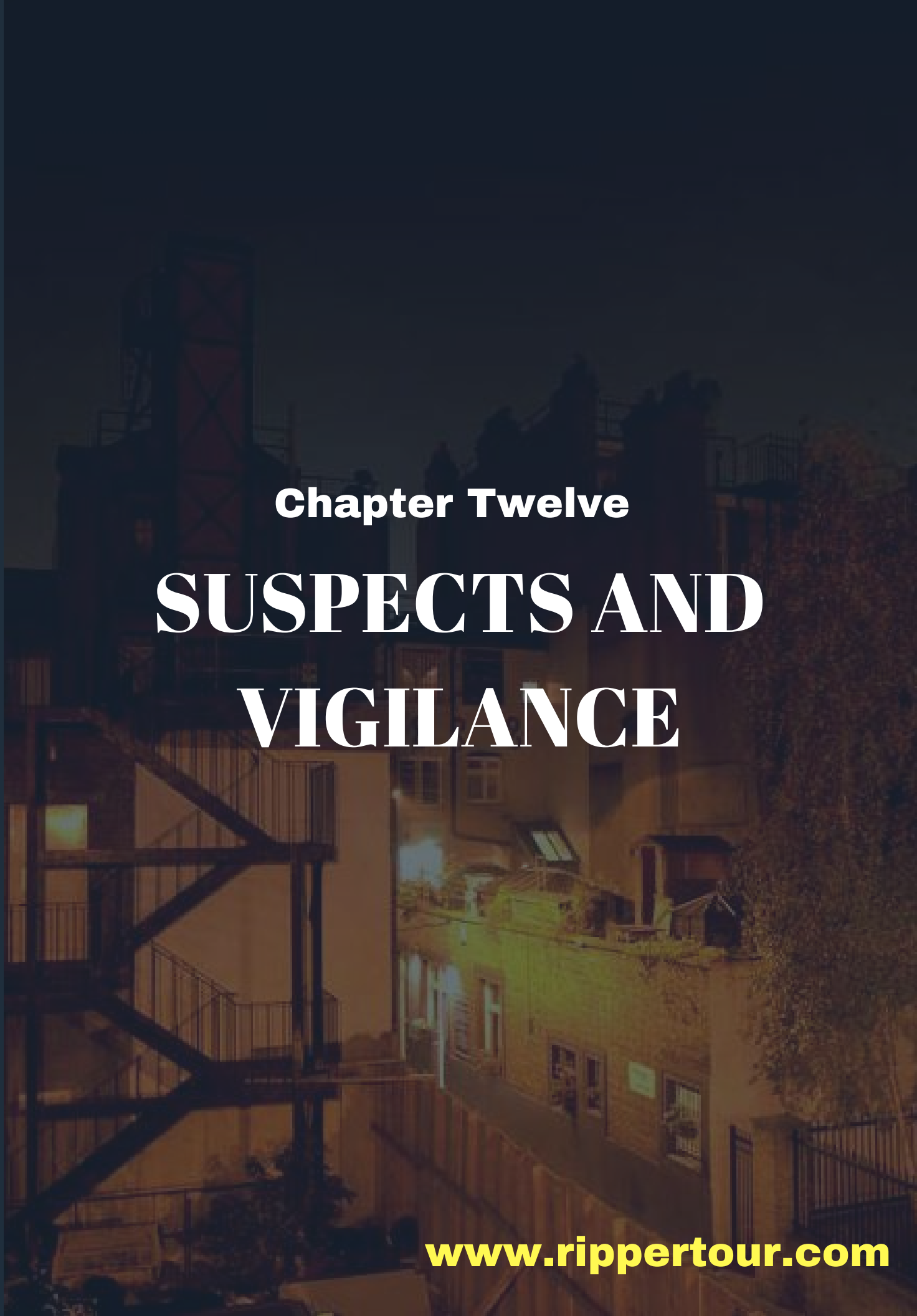
The crowd sighed at hearing the news, but were not persuaded that the person in question had not something to do with the murder."

Meanwhile, the residents of the adjoining houses to number 29 Hanbury Street had discovered a surprising advantage to their newfound notoriety, and were doing a roaring trade charging an admission fee of one penny to people anxious to view the spot where the body was found.

As *The Star* sniffed:-

"…Several hundreds of people have availed themselves of this opportunity, though all that can be seen are a couple of packing cases from beneath which is the stain of a blood track."

But, on the whole, the people of London were genuinely shocked by the horror of what had happened in Hanbury Street. Newspapers struggled to convey the sheer audaciousness and brutality of the crimes. It was an almost impossible task. "One may search the ghastliest efforts of fiction", *The Times* told its readers, "and fail to find anything to surpass these crimes in diabolical audacity…"



Chapter Twelve

SUSPECTS AND VIGILANCE

“London lies to-day under the spell of a great terror. A nameless reprobate - half beast, half man - is at large, who is daily gratifying his murderous instincts on the most miserable and defenceless classes of the community. There can be no shadow of a doubt now that our original theory was correct, and that the Whitechapel murderer, who has now four, if not five, victims to his knife, is one man, and that man a murderous maniac…Hideous malice, deadly cunning, insatiable thirst for blood - all these are the marks of the mad homicide. The ghoul-like creature who stalks through the streets of London, stalking down his victim… is simply drunk with blood, and he will have more. “

THE STAR

8th September 1888

Brushfield Street

At 7am on 8th September Mrs Fiddymont, wife of the proprietor of the Prince Albert pub, better known locally as the “Clean House,” which stood at the corner of Brushfield Street and Steward Street, was standing at the bar talking with a friend of hers named Mary Chappell. Suddenly a man came in whose rough appearance and evil looking eyes so terrified Mrs Fiddymount that she asked Mary Chappell not to leave her alone with him.

He had on a brown stiff hat, which was down over his eyes partly concealing his face, a dark coat and no waistcoat.

Turning to draw him a glass of ale Mrs Fiddymont surveyed her customer in the mirror at the back of the bar and noticed that his shirt was badly torn.

But what struck her most about him was the fact that there was a narrow streak of blood under his right ear, parallel with the edge of his shirt. There was also dried blood between the fingers of his hand.

Mary Chappell meanwhile glanced over at him from the other compartment which caused the man to quickly turn his back, in order that the partition was between himself and her.

Downing his drink in one gulp, the man hurried out into the street and headed towards Bishopsgate, closely followed by Mary Chappell.

She alerted a passing builder named Joseph Taylor who hastened after the stranger and came alongside him, being straight away struck by the fact that:- "His eyes were as wild as a hawk's."

The man was rather thin, about 5ft.8 inches tall, and aged between 40 and 50 years. He had a shabby-genteel look, pepper and salt trousers which fitted badly, and wore a dark coat. The man had a nervous and frightened way about him and walked holding his coat together at the top.

He wore a ginger-coloured moustache and had short sandy hair.

Taylor ceased to follow the man, but watched him as far as "Dirty Dick's," in Halfmoon-street, where he became lost to view.

According to Taylor he had seen the man before coming out of a lodging house in Thrawl Street, and he thought him to be a foreigner.

The proximity of the Prince Albert to Hanbury Street meant that the police took the sighting very seriously and Mrs Fiddymount and her fellow witnesses were interviewed by detectives.

Abberline himself would later try to forge a link between this bloodstained “foreigner” and two later suspects.

But for the time being the police had very little to go on, and as they thrashed around for clues and information press criticism of their lack of success in bringing the killer to book intensified.

*The Star l*amented their obvious inability to catch the killer, and advised that the local citizens had little choice but to take their own measures to defend themselves against the homicidal miscreant:-

"…Now there is only one thing to be done at this moment…the people of the East-end must become their own police. They must form themselves at once into Vigilance Committees. There should be a central committee, which should map out the neighborhood into districts, and appoint the smaller committees. These again should at once devote themselves to volunteer patrol work at night, as well as to general detective service. The unfortunates who are the objects of the man-monster's malignity should be shadowed by one or two of the amateur patrols…”

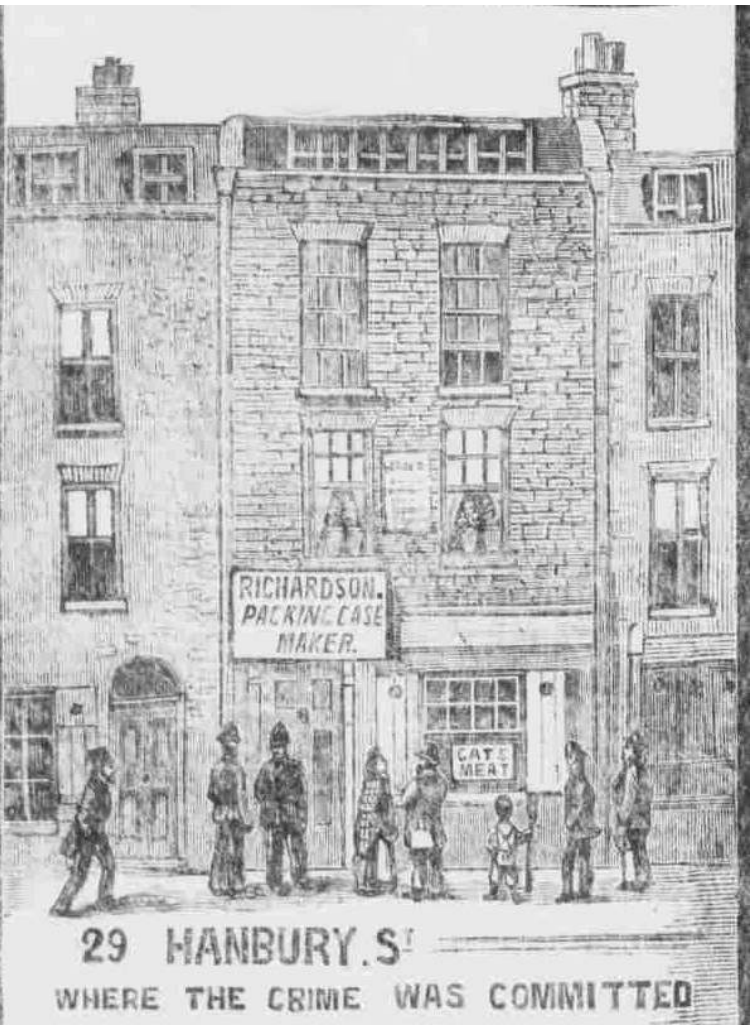
During the hours of daylight, the crowds that thronged around Hanbury Street were ready to take out their frustrations on anyone that they thought might be responsible.

Press reports about the man seen my Mrs. Fiddymont, and of the skull-capped man who was thought to have lured Annie Chapman from the Ten Bells pub at 5am, continued to fuel the anti-Semitism.

Meanwhile, more level-headed and less sensationalising journalists began to see the danger of the press campaign, whilst others began to doubt the actual existence of Leather Apron.

The Daily News commented on the following Monday:-

"The public are looking for a monster, and in the legend of "Leather Apron" the Whitechapel part of them seem to be inventing a monster to look for. This kind of invention ought to be discouraged in every possible way, or there may soon be murders from panic to add to murders from lust of blood. A touch would fire the whole district, in the mood which it is now. Leather Apron



walks without making a noise, Leather Apron has piercing eyes and a strange smile, and finally Leather Apron looks like a Jew. The last is brutal as well as foolish, and it has already had its effect in a cry against Whitechapel Jews. Already, as our columns show today, the list of savage assaults in the neighbourhood has shown an alarming increase since the discovery on Saturday. Every man who can say a reasonable word ought to say it, or worse may follow than all we have already known."

But, once night fell, the bravado of the daylight hours was replaced by sheer terror, and people hurried indoors, too afraid to venture out onto the streets.

Locksmiths began doing a roaring trade, as people began to take precautions to protect their households against the killer.

Some of the prostitutes decided that Whitechapel was just too dangerous and moved to other areas. Others retreated to the relative safety of the Common Lodging Houses, whilst those streetwalkers who went out after dark began to arm themselves lest they encounter the perpetrator.

Publicans began to complain of a severe downturn in trade.

Abberline and his colleagues had by this time become convinced that they were hunting a lone assassin, and the sheer ruthlessness and cunning of their quarry was beginning to dawn on them.

Yet their investigation was hampered by the very nature of the crimes and by the fact that his victims were all prostitutes. The killer struck in the dead of night in out of the way

Women Armed And Ready

places. He left no clues behind him, nor did he have an accomplice that might inform upon him. He was somehow able to prevent his victims from crying out and thus drawing attention to their plights. As far as could be ascertained there was no motive for the crimes save for the grim satisfaction of mutilating those victims. And the fact that his victims were all prostitutes meant that they would take him to the very places where they knew that they were safe from interruption. As one police officer put it “it’s not as if he has to wait for his chance, they make that chance for him.”

On the 10th September Sergeant William Thicke went round to number 22 Mulberry Street and arrested John Pizer. There is little doubt that the police were convinced that Pizer was the man known as Leather Apron, so as Sergeant Thick escorted him into Leman Street Police Station feeling must have been running high that the Whitechapel murderer had been caught.

But, under intense interrogation, Pizer was able to provide cast-iron alibis for the nights of the two most recent murders and the police quickly ruled him out as a suspect. He even appeared at Annie Chapman’s inquest where, with Sergeant Thick sitting next to him, he was given the opportunity to publicly clear his name.

As Thicke began his interrogation of John Pizer, Inspector Abberline was on his way to Gravesend where the local police there had arrested a fifty-three-year-old ships cook named William Henry Piggott on the Sunday night.

Piggott had been making a nuisance of himself in the Pope’s Head tavern and had been vociferously declaring his utter hatred of women.

Following his arrest police had recovered a paper package that he had left at a local fish shop and found that it contained several items of clothing, amongst them a torn and

bloodstained shirt. One of his hands was also injured. Piggott insisted that he had seen a woman fall down in a fit in Whitechapel on Saturday at 4.30am and that when he had tried to help her up she had bit his hand. Losing his temper he struck her, but then spotted two policemen approaching and ran away.

Evidently believing that this might be the man seen by Mrs Fiddymont in the Prince Albert, Abberline went to Gravesend and brought Piggott back to London for questioning.

That afternoon he was placed in a lineup and Mrs Fiddymont and the other two witnesses were brought in to see if they could identify him. Mrs Fiddymont and Joseph Taylor both failed to do so. Mary Chapell picked him out, but would not positively swear that he was the man she'd seen.

The police, therefore, sent Piggott to the Whitechapel Union Infirmary pending further inquiries, and, by the 14th September, *The Times* was reporting that:- *"The police have satisfied themselves that the man Pigott could have had nothing to do with the murders. His movements have been fully accounted for, and he is no longer under surveillance."*

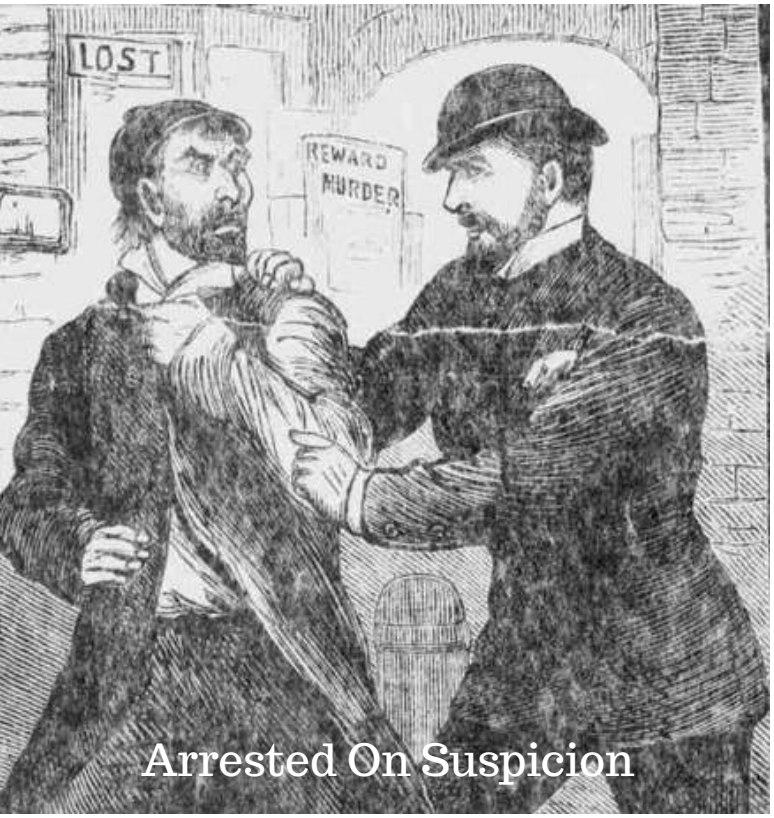
Piggott and Pizer were just two of several suspects that the police hauled in for questioning in the aftermath of Annie Chapman's murder. Indeed newspaper reports speak of seven men being held at various London police stations at noon on Monday 10th September. The police might not have been successful at catching the Whitechapel Murderer but their trawl through the streets in search of suspects had certainly yielded a varied batch of lunatics and misfits who, as far as the local people were concerned, were probably better off the streets than on them.

In addition, there were also some people who found their lives devastated by the willingness of the local populace to take against anyone they even remotely suspected of an involvement in the crimes.

A case at Worship Street Police Court on 20th September, 1888, demonstrated how the Leather Apron scare was impacting on the lives of the innocent in unforeseen ways.

Thomas Mills, aged 59, whose trade was given as cabinet maker and who had been before the court many times for drunkenness, was brought up again to answer the usual charge. The police constable who had arrested him told the court how he had found the prisoner surrounded by an angry mob that was pulling him about and threatening him with the cry, "We'll lynch him, he's "Leather Apron." For his own safety, Mills was taken into police custody.

In court Mills told the magistrate that he had been drunk, but blamed it on the predicament he had found himself in since the start of the Leather Apron scare. "It's quite true, sir, but what am I to do? Whenever I go out they say I'm "Leather Apron", because the papers had published a



Arrested On Suspicion


George Lusk

a portrait of the man, and I'm like it. I was out looking for work, and wherever I go they say, "That's him," and I can't get work, and I get a drop to drink, and then I get angry.'

Mr Saunders, the magistrate, was not in the least bit sympathetic and told Mills that he had no doubt it was his own fault for getting drunk. If he kept sober, people would not take any notice of his likeness to a picture.

The police, it would appear, were making strenuous efforts to remove suspicious characters from the streets of the East End.

But their true quarry had succeeded in evading all their efforts, and as press and public criticism of the police increased, a group of local businessmen and tradesmen, many of them Jewish, acted on *The Star's* call for local action and on the 10th September formed themselves into what would become the most famous of the Vigilance Committees, The Mile End Vigilance Committee, electing local builder Mr George Akin Lusk as their president.

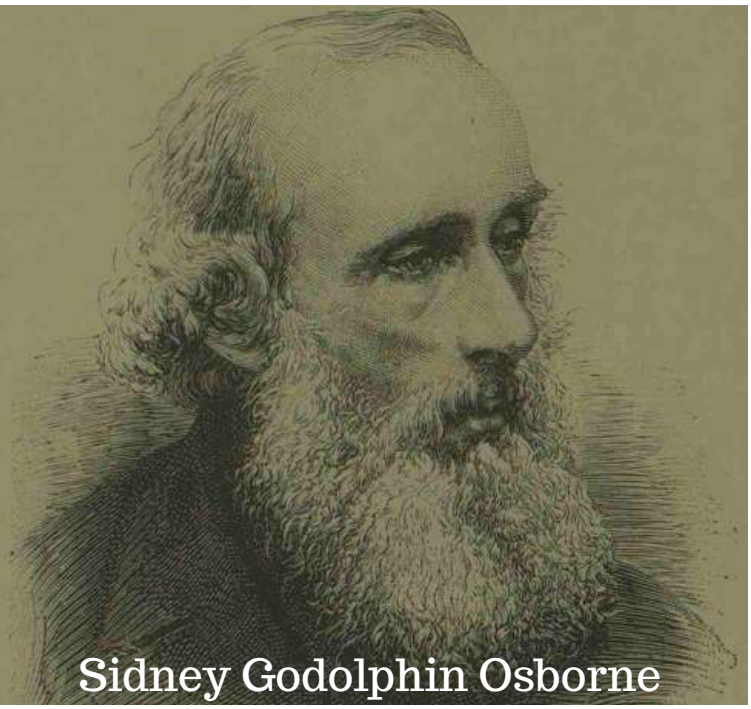
The stated intention of this new committee was to aid the police as much as they could, and, in their early days, they devoted their energies to raising sufficient funds to offer a reward for information that might lead to the apprehension of the murderer.

When a public appeal failed to bring in sufficient money, the committee wrote to the Home Secretary, Henry Matthews, asking that the government either offer a reward or provide a good reason for not doing so.

The subject of an official reward, or to be more precise the governments' refusal to offer one, would remain a bone of contention throughout the rest of the murders.

Inside An East End Slum

Outside A Slaughterhouse



Sidney Godolphin Osborne

The official line was that rewards did more harm than good in that they encouraged people to come forward and give false information in the hope that they might benefit financially.

But the government's refusal to sanction a reward was now starting to rankle in the district and the foreman of the jurors at Mary Nichol's inquest even went so far as to express the view that the murders of both Chapman and Nichols could have been prevented had the Government offered a reward in the wake of Martha Tabram's murder.

In fairness to the Home Office, it is worth noting that several private rewards were offered and that, after Catharine Eddowes' murder, the City of London authorities offered a reward of £500, though none of these resulted in any useful information.

As the arguments for and against a reward were bandied back and forth, some commentators were beginning to view the killer as an inevitable outgrowth of the dreadful social conditions in the area; in an effort to comprehend the incomprehensible, an image was forming in middle-class minds of a creature spawned by the vice and squalor of the slums.

On 18th September, in a letter to *The Times*, Sidney Godolphin Osborne warned:-

"However abhorrent in all cruel, filthy detail are the murders to which public attention is now so painfully called, however hard it may be to believe that they could occur in any civilized community, the fact remains that they have been so committed. Whatever the theories to account for them, whether or not the perpetrators may be yet discovered, they have been the means of affording to us a warning it will be at our extreme peril to neglect. We have far too long been content to know that within a walk of palaces and mansions, where all that money can obtain secures whatever can contribute to make

A Whitechapel Slaughter House

human life one of luxury... there have existed tens of thousands of our fellow creatures begotten and reared in an atmosphere of godless brutality, a species of human sewage, the very drainage of the vilest production of ordinary vice, such sewage ever on the increase, and in its increase for ever developing fresh depths of degradation... We may choose to ignore the fact, but there is not a shadow of doubt in the minds of those who have made this deprived race a study, that of both sexes it may be said they scarce have passed childhood before they fall into the grosser sins of that adult life which is their daily street examples.

Just so long as the dwellings of this race continue in their present condition, their whole surroundings a sort of warren of foul alleys garnished with the flaring lamps of the gin shops, and offering to all sorts of lodgers, for all conceivable wicked purposes, every possible accommodation to further brutalize, we shall have still to go on - affecting astonishment that in such a state of things we have outbreaks from time to time of the horrors of the present day."

Godolphin's letter (signed simply SGO) inspired one of the most readily recognizable images associated with the Ripper crimes, *Punch's* cartoon "The Nemesis of Neglect."

It showed a shrouded, hollow-eyed phantom holding aloft a fearsome-looking knife, drifting through the miasmic slums of the East End.

The cartoon's caption reiterated the imagery:-

There floats a phantom on the slum's foul air,
Shaping, to eyes which have the gift of seeing,
Into the Spectre of that loathly lair.
Face it – for vain is fleeing!
Red-handed, ruthless, furtive, unerect,
'Tis murderous Crime - the Nemesis of Neglect!


CRIME

Social reformers had begun to realize that the murders could be effectively utilized to spear-head change in the neighbourhood.

The Lancet pointed out that ‘modern society is more promptly awakened to a sense of duty by the knife of a murderer than by the pens of many earnest writers...’

The Daily Telegraph lectured its readers:-

‘DARK ANNIE’S’ spirit still walks Whitechapel, unavenged by Justice... yet even this forlorn and despised citizeness of London cannot be said to have suffered in vain. On the contrary, she has effected more by her death than many long speeches in Parliament and countless columns of letters to the newspapers could have brought about. She has forced innumerable people who never gave a serious thought before to the subject to realize how it is and where it is that our vast floating population – the waifs and strays of our thoroughfares – live and sleep at nights, and what sort of accommodation our rich and enlightened capital provides for them, after so many Acts of Parliament passed to improve the dwellings of the poor... ‘Dark ANNIE’S’ dreadful end has compelled a hundred thousand Londoners to reflect what it must be like to have no home at all except the ‘common kitchen’ of a low lodging-house; to sit there, sick and weak and bruised and wretched, for lack of fourpence with which to pay for the right of a ‘doss’; to be turned out after midnight to earn the requisite pence, anywhere and anyhow; and in course of earning it to come across your murderer and to caress your assassin

On the 19th September, Canon Barnet, the vicar of St Jude’s Church on Commercial Street, founder of Toynbee Hall and ardent mover for social reform in the area wrote to *The Times:-*

"Sir, - Whitechapel horrors will not be in vain if ‘at last’ the public conscience awakes to consider the life which these horrors reveal. The murders were, it may almost be said, bound to come; generation could not follow generation in lawless intercourse, children could not be familiarized with scenes of degradation, community in crime could not be the bond of society and the end of all be peace."

He pointed out that, "The greater part of Whitechapel is as orderly as any part of London, and the life of most of its inhabitants is more moral than that of many whose vices are hidden by greater wealth."

However, the evil quarter mile onto which his church adjoined, and where the victims of the recent murders had lodged, needed to be dealt with ‘strongly and adequately’.

The first requirement, he opined, was an increase of police officers in the neighbourhood. The Home Office, he complained, had "never authorized the employment of a sufficient force to keep decent order inside the criminal quarters.’ Secondly, adequate lighting was essential. "Without doubt... dark passages lend themselves to evil deeds.’

He also inadvertently highlighted a reason why the murderer could escape, possibly bloodstained, into the teeming streets of the neighbourhood without being noticed. Calling for the closure of the area's many slaughterhouses, he pointed out that, "At present animals are daily slaughtered in the midst of Whitechapel, the butchers with their blood stains are familiar among the street passengers, and sights are common which tend to brutalize ignorant natures."

On 24th September, George Bernard Shaw wrote to the Star and offered his own intriguing theory for the killer's motive:-

"SIR, Will you allow me to make a comment on the success of the Whitechapel murderer in calling attention for a moment to the social question? Private enterprise has succeeded where Socialism failed. Whilst we conventional Social Democrats were wasting our time on education, agitation, and organization, some independent genius has taken the matter in hand, and by simply murdering and disembowelling four women, converted the proprietary press to an inept sort of communism."

No doubt Shaw's tongue was very firmly in his cheek when he suggested that the murderer was a social reformer, but there is little doubt that the Whitechapel murders had succeeded in drawing attention to the dreadful living conditions in the area, and several of the improvements that took place over the next few years can be attributed to this change in attitude as a result of the murders.

As the socially-minded began to focus their attention on the need for change in the area, the police continued to arrest suspects.

In the early hours of 18th September, PC John Johnson of the City Police was walking his beat along Minories when he heard a loud cry of 'Murder!'

It was coming from a walled-in yard – a notorious trouble spot by the name of Three Kings' Court. Hurrying through the alleyway that led into it from Minories, Johnson found a man and a woman standing together there.

When Johnson asked the man what he was doing he received the brusque reply, "Nothing." The woman was evidently terrified and begged him, "Oh policeman do take me out of this!"

Johnson escorted the couple out of the court and told the man to be on his way.

As the man vanished, the woman turned to Johnson and exclaimed, "Dear me. He frightened me very much when he pulled that big knife out." Johnson's jaw no doubt fell open. 'Why didn't you tell me that at the time?' he asked. 'I was too much frightened.'

Johnson conducted a quick search of the area but could find no trace of the man. It must have been a very nervous Johnson who informed his superiors that he might have had the killer and let him go.

As it transpired, the man had headed over to Whitechapel High Street, where he got into a heated and drunken exchange with a coffee stallholder and a youth named Alexander Finlay. Having pulled out a long-bladed knife, the man chased Finlay around the coffee stall and attempted to stab him, whereupon a constable arrived and took the man into police custody.

The man was a German hairdresser named Charles Ludwig and the police evidently thought him a good murder suspect. When he appeared at Thames Magistrates' Court, charged with being drunk and disorderly and with threatening to stab Finlay, the magistrate called him a dangerous character and remanded him in custody for a week.

As Ludwig languished in prison, the police conducted rigorous investigations into his background and character. When he next appeared in court, on 25th September, Abberline asked that he be remanded again and the magistrate complied.

But his innocence was proved conclusively when, in the early hours of 30th September, with Ludwig safely in custody, the Whitechapel murderer struck gain, thus absolving him of any involvement.

On 19th September, Sir Charles Warren wrote to the Home Office to update them on progress, or to be more precise, the lack of progress in the police investigation. "A great number of clues have been examined & exhausted without finding anything suspicious. A large staff of men are employed and every point is being examined which seems to offer any prospect of a discovery."

He also mentioned three suspects that the police favoured.

The first was Jacob Isenschmid, an insane pork butcher from Switzerland who had been arrested at Holloway and was now in an asylum.

Abberline had written of him on 18th September, "Although at present we are unable to procure any evidence to connect him with the murders, he appears to be the most likely person that has come under our notice to have committed the crimes."

Apparently, two doctors, Dr Cowan and Dr Landseer, had told the police that this man, whom they knew to be a lunatic, was the murderer.

His landlord told the police that he was absent from his lodgings on the night of Annie Chapman's murder.

His estranged wife, Mary, told Sergeant Thicke that although her husband was violent she did not think he would "injure anyone but me. I think he would kill me if he had the chance."

Abberline was struck by the fact that Isenschmid bore a strong resemblance to the man seen by Mrs Fiddymont in the Prince Albert, and the fact that her name disappears from police records after this

suggests that she may have identified him as such.

But, as with Ludwig, Isenschmid was to be absolved from being the perpetrator of the crimes; for, on 30th September, when the killer struck again, the mad Swiss Pork Butcher was caged in an asylum.

Warren's second suspect was Oswald Puckeridge who, so Warren wrote, had been "released from an asylum on 4th August [and who] has threatened to rip people up. He is being looked for but cannot be found as yet."

Not a great deal has been found about Puckeridge, and even less is known as to why the police suspected him.

It would seem that they may have traced him and eliminated him as a suspect since he was not included in later police reports and correspondence.

The final suspect is even more elusive, since Warren doesn't identify him but merely states that:-

"A brothel keeper who will not give her address or name writes to say that a man living in her house was seen with blood on him on the morning of the murder.

She described his appearance & said where he might be seen. When the detectives came near him he bolted, got away & there is no clue to the writer of the letter."

.The police, in general, were rapidly coming round to the view that the murderer was probably a lunatic and that he possibly possessed surgical knowledge.

As a result, three medical students who had recently spent time in asylums were traced and interviewed.

But as with so many avenues of enquiry, this led to a dead end; as, one by one, the students were exonerated of any involvement.

Suspect after suspect was evidently being brought in throughout September, often on very tenuous grounds, and as the end of the month approached it was becoming obvious that the police were no nearer catching the actual killer than they had been at the beginning of the month.

This seeming lack of progress resulted in an almost daily barrage of press criticism.

On 22nd September, *Punch* summed up their efforts with a cartoon entitled 'Blind-Man's Bluff'.

It showed a blindfolded policeman being spun around by a rough-looking group of villains.

The accompanying caption read:-

'TURN ROUND THREE TIMES, AND CATCH WHOM YOU MAY!'


MURDER

In the same issue, it treated its readers to ‘A Detective’s Diary’:-

"Monday. - Papers full of the latest tragedy. One of them suggested that the assassin was a man who wore a blue coat. Arrested three blue-coat wearers on suspicion.

Tuesday. - The blue coats proved innocent. Released. Evening journal threw out a hint that the deed might have been perpetrated by a soldier. Found a small drummer-boy drunk and incapable. Conveyed him to the Station-house.

Wednesday. - Drummer-boy released. Letter of anonymous correspondent to daily journal declaring that the outrage could only have been committed by a sailor. Decoyed petty officer of Penny Steamboat on shore, and suddenly arrested him.

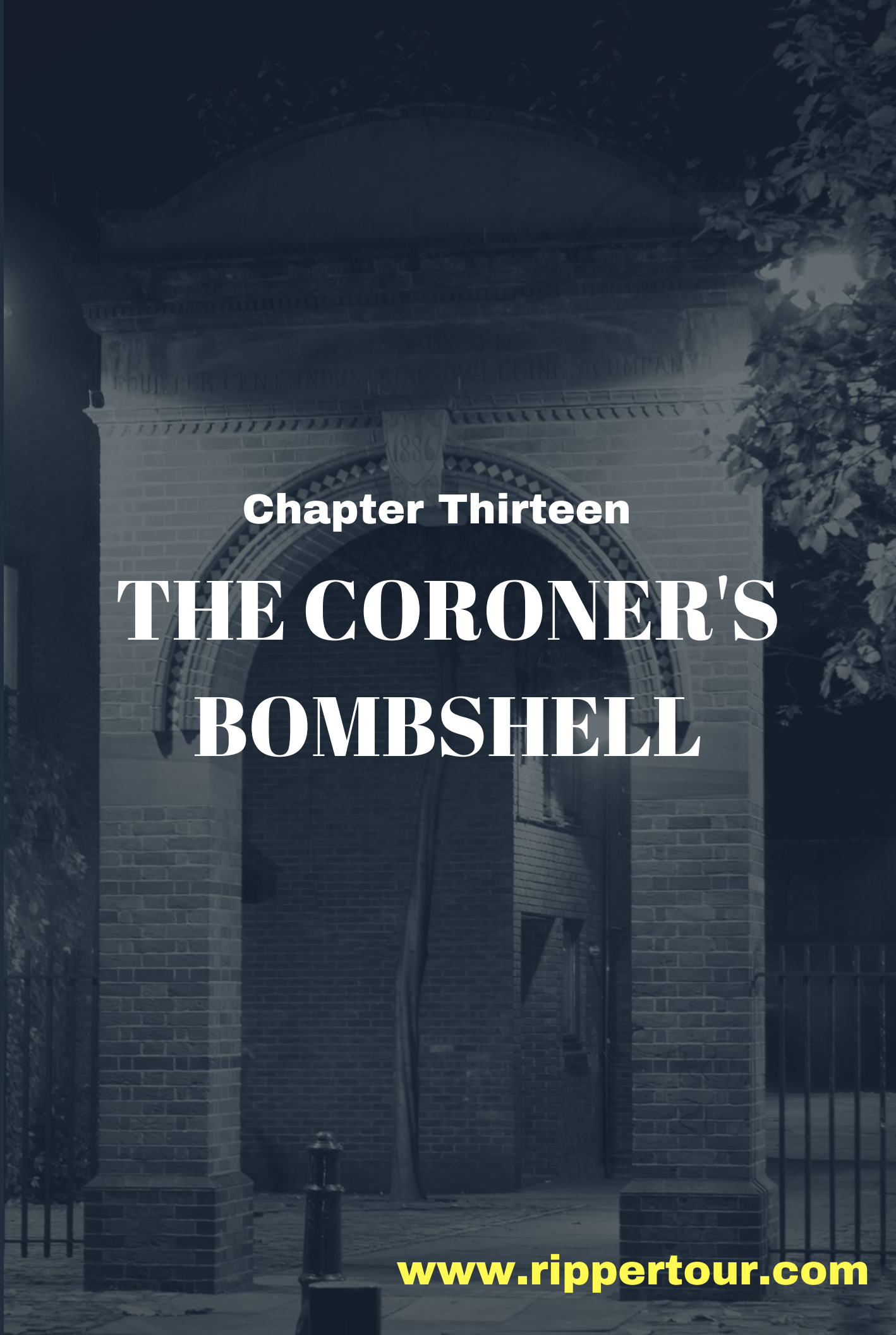
Thursday. - Petty officer allowed to go. Hint thrown out in the correspondence columns that the crime might be traceable to a lunatic. Noticed an old gentleman purchasing a copy of Maiwa’s Revenge. Seized him.

Friday. - Lunatic dispatched to an asylum. Anonymous letter received, denouncing local clergyman as the criminal. Took the reverend gentleman into custody.

Saturday. - Eminent ecclesiastic set at liberty with an apology. Ascertain in a periodical that it is thought just possible that the Police may have committed the crime themselves. At the call of duty, finished week by arresting myself!"

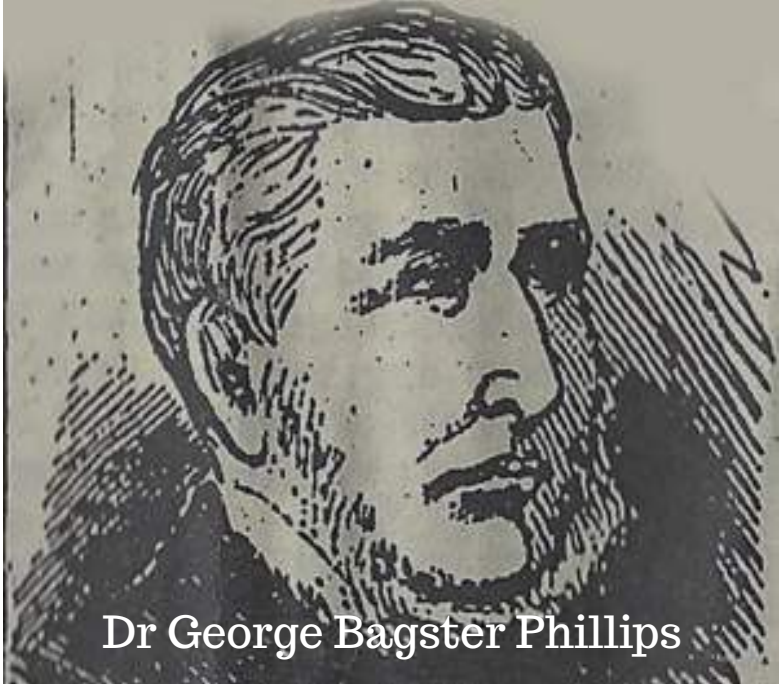
The Scotsman, in its edition of the 13th of September, 1888, however, came to the defence of the beleaguered police, albeit the article did proffer some criticism:-

"It is so far satisfactory to find that an effort is made to defend the policemen from blame. An honest belief is declared that the patrolling police do all they can to prevent crime, and it is pointed out that, in the labyrinth of London, even twice the number of police could not make murder impossible. The blame is shifted from them, not perhaps without reasons, to “a municipal policy of stupidity, carelessness, and laissez-faire”, which has tolerated the existence in London of so many labyrinths of slums and dens as coverts for the dangerous classes.But while all these excuses are offered in defence of the defence of the patrolling police, no mercy is shown to the Detective Department.
Its characteristics are stated to be “disgraceful incompetence, want of perspicacity, self-sufficient contempt of public opinion, and actual blockheadism.” This is an appalling indictment, and the reader is apt to believe that it has “little meaning, though the words are strong.” It is a relief to find that, though this is the character of the Department as such, it by no means follows that there is not “an adequate contingent of active and astute detectives.” The police and the detectives may have made mistakes and overlooked possible clues. On this point the published information furnishes no means of judging. But, it is easy to understand that no crime is so difficult to trace as murder of this character, when the murderer has once got clear off, leaving nothing by which he can be traced…”

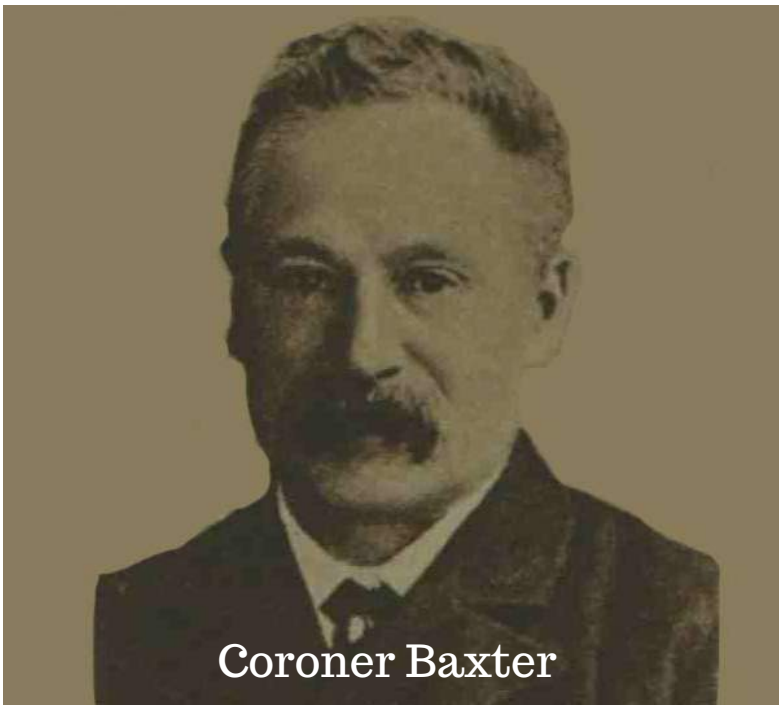


Chapter Thirteen

THE CORONER'S BOMBSHELL



Dr George Bagster Phillips



Coroner Baxter

As the police continued their efforts to bring the perpetrator of the Whitechapel Murders to justice the inquest into her death, presided over by Coroner Wynne Edwin Baxter, was drawing to its conclusion at the Working Lads' Institute on Whitechapel Road.

Dr George Bagster Phillips, the divisional police surgeon who had examined Annie's body as it lay in the backyard of 29 Hanbury Street had raised a sensational but chilling possibility.

The fact, he said, that the killer had removed Annie's womb and gone off with it, suggested to him that the reason for her murder may well have been that the killer was deliberately trying to acquire that particular part of her anatomy.

Furthermore, the speed with which he did it and the skill he had displayed suggested that her killer possessed *some* anatomical knowledge.

The doctor's stated opinion paved the way for Coroner Baxter to pose his own sensational theory during his summing up on the 26th September 1888:-

"The body has not been dissected, but the injuries have been made by someone who had considerable anatomical skill and knowledge.

There are no meaningless cuts. It was done by one who knew where to find what he wanted, what difficulties he would have to contend against, and how he should use his knife, so as to abstract the organ without injury to it.

No unskilled person could have known where to find it, or have recognised it when it was found. For instance, no mere slaughterer of animals could have carried out these operations. It must have been someone accustomed to the post-mortem room. The conclusion that the desire was to possess the missing part seems overwhelming."

The Working Lads' Institute

Here was a bogeyman to out bogey Leather Apron, the idea that a doctor was wandering the streets of Whitechapel in search of wombs, presumably for research purposes.

No doubt the revelation was met with a murmur of disdainful disapproval. But Baxter had an even bigger bombshell to drop:-

"It has been suggested that the criminal is a lunatic with morbid feelings.

This may or may not be the case; but the object of the murderer appears palpably shown by the facts, and it is not necessary to assume lunacy, for it is clear that there is a market for the object of the murder.

To show you this, I must mention a fact which at the same time proves the assistance which publicity and the newspaper press afford in the detection of crime.

Within a few hours of the issue of the morning papers containing a report of the medical evidence given at the last sitting of communication from an officer of one of our great medical schools, that they had information which might or might not have a distinct bearing on our inquiry.

I attended at the first opportunity, and was told by the sub-curator of the Pathological Museum that some months ago an American had called on him, and asked him to procure a number of specimens of the organ that was missing in the deceased. He stated his willingness to give £20 for each, and explained that his object was to issue an actual specimen with each copy of a publication on which he was then engaged.*Although he was told that his wish was impossible to be complied with, he still urged his request.*

He desired them preserved, not in spirits of wine, the usual medium, but in glycerine, in order to preserve them in a flaccid condition, and he wished them sent to America direct. It is known that this request was repeated to another institution of a similar character.

Now, is it not possible that the knowledge of this demand may have incited some abandoned wretch to possess himself of a specimen. It seems beyond belief that such inhuman wickedness could enter into the mind of any man, but unfortunately our criminal annals prove that every crime is possible.

I need hardly say that I at once communicated my information to the Detective Department at Scotland-yard.

Of course, I do not know what use has been made of it, but I believe that publicity may possibly further elucidate this fact, and, therefore, I have not withheld from you my knowledge.

By means of the press, some further explanation may be forthcoming from America if not from here. I have endeavoured to suggest to you the object with which this offence was committed, and the class of person who must have perpetrated it.

The greatest deterrent from crime was the conviction that detection and punishment would follow with rapidity and certainty, and it might be that the impunity with which Mary Anne Smith and Ann Tabram [sic] were murdered suggested the possibility of such horrid crimes as those which the jury and another jury had been considering.

It was, therefore, a great misfortune that nearly three weeks had already elapsed without the chief actor in this awful tragedy having been discovered.

Surely it was not too much even yet to hope that the ingenuity of our detective force would succeed in unearthing this monster. It was not as if there were no clue to the character of the criminal or the cause of his crime. His object was clearly divulged. His anatomical knowledge carried him out of the category of a common criminal, for that knowledge could only have been obtained by assisting at post-mortems or by frequenting the post-mortem room.

Thus the class in which search must be made, although a large one, was limited. In addition to the former description of the man Mrs. Long saw, they should know that he was a foreigner, of dark complexion, over 40 years of age, a little taller than deceased, of shabby-genteel appearance, with a brown deerstalker hat on his head and a dark coat on his back.

If the jury's views accorded with his, they would be of opinion that they were confronted with a murder of no ordinary character, committed not from jealousy, revenge, or robbery, but from motives less adequate than many which still disgraced our civilization, marred our progress, and blotted the pages of our Christianity."

It is important to note that Baxter did not state that the doctor in question was the murderer, but merely gave it as his opinion that the offer may have inspired someone to commit the murder for financial gain.

The press, though, were quick to dub his revelation "The Burke and Hare Theory" and praised him for having the courage to make it public.

Naturally, the medical profession was quick to refute it.

On the 29th September,*The Lancet* lamented that:-

The public mind–ever too ready to cast mud at legitimate research–will hardly fail to be excited to a pitch of animosity against anatomists and curators, which may take a long while to subside.

And, what is equally deplorable, the revelation thus made by the coroner, which so dramatically startled the public last Wednesday evening, may probably lead to a diversion from the real track of the murderer, and thus defeat rather than serve the ends of justice. We believe the story to be highly improbable..."

The British Medical Journal went further and scotched the theory once and for all:-

"It is true that enquiries were made at one or two medical schools early last year by a foreign physician, who was spending some time in London, as to the possibility of securing certain parts of the body for purposes of scientific investigation.

No large sum, however, was offered. The person in question was a physician of the highest reputability... and he left London fully eighteen months ago.

There was never any real foundation for the hypothesis and the information communicated, which was not at all of the nature the public has been led to believe, was due to the erroneous interpretation by a minor official of a question which he had overheard and to which a negative reply was given.

This theory may be dismissed, and is, we believe, no longer entertained even by its author."

It is significant that Coroner Baxter did not revive his theory at the inquest into the death of the next victim, Elizabeth Stride.

But the image of *Dr Jack the Ripper* had taken shape in the minds of the public at large, and it remains one of the most popular images of the murderer to this day.

Meanwhile, on the streets of Whitechapel, the fact that there had been no new murders since 8th September meant that the fear and panic were beginning to subside.

Many of the prostitutes had returned to their old haunts and were once more leading lone clients into dark recesses where they knew the police could not protect them.

In the pubs people chatted in animated tones about the revelations that had emerged from the inquests, particularly Coroner Baxter's sensational claims.

On 22nd September a woman was murdered at Birtley Fell, near Gateshead, in the north of England and inevitably comparisons were made with the Whitechapel murders.

As the end of September approached, a journalist from the *Daily News* took an evening stroll through the area.

In Hanbury Street, he met with a respectable-looking elderly man and observed, "There seems to be little apprehension of further mischief by this assassin at large."

'No, very little,' was the cheerful reply. 'People, most of 'em, think he's gone to Gateshead.' Three days later, the Whitechapel murderer would prove them horrifyingly wrong by murdering twice in less than an hour

Chapter Fourteen

THE MURDER OF ELIZABETH STRIDE 30TH SEPTEMBER 1888

Elizabeth, or “Long Liz”, Stride spent the last afternoon of her life cleaning rooms in the lodging house at number 32 Flower and Dean Street, where she had lived on and off for the previous six years. The deputy keeper, Elizabeth Tanner, paid her sixpence for the chores and by 6.30pm Elizabeth was slaking her thirst in the nearby Queen’s Head pub at the junction of Fashion and Commercial Streets.

By 7pm she had returned to the lodging house, and was, according to fellow resident Charles Preston - from whom she borrowed a clothes brush - dressed “ready to go out.”

Having chatted briefly with another lodger, Catherine Lane, Liz Stride left the lodging house at around 7.30pm.

It rained heavily that night and the next sighting of her was at eleven o’clock when J. Best and John Gardner were certain that they saw her sheltering in the doorway of the Bricklayer’s Arms on Settles Street. She was in the company of a man who was about 5’ 5 inches tall. He had a black moustache, sandy eyelashes and was wearing a black morning suit together with a billycock hat. According to Best “… they did not appear willing to go out. He was hugging and kissing her, and as he seemed a respectably dressed man, we were rather astonished at the way he was going on with the woman.” The two men couldn’t resist a little light-hearted banter at the couple’s expense and remarked to the woman “Watch out, that’s Leather Apron getting round you!” Embarrassed by the chaffing the couple “went off like a shot” and best and Gardner watched them hurry off through the rain towards Commercial Road.

At around 11.45pm, William Marshall, a labourer who lived at number 64 Berner Street was standing outside his lodgings, when he noticed a man and woman outside number 63. They both seemed quite sober, and as he watched them began to kiss.

Marshall heard the man remark to the woman, “You would say anything but your prayers.” The couple then moved off heading in the direction of Dutfield’s Yard. Marshall described the man as being middle-aged and stout, and had the appearance of a clerk. He was around 5 feet 6 inches tall clean shaven, and respectably dressed. He wore a Small, black, cutaway coat, dark trousers, and a round cap with a small sailor-like peak.

At 12.30am PC William Smith proceeded along Berner Street on his beat and noticed a man and a woman on the opposite side of the road to Dutfield’s Yard, where Elizabeth Stride’s body was later discovered.

The man was approximately 28 years old, with a dark complexion and a small dark moustache. He was about five foot seven inches tall, had on a dark overcoat, a hard, felt, deerstalker, dark hat, and ark clothing.

The woman, whom Smith later identified as Elizabeth Stride, had a flower pinned to her jacket.

However, the couple were doing nothing that aroused Smith’s suspicions, so he continued on his beat keeping ahead onto Commercial Road.

At number 40 Berner Street was the International Working Men’s Educational Club, which had been founded in 1884 by a group of Jewish Socialists.

Member Morris Eagle had left the club at around 12.15am to walk his “young lady” home.

Returning to the club at 25 minutes to one, he found the front door locked, so went through the gates into Dutfield’s Yard, and entered the club via its back door.

He noticed nothing on the ground by the gates as he passed through them and was sure he would have noticed if a man and woman had been in the yard at the time.

However, since the yard itself was pitch-black, he was not able to say for certain if the body of Elizabeth Stride could have been there at that time.

The most important witness to have seen Elizabeth Stride, in the 30 minutes before her body was discovered in Dutfield’s Yard, was a Hungarian Jew by the name of Israel Swcharz. He turned into Berner Street at around 12.45am and noticed a man walking ahead of him. The man stopped to talk to a woman who was standing in the gateway of Dutfield’s Yard. Later, Schwartz was emphatic that the woman had seen was Elizabeth Stride.

Since it is likely that Israel Schwartz witnessed the early stages of Elizabeth Stride’s murder, and is therefore possibly the only person ever to have seen one of Jack the Ripper's victims in the act of being murdered, his statement is worth close scrutiny, albeit he spoke no English, and therefore gave his evidence through an interpreter.

It is also worth noting that his statement to the police, and interviews he subsequently gave

Women In Flower And Dean Street

Liz Stride Seen With A Man

Another Sighting

to journalists, did differ in certain details.

However, the police do seem to have taken him very seriously as a witness. According to Scwharz, the man was about 5 feet, 5 inches tall, aged around 30 with dark hair, a fair complexion, a small brown moustache. He had a full face, broad shoulders and appeared to be slightly intoxicated.

As Schwartz watched, the man tried to pull the woman into the street, but then spun her around, and threw her onto the footway, whereupon the woman screamed three times, but not very loudly.

Israel Schwartz appears to have believed that he was witnessing a domestic attack, and so crossed the road to avoid getting involved.

As he did so, he saw a second man standing, lighting his pipe. As Schwartz passed him, the man who was attacking the woman called out, apparently to this second man, the word ‘Lipski,’ at which point the second man began to follow him.

Schwartz panicked and began to run, and had managed to lose his apparent pursuer by the time he reached the nearby railway arch.

This second man, Schwartz said, was aged about 35, around 5feet, 11 inches tall, had a fresh complexion, light brown hair, a brown moustache, and wore a dark overcoat with an old, black, hard felt hat.

The presence of the second man is something of a mystery. It has suggested to some that the killer had an accomplice.

However, the evidence seems to suggest that the police traced the second man, and eliminated him as a suspect. Indeed in a report, dated the

.

Berner Street

19th of October 1888, Chief Inspector Swanson wrote that 'the police apparently do not suspect the second man,' although we do not know why this should be.

For two such violent attacks to have taken place on the same woman in the same gateway in the space of 15 minutes is too much of a coincidence, so there is a high probability that the man that Schwartz saw was the murderer of Elizabeth stride.

At 1 a.m. Louise Diemshutz, the steward of the International Working Men's Educational Club, returned to Dutfield's Yard from Westow Hill Market, near Crystal Palace, where he had spent the day hawking the cheap jewellery.

As he turned his pony and cart into the yard his pony shied to the left and refused to go any further. Looking into the yard, Diemshutz saw a dark shape lying on the ground close to the wall of the club. Leaning forward he prodded it with his whip and tried to lift it. When this proved unsuccessful he jumped down to investigate and struck a match to get a better view. It was windy that night and the match was extinguished almost immediately. But in the brief seconds flickering light, he saw that it was a woman lying on the ground.

Thinking it might be his wife he went into the club by the side entrance and finding his wife safe, told several club members, "There's a woman lying in the yard, but I cannot say whether she is drunk or dead."

Taking a candle, Diemshutz returned to the yard with several other club members. Now he noticed blood by the body, and those present winced in horror, when they saw that the woman's throat had been cut.

The various club members rushed from the yard and hurried off into the surrounding streets to find a police constable. Deimschutz and a companion headed along Fairclough Street

shouting “Murder” and “Police.”

At its junction with Christian Street, they met Edward Spooner. He asked what all the fuss was about and when they told him he returned with them to Dutfield’s Yard where around fifteen people were gathered. Spooner stooped down, lifted the woman’s chin and found it to be slightly warm. As Spooner tilted the head back Diemschutz got his first glimpse of just how terrible the wound to her throat was. “I could see that her throat was fearfully cut,” he told a journalist later that day. “There was a great gash in it over two inches wide.”

There was a stream of blood running from the woman’s throat and up the yard towards the door of the club. There was also a doubled up piece of paper in the woman’s right hand, which it later transpired was a packet of cachous, or breath fresheners.

Morris Eagle and another club member had headed out of Berner Street and gone right along Commercial Road.

Here they met PC Henry Lamb and told him “Come on! There has been another murder.” Lamb alerted PC Edward Collins and together they followed the two men back to Dutfield’s Yard where the crowd had now swelled to some 20 or 30 people.

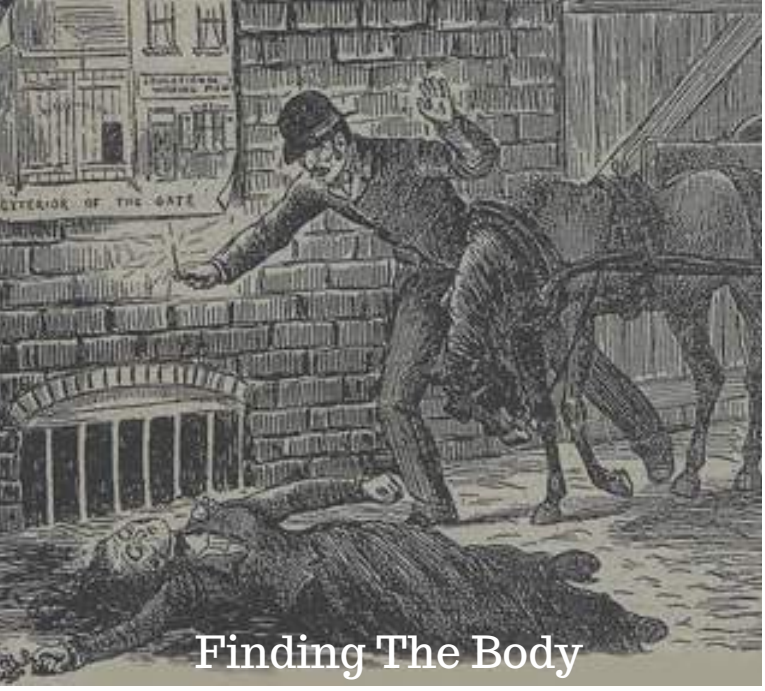
Lamb ordered the bystanders to keep back lest they get blood on their clothing and “find themselves in trouble,” and told Collins to go at once for Dr Frederick William Blackwell who lived at 100 Commercial Road.

He then sent Morris Eagle to Leman Street Police Station to summon further assistance.

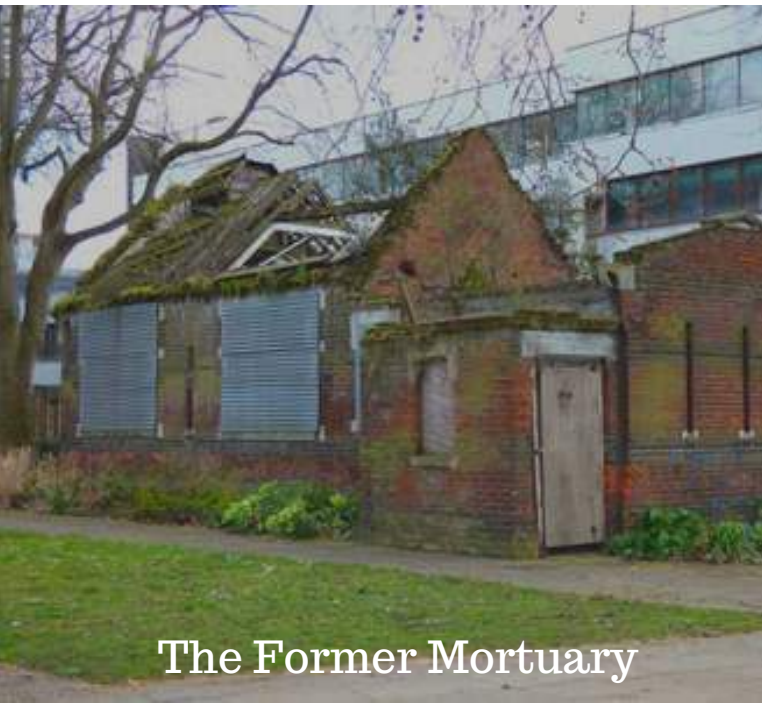
As the two men headed off, Lamb stooped down and felt the woman’s face, it was still slightly warm. However, when he felt her wrist he could detect no sign of a pulse. When asked by the Coroner at the subsequent inquest whether the woman’s clothing had been disturbed, Lamb replied “No. I could scarcely see her boots,” and added, “she looked like she had been quietly laid down.”

Dr Blackwell arrived in the Yard at 1.16am and having pronounced the woman dead, gave it as his opinion that she had been dead for between 20 - 30 minutes. He noted that the woman was wearing a check silk scarf, the bow of which was turned to the left and pulled tightly. At the inquest he stated that he had formed the opinion that the killer had first taken hold of the back of the silk scarf, and pulled his victim backwards onto the ground. He, however, couldn’t be certain whether the woman’s throat was cut whilst she was standing or after she had been pulled backwards. Once the killer had cut her throat, slicing through the windpipe, she would not have been able to cry out, and would have bled to death within about a minute and a half.

Shortly after Dr Blackwell’s arrival PC Lamb gave orders to close the gates into Dutfield’s Yard and told everybody to remain where they were. He then carried out a search of the club premises, examining people’s hands



Finding The Body



The Former Mortuary

Elizabeth Stride Mortuary Photo

and clothing for bloodstains in the process.

Having found nothing suspicious, he went round to the cottages at the rear of number 42 Berner Street, and woke the residents who had apparently remained asleep throughout the excitement of the previous 30 or so minutes. The residents appeared very frightened, and when they asked Lamb what had happened he told them “nothing much,” as he didn’t want to alarm them further.

Lamb then returned to the body to find that Inspector West, Inspector Pinhorn and Dr Phillips had arrived at the scene.

Inspector Reid was alerted by telegram at 1.25am and headed directly to Berner Street from Commercial Street Police Station.

When he arrived Phillips and Blackwell were examining the woman’s throat. All the people in the yard were then interrogated and there names and addresses taken.

Once they had given a satisfactory account of themselves and their movements, and their hands and pockets had been inspected and searched, they were allowed to leave.

A more thorough search was then made of the cottages and the names of the residents ascertained.

Hopes of apprehending the killer in his hiding place were briefly raised when the door of a loft was found to be locked from the inside. But on forcing it open the police found it empty.

Reid then minutely inspected the wall near to where the body was lying and found no traces of blood on it. At 4.30am the body was removed to St George’s Mortuary in cable Street and at 5am

PC Albert Collins washed the blood away from the yard.

The fact that Elizabeth Stride had not been disembowelled but had only had her throat cut, led to some newspapers to dubbing her, somewhat bizarrely, “Lucky Liz Stride.” To the police this suggested that the killer had been interrupted in the course of the murder. It is possible that he may have been commencing his mutilations when Diemshutz entered the yard, and that he may have jumped back into the shadows to avoid being seen. Indeed it could have been this sudden movement that startled the pony, causing it to shie to the left.

Later that day it dawned on Diemshutz that the killer may have been hiding in the shadows just a few inches away from him as he made his grisly discovery. With Diemshutz distracted the murderer no doubt slipped briskly out into Berner Street and made good his escape.

No weapon had been found, no clues had been discovered. Yet again the Whitechapel murderer had killed within yards or even feet of numerous people, had possibly been interrupted in the process, and yet, just like on the other occasions, he had simply melted away unseen into the night.

Or had he? On the 1st October, *The Star* newspaper carried the following tantalising report:-

""From two different sources we have the story that a man when passing through Church-lane at about half-past one, saw a man sitting on a door-step and wiping his hands.

As every one is on the look out for the murderer the man looked at the stranger with a certain amount of suspicion, whereupon he tried to conceal his face. He is described as a man who wore a short jacket and a sailor's hat."

The man's jacket and sailor's hat are certainly similar to the clothing worn by the men or man seen with Stride by PC Marshall and Israel Schwarz.

Unfortunately, the report is uncorroborated, and there is no mention of the sighting in police records, or at least if there was no record of it has survived.

There is also the problem of the timing, since, as we shall see, at 1.30am the murderer was apparently standing outside Mitre Square chatting with Catharine Eddowes.

It is possible that the witness, who like most people in the area probably didn't possess a watch, was estimating the time that he had passed along Church Lane, and that the sighting actually took place earlier.

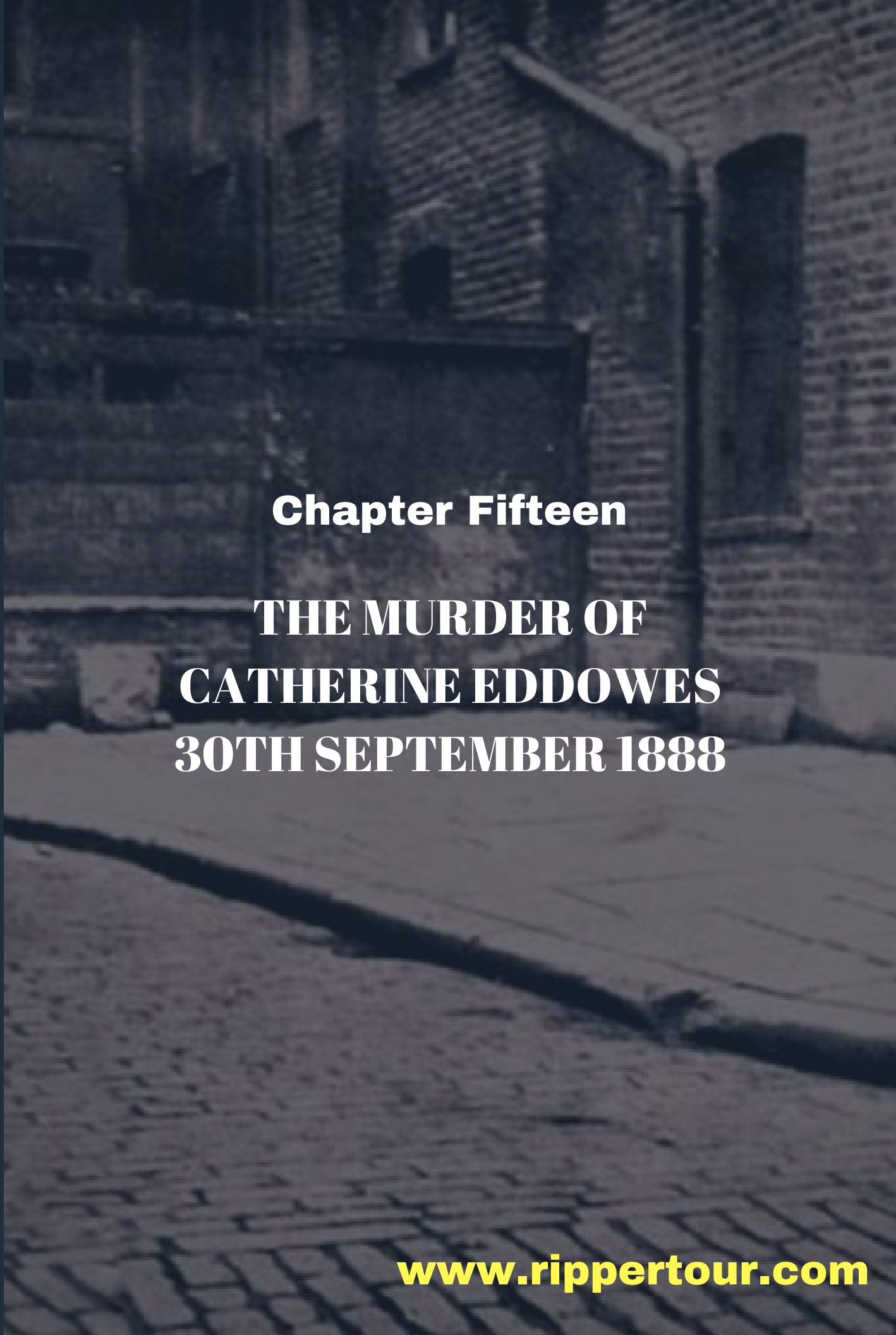
But if genuine, the sighting does provide us with an idea of the route taken by Elizabeth Stride's killer when he left Berner Street.

Aware that Berner Street would soon be the epicentre of the search for him, he would have been anxious to get away from the vicinity as quickly as possible. He was probably quite fortunate that Diemshutz didn't raise the alarm immediately but instead went into the club to check on his wife. This gave the killer the vital minutes required to make his escape from the yard. Evidently, his hands would have been bloodstained so an escape along the brightly lit and fairly busy Commercial Road would have been risky.

However, a left turn out of Dutfield's Yard would have brought him, within seconds to a narrow and dark thoroughfare known as Batty's Gardens.

From here he could have taken any number of routes to escape from the scene of his latest atrocity, Church Lane certainly being one of them.

Whatever his chosen route of fleeing the crime scene, it almost certainly took him towards the City of London - where, within half-an-hour, he had met his second victim of the morning.



Chapter Fifteen

THE MURDER OF CATHERINE EDDOWES 30TH SEPTEMBER 1888

At more or less the exact moment that the body of Elizabeth Stride was being discovered in Dutfield's Yard, another woman by the name of Catharine or "Kate" Eddowes, was being released from Bishopsgate Police Station in the City of London.

At around 8.30pm the previous evening she had been entertaining a delighted a crowd of onlookers outside number 29 Aldgate High Street with a spontaneous, though drunken, imitation of a fire engine. Having taken a bow, she lay down on the pavement and went to sleep!

PC Robinson of the City Police arrived on the scene and asked if any of the onlookers knew who she was or where she lived. None of them did. So Robinson hauled her to her feet and lent her against the wall. She promptly slid back down onto the pavement, no doubt to the further amusement of the crowd. Robinson summoned a colleague, PC George Simmons to his assistance and together they manhandled her round to Bishopsgate Police Station. Here, when asked her name Kate replied, "Nothing."

The officers placed her in a cell and left her to sober up. She had soon fallen into a comatose sleep.

PC George Hutt, the City gaoler, came on duty at 10pm and took over the responsibility for the Prisoners in the cells. He checked on her several times over the next few hours, and found her still fast asleep each time he did so.

But by 12.15am she had woken and Hutt heard her singing softly. Fifteen minutes later she called to him and asked when she would be allowed to leave. "When you can take care of yourself," Hutt called back. "I can do that now," came her reply. At 12.55am he brought her from the cell and told her she could go.

When he asked her name and address for the release papers, she told him it was ‘Mary Ann Kelly of 6 Fashion Street.’

Discharging her from custody Hutt pushed open the swing door to the passage and said. ‘This way Misses.’

As she walked along the passage to the outer door, she asked him what time it was. “Too late for you to get anymore drink,” observed Hutt. “I shall get a Damned fine hiding when I get home,” she sighed as she opened the door. Hutt was not in the least bit sympathetic “And serve you right,” he replied, “you have no right to get drunk.”

As Kate left the station, Hutt asked her to shut the door behind her. “All right” she chirped “Good Night Old Cock.”

So saying she turned left and headed off towards Houndsditch. According to Hutt’s later estimation, it would have taken her around eight minutes “ordinary walking” to reach Mitre Square, during which time the murderer of Elizabeth Stride was also heading towards the square from the opposite direction.

Mitre Square, situated about half a mile to the west of Berner Street, lay just inside the City of London boundary. It was then an enclosed square over which towered three imposing warehouse buildings.

Three uninhabited houses and a shop backed onto its south-west corner, whilst two further houses, one of which was occupied by a City Police man, Richard Peasre, nestled between the warehouses.

The square was bordered by Mitre Street to the west, Aldgate High Street to the south and Dukes Place to the east.

Mitre Square North-East Corner

Mitre Square South-East Corner

Mitre Square South-West Corner

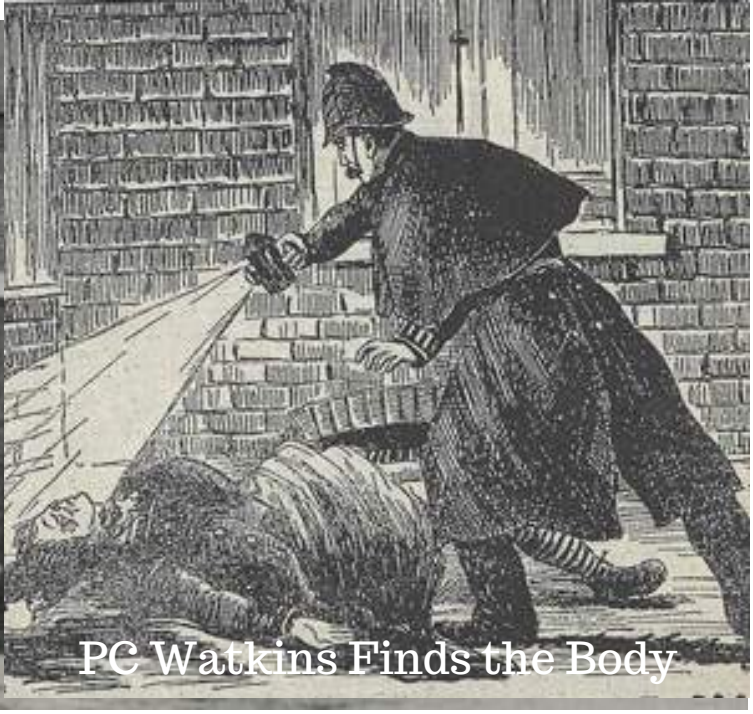
Nearby stood the Great Synagogue on Bevis Marks, whilst a stone's throw away was the church of St Botolph, beyond which the south side of Aldgate High Street was lined with butchers shops and slaughterhouses and was consequently known as Butchers Row.

There were three entrances into the square - a fairly wide one that came in from Mitre Street; the narrower St James Place (known locally as the Orange Market) in the square's northeast corner; and the long, narrow Church Passage in the south-east corner that came in from Duke's Place.

At 1.30am PC Watkins of the City Police passed this south-east corner on a beat that brought him through Mitre Square every twelve to fourteen minutes. He had his lantern on and fixed to his belt. He was later emphatic that the square had been quite deserted and that no-one could have been hiding in the square without him seeing them. He left the square and turned right towards Aldgate.

Five minutes later three Jewish gentlemen, Harry Harris, Joseph Hyam Levy and Joseph Lawende left the Imperial Club on Duke Street and, as they passed its junction with Church Passage, noticed a man and woman talking quietly together.

The woman had her back to them, but they could see that her hand was resting on the man's chest. Levy was immediately convinced that the couple were up to no good, and announced brusquely,



PC Watkins Finds the Body

Murder Corner Mitre square

Catherine Eddowes Mortuary Photo

"I don't like going home by myself when I see these sorts of character's about" In his hurry to get away he paid the couple scant attention and was unable to furnish a description of either of them, although he did say that the man may have been three or so inches taller than the woman.

Jospeh Lawende, however, was a little less disgusted and a little more observant.

Although he hadn't seen the woman's face, he was almost certain that her clothing was that worn by Catharine Eddowes, when he was later shown it at the police station.

Although the street lighting wasn't particularly good, he caught a brief glimpse of the man's face and was able to provide police with a description. He had the appearance of a sailor and was aged about 30. He was around 5 feet 9 inches tall, of medium build. He had a fair complexion, and a small fair moustache. He sported a reddish neckerchief, tied in a knot; wore a pepper-and-salt coloured, loose-fitting jacket, and had on a grey, peaked, cloth cap.

However, it should be noted that Lawende obtained only a quick glimpse of the man as he passed by, and since the couple were doing nothing particularly suspicious, he later maintained that he would not be able to recognize or identify the man were he to see him again.

At 1.44am PC Watkins turned out of Leadenhall Street, strolled along Mitre Street, and veered right into Mitre Square. Almost immediately he saw a sight that sent him reeling back in horror. Catharine Eddowes was lying on her back in a pool of blood, with her clothes thrown up over her waist. Racing across the square Watkins burst into Kearley and Tonge's warehouse where he knew retired policeman, George Morris, was

.

Mitre Square In 2010

working as a night watchman. “For God’s sake mate”, cried Watkins “come to my assistance…here is another woman cut to pieces”. Pausing to get his lamp, the night watchman followed Watkins to the square’s south west corner, took one look at the body, and raced off along Mitre Street towards Aldgate, blowing furiously on his whistle as he ran.

In Aldgate he met PC James Harvey and PC Holland and brought them back to the square. Holland went immediately to fetch Dr George Sequeira, from his abode on nearby Jewry Street.

Sequeira was at the scene by 1.55am and later told the inquest that the place where the murder had occurred was probably the darkest part of Mitre Square, although there had certainly been enough light for the miscreant to perpetrate the deed. Death, he said, would have been instantaneous once the murderer had cut the windpipe and the blood vessels.

Significantly, he was of the opinion that the murderer possessed no great anatomical skill - in other words, he had only a basic knowledge of anatomy - and when asked by the Coroner if he would have expected the murderer to be bespattered with blood, he replied: “Not necessarily.”

But at the scene of the murder in the early hours of that morning,

Sequeira did little more than pronounce life extinct and decided not to touch the body, preferring instead to await the arrival of the City Police Divisional Surgeon, Dr Frederick Gordon Brown.

Meanwhile, police officers were converging on Mitre Square from all over the City. Inspector Edward Collard arrived from Bishopsgate Police Station and ordered an immediate search of the neighbourhood instructing that door to door

inquiries were to be made of the area around Mitre Square.

Next on the scene was Superintendent James McWilliam, head of the City Police Detective Department, who arrived with a number of detectives, all of whom he sent off to make a thorough search of the Spitalfields streets and lodging houses.

As the officers began to fan out through the streets, several men were stopped and questioned, but to no avail.

The killer, it appeared, had simply melted away into the night. It is probable that he made his escape via the adjacent St James's Place where there was a Metropolitan Fire Escape Station. Yet the firemen on duty had seen or heard a nothing. Neither had City Police Constable Richard Pearse who lived at number 3 Mitre Square, where his bedroom window looked across at the murder site.

George Morris, the night watchman, whose whistle had first alerted the police at large to the atrocity, expressed himself totally baffled as to how such a brutal crime could have been committed close by, without him hearing a sound. As *The Illustrated Police News* reported:-

"He could hear the footsteps of the policeman as he passed on his beat every quarter of an hour, so that it appeared impossible that the woman could have uttered any sound without his detecting it. It was only on the night that he remarked to some policeman that he wished the "butcher" would come round Mitre Square and he would give him a doing; yet the "butcher" had come and he was perfectly ignorant of it."

Stranger still, at the exact moment that Catherine Eddowes was going with her murderer into Mitre Square, three City Detectives, Daniel Halse, Robert Outram and Edward Marriot, were busily orchestrating plain clothes patrols of the City's eastern fringe. Yet the murderer had, apparently, managed to slip past them undetected and then had headed back into the streets of the East End.

Halse was over by St Botolph's Church when he learnt of the murder at just before 2am.

Hurrying to Mitre Square he gave instructions to the constables present to search the neighbourhood.

He then set off to make his own search, heading first for Middlesex Street from which he turned into Wentworth Street, where he stopped to question two men. Both though were able to give him a satisfactory account of their movements and he allowed them to continue on their way.

He then passed through Goulston Street at around 2.20am, where he had noticed nothing untoward, and then headed back to Mitre Square. Here he found that the body had been removed to the Golden Lane Mortuary. On making his way there he learnt that a portion of the deceased's apron was

missing, and was presumed to have been taken away by her killer.

At around 2.55 am Pc Alfred Long, of the Metropolitan Police, and one of the extra constables drafted into the area after the Annie Chapman murder, was walking his beat along Goulston Street.

As he passed the doorway that led to the staircases of 108 to 119 Wentworth Model Dwellings he found the missing portion of the woman's apron. It was stained with blood and faeces, one section of it was wet and the blade of a knife had apparently been wiped on it.

Long had earlier passed that way at roughly 2.20am, about the same time as Halse had, and like the City detective, he too had seen nothing to attract his attention. Indeed he was sure that the fragment had not been there then.

With the piece of bloodstained apron we have a significant clue that raises as many questions as it answers.

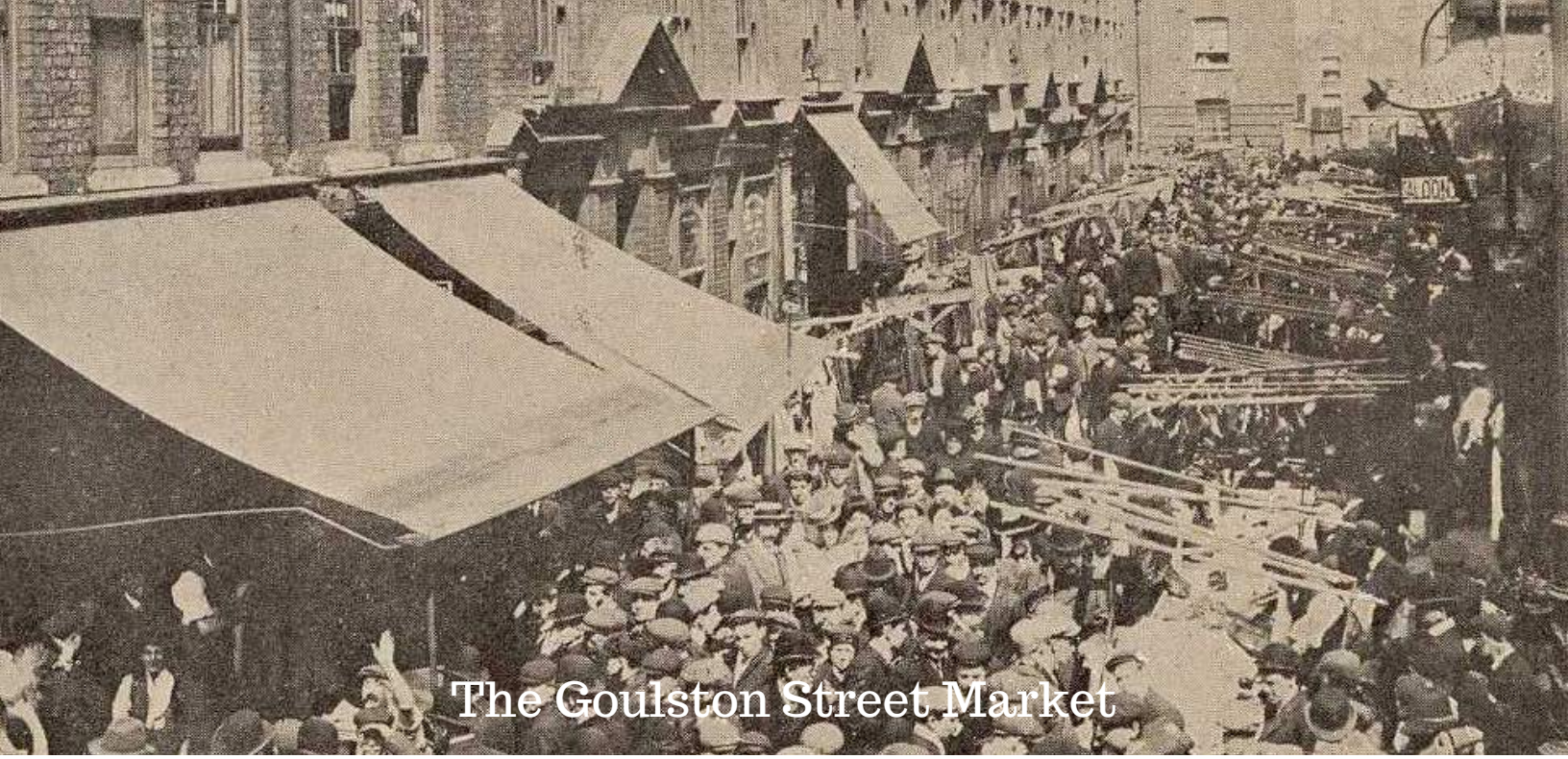
Firstly, it tells us which way the killer was heading. He had to be going to ground, so the positioning of the apron suggests someone who lived in the area and who was heading home.

The apron also answers a fundamental question about the killer's appearance as he fled the scenes of his outrages. It is commonly believed that, having committed such gruesome murders, the killer must have been drenched in blood. This may have been so, but there were eighty or so butchers and slaughterhouses in the vicinity, where the employees worked through the night, so it wasn't that uncommon to see people in bloodstained clothing on the streets in the early hours of the morning.

The evidence, however, suggests that Jack the Ripper asphyxiated his victims before he commenced his mutilations, so by the time he cut their throats, their hearts had all but stopped beating and so you wouldn't get the arterial spurt that would have covered him in blood.

Finally, his victims were all prostitutes and when they went with him into the dark corners of squares and passageways they were only doing so for one reason. Suppose when he met them he was wearing a heavy buttoned-up overcoat? They wouldn't be in the least bit suspicious if he were to unbutton the coat, or even if he took it off altogether. In fact, they'd probably have been more suspicious if he didn't. He could, therefore, have got blood all over his shirt, jacket and trousers but by putting the coat back on once he had murdered and mutilated his victims he would have covered the bloodstains, which would then have remained hidden until he got home and was able to clean himself up at his leisure.

Personally, I believe he was heading back into the East End from Mitre Square, with the apron, his hands and the knife in his pockets. To have stood still in the streets and



The Goulston Street Market

proceeded to wipe away the bloodstains may have attracted attention to him.

But a recessed doorway on Goulston Street provided sufficient cover for him to do so quickly and safely, and once clear of any visible incriminating signs he simply dropped the apron in the doorway and continued on his way.

But why did it take him so long to reach the doorway?

The journey from Mitre Square to Goulston Street is no great distance. Daniel Halse had done it in twenty or so minutes, and he was on the lookout for suspicious looking characters, and had even waited whilst two men had given accounts of themselves.

Today the journey can be walked via several routes, all of which can be done at a rapid pace in less than ten minutes. If Long and Halse were correct and the apron wasn't there at 2.20am, then the murderer had loitered in the area for anywhere between 35 minutes and an hour, during which time the police were fanning out into the streets to search for him, and were stopping and questioning any man they met.

So where was the killer while all this was happening? Was he hiding in one of the empty warehouses along the route? If so why hadn't he dropped the apron there?

Surely his survival instinct would have instantly kicked in after the crime, and his overwhelming desire would have been to get away from the danger of capture as quickly as he possible.

Is it possible that he had, in fact, gone home, and then returned to the streets, devoid of bloodstains, to drop the apron into the doorway?

Was his intention to taunt the police by hanging around the vicinity as they searched for him; or did he perhaps have an even more sinister agenda in mind?

Goulston Street 1898

Long's first thought on discovering the portion of apron was that someone may have been attacked and could at that very moment be lying injured or dead on a staircase or landing inside the dwellings.

So he stood up intending to search the block and, as he did so, he noticed a scrawled chalk message on the wall directly above the apron which read:- 'The Juwes are the men that will not be blamed for nothing.'

Moments later another officer arrived at the scene, and Long asked him to guard the building - telling him to keep a careful watch on anybody entering or leaving it - whilst he took the portion of apron round to Commercial Street Police Station and handed over to an inspector.

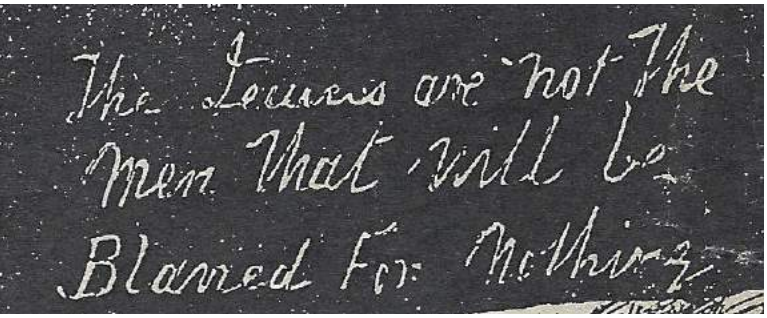
Soon officers of the Metropolitan Police were gathering around the doorway and were gazing at the graffito with feelings of great trepidation.

Mindful of the strong feelings of anti Semitism that had surfaced in the area in the wake of the Leather Apron scare, and realizing that Wentworth Model Dwellings not only stood in a largely Jewish locality but was also inhabited almost exclusively by Jews, the Metropolitan Police began to fear that if the message was left it could lead to a resurgence of racial unrest in the district and the consequences could be dire.

They were, therefore, anxious to erase the message, and sooner rather than later.

But both the portion of apron and the graffito pertained to a murder investigation being carried out by the City of London Police force, detectives from which had soon crossed the boundary and were also gathering around the doorway.

They were not so keen to erase what they saw as an important clue in their investigation and the two forces clashed over what should be done about the graffito.



The City Police detectives were adamant that it should be photographed. The Metropolitan Police officers, however, pointed out that that would mean waiting until it was light, by which time gentile purchasers would be arriving in their thousands to purchase from the Jewish stallholders on Petticoat Lane and Goulston Street Sunday markets.

Since there was no way of keeping it hidden from these crowds the Metropolitan Police were convinced the result might be a full scale against the Jews.

Daniel Halse suggested a compromise whereby only the top line, “The Juwes are,” would be erased.

But, as Superintendent Arnold, of the Metropolitan Police, later pointed out in a report:- “Had only a portion of the writing been removed the context would have remained.”

The bickering was still going on when Sir Charles Warren arrived at the scene between 5 and 5.30am.

Since the doorway stood on Metropolitan Police territory, his word was final, and he immediately concurred with his officers that leaving the graffito any longer would lead to far greater crimes against innocent Jews.

So he ordered that the message be erased without delay, and before any photograph of it could be taken.

It would prove the most controversial order he gave in the entire investigation and Major Smith, the acting City Police Commissioner considered it a huge blunder and could barely disguise his contempt for Warren’s actions in the days and weeks that followed.

On the 6th November, in a report to the Home office, Warren defended his action:-

"…it was just getting light, the public would be in the streets in a few minutes, in a neighbourhood very much crowded by Jewish vendors and Christian Purchasers from all parts of London…

The writing was on the jamb of the open archway or doorway visible to anybody in the street and could not be covered up without danger of the covering been torn off at once.

A discussion took place whether the writing could be left covered up or otherwise… for an hour until it could be photographed, but after taking into consideration the excited state of the population in London…the strong feeling which had been excited against the Jews, and the fact that in a short time there would be a large concourse of the people in the streets, and having before me a report that if it was left there the house was likely to be wrecked (in which from my own observation I entirely concurred) I considered it desirable to obliterate the writing at once…

I do not hesitate to say that if the writing had been left there would have been an onslaught upon the Jews, property would have been wrecked, and lives would probably have been lost…"

As some of the City of London Police detectives argued with the Metropolitan Police detectives over what was to be done with the chalked graffito, others were attempting to identify the Mitre Square victim.

The horrific mutilations that her body had been subjected to led several newspapers to wonder if an identification would be at all possible.

The Edinburgh Evening News, in common with almost every other newspaper in the country, tried to convey the full horror of what had happened in Mitre Square to its readers on Monday 1st October, 188:-

"The scene...was a most horrible one. The woman, about forty years of age, was lying on her back dead. Her head was inclined to the left side. Both arms were extended. The throat was cut half-way round. Across the right cheek to the neck was another gash, and a part of the right ear had been cut off.

Following the plan in the Whitechapel tragedy, the murderer was not content with merely killing his victim, but had subjected her to terrible mutilation.

After careful notice had been taken of the position of the body when found, it was conveyed to the City Mortuary in Golden Lane. Here a more extended examination was made.

The murdered woman was apparently about 40 years of age and about 5 feet in height and evidently belonged to that immoral class of which the women done to death in Whitechapel were members.

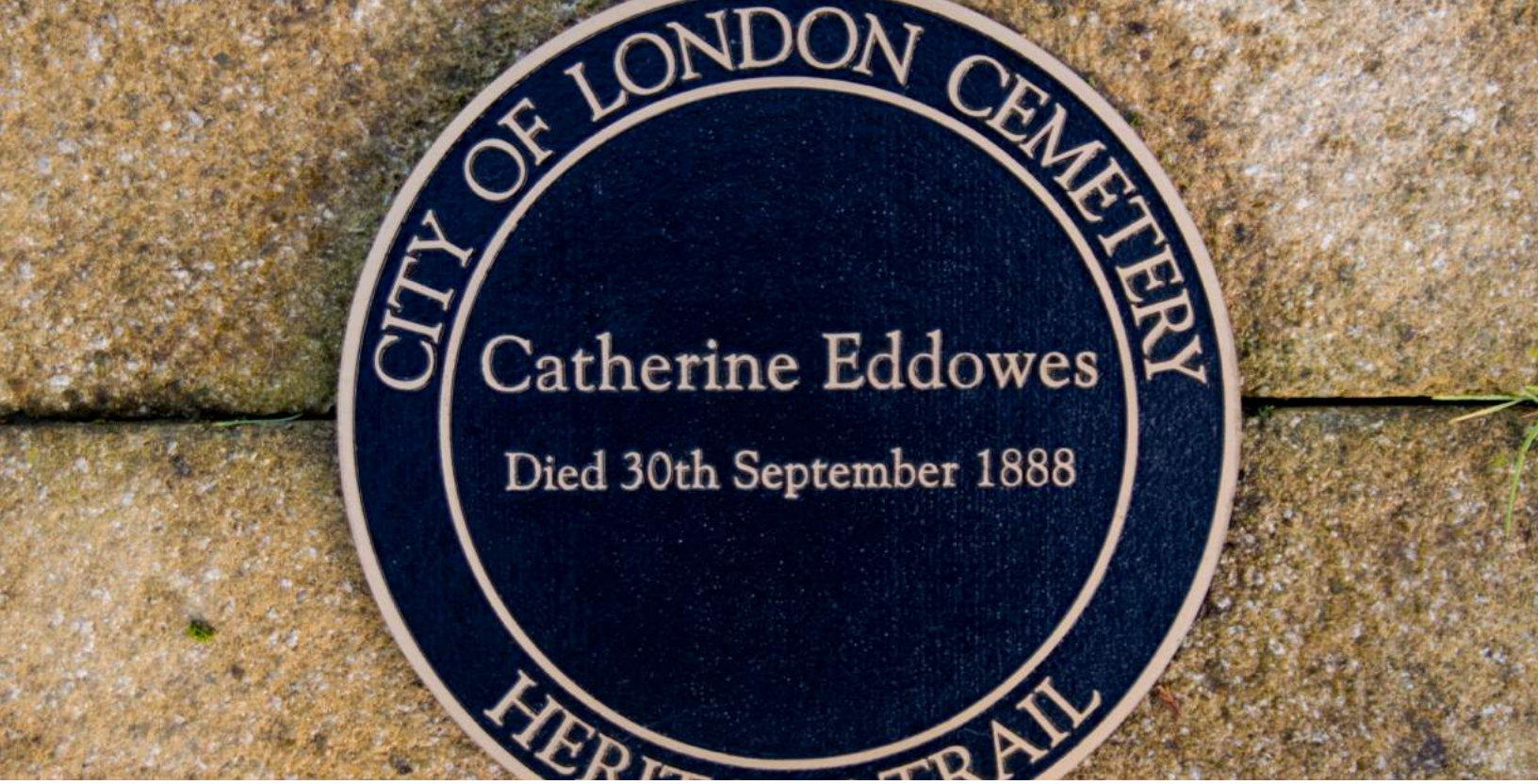
She was of dark complexion, with auburn hair, and hazel eyes, and was dresser! in

shabby dark clothes. She wore a black cloth jacket with imitation fur collar. Her dress was made of green chintz.

The police found upon the body a white pocket-handkerchief, a blunt bone-handled table knife, short clay pipe, and a red cigarette case with white metal fittings. The knife bore no traces of blood, so could have no connection with the crime...One most extraordinary incident in connection with the crime is that not the slightest scream or noise was heard. A watchman is employed at one of the warehouses in the square, and, on the other side of the square, a city policeman was sleeping. Many people would be about in the immediate neighbourhood, even at this early hour, making preparations for the market which takes place every Sunday in Middlesex (formerly Petticoat} Lane and the adjacent thoroughfares...Taking everything into account, therefore, the murder must be pronounced one of extraordinary daring and brutality... The woman is so dreadfully mutilated that it is feared she cannot be recognised, except by her clothes, the two pawn tickets found lying by her, and the initials "D.C." or "T. C" tattooed in blue ink on her left forearm..."

The pawn-tickets, that were mentioned in the many newspaper articles that appeared in the days following the murder led to a positive identification of the woman on the evening of Tuesday, 2nd October 1888.

That evening, a labourer by the name of John Kelly, who gave his address as a common lodging house at 55, Flower and Dean Street turned up at Bishopsgate police station, and stated that he believed that the woman who had been murdered in Mitre Square was his "wife."



Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper reported on the identification on Sunday 7th October 1888:-

"He [Kelly] was at once taken to the mortuary in Golden Lane, and there he identified her as the woman, to whom he subsequently admitted he was not married, but with whom he had cohabited for seven years.

In answer to questions, he stated that the last time he saw her - referring to her as "Kate" - was on Saturday afternoon.

He left her believing that she would return to him at the lodging-house in Flower and Dean Street.

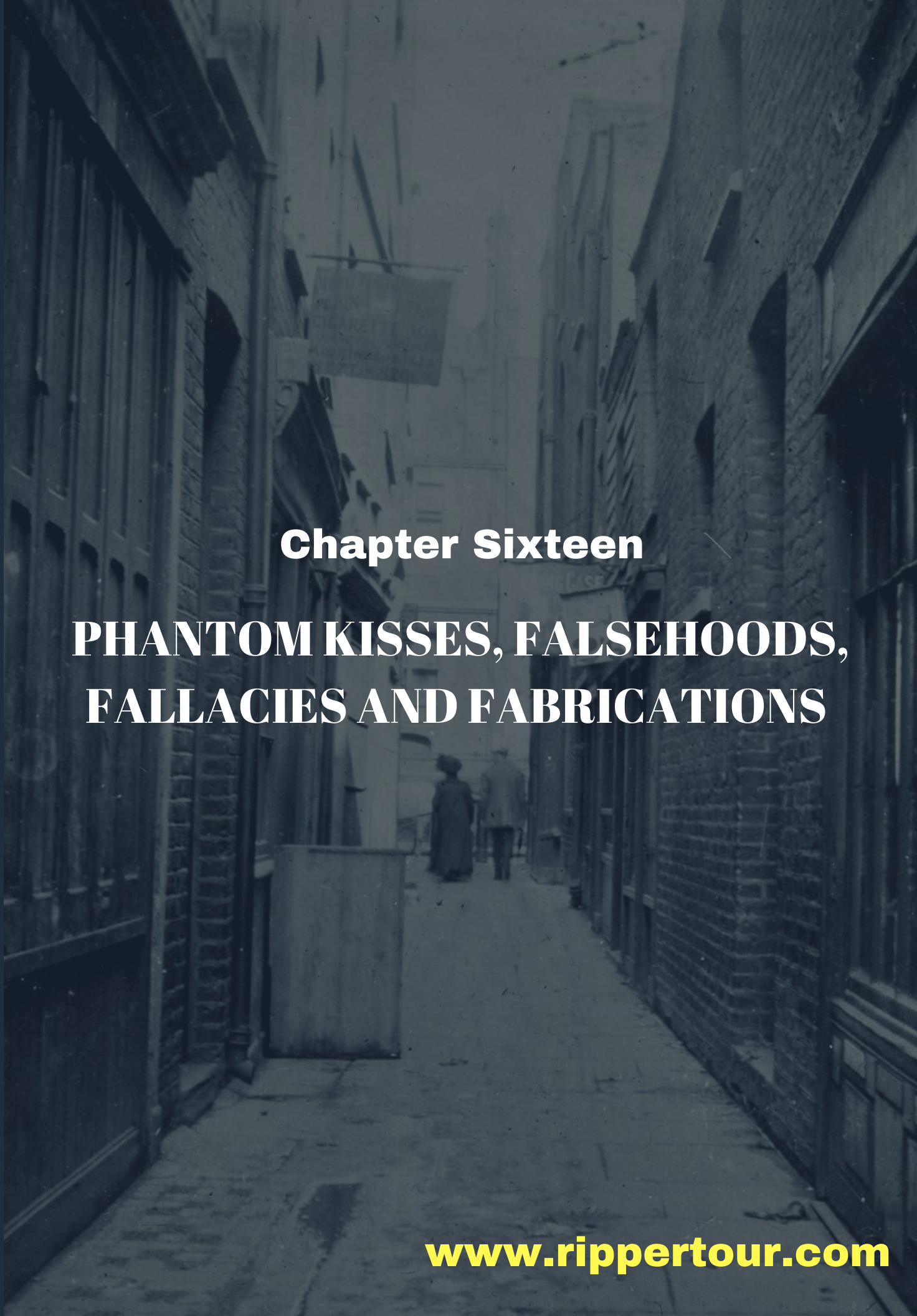
Being asked why he had not made inquiries before relative to her absence on Saturday night and since he replied that he thought she had got into some trouble and had been locked up..."

Kelly also explained the initials, "T.C", which were found on the woman's forearm. Prior to living with him, he stated, she had lived with a man named Thomas Conway.

On Thursday, 4th October 1888, Eliza Gold, of 6 Thrawl Street, testified at the inquest that she had identified the body as that of her sister, Catherine Eddowes, a "single woman" who had lived with John Kelly for some years, and who, to the best of her knowledge, was a woman of "sober habits."

On Monday, 8th of October 1888, crowds lined the streets as the funeral cortege for Catherine Eddowes made its way to the City of London Cemetery in Ilford where she was laid to rest, and where a memorial plaque to her can still be seen today.

What those watching had no way of knowing was that for the rest of that month there would be no further murders.



Chapter Sixteen

PHANTOM KISSES, FALSEHOODS, FALLACIES AND FABRICATIONS

“All the circumstances connected with the terrible East End murders are of a nature to stir up people's imagination in an exceptional degree.

But even amid so much that is awe-inspiring and dramatic one fact that was elicited at the inquest on the unfortunate woman Stride or Watts was of a peculiarly thrilling nature.

If anything were wanted to heighten the horrors of these tragedies it was the introduction of the supernatural element. “

THE EAST LONDON ADVERTISER
6th October 1888

Although the Berner Street victim was identified as Elizabeth Stride within 24 hours of her body being discovered, an official identification was to prove slightly more difficult.

In life, Elizabeth Stride had without doubt been a self-dramatising fantasist, albeit one whose antics it is difficult not to smirk at.

In death she was, at first, to prove extremely elusive, her identification being hampered by the appearance in the investigation of a mysterious lady named Mary Malcolm, who spun the police and then the inquest an elaborate yarn that delayed a definite identification by almost three weeks.

Mrs. Malcolm was the wife of a tailor and she lived at 50 Eagle Street, off Red Lion Square, Holborn. She had a sister by the name of Elizabeth who was 37 years old and who had been living in an East End lodging house. Some years ago this sister had married a respectable Bath wine merchant by the name of Watts, but had then “brought disgrace on her family” when her husband found her in bed with a porter and sent her and their two children, a boy and a girl, back to live with her “poor mother.” The girl died and the boy was sent to a boarding school, his fees being paid by Mr. Watts’s elderly sister.

Elizabeth Watts had then moved in with a man in Poplar who ran a coffee shop.

In 1885, however, she suffered another set back when this man went to sea and was drowned in a shipwreck. After that Liz Watts had gone well and truly off the rails. According to her sister, Mary, “drink was a failing with her [and she had]… been before the Thames Police Court magistrate on charges of drunkenness.” On one occasion Liz had even left a naked baby outside Mrs. Malcolm’s door, the result of an illicit affair with “some policeman or another.”

The Malcolms' had to keep the child until Liz "fetched it away." When asked by the Coroner what her sister did for a living, Mrs. Malcolm assumed a grave demeanour and replied: "I had my doubts." However, she had gone out of her way to ensure that her sister didn't starve, and every Saturday at 4 O'clock for the last two and a half years, Mrs. Malcolm had met with her errant sibling at the corner of Chancery Lane, and had dutifully given her 2 shillings to pay for her lodgings.

But on the Saturday just gone, Liz had failed to appear. Mrs. Malcolm had, in fact, last seen her alive on the previous Thursday when Liz turned up at her place of work to ask for "a little assistance." Mrs. Malcolm gave her a shilling and a little short jacket.

At 1.20am on Sunday 30th September Mrs. Malcolm was lying in bed when she felt a "kind of pressure" on her breast. This was followed by three kisses on her cheek, which she also heard as they were "quite distinct." This led her to believe that some tragedy had, at that instant, befallen her sister, and when later that day she read of the Berner Street murder she at once suspected that the victim was her sister.

The long-suffering Mary Malcolm quickly headed over to Whitechapel to inform the police of her suspicions. On first seeing the body at the mortuary she was unable to identify it as her sister's, excusing her failure at the inquest as the result of her being shown the body by gaslight. However she was able to make a positive identification the next day, not it should be noted from her sister's facial features, but from a black mark on her leg, which was, she said, the result of Liz's having been bitten by an adder when they were girls.

At the inquest, Mary Malcolm also revealed that they had another sister and a brother, neither of whom had seen Liz for years.The disgrace of it all, she told the Coroner with trembling lip, would kill her other sister. Then, bursting into profuse tears, Mary wailed to an open-jawed courtroom how she had stoically "kept this shame from everyone." Poor Mary Malcolm.

And poor Mrs. Elizabeth Stokes, wife of Joseph Stokes a brick-maker of 5 Charles Street Tottenham, who hobbled into the Coroners Court on 23rd October to reveal that she was, in fact, Mary Malcolm's sister, the former Elizabeth Watts of Bath. Her first husband had died, after which she had suffered a mental breakdown, but her character had remained good. There had been no adulterous flings with a porter or a policeman, no cuckolded husband, and no children maintained by an aunt, or, for that matter, left naked on her sister's doorstep. She was now being accused of living bigamously with her second husband, and neighbours tongues were wagging. "My sister I have not seen for years," an indignant Elizabeth Stokes told the Coroners Court. "She has given me a dreadful character. Her evidence is all false…This has put me to dreadful trouble…It is a

Mary Malcolm

shame my sister should say what she has about me, and that the innocent should suffer for the guilty."

Of Mrs. Malcolm, however, there was no sign. "Is Mrs. Malcolm here?" asked the Coroner angrily, no doubt wanting her to provide him with an explanation. "No Sir" was Inspector Edmund Reid's succinct reply.

But what was Mary Malcolm's motivation for the elaborate yarn, and why did she stick to her story whilst under oath, and against hostile questioning from both the Coroner and the Police, who made it quite plain that they didn't believe a word of her story?

It has been suggested that she may have been a macabre ghoul who just wanted to see the body of the murder victim. If this was the case, then why did she not simply walk away on the Sunday or Monday once she had viewed the body at the mortuary? Why perjure herself under oath?

Others argue that she was simply an attention seeker, who was enjoying her time in the spotlight, even if it meant libelling her innocent and blameless sister. This is possible, although journalists reporting her testimony frequently commented that she seemed truly moved by the loss of her sister.

One final explanation is that she genuinely believed that Elizabeth Stride was her sister, Elizabeth Watts. Is it possible that Stride, who it must be said, was capable of an extreme economy with the truth at the best of times, and was what would be known today as a chancer, had been impersonating Elizabeth Watts in order to illicit funds from her sister? The truth is that we can only guess at Mrs. Malcolm's motivation, she is just one of those tantalizing aspects of the case that crops up,

Berner Street

adds another element of mystery, and then disappears without a trace.

And the murder of Elizabeth Stride was to add two more twists to the tale that would result in several well-known and oft trotted out fallacies that have since become an integral part of the Jack the Ripper legend.

The first came courtesy of Matthew Packer, a greengrocer who lived at and traded from number 44 Berner Street, two doors to the south of the International Working Men's Educational Club. An *Evening News* reporter politely described him as a respectable and hardworking person who was "a little past the prime of life."

At 9am on the 30th September, Sergeant Stephen White called on Packer in the course of his door to door enquiries in the wake of Liz Stride's murder. Packer was adamant that both he and his wife had neither seen nor heard anything untoward during the night.

Two days later, Packer was visited by Grand and Batchelor, two private detectives employed by the *Evening News* and the Whitechapel Vigilance Committee. He had, it seems, remembered an important detail that had somehow slipped his mind when White had called a few days before.

He told the two private detectives that he had sold grapes to a man and a woman from his shop window at around 11.45pm on the night of the murder. The man, he said, was aged about thirty-five, was around 5 feet 7 inches tall, and was of stout square-build. He wore a wide-awake hat, dark clothes and had a clerkly appearance, or as Packer put it when expanding on his story to an *Evening News* reporter "… I am certain that he wasn't what I should call a working man or anything like us folks that live around here."

Packer recalled how the man had asked him,

'I say, old man, how do you sell your grapes?' 'Sixpence a pound the black 'uns, sir, and fourpence a pound the white 'uns,' was Packer's response.

Turning to the woman, the man asked, 'Which will you have, my dear, black or white? You shall have whichever you 'like best.' The woman chose the black ones. Packer insisted that the couple had loitered in the street for more than half an hour and that he had watched them eating the grapes in the rain.

By 12.15am the couple had moved across the road to stand in front of the Berner Street Club where they stood listening to the singing. After that Packer, who had begun shutting up shop for the night, lost sight of them.

Further enquiries by the intrepid Grande and Batchelor turned up two sisters, Mrs Rosenfield and Mrs Eva Harstein, of number 14 Berner Street, who both claimed to have seen some flower petals and a bloodied grape-stalk close to where the body of Elizabeth Stride had been found.

The two detectives, therefore, headed over to Dutfield's Yard and on searching the drain they are said to have discovered a grape stalk.

The police were more than a little perturbed by Matthew Packer's sudden recollection, especially when the subsequent article in *The Evening News* ended with the reporter's observation "Well, Mr. Packer, to ask you and your wife what you knew about the affair, as soon as ever the body was discovered?" "The Police," Packer contemptuously replied, "NO. THEY HAVEN'T ASKED ME A WORD ABOUT IT YET!"

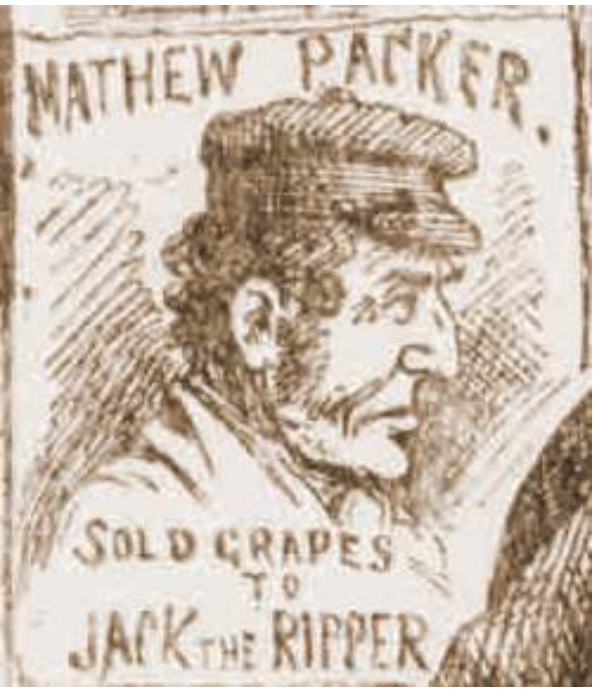
Sergeant White was promptly dispatched to re-interview this now seemingly important witness.

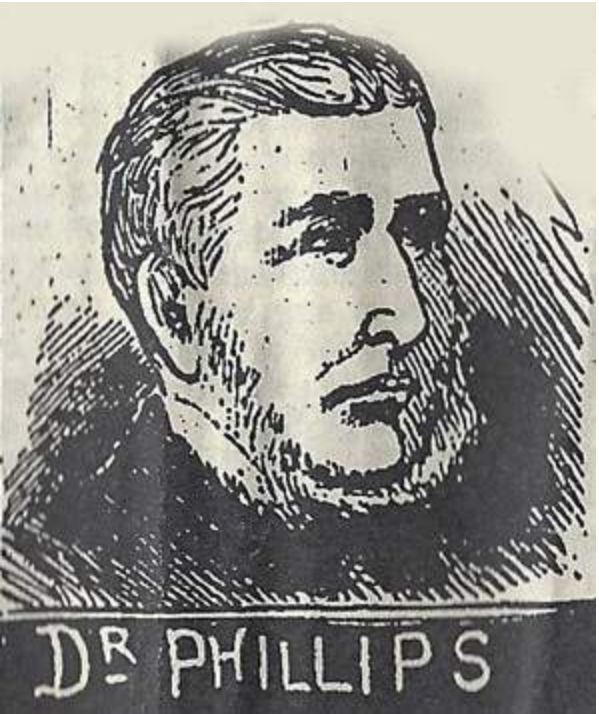
When he got to the shop, Mrs. Packer told him that her husband had been taken to the mortuary by the two private detectives.

Heading for the mortuary he met Packer returning with one of the detectives. He asked him where he had been and received the reply that he had been to "see if he could identify the woman." White asked him if he had done so. "Yes," was Packer's reply, "I believe she bought some grapes at my shop at about 12 O'clock on Saturday."

Later that day, Grand and Batchelor took Packer to Scotland Yard where he was personally interviewed by Sir Charles Warren.This time he claimed to have sold the grapes to the couple an hour earlier - at 11pm - and to have then closed his shop, leaving the couple standing in the street.

It is, of course, possible that he had misremembered the time. But what is noticeable about Packers various statements is that they were constantly evolving, with more details, or even embellishments, being added over the days that followed. Several of these, blatantly and obviously drew on newspaper reports and





popular gossip as more and more details from different witnesses about Elizabeth Stride's appearance and clothing at the time of her death were sought out and published by journalists.

Perhaps Packer was another person who was enjoying his time in the limelight, and was telling his interviewers the facts he thought they wished to hear?

Or perhaps the prospect of the £500 reward offered by the City Police for information that might lead to the apprehension of the killer proved too much of an allure for a hard working Whitechapel greengrocer, and he began fabricating his story in the hope that, should even part of it prove correct, he would be entitled to at least a share of the reward?

It must be said in Packer's defence that several of his facts remained extremely consistent with each retelling of the story. But in other respects his different statements also contained numerous inconsistencies, not to mention outright inaccuracies, and these - according to Chief Inspector Swanson, reporting on the murder to the Home Office on the 19th October, were sufficient to render "any statement he made…almost valueless as evidence."

At the subsequent inquest into the death of Elizabeth Stride, Dr George Bagster Phillips was adamant that "the deceased had not swallowed either skin or seed of a grape within many hours of her death."

But local gossip wasn't easily dissuaded and several people claimed that Elizabeth Stride had died with a grape stem clenched tightly in her fist. This, when merged with Packer's tale of the well-spoken stranger buying her grapes shortly before her murder, and the subsequent coverage of his story in the newspapers, ensured that the grapes

soon became an integral part of the Jack the Ripper legend.

Thus the idea of an upper-class killer luring his hapless victims (such a dramatic image could never be confined to just one victim) to their deaths by dangling a bunch of grapes temptingly in front of them took root.

It has been doing the rounds ever since, and successive generations have duly contributed their own embellishments, with several recent films and television dramatizations adding the macabre ingredient of the grapes being adulterated with a powerful narcotic to render his victims unconscious before Dr Jack or Sir Jack commences his mutilations.

Mrs Fanny Mortimer, who lived at 36 Berner Street, four doors up from Dutfield's Yard proved a somewhat more consistent witness, whose experience, nonetheless, gave rise to an even more widespread yet equally erroneous image of the ripper.

At around 12.30am she told how she had heard "the measured, heavy stamp of a policeman passing her house on his beat." For some reason, she had then gone out into the street and had stood outside stand her door for a while. Having gone back indoors, she was getting ready for bed, when she heard a terrible commotion.Running outside she was informed that there had been another dreadful murder.

Entering Dutfield's Yard, she saw the body of a woman "lying huddled up just inside the gates with her throat cut from ear to ear." She later recalled how there had certainly been no noise made, and maintained that she did not observe anyone enter the gates during her time outside. The only man she had seen in Berner Street was a young man who was carrying a black shiny bag. Later that day she told the *Daily News* how he "…walked very fast down the street from the direction of Commercial Road…looked up at the club, and then went round the corner by the Board School." She also gave it as her opinion that, "… If a man had come out of the yard before one o'clock I must [as in would] have seen him…"

Her statement received widespread publicity and was greatly embellished in the months and even years that followed.

Reminiscing in his memoirs, some fifty years later, Walter Dew credited Mrs. Mortimer with being "the only person ever to see the Ripper in the vicinity of one of his crimes."

According to Dew's account, just as she was about to re-enter her cottage she heard the approach of Diemschutz's horse and cart. "At the same moment [she] observed something else, silent and sinister. A man, whom she judged to be about thirty, dressed in black, carrying a small, shiny black bag, hurried furtively along the opposite side of the court… The man had been so quiet that she had not seen him until he was abreast of her. His head was turned away, as though he did not wish to be seen…"

Evidently, Walter Dew was either misremembering or else he had been influenced by later embellishments of this widely circulated story.

Furthermore, it would appear that he was not kept particularly well informed by his superiors, for Mrs. Mortimer had most definitely not seen in the "Ripper in the vicinity of one of his crimes."

Leon Goldstein was horrified when he heard local gossip about the suspicious looking man

seen hurrying away from the scene of the murder. He had, he told the police when he walked into Leman Street Police Station the next day, left a coffee house in Spectacle Alley only a short time before Mrs. Mortimer's sighting, and had indeed hurried past her carrying a bag full of empty cigarette boxes on his way home to number 22 Christian Street.

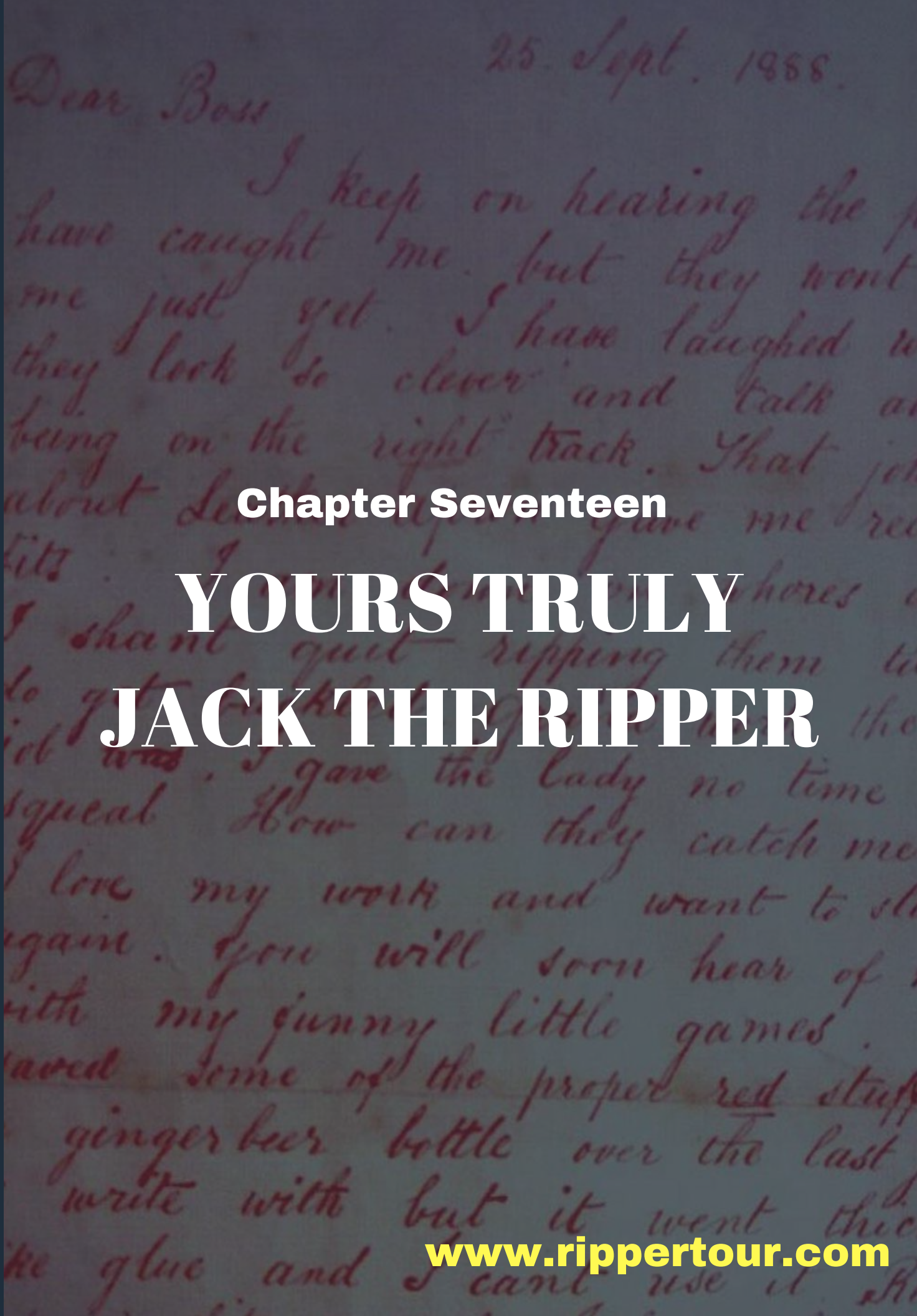
Goldstein was not in any way related to the crime, and he was most certainly not the Whitechapel murderer.

Yet his hasty dash home along Berner Street would furnish the killer with one of his most readily recognizable features.

For, although Mrs. Mortimer's sighting of him received widespread press coverage, his self-identification and subsequent absolution by the police did not, and the shiny black bag became as integral a part of the murderer's reputed apparel as the top hat and swirling cape.

All that was required now was a suitable name for this pantomime-villain-like figure; and, in the early days of October 1888, the police themselves made a decision that would imbue the killer with a name that would guarantee him a gruesome immortality.

The legend of Jack the Ripper was about to be born.

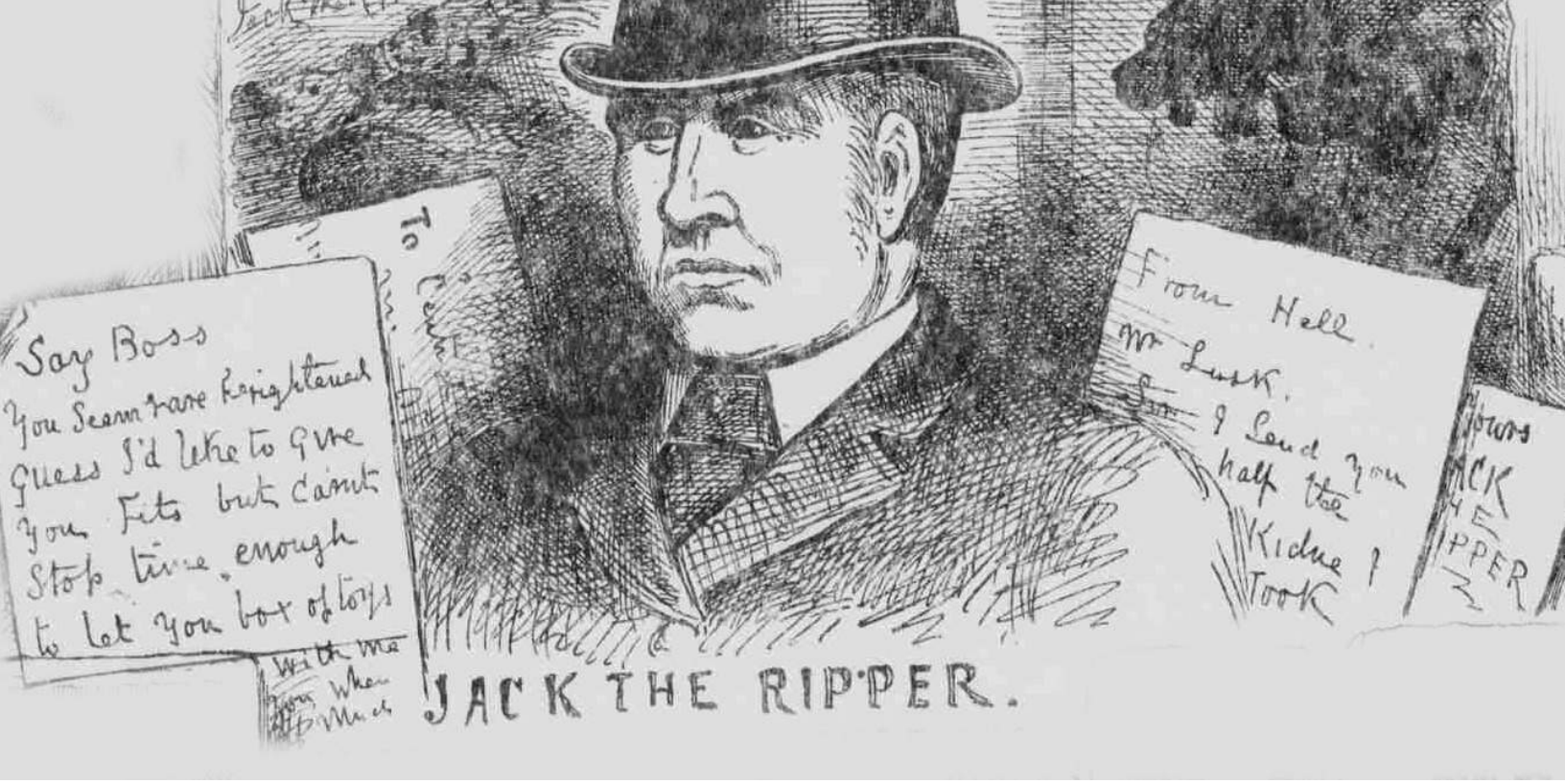


Chapter Seventeen

YOURS TRULY JACK THE RIPPER

I'm not a butcher, I'm not a Yid,
Nor yet a foreign skipper,
But I'm your own light-hearted friend,
Yours truly,
Jack the Ripper.

ANONYMOUS



The days that followed the double murder saw one of the most significant developments in the hunt for the killer. The fact that two women had been brutally slain within an hour of each other, apparently by the same man, and only a short distance apart, ensured that public fascination with, and fear of, the murderer was raised to a whole new level.

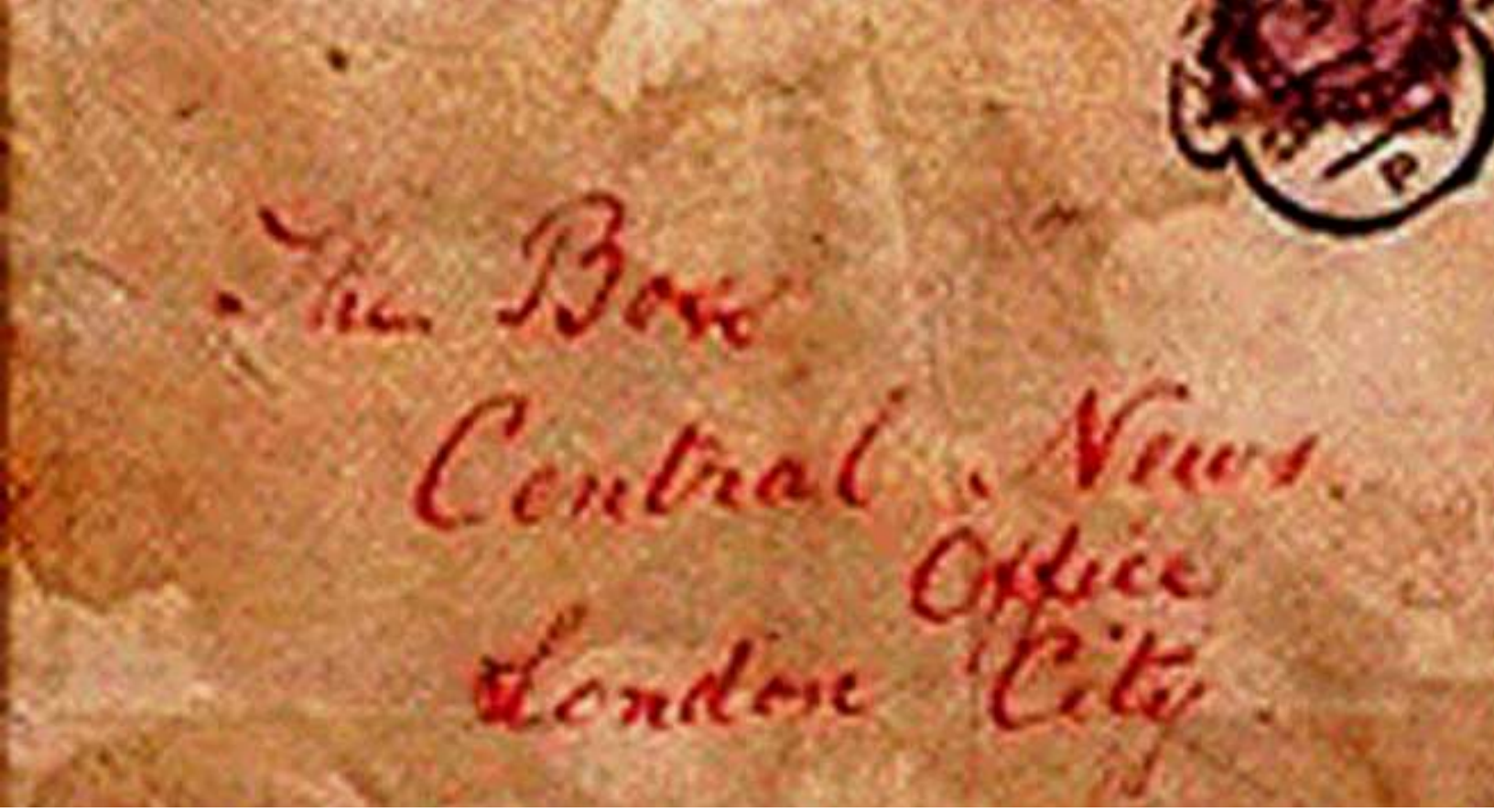
As word of a ‘double event’ crackled around the metropolis, excited and agitated crowds flocked to the murder sites to speculate on the killer’s motives and identity. Berner Street was said to have been like a sea of heads from end to end. The thoroughfares around Mitre Square were blocked by ghoulish spectators.

The murders were rapidly assuming a distinct air of melodrama, and on the 1st of October, the Metropolitan Police made a decision that gave the gruesome street pantomime a villain that would ensure that it ran and ran.

On the 29th September 1888 the Central News Agency, whose offices were situated on New Bridge Street in the City of London, forwarded a letter to the police that they had received on the 27th September.

The missive, dated 25th September, was addressed to ‘The Boss, Central News Office, London, City.’ It read:-

Dear Boss,
I keep on hearing the police have caught me but they wont fix me just yet. I have laughed when they look so clever and talk about being on the right track. That joke about Leather Apron gave me real fits. I am down on whores and I shant quit ripping them till I do get buckled. Grand work the last job was. I gave the lady no time to squeal. How can they catch me now. I love my work and want to start again. You will soon hear of me with my funny little games. I saved some of the



proper red stuff in a ginger beer bottle over the last job to write with but it went thick like glue and I cant use it. Red ink is fit enough I hope ha. ha. The next job I do I shall clip the ladys ears off and send to the police officers just for jolly wouldn't you. Keep this letter back till I do a bit more work, then give it out straight. My knife's so nice and sharp I want to get to work right away if I get a chance.

Good Luck.

Yours truly
Jack the Ripper

Dont mind me giving the trade name
Wasnt good enough to post this before I got all the red ink off my hands curse it No luck yet. They say I'm a doctor now. ha ha.

At first, the police were convinced that the letter was a hoax. But within twenty-four hours of its being forwarded to them, the ‘double event’ occurred, and left them with little choice but to begin taking an interest in what ‘Jack the Ripper’ had to say. The comment that “…I want to get to work right away if I get a chance…” appeared to give credence to the author’s claim to be the murderer; whilst his threat to “clip the ladys ears off and send to the police officers,” when weighed against the fact that her killer had indeed mutilated Catharine Eddowes’s earlobes, was now, so the police thought, far too prophetic to dismiss as an empty boast.Furthermore, their investigation was rapidly losing both momentum and direction, and they were in desperate need of a breakthrough. Perhaps the Dear Boss missive could provide it?

25. Sept. 1888.

Dear Boss

I keep on hearing the police have caught me. but they wont fix me just yet. I have laughed when they look so clever and talk about being on the right track. That joke about Leather apron gave me real fits. I am down on whores and I shant quit ripping them till I do get buckled. Grand work the last job was. I gave the lady no time to squeal How can they catch me now. I love my work and want to start again. You will soon hear of me with my funny little games. I saved some of the proper red stuff in a gingerbeer bottle over the last job to write with but it went thick like glue and I cant use it. Red ink is fit enough I hope ha. ha.
The next job I do I shall clip the ladys ears off and send to the

police officers just for jolly wouldnt you. Keep this letter back till I do a bit more work. then give it out straight My knife's so nice and sharp I want to get to work right away if I get a chance. Good luck.

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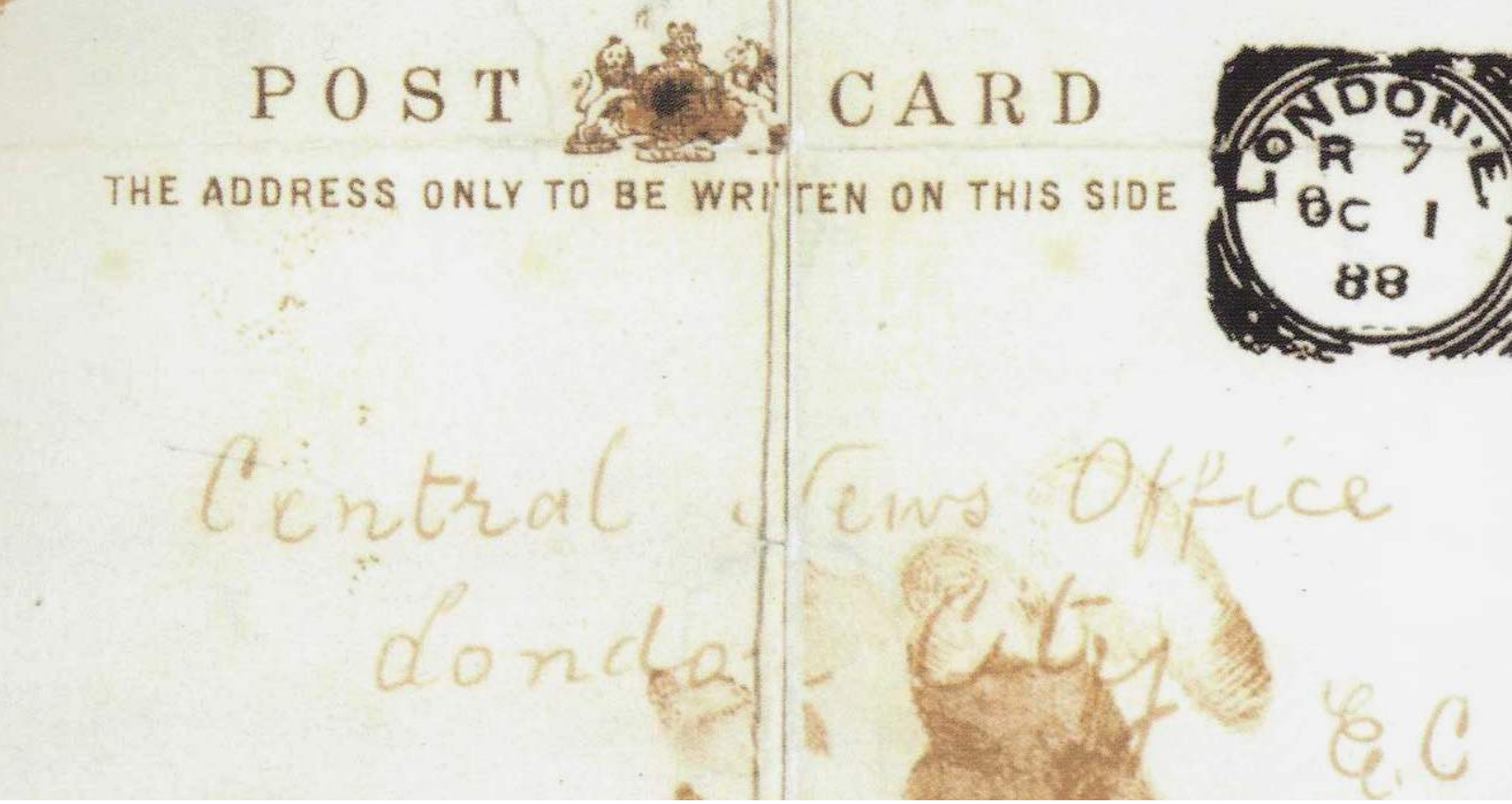
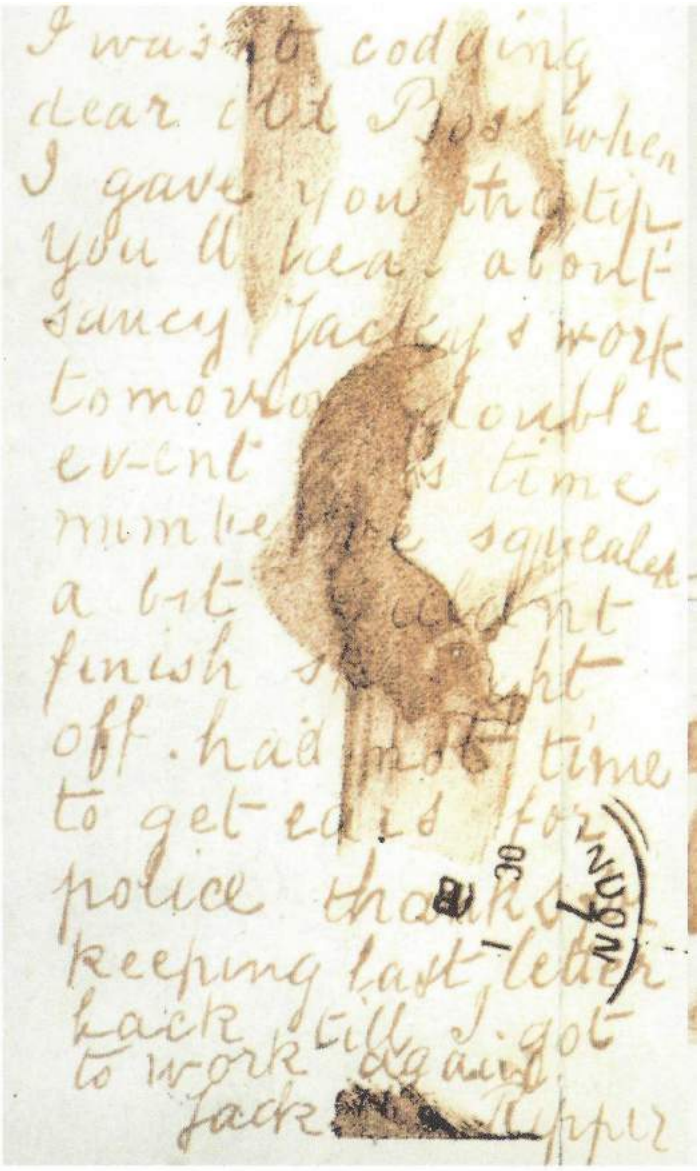


So, on the 1st October, the letter and its contents were made public, and from that moment on, five sordid East End murders were guaranteed a gruesome immortality, whilst the homicidal miscreant responsible for them would be elevated into the realm of legend.

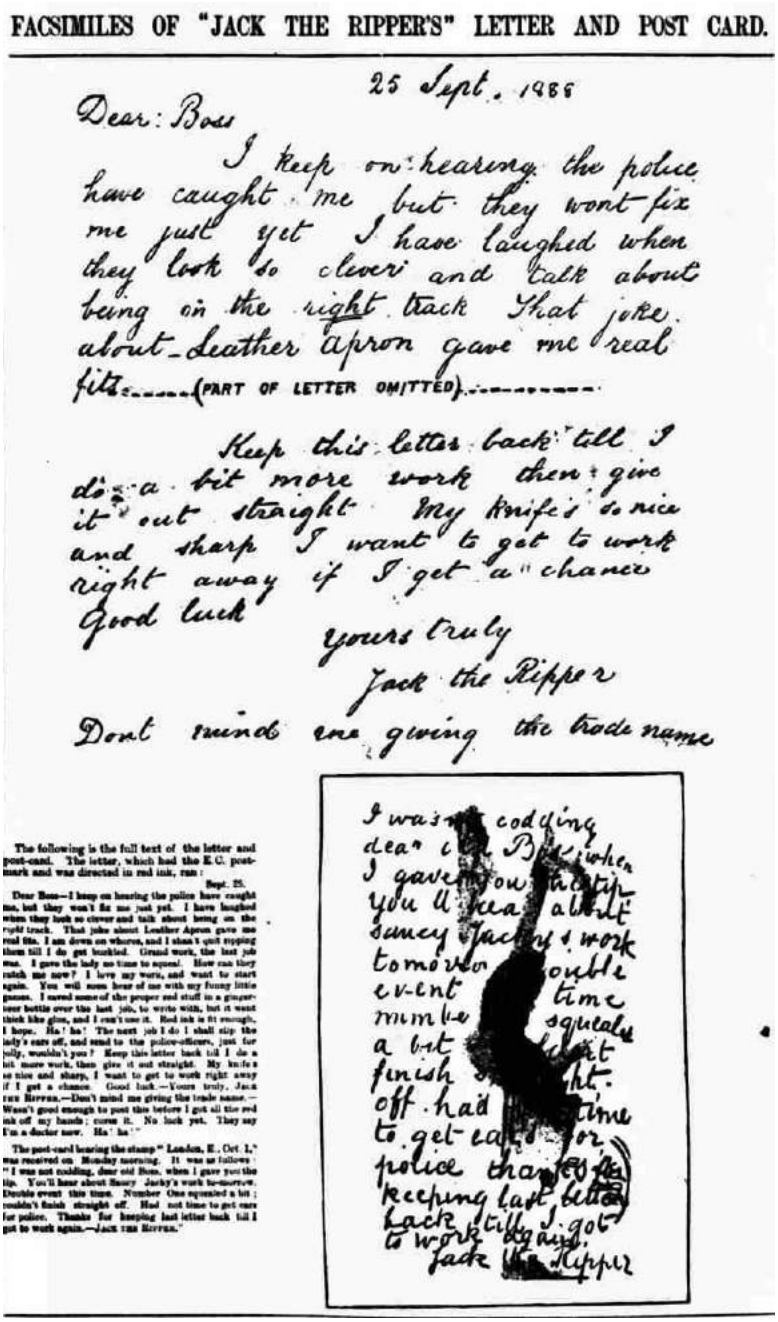
In the early post on Monday 1st of October, a postcard written in a similar handwriting as the ‘Dear Boss’ letter, was delivered to the Central News Agency.

Again written in red ink, and this time stained with what appeared to be blood, the postcard was undated by the author, but was stamped with a LONDON E postmark, which bore the date October 1st.

If the writer was not the same person behind the original communiqué, he was most certainly familiar with its contents:-



THE LETTER IN THE NEWSPAPERS



FACSIMILES OF "JACK THE RIPPER'S" LETTER AND POST CARD.

25 Sept. 1888

Dear: Boss

I keep on hearing the police have caught me but they wont fix me just yet I have laughed when they look so cleverand talk about being on the right track That joke about Leather apron gave me real fits.....(PART OF LETTER OMITTED).....

Keep this letter back till I do a bit more work then give it out straight My knife's so nice and sharp I want to get to work right away if I get a chance Good luck

yours truly

Jack the Ripper

Dont mind me giving the trade name

The following is the full text of the letter and post-card. The letter, which had the E.C. post-mark and was directed in red ink, ran:

Sept. 25.

Dear Boss—I keep on hearing the police have caught me, but they won't fix me just yet. I have laughed when they look so clever and talk about being on the right track. That joke about Leather Apron gave me real fits. I am down on whores, and I shan't quit ripping them till I do get buckled. Grand work, the last job was. I gave the lady no time to squeal. How can they catch me now? I love my work, and want to start again. You will soon hear of me with my funny little games. I saved some of the proper red stuff in a ginger-beer bottle over the last job, to write with, but it went thick like glue, and I can't use it. Red ink is fit enough, I hope. Ha! ha! The next job I do I shall clip the lady's ears off, and send to the police-officers, just for jolly, wouldn't you? Keep this letter back till I do a bit more work, then give it out straight. My knife's so nice and sharp, I want to get to work right away if I get a chance. Good luck.—Yours truly, Jack the Ripper.—Don't mind me giving the trade name.—Wasn't good enough to post this before I got all the red ink off my hands; curse it. No luck yet. They say I'm a doctor now. Ha! ha!"

The post-card bearing the stamp "London, E., Oct. 1," was received on Monday morning. It was as follows:—"I was not codding, dear old Boss, when I gave you the tip. You'll hear about Saucy Jacky's work to-morrow. Double event this time. Number One squealed a bit; couldn't finish straight off. Had not time to get ears for police. Thanks for keeping last letter back till I got to work again.—JACK THE RIPPER."

The above reproduction of the "Jack the Ripper" missive appeared in The Daily Telegraph and Courier on Thursday 4th October, 1888.

Notice that the newspaper committed what ti considered the more obscene portions of the letter.

I was not codding dear old Boss when I gave you the tip, you'll hear about Saucy Jacky's work tomorrow double event this time number one squealed a bit couldn't finish straight off. had not the time to get ears for police. thanks for keeping last letter back till I got to work again.

Jack the Ripper

The inference of the postcard, of course, was that it had been written within hours of the murders, and that the author was informing the police of the two murders he had just committed.

Furthermore, it boasted that he had indeed attempted to make good on his promise to ‘clip the ears’ off a victim.

Whether or not the police believed it to come from the murderer was largely immaterial, the correspondence had to be investigated and, if possible, their author traced.

So both the card and the ‘Dear Boss’ letter were reproduced on posters, which were placed outside police stations with a request for anyone recognizing the handwriting to contact the police.

By the 4th October facsimiles of the letter and postcard had been released to the press and were beginning to appear in newspapers all over the world.

Encouraged by this widespread publicity, hoaxers across the country began reaching for their pens, and the beleaguered detectives were soon inundated by a barrage of Jack the Ripper correspondence. All of it had to be read, assessed and, if possible, their writers investigated.

As the journalist George Sims observed in his Dragnet column for the *Referee* on Sunday October 7th:-

"JACK THE RIPPER is the hero of the hour.

A gruesome wag, a grim practical joker, has succeeded in getting an enormous amount of fun out of a postcard which he sent to the Central News.

The fun is all his own, and nobody shares in it, but he must be gloating demonically at the present moment at the state of perturbation in which he has flung the public mind.

Grave journals have reproduced the sorry jest, and have attempted to seriously argue that the awful Whitechapel fiend is the idle and mischievous idiot who sends blood-stained postcards to the news agency. Of course, the whole business is a farce."

The police appear to have realized early on, if they were ever in any doubt of the fact, that the letter and postcard were not the work of the Whitechapel Murderer.

Both, however, had to be investigated, if only to trace the author and eliminate him as a suspect.

On 10th October Sir Charles Warren informed the Home Office that:-

"At present I think the whole thing a hoax but of course we are bound to try & ascertain the writer in any case."

Robert Anderson whilst serializing his memoirs prior to their publication in 1910 was even more adamant that the letter was a hoax, and even went so far as to suggest that the police were aware of the prankster's identity:-

"I will only add here that the "Jack the Ripper" letter which is preserved in the Police Museum at New Scotland Yard is the creation of an enterprising London Journalist."

Indeed, the fact that the sender had demonstrated the wherewithal to send his communication to a news agency, as opposed to a local or national newspaper, suggests that he did indeed have an in-depth knowledge of how the press worked.

As George Sims observed:-

"The fact that the self-postcard-proclaimed assassin sent his imitation blood-besmeared communication to the Central News people opens up a wide field for theory.

How many among you, my dear readers, would have hit upon the idea of "the Central News" as a receptacle for your confidence? You might have sent your joke to the Telegraph, the Times, any morning or any evening paper, but I will lay long odds that it would never have occurred to communicate with a Press agency.

Curious, is it not, that this maniac makes his communication to an agency which serves

the entire Press? It is an idea which might occur to a Pressman perhaps; and even then it would probably only occur to someone connected with the editorial department of a newspaper, someone who knew what the Central News was, and the place it filled in the business of news supply.

This proceeding on Jack's part betrays an inner knowledge of the newspaper world which is certainly surprising.

Everything, therefore, points to the fact that the jokist is professionally connected with the Press.

And if he is telling the truth and not fooling us, then we are brought face to face with the fact that the Whitechapel murders have been committed by a practical journalist - perhaps by a real live editor! Which is absurd, and at that I think I will leave it."

In 1913 retired Detective Chief Inspector John George Littlechild, who at the time of the murders was head of Special Branch, and therefore privy to much of the contemporary opinion amongst senior officers on the case, replied to a query sent to him by George Sims:-

"With regard to the term 'Jack the Ripper' it was generally believed at the Yard that Tom Bullen of the Central News was the originator, but it is probable Moore, who was his chief, was the inventor. *It was a smart piece of journalistic work. No journalist of my time got such privileges from Scotland Yard as Bullen. Mr James Munro when Assistant Commissioner, and afterwards Commissioner, relied on his integrity. Poor Bullen occasionally took too much to drink, and I fail to see how he could help it knocking about so many hours and seeking favours from so many people to procure copy. One night when Bullen had taken a 'few too many' he got early information of the death of Prince Bismarck and instead of going to the office to report it sent a laconic telegram 'Bloody Bismarck is dead'. On this, I believe Mr Charles Moore fired him out."*

Littlechild's memory was slightly amiss when he wrote to Sims, since Tom Bullen was, in fact, Thomas J. Bulling.

It was he who forwarded a transcript of a third letter to the police, which was dated 5th of October, and which purported to again come from 'Jack the Ripper.'

He enclosed the envelope that contained the letter and observed that it was "in the same handwriting as the previous communications."

But, interestingly, he only sent a handwritten copy of the original. Perhaps he was finding it difficult to disguise his handwriting?

The letter included several biblical quotes and more threats such as "I must get to work tomorrow treble event this time yes yes three must be ripped . will send you a bit of face by post I promise this dear old Boss." The letter ended with the taunt "The police now reckon my work a practical joke

George Sims

Chief Inspector John Littlechild

well well Jacky's a very practical joker ha ha Keep this back till three are wiped out and you can show the cold meat."

Obviously, whether it was Bulling or Moore, or for that matter whether it was either, who was responsible for inventing the name "Jack the Ripper" will now never be known for sure.

What is interesting about this third letter, however, is that by 5th October the police were evidently dubious about the provenance of the correspondence, and were beginning to realize that releasing them had hindered rather than helped their investigation.

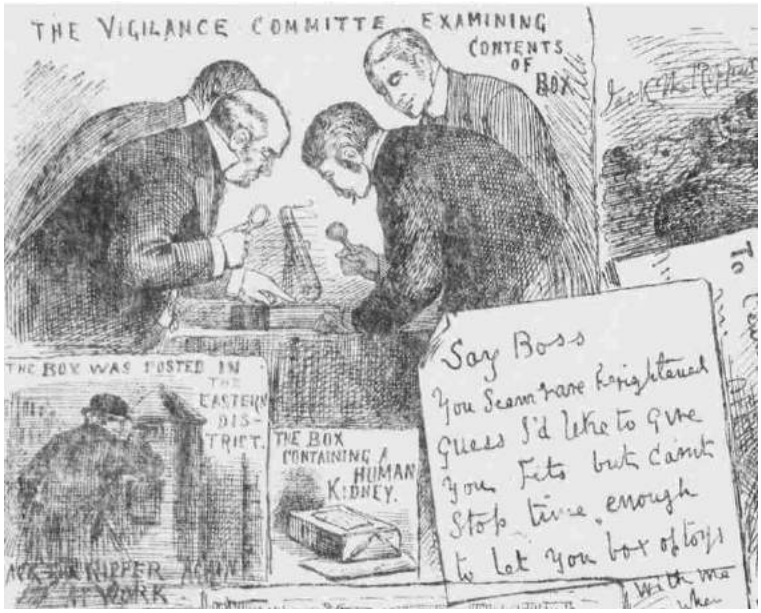
Indeed, it seems likely that they asked the Central News Agency not to release details of it, and as a result, it received hardly any mention by the newspapers.

But, as October progressed more and more letters were sent to the police by various members of the public.

The authors of these missives were seldom traced, albeit, when they were tracked down, it is interesting to note just how "ordinary" these writers were.

One "author" who was traced, and subsequently prosecuted was twenty-one-years-old Maria Coroner, a Canadian born milliner, who appeared before magistrates at Bradford Borough Court on the 19th of October, 1888, charged with having "written certain letters tending to cause a breach of the peace."

Maria had written two letters, one to the Chief Constable and the other to a local newspaper. Both were signed 'Jack the Ripper' and spoke of his intention to visit Bradford and "do a little business" before starting to some other place on the "same errand."



The Illustrated Police News Depiction of the letters sent to George Lusk.

George Lusk

In court, she excused her “foolish conduct” by saying that she “had done it as a joke”.

The magistrate, however, failed to see the funny side, and he remanded her in custody.

When she next appeared, on the 23rd October, “a dense crowd fought for admission to the court.”

According to *The Star*, “The prisoner listened to the proceedings with an amused expression.”

She was fined £20 and bound over to keep the peace for six months, being told that if she “again transgressed she would go to gaol.”

Doubtless, many of the sickest and most perverted sentiments expressed in the Jack the Ripper correspondence were written by similarly ‘respectable’ Victorian citizens who found the allure and titillation offered by the press reportage of the murders irresistible.

At around the time that Maria Coroner was composing her prank missives, somewhere in London another anonymous correspondent was preparing to make good on a threat that had been contained in virtually all the letters received in early October, the threat to send a body part in the mail.

George Lusk, president of the Mile End Vigilance Committee, had been extremely busy throughout early October. In addition to gathering information from local informants, he was also addressing meetings and liaising with the press. He had also been badgering both the Home Office and Queen Victoria endeavouring to get them to offer a reward for information that might lead to the apprehension of the killer. His name was, therefore, frequently being mentioned in the press. Several people appear to have taken an interest in him and he soon attracted what would today be known as a stalker, possibly even two.

On Thursday 4th October, at 4:15, a man apparently from 30 to 40 years of age, 5ft. 9in. in height, florid complexion, with bushy brown beard, whiskers and moustache, went to the private residence of Mr. Lusk in Alderney-street, Mile-end, and asked for him.

Lusk happened to be at a tavern kept by his son, and thither the man went, and after asking all sorts of questions relative to the beats taken by members of the Committee, the man “attempted to induce Mr. Lusk to enter a private room with him.”

According to the *News of The World:-*

"The stranger's appearance, however, was so repulsive and forbidding that Mr. Lusk declined, but consented to hold a quiet conversation with him in the bar-parlour. The two were talking, when the stranger drew a pencil from his pocket and purposely dropped it over the side of the table saying, "Pick that up."

Just as Mr. Lusk turned to do so he noticed the stranger make a swift though silent movement of his right hand towards his side pocket, and seeing that he was detected assumed a nonchalant air, and asked to be directed to the nearest coffee and dining-rooms. Mr. Lusk directed him to a house in the Mile End-road, and the stranger quietly left the house, followed by Mr. Lusk who went to the coffee-house indicated, and found that the man had not been there, but had given his pursuer the slip by disappearing up a court."

Mr. George Lusk’s Vigilance activities had, it appears, made him a magnet for all manner sinister characters and sick individuals.

On 10th October another suspicious looking man was seen lurking outside his house. This time Lusk reported him to the police and a description of him was circulated.

On the 12th of October, Lusk was targeted by one of the ‘Jack the Ripper’ correspondents and received a letter in a handwriting supposedly similar to that of the ‘Dear Boss’ letter.

It read:-

"I write you a letter in black ink, as I have no more of the right stuff. I think you are all asleep in Scotland-yard with your bloodhounds, as I will show you to-morrow night (Saturday). I am going to do a double Event, but not in Whitechapel. Got rather too warm there. Had to shift. No more till you hear me again.

JACK THE RIPPER."

Naturally George Lusk was beginning to fear for his personal safety, and no doubt that of his family, when yet another postcard addressed to ‘Mr. Lusk, Head Vigilance Committee, Alderney- street, Mile End arrived to taunt him still further:-

"You seem rare frightened, guess I’d like to give you fits, but can’t stop time enough to let your box of toys play copper games with me, but hope to see you when I don’t hurry much Bye Bye Boss."

On 15th October a Miss Marsh was behind the counter in her father’s leather shop when a man dressed like a cleric entered.

He wanted to know about the Vigilance Committee’s reward poster in the shop window and asked if she knew the address of Mr. George Lusk.

She suggested he enquire at the nearby Crown, but the man insisted he didn’t want to go to a pub.

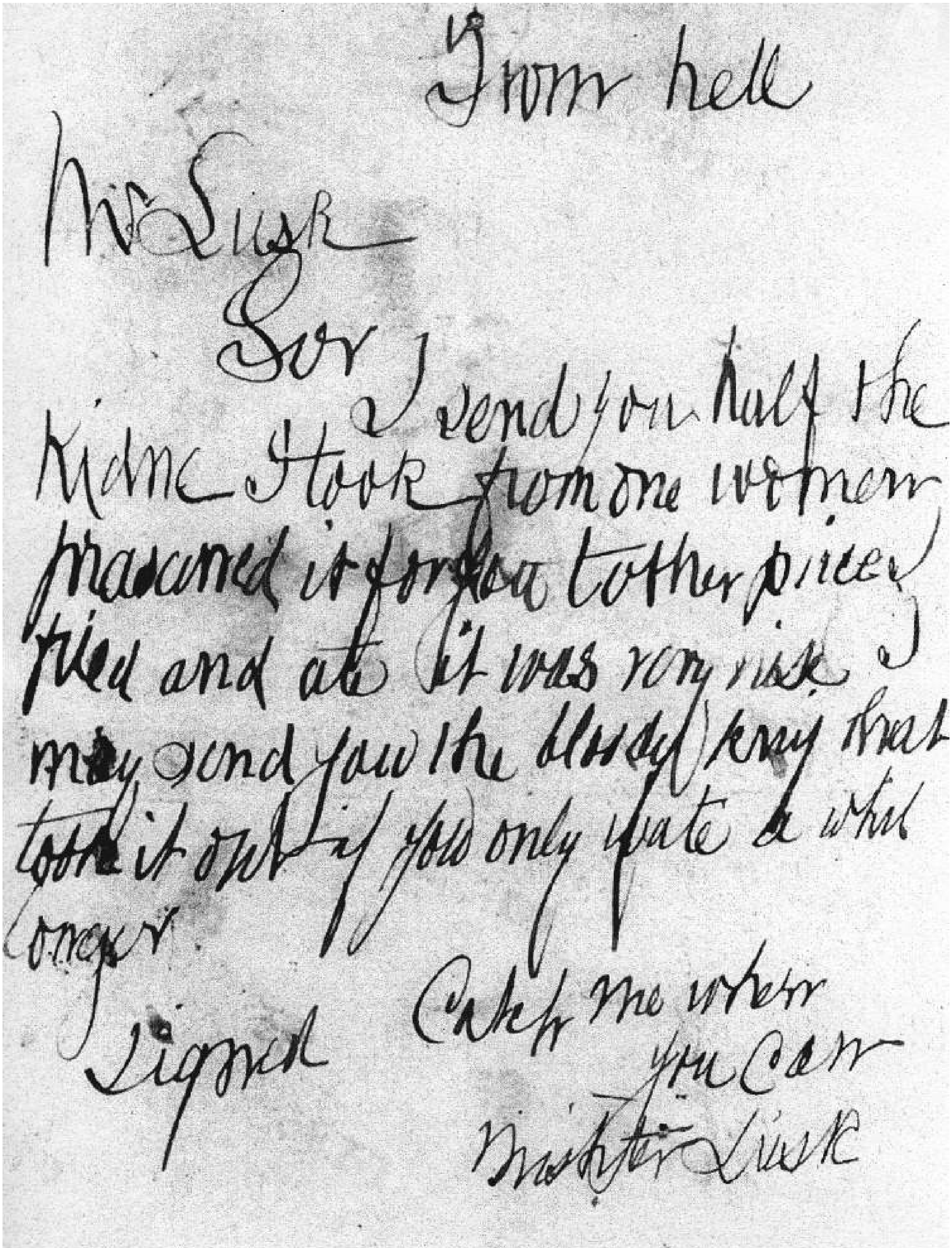
Obligingly she got out a newspaper that gave Lusk’s address, although not his house number, and read it out to the stranger who proceeded to take it down in a notebook.

Miss Marsh described the man as being around 45 years old, six feet tall, of slim build with a sallow complexion, dark beard and moustache. He spoke with what she took to be an Irish brogue.

No-one answering that description actually called on Lusk, but on the evening of Tuesday, October 16th a small package, wrapped in brown paper and bearing an indistinct London postmark was delivered to Lusk in the evening mail.

Although addressed to him by name, it had the street in which he lived on it, but not the house number.

Opening the package, Lusk was disgusted by the contents which consisted of a foul smelling piece of kidney and a letter which read:



From hell

Mr Lusk

Sor

I send you half the
Kidne I took from one women
prasarved it for you tother piece
I fried and ate it was very nise I
may send you the bloody knif that
took it out if you only wate a whil
longer

signed Catch me when
you Can
Mishter Lusk

The "From Hell" Letter

"From hell

Mr Lusk

Sor
I send you half the Kidne I took from one women prasarved it for you tother piece I fried and ate it was very nise I may send you the bloody knif that took it out if you only wate a whil longer
signed
Catch me when you Can
Mishter Lusk"

The handwriting was identical to that of the postcard Lusk had received a few days before. Lusk's first thought was that it was just another sick joke and he assumed the kidney to be from a sheep or some other animal.

However, he decided to seek the opinions of his fellow Vigilance Committee members, and they were not so certain it was a joke.

They, therefore, decided to seek a medical opinion as to whether the kidney was human or animal.

It was duly taken to the Mile End Road surgery of Dr Frederick Wiles where, this doctor not being in, his assistant Dr Reed examined it and immediately pronounced it human.

Reed then went for a second opinion and took it to the nearby London Hospital where he asked the Pathological Curator Dr Thomas Openshaw to examine the organ. According to The Star:-

"By use of the microscope Dr Openshaw was able to determine that the kidney had been taken from a full-grown human being, and that the portion before him was part of the left kidney."

The newspaper went on to inform its readers that|:-

"There seems to be no room for doubt that what has been sent to Mr. Lusk is part of a human kidney, but nevertheless it may be doubted whether it has any serious bearing on the Mitre-square murder."

Several newspapers, however, were quoting Openshaw as having categorically stated that the kidney was that of a woman, who had died within the previous three weeks.

Openshaw felt a need to refute these claims and in an interview with a *Star* reporter he stated that, although he was of opinion that it was half of a left human kidney, he couldn't say whether it was that of a woman, nor how long ago it had been removed from the body, as it had been preserved in spirits.

The newspaper ended this report with the observation that "The whole thing may possibly turn out to be a medical student's gruesome joke."

The idea that the sending of the kidney was a prank perpetrated by a medical student appears to have struck the police from the outset.

After Openshaw's examination, the organ was taken to Leman Street Police Station and then handed over to the City Police in whose jurisdiction Catherine Eddowes had been murdered.

The first police report about it was submitted by Inspector James McWilliam of the City Police who on the 27th October commented that:-

"The kidney has been examined by Dr Gordon Brown who is of the opinion that it is human. Every effort is being made to trace the sender, but it is not desirable that publicity should be given to the doctor's opinion, or the steps that are being taken inconsequence. It might turn out after all to be the act of a Medical Student who would have no difficulty in obtaining the organ in question."

On 6th November Chief Inspector Swanson, who had met daily with Inspector McWilliam to discuss the matter, forwarded a report to the Home Office in which he stated:-

"The result of the combined medical opinion… is that it is the kidney of a human adult, not charged with a fluid, as it would have been in the case of a body handed over for purposes of dissection to an hospital, but rather as it would be in the case where it was taken from the body not so destined. In other words similar kidneys might & could be obtained from any dead person upon whom a post mortem had been made from any cause by students or dissecting room porter."

Today, of course, it is impossible to say for certain whether or not the Kidney sent to Mr. Lusk was part of the one taken from Catharine Eddowes body, and, therefore, that it was sent by her murderer.

The letter that accompanied it is, perhaps, the most debated over of all Jack the Ripper missives, and has been the subject of endless speculation and myth-making.

The doctors who examined it at the time appear to have reached the conclusion that it was a hoax, and this appears to have been the consensus amongst the police officers investigating the case, with the notable exception of Major Henry Smith the acting City Commissioner, who later recalled in his memoirs:-

"I made over the kidney to the police surgeon, instructing him to consult with the most eminent men in the Profession, and to send me a report without delay. I give the substance of it. The renal artery is about three inches long. Two inches remained in the corpse, one inch was attached to the kidney. The kidney left in the corpse was in an advanced state of Bright's Disease; the kidney sent me was in an exactly similar state. But what was of far more importance, Mr Sutton, one of the senior surgeons at the London Hospital, whom Gordon Brown asked to meet him and another surgeon in consultation, and who was one of the greatest authorities living on the kidney and its diseases, said he would pledge his

reputation that the kidney submitted to them had been put in spirits within a few hours of its removal from the body thus effectually disposing of all hoaxes in connection with it."

Unfortunately, no report from Sutton, if one ever existed, has survived, and it has to be said that Major Smith's veracity has often been called into doubt. Colleagues remembered him as being an entertaining and charming raconteur, but also commented on his ability to play fast and loose with the truth when it suited his story!

Indeed, Dr Brown himself was quoted in *The Star* on 22nd October 1888 as saying that:-

"...there is no portion of renal artery adhering to [the kidney], it having been trimmed up, so consequently, there could be no correspondence established between the portion of the body from which it was cut."

In the same article, he observed that the kidney exhibited:-

"... no trace of decomposition, when we consider the length of time that has elapsed since the commission of the murder, we come to the conclusion that the possibility is slight of its being a portion of the murdered woman of Mitre Square..."

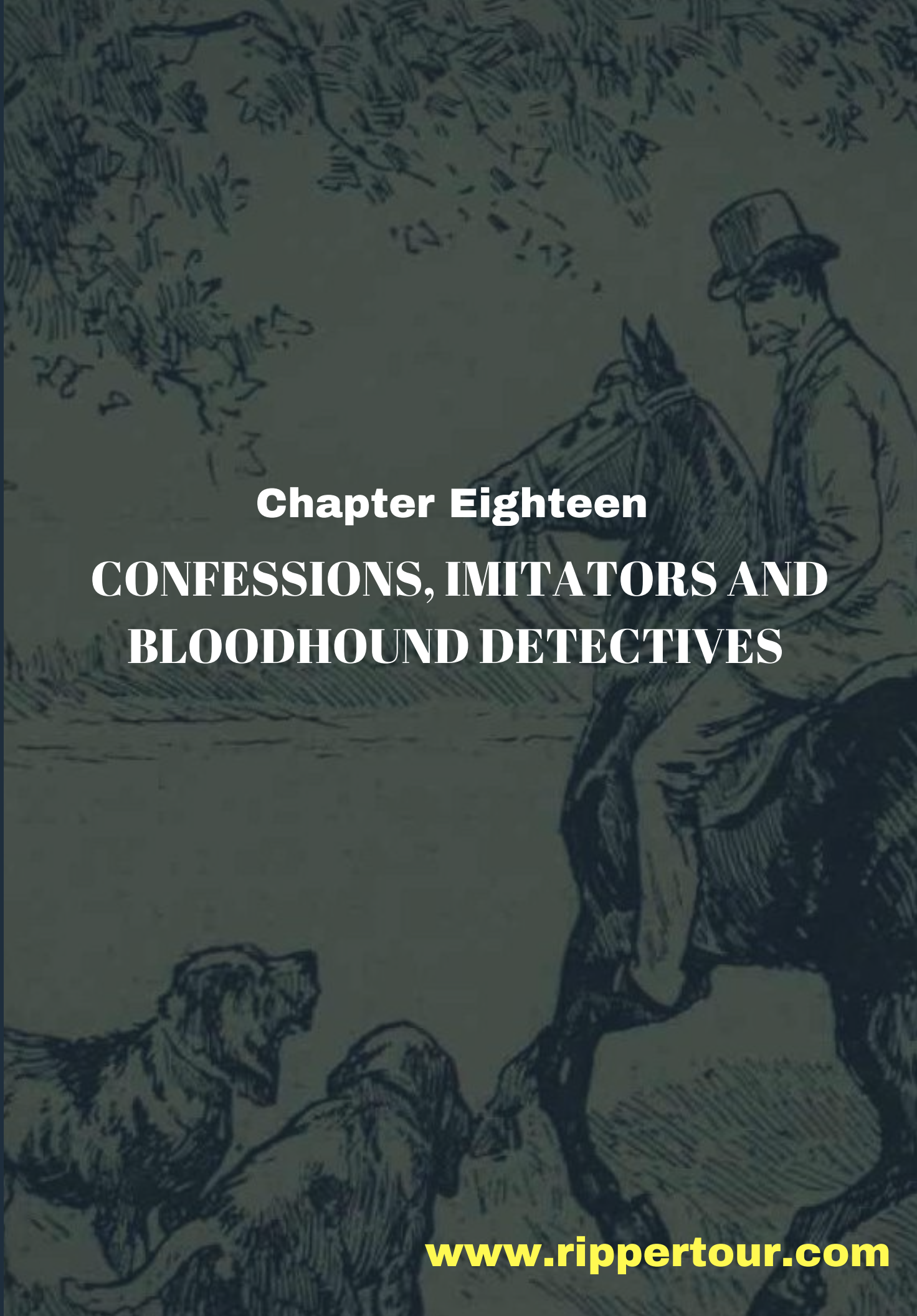
Whether or not the kidney was sent to Mr. Lusk by the murderer of Catharine Eddowes, its arrival in the investigation provided yet another macabre and gruesome twist to the saga, one which, inevitably, proved irresistible to the letter writers.

Dr Openshaw's comments to the newspapers ensured that his name became synonymous with the Lusk Kidney, and, on the 29th October, 1888, he opened his mail to find that an anonymous prankster had decided to honour him with his very own missive:-

"Old boss you was rite it was the left kidny i was goin to hoperate agin close to you ospitle just as i was going to dror mi nife along of er bloomin throte them cusses of coppers spoilt the game but i guess i wil be on the jobn soon and will send you another bit of innerds

Jack the Ripper

O have you seen the devle with his mikerscope and scalpul a-lookin at a kidney with a slide cocked up."



Chapter Eighteen

CONFESSIONS, IMITATORS AND BLOODHOUND DETECTIVES

"There is a very general belief among the local detective force in the East-end that the murderer or murderers are lurking in some of the dangerous dens of the low slums, in close proximity to the scenes of the murders. Among other circumstances which support this theory is that some of the houses supposed to be bolted up for the night are found to have secret strings attached to the bolts, so that the house can be entered by persons who are acquainted with these secrets without delay or noise...Even the cellars in some of the slums are stated to be occupied for sleeping purposes by strange characters who only appear in the streets at night. These dilapidated hovels are unfit for human habitation, and are known to the police to be the hiding places of the most dangerous and desperate characters. The police, it is stated, are contemplating a series of immediate and sudden raids upon these dreadful dens, both in the City and Whitechapel."

The Daily News
4th October, 1888

As the police continued to hunt for suspects, several men came forward to claim responsibility for the killings. The majority were drunk, insane or both.

One such person was William Bull, who was 27 years old and described himself as a medical student at the London Hospital. On the evening of 3rd October, he walked into Bishopsgate Police Station and confessed to the murder in Mitre Square. It was obvious to the police that he was drunk. He told them how he had gone with the woman up a narrow street where he had given her half a crown.

‘I shall go mad,’ he sobbed, clutching his head, ‘I have done it, and I must put up with it.’

Police enquiries revealed that no such medical student was known at the London Hospital, and Bull’s father, who was described as being ‘a most respectable man’, testified that his son was at home all Saturday night.

In court, a now sober Bull excused his confession by saying that he was ‘mad drunk’ when he did so. He was remanded in custody pending further enquiries, which evidently exonerated him of any involvement.

On the same night, a young sailor approached several of the prostitutes who hung around the docks, only to be suddenly denounced by one of them as the murderer. The cry was taken up by her companions, who chased after him.

The panic-stricken sailor had little choice but to seek shelter within King David’s Lane Police Station. Word spread around the district that the murderer was in police custody, and soon an angry mob had surrounded the station.

It took the police several hours to diffuse the situation.

Once again the people of the district were terrified and they chose to stay indoors after nightfall. As in the aftermath of Annie Chapman's murder, the streets were abandoned to patrolling police officers.

Prostitutes all over London sought shelter at workhouses or other establishments."There was scarcely a female figure to be seen", wrote a *Daily News* reporter, following a late-night wander in the district, "and the one or two who were visible were evidently taking care to keep within easy reach of friendly doorways. As for the quiet squares and byways of the locality, they were absolutely lifeless and deserted, and the passing stranger who emerged from a side street into the light of the main road was scanned as curiously as the wayfarer through a remote village:"

On the whole, the keepers of the common lodging houses appear to have become a little more understanding and lenient towards those who could not pay for their night's doss.

A local clergyman told a journalist how the prostitutes themselves were also looking out for each other. 'You know these women are very good-natured to each other. They are drawn together by common interests and a common danger, and they will help each other all they can:"

As a consequence, distress amongst the majority of Whitechapel prostitutes was not as great as it might have been throughout October.

But there were still some who were forced out onto the streets, and, for them, every minute of the night must have seemed like an eternity.

A *Daily News* reporter met one of them:-

"Good heavens! What are we to do?' exclaimed a trembling wretch... 'At one o'clock last night... Mother Morris came down into the kitchen, and she says, 'Now, then, you girls who haven't got your doss money-out you go,' and all of them as hadn't got enough was forced to turn out and go into the streets shuddering at every shadow, and expecting every minute to be murdered. What are we to do?"

On 5th October, in an article that could just as easily have been written in the 21st Century, *The Star* lectured its readers for their lack of public spirit:-

"The moral of the whole business is plain enough. It is poverty which lies at the root of what we perhaps rightly call the social evil, and it is by aiming at the abolition of poverty that we shall cure a variety of woes which we usually set down to an entirely different set of causes.

The Whitechapel murders are indeed a tardy visitation on us for our neglect of obvious social duties, for our hopeless individualism. In a city where very few of us know the names of our next-door neighbours we cannot be surprised that a crafty scoundrel like the Whitechapel murderer should be able to hide his misdeeds.

But there is a far more rooted unfriendliness in our so-called Christian society than that which concerns the isolation of neighbour from neighbour. There is the alienation of the rich from the poor; there is that especially un-neighbourly form of dealing which consists in one class abstracting the fruits of the labour of another."

On 9th October Dr Barnardo wrote to *The Times,* telling how he had actually met Elizabeth Stride a few days before she had been murdered.

At the time, Barnardo was campaigning to make it illegal for the keepers of common lodging houses to admit young children.

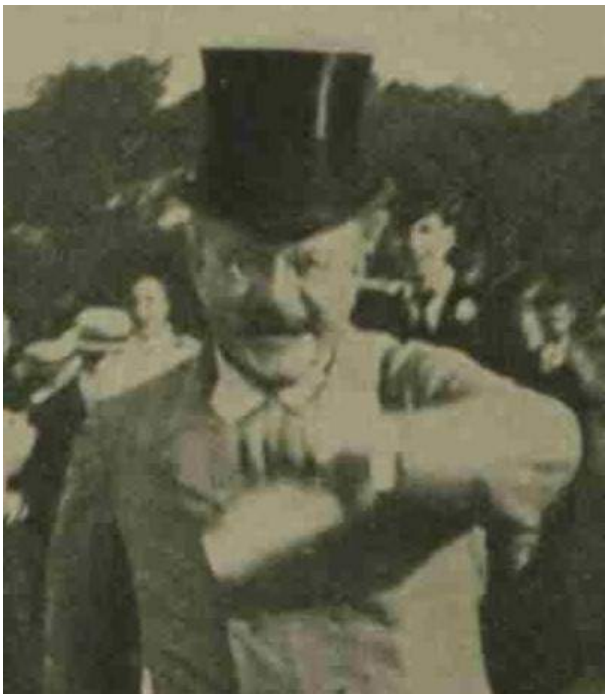
Instead, he proposed that special shelters be set up exclusively for minors.

He decided to find out first hand how this would be viewed by that 'class of unhappy women who had no abode but the common Lodging house', and so, one night in late September, he visited 32 Flower and Dean Street.

He later wrote of his experience:-

"In the kitchen, there were many persons, some of them being girls and women of the same unhappy class as that to which poor Elizabeth Stride belonged. The company soon recognized me, and the conversation turned upon the previous murders. The female inmates of the kitchen seemed thoroughly frightened at the dangers to which they were presumably exposed. In an explanatory fashion, I put before them the scheme which had suggested itself to my mind, by which children at all events could be saved from the contamination of the common lodging-houses and the streets, and so to some extent the supply cut off which feeds the vast ocean of misery in this great city. The pathetic part of my story is that my remarks were manifestly followed *with deep interest by all the women. Not a single scoffingvoice was raised in ridicule or opposition. One poor creature, who had evidently been drinking, exclaimed somewhat bitterly to the following effect:- 'We're all up to no good, and no one cares what becomes of us. Perhaps some of us will be killed next!' And then she added, If anybody had helped the likes of us long ago we would never have come to this!' Impressed by the unusual manner of the people, I could not help noticing their appearance somewhat closely, and I saw how evidently some of them were moved. I have since visited the mortuary in which were lying the remains of the poor woman Stride, and I at once recognized her as one of those who stood around me in the kitchen of the common lodging-house on the occasion of my visit last Wednesday week..."*

Barnardo was so moved by this firsthand experience that he promptly purchased a property in Flower and Dean Street and converted it into a licensed common lodging house for young girls. From the day it opened, each bunk was filled every night.



Dr. Thomas Barmardo

Others, however, reacted to the crimes in a far less charitable manner. To some of the men of London, the murderer had become something of a folk hero and several irresponsible pranksters thought it a huge joke to go about imitating him.

At around 9.30pm on 4th October, Mrs Sewell of 2 Pole Street, Stepney Green, was on her way to attend a temperance meeting. As she was passing along Redman's Road, a very dark thoroughfare, a man suddenly sprang out in front of her. She was greatly alarmed, especially, when she observed that he was holding a glittering object up against his sleeve. The man noticed her alarm, and 'as if to ingratiate himself' he said, 'I did not hurt you, missus, did I?' Just then a young man came by, and the mysterious stranger ran off. "Did you see what he had in his hand?" said the young man to Mrs Sewell, clearly alarmed.She replied, "I saw he had something glittering." "Why," said the young man, "it was a huge knife, a foot long." The two followed the man but failed to track him, and, in the pursuit, they then lost sight of each other.

The imitators were not a phenomenon exclusive to London.

A young woman in Liverpool was walking past Shiel Park in early October when an elderly woman aged about 60 urged her "most earnestly" not to go into the park. She explained that a few minutes previously she had been resting on one of the park seats when she was accosted by a respectable-looking man dressed in a black coat, light trousers and a soft felt hat. He inquired if she knew of any loose woman in the neighbourhood. Then, producing a knife with a long, thin blade, he stated he intended to kill as many women in Liverpool as in London, adding that he would send the ears of the first victim to the editor of *The Liverpool Daily Post.*

Compulsive confessors and reckless pranksters were one thing, but for some, the murders were a catalyst for psychological problems, often with tragic consequences.

On 17th October, a 40-year-old needlewoman named Sarah Goody, of 46 Wilson Street, Stepney, was committed to a lunatic asylum by Thames Magistrates Court. She was convinced that she was being followed by men who watched her movements and intended either to murder or otherwise harm her. She was so frightened that she could neither eat nor sleep. She could think of nothing else, and had she not been taken into the workhouse she would have committed suicide.

A month earlier, on 16th September, a young butcher named Hennell had cut his throat ‘from ear to ear’ at his parents’ house in Hoxton because he feared that they ‘were after him for the Whitechapel murder.’His parents had watched him closely, but when his mother had left the room for a minute, he had taken the opportunity to cut his throat.

The police were obviously no closer to catching the killer than they had been in the

wake of Annie Chapman's murder and the beleaguered officers were coming under increasing criticism from the press and public alike.

The Star went so far as to accuse the entire force of being 'rotten to the core'.*The Daily Telegraph* attacked the 'notorious and shameful shortcomings of the detective department', whilst *The East London Advertiser* lamented that there was 'no detective force in the proper sense of the word in London at all'.

On 2nd October, at a demonstration by the unemployed in Victoria Park, a huge banner expressed the feelings of many Londoners. It read simply\;- 'THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS. WHERE ARE THE POLICE?

The police were in fact rigorously pursuing their investigations, but they had adopted a policy of guarded secrecy to prevent their lines of enquiry from becoming public knowledge. One of Sir Charles Warren's first actions in the days that followed the double murder was to send extra police into the district. Detectives went around in disguise, some, it is rumoured, even dressed as prostitutes. Door-to-door enquiries were made at common lodging houses, in which 2,000 lodgers were questioned and 80,000 handbills were distributed. They read:-

"Police Notice.-To the Occupier,-On the mornings of Friday, 31st August, Saturday, 8th, and Sunday, 30th Sept., 1888, women were murdered in Whitechapel, it is supposed by some one residing in the immediate neighbourhood. Should you know of any person to whom suspicion is attached, you are earnestly requested to communicate at once with the nearest police-station. Metropolitan Police Office, 30th Sept., 1888.

On 13th October, the police began a massive search of some of the area's worst slums. For almost a week, officers entered every room of every house. They searched under the beds and looked inside the cupboards. They scrutinized every knife they could find, and they interviewed hundreds of landlords and their lodgers.

But despite the thoroughness of the investigation, the murderer remained at large.

On 23rd October, Dr Robert Anderson, who had returned from sick leave on 6th October, wrote to the Home Office and pointed out that one of the main problems faced by the police was the lack of clues at any of the crime scenes:-

"That a crime of this kind should have been committed without any clue being supplied by the criminal, is unusual, but that five successive murders should have been committed without our having the slightest clue of any kind is extraordinary, if not unique, in the annals of crime."

One of the most famous and misreported police initiatives - that of using bloodhounds to try to track the killer - originated around this time.

Time after time, you will read accounts of how Sir Charles Warren demonstrated his sheer incompetence with several mishaps concerning the bloodhounds.

They were released, so one oft-touted misrepresentation of the facts goes, and they promptly hunted down none other than Sir Charles Warren himself. He set them loose, goes the narrative of another account, and they promptly got lost in a London fog.

Whereas it cannot be denied that these anecdotes bring a degree of levity to the case, the stark fact remains that neither of them is true, albeit they have found their way into ripper mythology where they remain firmly rooted in many accounts on the crimes!

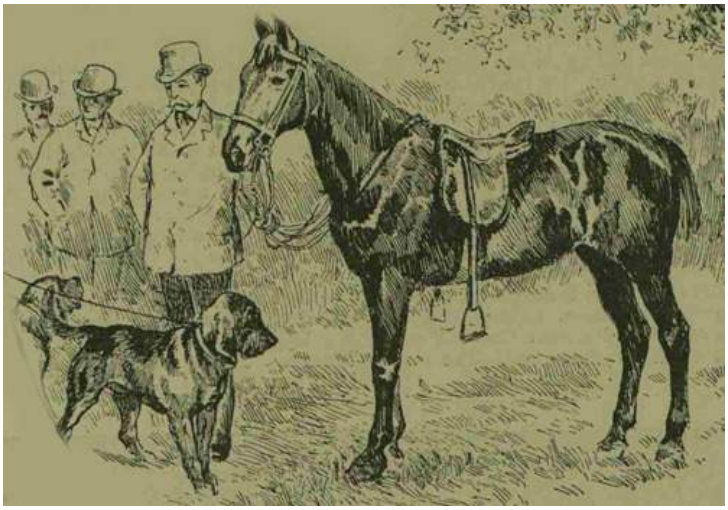
The idea of using bloodhounds was not Sir Charles Warren's but, rather, it had been suggested to him by the Home Office.

Warren was sceptical that bloodhounds could be of any use in the hunt for the killer and questioned how dogs could be expected to trace the killer without either a piece of his clothing or a sample of his blood from which to acquire his scent?

Furthermore, he argued, even if they had the aforementioned items to go on, how effective would their sense of smell be on streets and pavements that hundreds, sometimes thousands, of people might have been walking on all night long?

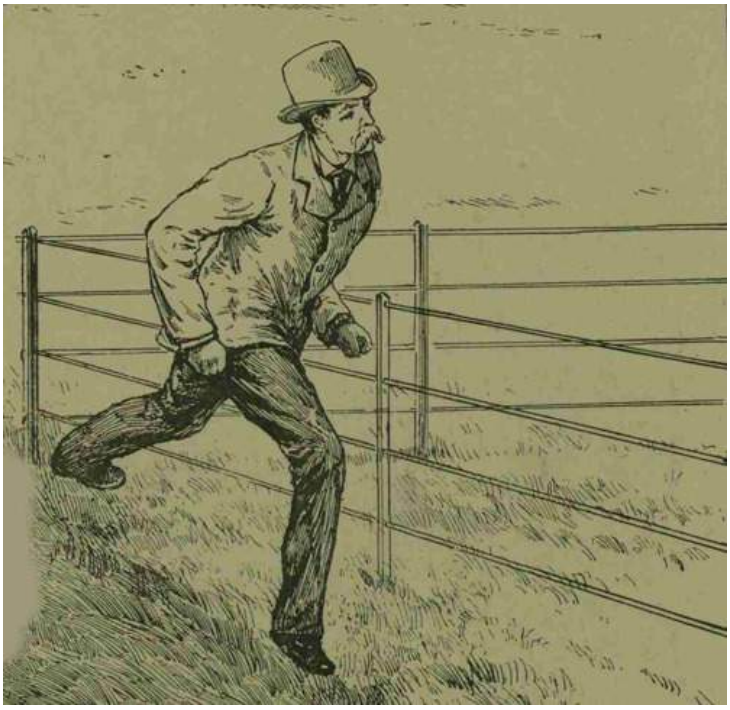
His reservations notwithstanding, he did agree to hold trials to test the effectiveness of the dogs and, it must be said, he was sufficiently impressed with the results to give orders that, in the event of any further murder, the body must not be touched until bloodhounds could be brought and put on the scent of the killer.

Barnaby and Burgho.
The Detective Bloddhounds



Sir Charles Warren Inspects The Hounds

The Hounds Set Off



Sir Charles Warren Hunted

The bloodhounds used in the trials belonged to Mr. Edwin Brough, of Wyndyate, near Scarborough, and their names were Barnaby and Burgho.

In one of the trials, Sir Charles Warren himself acted as the quarry to be tracked, an image that *proved* irresistible to his adversaries in the press; and when, around October 19th, 1888 a report that originated with the Press Association, but which gained wide circulation in newspapers all over the country, suggested that the bloodhounds had been lost during trials on Tooting Common, Warren's critics were quick to use the alleged mishap to attack him.

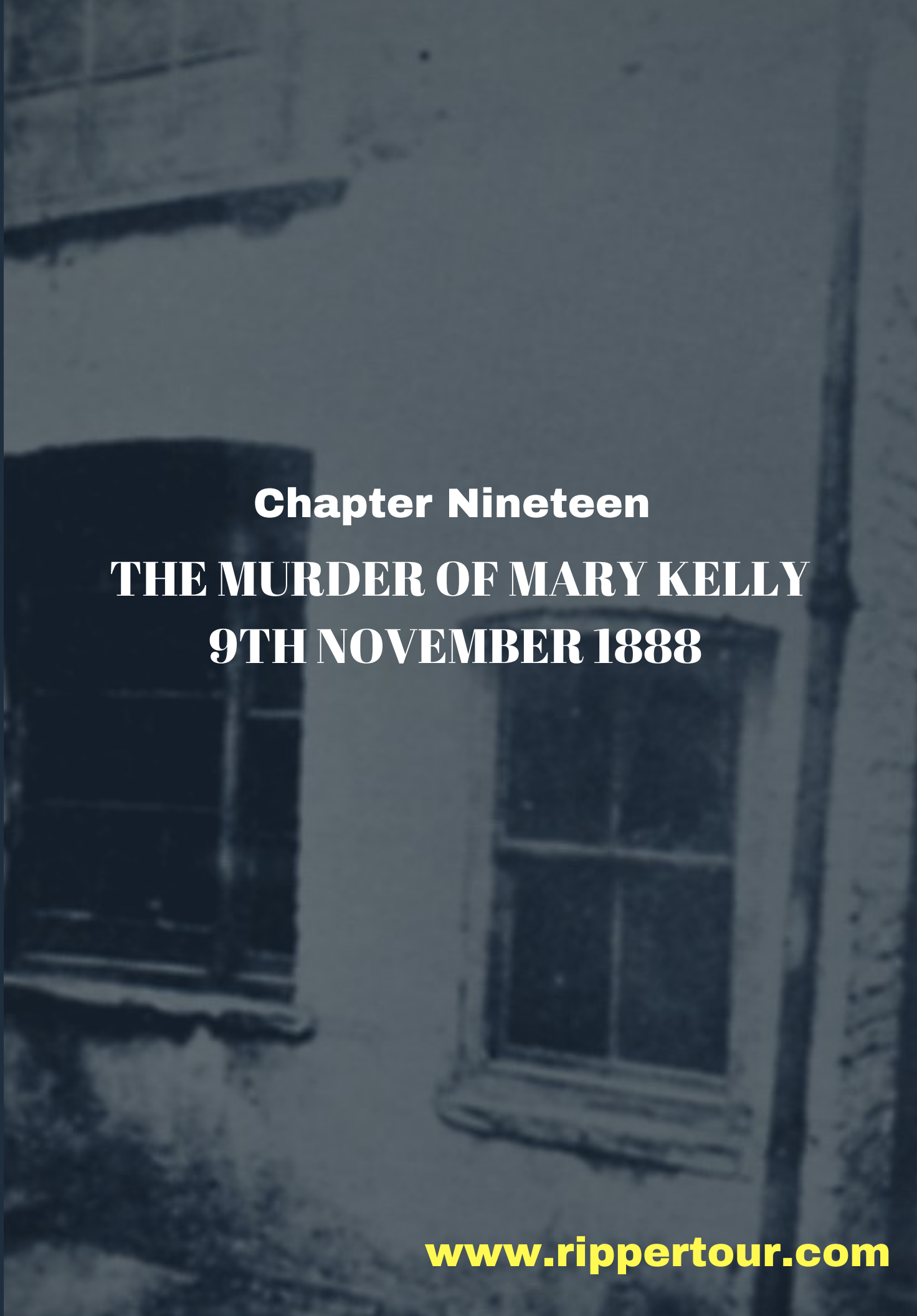
The Pall Mall Gazette, on the 19th of October, 1888, reported that:-

"No formal warrant of arrest, we understand, has as yet been made out; but we are informed that notification has been sent to all the police stations of the disaster, and that all constables have been instructed to apprehend all vagrant bloodhounds, and bid them stand in the name of Sir Charles Warren."

Hilarious as the story of the missing bloodhounds was, it was, sadly, not true. Mr Brough had insisted that the dogs should be sent back to him in Scarborough, as he feared that there was a danger of them being poisoned if it became known that the police were trying to track burglars with their aid, and Sir Charles Warren would not give Mr Brough a guarantee against any pecuniary loss he might suffer in the event of the animals being maltreated.

In Whitechapel, meanwhile, the increased police presence appears to have deterred the killer, and, as the whole of October passed with no further killings.

But the Ripper was merely biding his time, and, on the 9th of November, 1888, he carried out his bloodiest and most barbaric murder of all.



Chapter Nineteen

THE MURDER OF MARY KELLY 9TH NOVEMBER 1888

The simple truth is, that as long as this murderer, whether he be maniac or not, is cool enough to leave no clue behind him; and as long as he confines his operations to women who make themselves accessories to his escape, his crimes may continue. Unless there were a policeman, not merely in every street, but in every house in Whitechapel, it is impossible to secure the safety against the "monster" of such women as yesterday's victim. The best hope would be that the scare should at length have gone far enough to prevent these poor creatures taking unknown strangers into dark corners or empty rooms. Then the criminal, rendered desperate by his thirst for blood, may do something which will secure his detection. But as long as these Whitechapel women offer themselves to the slaughterer, and the slaughterer does not lose his head, it is unjust to blame the police for failing to protect them.

The Times

10th November, 1888

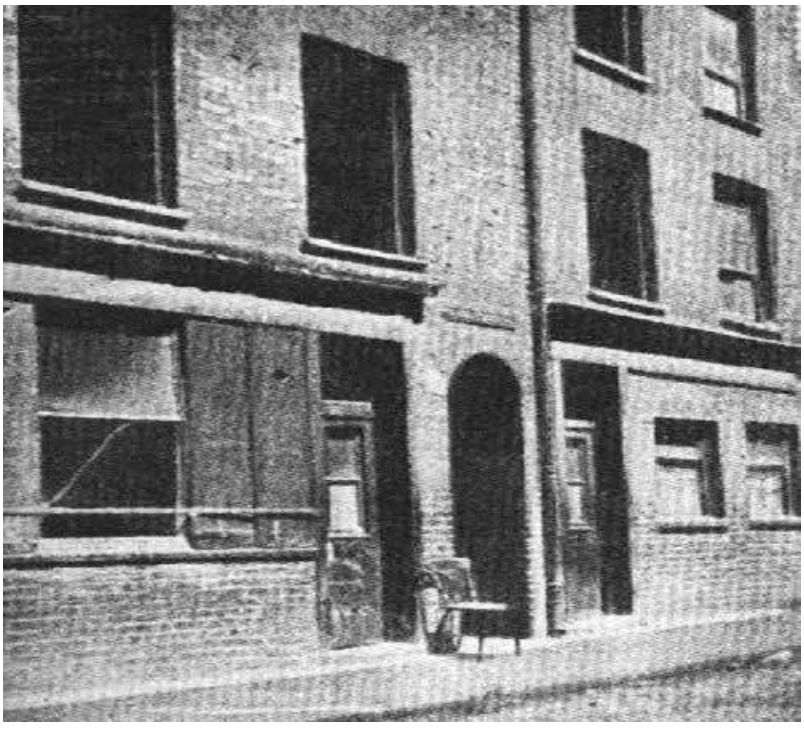
At twenty five years old Mary Kelly was much younger than the other victims of Jack the Ripper. *The Daily Telegraph* described her as being of "…fair complexion, with light hair, and possessing rather attractive features…" Remembering her in his memoirs fifty years later, Walter Dew claimed that he knew her quite well by site and told of how he had often seen her "parading along Commercial Street, between Flower and Dean Street and Aldgate, or along Whitechapel Road." She was, he continued, "usually in the company of two or three of her kind, fairly neatly dressed and invariably wearing a clean white apron, but no hat." She appears to have been well liked in the area, and the only bad thing those who knew her could find to say about her was that she was occasionally tipsy.

For the eight months prior to her death she had been renting a room in Miller's Court, off Dorset Street in Spitalfields. Until two weeks before her murder, she had been living there with an unemployed Billingsgate fish porter named Joseph Barnet. His lack of earnings meant that the rent on the room was in arrears, and Mary had resorted to prostitution. This led to arguments between them, and during one particularly heated exchange - apparently when Mary was tipsy - a pane of glass in the window by the door had been broken. The window was now stuffed with newspaper and rags, and was covered by an old coat.

Then, in late October, Mary invited a homeless, prostitute named Julia to stay with them. This proved too much for Joe Barnet who decided enough was enough and moved out.

Maria Harvey, who gave her occupation as "laundress" told police that she had stayed with Kelly in her room on the Monday and Tuesday nights prior to the murder. She had then taken a room in New Court, Dorset Street but had spent the Thursday afternoon with Mary Kelly in her room at

Dorset Street, Spitalfields



The Entrance To Miller's Court

Mary Kelly's Room

Miller's Court. At around 7pm Joe Barnet had arrived and Maria Harvey left, leaving behind her black crepe bonnet, an overcoat, two dirty cotton shirts, a boys shirt, and a girl's white petticoat.

Joe Barnet had remained on friendly terms with Mary Kelly, and had last seen her alive when he called on her between 7pm and 8pm on Thursday 8th November. He later said that there was another woman with them in the room but that she left first. It is unlikely that he was referring to Maria Harvey, since he knew her and would surely have mentioned her by name. He also said that the woman lived in Miller's Court, which Maria Harvey did not. It is, therefore, more likely that he was referring to Lizzie Albrook (see below). In his inquest testimony Barnet stated that he "last saw her [Mary Kelly] alive between 7.30 & 7.45 the night of Thursday before she was found. I was with her about one hour." This could be interpreted either as he arrived at between 7.30 and 7.45 or that he left between 7.30 and 7.45. Given that he said it was the last time that he saw her alive, and that he was with her for about an hour, I would be inclined to suggest that he meant the latter.

A possible scenario is that he arrived at around 7pm at which point Maria Harvey left. Whilst he was with Mary Kelly they were visited by Lizzie Albrook. Perhaps Lizzie and Mary chatted a little before Lizzie left? Of course, this is mere supposition and to ascertain the exact sequence of events is, of course, now impossible.

According to Barnet, as he left he told Mary Kelly that he had had no work and was very sorry that he was unable to give her any money. Barnet returned to his lodging house on Bishopsgate and played whist until 12.30am at which time he retired to bed.

Lizzie Albrook was 20 years old and a good friend of Kelly's. Her later statements to the press (she was never called as a witness at the inquest), provide a poignant glimpse of Mary Kelly's state of mind on that last night of her life:-

"About the last thing she said was, 'Whatever you do don't you do wrong and turn out as I have.' She had often spoken to me in this way and warned me against going on the streets as she had done. She told me, too, that she was heartily sick of the life she was leading and wished she had money enough to go back to Ireland where her people lived. I do not believe she would have gone out as she did if she had not been obliged to do so to keep herself from starvation."

A surprising number of people appear to have met or seen Mary in the hours leading up to her death, and although some witness accounts confuse rather than clarify how she spent the remainder of her last night, the majority help us build up a reasonable picture of her activities into the early hours of Friday 9th November 1888.

Maurice Lewis was a tailor who lived in Dorset Street who claimed to have known Mary Kelly for five years. He saw her drinking in the Horn

of Plenty Pub in Dorset Street, with some women - one of whom was named Julia - and a man called Dan who sold oranges at Billingsgate and Spitalfields markets, and with whom she had been living until recently. Evidently, he is referring to Joseph Barnet

Mary Anne Cox was described in her police statement, made on the 9th November, as being ‘a widow and an unfortunate’. She lived at 5 Miller’s Court and judging by her comings and goings, she went out soliciting several times in the course of the night. Returning to Dorset Street between 11.45pm and midnight, she saw Mary Jane (the name by which she apparently knew Kelly) walking ahead of her in the company of a man who was carrying a quart can of beer. As Mrs Cox turned into the Court, Mary and the man were entering Kelly’s room. Mrs Cox called out, ‘Good night, Mary Jane,’ but Kelly, who was ‘very drunk’, could scarcely answer; although she did manage to say, ‘Good night.’

The man was aged about 36, was 5 feet 5 inches tall, with a fresh complexion and, so she thought, a blotchy face. He had side whiskers, a thick carroty moustache, and was dressed in dark shabby clothes, dark overcoat and black felt hat. Mrs Cox went to her room and almost immediately heard Mary Kelly singing, ‘A violet I plucked from my mother’s grave when a boy.’ She was still singing when Mrs Cox went out again 15 minutes later, and also when she came back at around 1am. Having warmed her hands, Mrs Cox went out again and when she returned at 3am, Miller’s Court was quiet. At Mary Kelly’s inquest Mrs Cox testified that she did not go to sleep ‘at all’, and that she heard ‘men going in and out, several go in and out. I heard someone go out at a quarter to six.’ However, she didn’t know which of the houses he came out of, and she heard no door being shut.

Mrs Elizabeth Prater, who lived in the room above Mary Kelly’s, may have heard something even more significant. She had been out for the night and had returned to Miller’s Court at around 1am. According to her police testimony, she stood chatting with John McCarthy, whose chandler’s shop was next to the court entrance.

At the inquest, however, she told a slightly different tale, claiming that she simply stood outside McCarthy’s shop waiting for a man she lived with, and that she spoke with no one.

When the man didn’t arrive she went up to her room, placed two tables against her door, lay on the bed and having ‘had something to drink’, slept soundly.

At around 3.30am to 4am her cat jumped on her, waking her up. As she pushed the cat away, she heard a faint cry of, ‘Oh! Murder!’ It seemed to come from close by, but since the area was a very violent one and domestic violence was commonplace, she thought it was just another husband abusing his wife. She ignored it and went back to sleep.

She awoke again at 5am, got up and went over to the Ten Bells pub, arriving at around 5.45am. She saw a few men harnessing horses in Dorset Street, but nothing suspicious.

Having had a drink, she returned to her room and slept soundly till 11am.

Another witness who may have heard Mary Kelly’s last desperate cry for help was Sarah Lewis, a laundress of 24 Great Pearl Street, who passed Christchurch at 2.30am. She had argued with her husband and decided to spend the rest of the night with her friends Mr and Mrs Keyler, who lived at 2 Miller’s Court, a first-floor

room.

According to her police statement, as she approached the court there was a man standing against the lodging house on the opposite side of Dorset Street, although she was unable to describe him.

This statement was taken on 9th November, probably in the Keylers' room, as she later testified that the police would not let them out until 5.30pm.

Evidently, over the next few days Sarah Lewis gave a lot of thought to this mystery man, and by the time of Mary Kelly's inquest she was able to go into a little more detail:-

"He was not tall – but stout – had on a wideawake black hat – I did not notice his clothes – another young man with a woman passed along – The man standing in the street was looking up the court as if waiting for someone to come out."

Her inquest testimony is remarkable for another fact that had, apparently, slipped her mind when making her police statement:-

"About Wednesday night at 8 O'clock I was going along Bethnal Green Road with another female and a Gentleman passed us he turned back & spoke to us, he asked us to follow him, and asked one of us he did not mind which, [to go with him] we refused. He went away, and came back & said if we would follow him he would treat us – he asked us to go down a passage – he had a bag he put it down saying what are you frightened of – he then undid his coat and felt for something and we ran away – He was short, pale-faced, with a black small mous¬tache, about forty years of age – the bag he had was about a foot or nine inches long – he had on a round high hat – he had a brownish long overcoat and a short black coat underneath - and pepper & salt trousers."

On our running away we did not look after the man – On the Friday morning about half-past two when I was coming to Miller's Court I met the same man with a female – in Commercial Street near Mr Ringers Public House – He had then no overcoat on – but he had the bag & the same hat trousers & undercoat.

I passed by them and looked back at the man – I was frightened – I looked again when I got to the corner of Dorset Street. I have not seen the man since I should know him if I did."

The difference between Sarah Lewis's police and inquest testimonies regarding the sinister man she saw on Commercial Street casts some doubt on her veracity as a witness.

Her police statement had this to say about him:-

"Sarah Lewis further said that when in company with another female on Wednesday evening last at Bethnal Green, a suspicious man accosted her, he carried a bag."

According to the inquest statement, this man had so terrified her and her friend that they had run away. When she saw the same man in the early hours of Friday 9th November, she was frightened once again. Yet it seems that she made no mention of having seen him in Commercial Street when she was interviewed later that day by the police.

It is clear that in the days following the murder, Sarah Lewis was filling in the blanks in her memory; by the time she came to give evidence at the inquest, not only had she remembered seeing him, but she was also able to give a full description of him:-

"He was short, pale-faced, with a black small moustache, about forty years of age – the bag he had was about a foot or nine inches long – he had on a round high hat – he had a brownish long overcoat and a short black coat underneath – and pepper & salt trousers."

When her statement is compared to several press stories of meetings with sinister strangers on the day of the murder, surprising similarities occur.The following article, for example, appeared in the Manchester Guardian on 10th November, two days before Mary Kelly's inquest:-

"Mrs Paumier, a chestnut seller at the corner of Widcoate-street, a narrow thoroughfare about two minutes' walk from the scene of the murder, told a reporter a story which appear (sic) to afford a clue to the murder. She said that about 12 o'clock this morning a man dressed like a gentleman came to her and said, 'I suppose you have heard about the murder in Dorset-street.' She replied that she had, whereupon the man grinned and said 'I know more about it than you.' He then stared into her face and went down Sandys Row, another narrow thoroughfare which cuts across Widcoate-street. When he had got some way off he looked back, as if to see whether she was watching him, and then vanished. Mrs Paumier said the man had a black moustache, was about 5ft. 6in. in height, and wore a black silk hat, black coat, and speckled trousers. He carried a black bag about 1ft. in depth and 11⁄2 ft. in length. Sarah Roney, a girl about 20 years of age, states that she was with two other girls last night in Brushfield-street, which is near Dorset-street, when a man wearing a tall hat and a black coat, and carrying a black bag, came up to her, and said, 'Will you come with me?' She told him she would not, and asked him what he had in the bag, and he said, 'Something the ladies don't like.' He then walked away."

Evidently, rumoured sightings of the villain (and if you read the descriptions again, you will see that he bore an uncanny resemblance to the traditional Victorian villain as portrayed on stage and in pantomime and film) were circulating in the area by the Saturday. It is possible that Sarah Lewis was influenced more by these 'rumours' than by what she actually saw and that, for some reason, she transported the man who had frightened her on Bethnal Green Road to Commercial Street on the morning of the murder.

Since the man that she saw leaning against the lodg¬ing house wall appears in both her statements, it seems reasonable to assume that this section of her testimony was reliable.

His identity was possibly revealed on the following Monday, when at 6pm a man named George Hutchinson, who lived at the Victoria Home on Commercial Street, walked into Commercial Street Police Station to tell of an encounter he had had with Mary Kelly at around 2am on the morning of her murder. He claimed that he had known her for three years and said that he had occasionally given her a few shillings. In his statement, which was taken down by Inspector Abberline, he told how:-

"About 2:00am on the 9th I was coming by Thrawl Street, Commercial Street and just before I got to Flower and Dean Street I met the murdered woman Kelly and she said to me: 'Hutchinson, will you lend me sixpence?' I said: 'I can't. I have spent all my money going down to Romford.' She said: 'Good morning, I must go and find some money.' She went away to Thrawl Street. A man coming in the opposite direction to Kelly (I.e. from Aldgate) tapped her on the shoulder and said something to her. They both burst out laughing. I heard her say: 'All right' to him and the man said: 'You will be alright for what I have told you.' He then placed his right hand around her shoulder. He also had a kind of small parcel in his left hand with a kind of strap around it. I stood against the lamp of the Queen's Head Public House and watched him. They both came past me and the man hung his head down with his hat over his eyes. I stooped down and looked him in the face. He looked at me stern. They both went into Dorset Street. I followed them. They both stood on the corner of the court for about three minutes. He said something to her. She said: 'All right, my dear. Come along. You will be comfortable.' He then placed his arm on her shoulder and she gave him a kiss. She said she had lost her handkerchief. He then pulled out his handkerchief, a red one, and gave it to her. They both went up the court together. I went to the court to see if I could see them, but I could not. I stood there for about three-quarters of an hour to see if they came out. They did not, so I went away."

Hutchinson then proceeded to give a description of the man which went into an incredible amount of detail:-

"Age about thirty four or thirty five; height five feet six inches; complexion pale; dark eyes and eyelashes; slight moustache curled up at each end and hair dark; very surly looking; dress – long dark coat; collar and cuffs trimmed with astrakhan and a dark jacket underneath; light waistcoat; dark trousers; dark felt hat turned down in the middle; button boots and gaiters with white buttons: wore a very thick gold chain with linen collar; black tie with horseshoe pin; respectable appearance; walked very sharp; Jewish appearance. Can be identified."

Abberline took Hutchinson's statement very seriously and assigned him two detectives who spent two days escorting him around the area in the hope that he might see the man again and identify him. Today Hutchinson's statement arouses a good deal of debate. Many argue that he could not have witnessed all that he claimed to have seen, and it has been pointed out that his description of the man sounds too good to be true.

When compared to sightings by other witnesses this becomes very evident.

But what possible reason could Hutchinson have had for volunteering a false state¬ment that actually placed him at the scene of the Mary Kelly's murder? It has been argued that he was just another publicity seeker, anxious to involve himself in the flurry of speculation that fol¬lowed the murder. If so he was playing a dangerous game by placing himself so close to the crime scene and admitting to keeping the victim under surveillance. In recent years, Hutchinson's name has even found its way onto the ever-expanding list of Jack the Ripper suspects.

Another possible scenario is that Hutchinson knew that he had been spotted; he panicked and spent the next few days hon¬ing an alibi to explain his proximity to the murder site.

This, of course, would explain why he waited two days to come forward and why his description was so detailed compared to those of other witnesses.

Today, it is almost impossible to ascertain the reliability of Hutchinson's statement. Given that he did not appear as a witness at Mary Kelly's inquest, he was neither cross-examined by the coroner nor questioned by the jury, so his statement was never subjected to the scrutiny that may have proved or disproved it once and for all.

The problem with dismissing him outright is that Abberline, an experienced and intelligent detective, gave it as his opinion that Hutchison's statement was true.

So he must remain one of several unexplained mysteries concerning the final hours of Mary Kelly's life.

One of the major mysteries concerning the murder of Mary Kelly is when exactly it took place.

Dr Thomas Bond, the police divisional surgeon who together with Dr Phillips examined Mary Kelly's body in situ, estimated that she had been murdered at between 1am and 2am. Dr Phillips placed the time of death at around 4am.

This latter time would be in keeping with the cry of 'Murder!' that Elizabeth Prater and Sarah Lewis claim to have heard.

Yet sightings of Mary Kelly continued long after this hour.

Mrs Caroline Maxwell, wife of Henry Maxwell, a lodging house deputy at 14 Dorset Street, claimed that she saw Mary Kelly standing at the corner of Miller's Court between 8am and 8.30am. 'What brings you up so early?' Mrs Maxwell asked.
'Oh! I do feel so bad,' was Mary Kelly's reply. 'I have the horrors of drink upon me, as I have been drinking for some days past.' Mrs Maxwell suggested she should go to Mrs Ringers [the Britannia pub] and have half a pint of beer. Mary told her that she had already done so, but had brought it all up again, and so saying pointed to some vomit in the roadway. Caroline Maxwell then headed to Bishopsgate on an errand, and when she returned at around 9am she saw Mary standing outside the Britannia talking to a man. Although she was some distance

away from them, she thought the man was aged about 30, that he was around 5 feet 5inches tall, of stout build, and that he was dressed as a market porter.

Mrs Maxwell's statement is clearly at odds with both Bond's and Phillips' opinion regarding the time of death.

And, if Sarah Lewis and Elizabeth Prater did indeed hear Mary cry out as she was being murdered at around 4am, how could Mrs Maxwell have seen her twice between 8am and 9am?

There are many theories about these sightings. Some hold that Caroline Maxwell was mistaken about the day, or that she was lying because she wanted her moment in the spotlight. Others argue that she mistook someone else for Mary Kelly (she did say that she had only actually spoken to Kelly twice). Inevitably it has been proffered that she saw Mary's ghost, whilst conspiracy theorists argue that she did in fact meet Mary Kelly, and that the body in the room was that of someone else.

Yet Caroline Maxwell's account of the meeting is consistent in both her police statement and her inquest testimony.

Furthermore, the coroner at the inquest made a specific point of warning her that she was giving evidence on oath, and pointed out that her testimony contradicted those of other witnesses. But Caroline Maxwell stuck to her story. Evidently, she was convinced she had met Mary Kelly, not someone who looked like her or was dressed in her clothes, at 8am on the morning of her murder.

On 12th November 1888, *The Times* went so far as to report that at least part of Caroline Maxwell's story had been corroborated:-

"When asked by the police how she could fix the time of the morning, Mrs Maxwell replied, 'Because I went to the milkshop for some milk, and I had not before been there for a long time, and that she was wearing a woollen cross-over that I had not seen her wear for a considerable time.'

On inquiries being made at the milkshop indicated by the woman her statement was found to be correct, and the cross-over was also found in Kelly's room."

So we find ourselves confronted by another inexplicable mystery concerning the murder of Mary Kelly.

Caroline Maxwell appears to have been a reliable and consistent witness, and part of her story was corroborated by staff at the milkshop.

Given that Mary Kelly's body had been virtually skinned to the bone, and that the window to her room was broken, the room temperature would have been extremely cold; the body would have cooled a lot more rapidly than normal.

So the possibility remains that the doctors were wrong about the time of her death. Caroline Maxwell may, therefore, have met Mary Kelly just as she described, and the man she saw with her could well have been her murderer.


PORTRAIT SKETCHES OF SUPPOSED WHITECHAPEL MONSTER AND INCIDENTS IN THE CASE.
"I COULD SWEAR TO THE MAN ANYWHERE," HUTCHINSON.
HUTCHINSON'S DESCRIPTION OF THE MAN SEEN TO ENTER THE HOUSE WITH THE VICTIM.
KELLY
IS HE THE MURDERER?
"I HEARD A CRY OF "MURDER" IN A FAINT VOICE." EVIDENCE OF MR. PRATER.
AFTER!


WHITECHAPEL MURDERER'S RECORD.
EAST END HORRORS.
WHEN WILL THEY CEASE?
FIRST MURDER
SECOND MURDER
VICTIM
VICTIM
THIRD MURDER
VICTIM
FOURTH MURDER
VICTIM
HANBURY STREET
FIFTH MURDER
VICTIM
SIXTH MURDER
VICTIM
OPENING THE DOOR TO ADMIT DEATH!
MILLER'S COURT, DORSET ST.
THE EAST END MURDERER SEEN AGAIN!
A MEMBER OF THE VIGILANCE COMMITTEE
ANOTHER ARREST

At 10.45am on the 9th November Mary Kelly's landlord, John McCarthy, sent his assistant Thomas Bowyer (also known as Indian Harry) round to 13 Miller's Court to collect her overdue rent.

Striding into Miller's Court, Bowyer banged twice on her door. There was no answer. No doubt believing that she was inside but unwilling or unable to pay her rent, Bowyer stepped around the corner and pulled aside a curtain that covered the broken window pane.

Moments later an ashen-faced Bowyer staggered back into McCarthy's shop.
'Governor,' he spluttered, 'I knocked at the door and could not make anyone answer. I looked through the window and saw a lot of blood.'
'You don't mean that, Harry,' was McCarthy's horrified response, and the two men hurried from the shop and into Miller's Court. Stooping down, McCarthy pushed aside the curtain and peered into the gloomy room. A sight of unimaginable horror met his eyes. The wall behind the bed was spattered with blood. On the bedside table was a pile of bloody human flesh. And there on the bed, barely recognizable as human, lay the virtually skinned-down cadaver of Mary Kelly.

McCarthy sent Bowyer to Commercial Street Police Station to fetch the police, and having first stopped to secure his shop, hurried after him.

Inspectors Walter Dew and Walter Beck were chatting inside the station when Bowyer arrived.

As Dew recalled in his memoirs:-

'The poor fellow was so frightened that for a time he was unable to utter a single intelligible word. At last he managed to stammer out something about "Another one. Jack the Ripper. Awful. Jack McCarthy sent me."'

Soon Beck and Dew were following Bowyer along Commercial Street in the direction of Dorset Street.

When they arrived at Miller's Court, Dew tried the door but it would not open.

Inspector Beck, therefore, moved to the window and gazed into the room.
Almost instantly he staggered back. 'For God's sake, Dew,' he cried, 'don't look.'
Dew ignored the order, looked through the window, and saw a sight that would stay with him to his dying day. The horror of what he saw was still vivid in his mind when he penned his mem¬oirs 50 years later:-

"As my thoughts go back to Miller's Court, and what happened there, the old nausea, indignation and horror overwhelm me still... My mental picture of it remains as shockingly clear as though it were but yesterday... No savage could have been more barbaric. No wild animal could have done anything so horrifying."

Mary Kelly's body lay on the bed, her head turned towards the window. Her face had been mutilat¬ed beyond recognition and one feature in particular struck Inspector Dew: 'The poor woman's eyes. They were wide open, and seemed to be staring straight at me with a look of terror.'
Indeed, so horrific were the mutilations to

Mary Kelly Crime Scene Photo

Mary Kelly's face that her lover Joseph Barnet was later only able to identify her by her eyes and ears.

Dr George Bagster Phillips arrived at 11.15am and Inspector Abberline was at the scene 15 minutes later. Dr Phillips suggested that no one should enter the room until bloodhounds had been brought to the scene and put on the scent. As they waited, the police sealed off both ends of Dorset Street and the entrance to Miller's Court was closed.

At 1.30pm Inspector Arnold, the head of H Division, arrived and announced that the bloodhounds would not be coming after all, and gave instructions for the door to be forced open. John McCarthy fetched a pick-axe and proceeded to batter it down.

The scene inside the room was one of utter, bloody carnage. No doubt John McCarthy was expressing the sentiments of all those present when he later told a journalist:-

"The sight that we saw I cannot drive away from my mind. It looked more like the work of a devil than of a man.

I had heard a great deal about the Whitechapel murders, but I declare to God I had never expected to see such a sight as this. The whole scene is more than I can describe. I hope I may never see such a sight as this again."

Dr Thomas Bond, who arrived in the room at 2pm and carried out an examination of the body with Dr Phillips, detailed her injuries in his subsequent post-mortem report. Even today, inured as we are by graphic depictions of violence and bloodshed on television and in films, the detached scientific tone of his report makes for extremely discomforting and disturbing reading:-

"The body was lying naked in the middle of the bed, the shoulders flat, but the axis of the body inclined to the left side of the bed. The head was turned on the left cheek. The left arm was close to the body with the forearm flexed at a right angle & lying across the abdomen. The right arm was slightly abducted from the body & rested on the mattress, the elbow bent & the forearm supine with the fingers clenched. The legs were wide apart, the left thigh at right angles to the trunk & the right forming an obtuse angle with the pubes.

The whole of the surface of the abdomen & thighs was removed & the abdominal Cavity emptied of its viscera. The breasts were cut off, the arms mutilated by several jagged wounds & the face hacked beyond recognition of the features. The tissues of the neck were severed all round down to the bone.

The viscera were found in various parts viz: the uterus & Kidneys with one breast under the head, the other breast by the Rt foot, the Liver between the feet, the intestines by the right side & the spleen by the left side of the body. The flaps removed from the abdomen and thighs were on a table.

The bed clothing at the right corner was saturated with blood, & on the floor beneath

was a pool of blood covering about 2 feet square. The wall by the right side of the bed & in a line with the neck was marked by blood which had struck it in a number of separate splashes.

The face was gashed in all directions the nose cheeks, eyebrows and ears being partly removed.

The lips were blanched & cut by several incisions running obliquely down to the chin. There were also numerous cuts extending irregularly across all the features."

As the doctors went about their grim task, the police began examining the room itself.

There had been a fierce fire in the grate, the heat from which had been so intense that it had melted the handle and spout of the kettle. In the ashes, the police discovered the charred wire rim of a woman's hat, indicating that the fuel for the fire had been provided by the clothes Maria Harvey had left in Mary Kelly's room.

Inspector Abberline was of the opinion that the murderer had burnt the clothing to provide sufficient light for him to work by.

Mary Kelly's clothes were found on a chair at the foot of the bed.

By 3.45pm the doctors had completed their examination and instructions were given for the removal of Mary Kelly's body to the mortuary.

The Times reported the scene:-

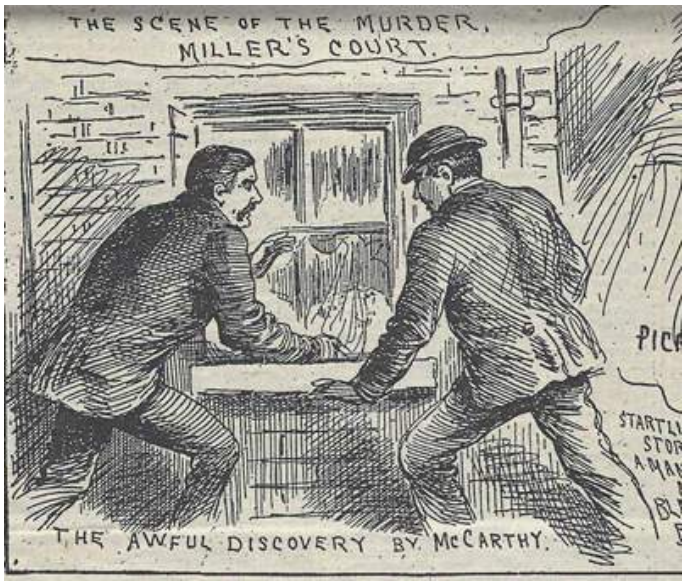
"At 10 minutes to 4 o'clock a one-horse carrier's cart, with the ordinary tarpaulin cover was driven into Dorset-street, and halted opposite Millers-court. From the cart was taken a long shell or coffin, dirty and scratched with constant use. This was taken into the death chamber, and there the remains were temporarily coffined. The news that the body was about to be removed caused a great rush of people from the courts running out of Dorset-street, and there was a determined effort to break the police cordon at the Commercial-street end. The crowd, which pressed round the van, was of the humblest class, but the demeanour of the poor people was all that could be described. Ragged caps were doffed and slatternly-looking women shed tears as the shell, covered with a ragged-looking cloth, was placed in the van."

Meanwhile, the police went about their, by now, familiar routine of interviewing witnesses and *hunting for suspects.*

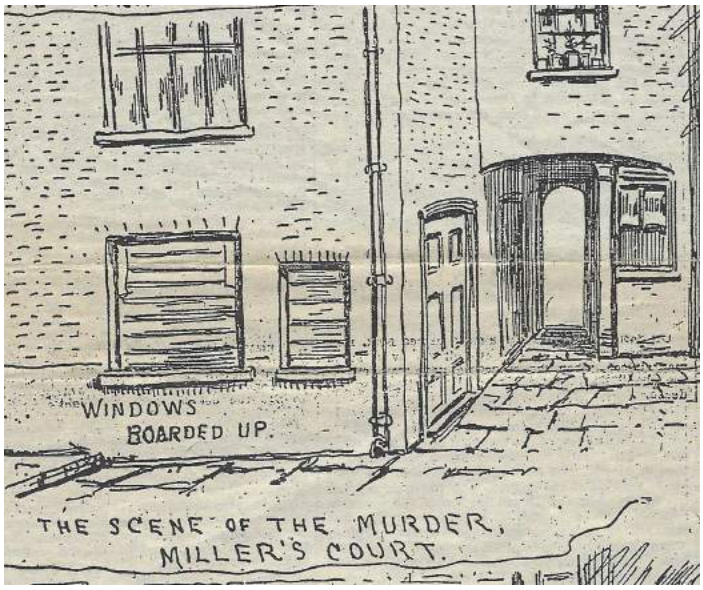
Sergeant Thicke and several other officers began taking down statements from those who lived in the immediate vicinity and took full particulars of people staying at the common lodging houses in Dorset Street.

Something of the magnitude of their task can be gleaned from press comments 'that in one house alone there are upwards of 260 persons, and that several houses accommodate over 200'.

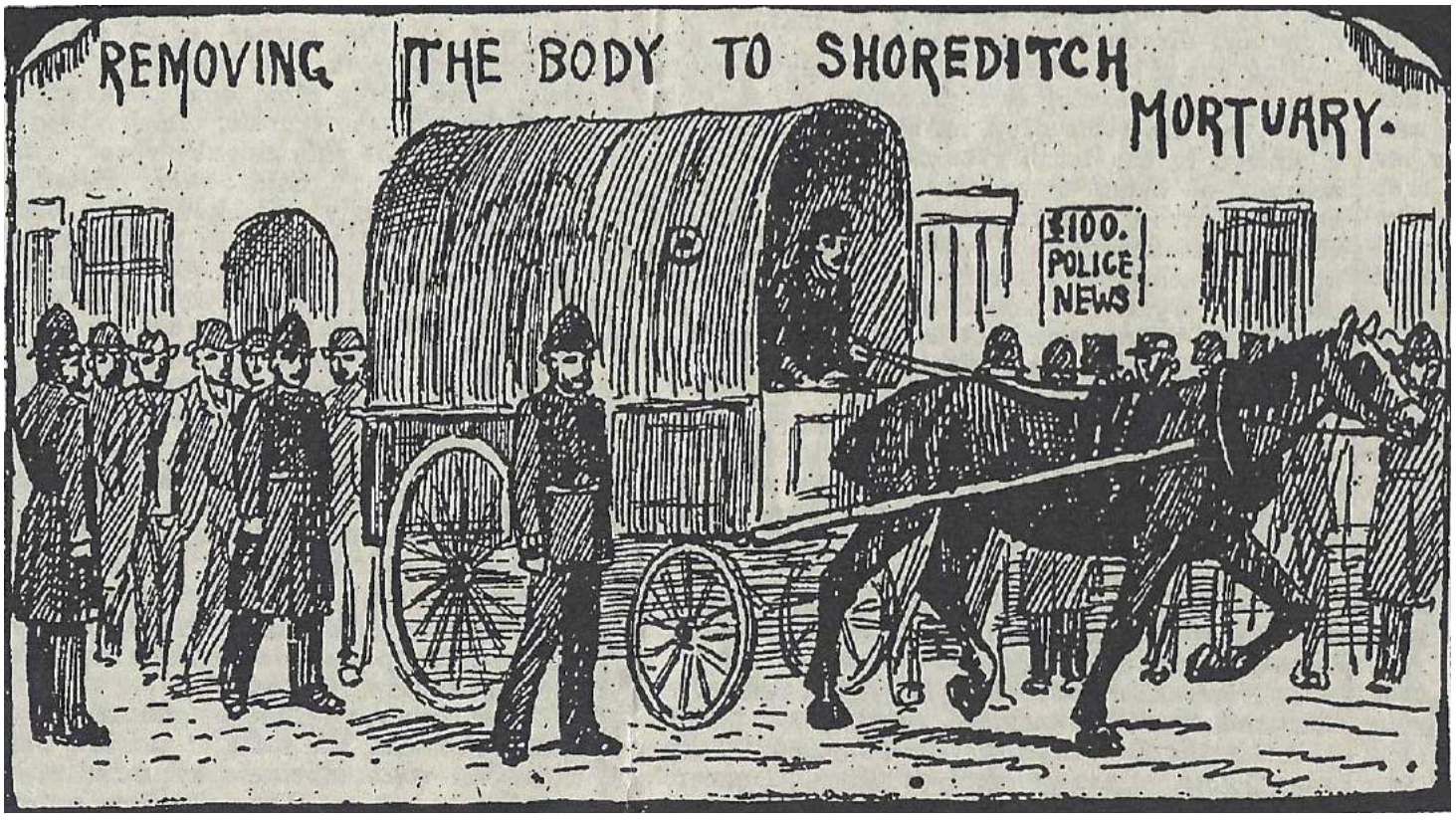
The day was to hold another shock for the beleaguered officers, for word came through that their commissioner, Sir Charles Warren, had resigned. The reason for his resignation was more to do with the strained relations between himself and the Home Secretary,


THE SCENE OF THE MURDER,
MILLER'S COURT.
THE AWFUL DISCOVERY BY McCARTHY.


MILLER'S COURT.
THE MURDERER'S CHOSEN SPOT.


WINDOWS
BOARDED UP.
THE SCENE OF THE MURDER,
MILLER'S COURT.


REMOVING THE BODY.


REMOVING THE BODY TO SHOREDITCH MORTUARY.
£100.
POLICE
NEWS

Henry Matthews, than with his force's inability to catch Jack the Ripper.

Warren had responded to press attacks on the police with an article that was published in Murray's Magazine entitled 'The Police of the Metropolis'. This was in direct contravention of official procedure, which required that all articles should first be cleared by senior Home Office officials. Matthews sent him a stern reprimand for his impropriety and Warren responded by tendering his resignation.

Although the formalities had been underway for a few days, his resignation was officially accepted and announced on the day of Mary Kelly's murder.

Warren actually remained in office until a new commissioner was appointed, and gave several orders for the handling of the Mary Kelly investigation.

His reign as commissioner ended on 27th November when he was replaced by the former subordinate with whom he had clashed at the end of August, James Monro.

As darkness fell on 9th November, the police nailed boards over the windows of Mary Kelly's room and padlocked the door shut.

A strange silence descended over Dorset Street as the residents attempted to comprehend the horror of what had occurred in their midst.

The week that followed Mary Kelly's murder saw an intense flurry of activity.

A hasty inquest was held on Monday 12th November and was brought to a close that same day, probably at the request of the police, in order to starve the press of the gossip and gory detail of which they had made so much during the protracted inquests into the previous murders.

The number of plain¬clothes officers in the area was increased from 89 to 143, and these men patrolled the streets of Whitechapel after nightfall.

Meanwhile, the Home Office authorized Sir Charles Warren to issue a notice offering a pardon to any accomplice who would give information that would lead to the discovery and conviction of the killer.

And the fresh panic that was now gripping the capital even snapped the patience of Queen Victoria, who fired off an angry missive to her Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury:-

"This new most ghastly murder shows the absolute necessity for some very decided action. All these courts must be lit, & our detectives improved. They are not what they should be."

At noon on Monday 19th November, 1888, the bell at St Leonard's church in Shoreditch began to toll a mourning knell as a coffin of elm and oak, borne on the shoulders of four men, was carried out of the gates in front of a crowd some several thousand strong. Men and women alike could barely control their emotions as the funeral procession set off for St Patrick's Roman Catholic Cemetery in Leyton. It was with great difficulty that the police forced a path for the cortege as onlookers jostled to touch the coffin and

read its simple brass plate:-

"Marie Jeanette Kelly, died 9th November 1888, aged twenty-five years."

What nobody could have realized as Mary Kelly was laid to rest was that in Miller's Court, Jack the Ripper had performed his swansong. That knowledge would only come with hindsight.

Over the weeks that followed, the panic and fear that had gripped the neighbourhood throughout the autumn began to abate as the residents returned to their everyday struggle for survival, and the press began to focus on other matters.

The police pursued their inquiries well into the winter and continued to arrest suspect after suspect, but to no avail; one by one, the arrestees were absolved of any hand in the crimes.

The plain-clothes amateur patrols continued plodding the streets after dark, but by February 1889 even they had begun to tire of the seemingly endless hours and harsh weather conditions. Gradually, they began to disband.

On 26th January, 1889 the new Metropolitan Police Commissioner, James Monro, informed the Home Office that he was going to start reducing the number of plain-clothes police officers 'as quickly as it is safe to do so'. He cut the number from 143 to 102 at once, and cut them again in February to 47. Thereafter they were phased out altogether.

Two further murders, that of Alice McKenzie in the early hours of 17th July, 1889 and that of Frances Coles on 13th February, 1891 raised the chilling possibility that the killer had returned, but these are generally not considered to have been the work of Jack the Ripper.

As he walked away from Miller's Court, the Whitechapel murderer left behind him one of the most enduring mysteries in history, and the legend of Jack the Ripper would grow in stature with every subsequent year that passed.

Today people travel from all over the world to tour the murder sites and walk through the streets of Whitechapel.

Some of those streets are still as sordid and down at heel as they were in 1888. Others have seen significant gentrification, and what were once slum dwellings have become very desirable and expensive properties.

The Ten Bells pub, where Mary Kelly spent some of the last hours of her short life, is still going strong, although it is trying to distance itself as much as possible from its past association with the Ripper.

The Frying Pan Pub, where Mary Nichols drank away her doss money shortly before being murdered, has now become the Shaad Indian Restaurant.

The doorway in Goulston Street where the piece of Catharine Eddowe's apron was found is now the takeaway counter of a fish and chip shop.

People still make their way out to St Patrick's Roman Catholic Cemetery in Leyton to lay flowers on the grave of Mary Kelly and spend a few moments in quiet contemplation.

In 2006, Jack the Ripper was voted the worst Briton ever, even though we don't know who he was, nor, for that matter, whether he was actually British.

But there is an intriguing paradox on which to end our journey into Jack the Ripper's London.

For the names of his five victims – Mary Nichols, Annie Chapman, Elizabeth Stride, Catharine Eddowes and Mary Kelly – would not be remembered today had it not been for the fact that they were murdered by a man whose name will probably never be known for sure.