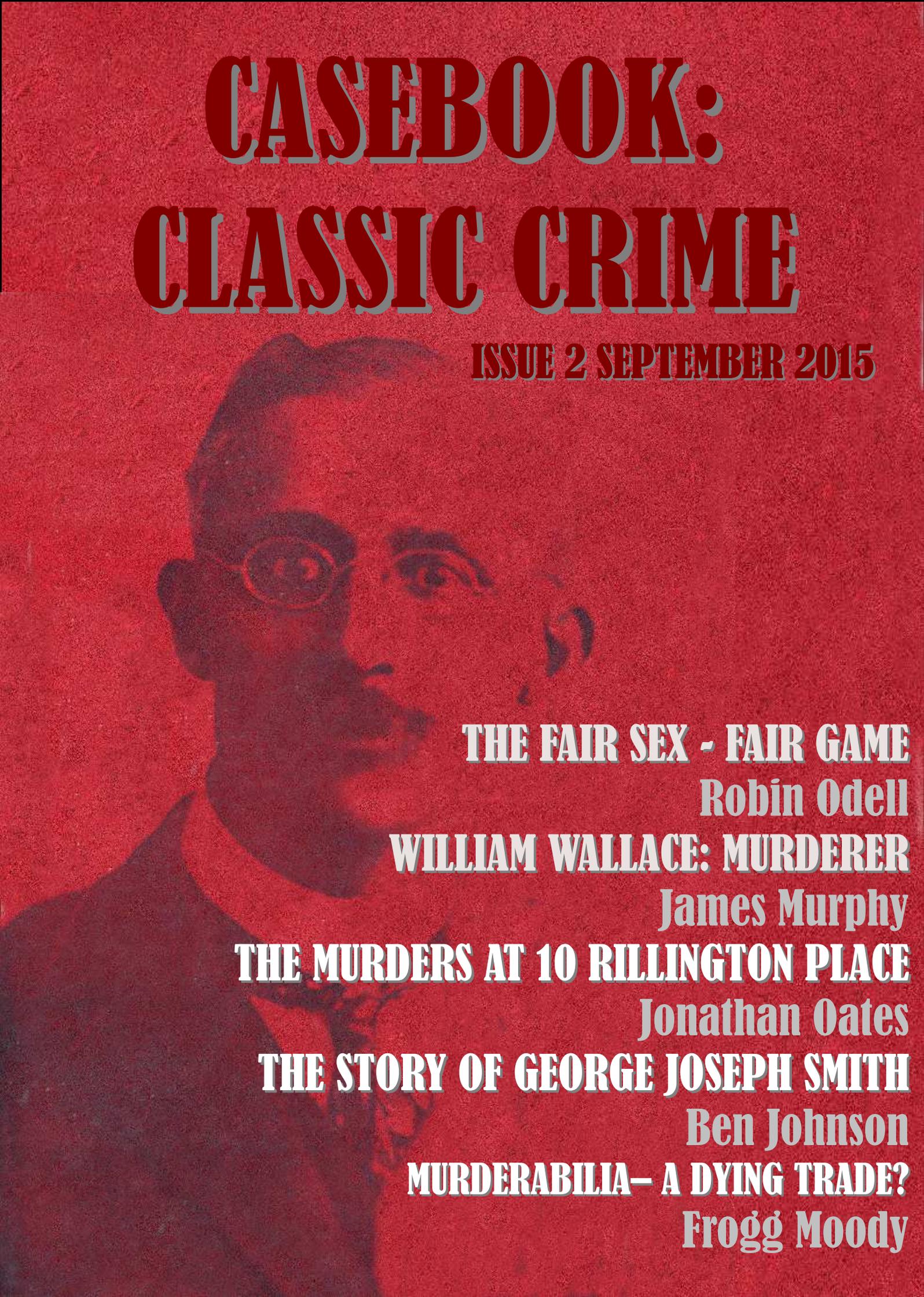


CASEBOOK: CLASSIC CRIME

ISSUE 2 SEPTEMBER 2015



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James Murphy

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CASEBOOK: CLASSIC CRIME

Outside of a war zone you are more likely to be murdered by your partner than anyone else. So for the issue 2 'end of Summer Special Edition' of Casebook: Classic Crime we examine 'How to Murder Your Wife'. We dig up the remains of different attempts both old and new, for you to share with your loved ones ...

How to murder your wife? For many men involved in acrimonious divorce cases the idea is very attractive - more attractive than the wife, and of course this emotion is often reciprocated by the significant other: The mother of a friend was talking about her divorce when she mentioned casually "I fantasized about slipping Laburnum seeds into his sandwich, I would never have actually done it, but I thought about it...often."

Poison may be the woman's weapon of choice, but to really avoid detection the act should look like an accident. For the writer William Borroughs, this was shooting his wife between the

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Ben Johnson

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eyes at a drunken party, in a 'shoot the apple on the head stunt gone wrong'.

We plunge into our end of summer special with the 'Brides in the Bath murders' by Ben Johnson. Many men felt the one wife is more than enough, but these brides sink beneath the uncertain waters of marriage with an rapidity that could surely not have been accidental?

If you can't make it look like An accident, you have a problem of what to do with the body. Without a body it is very difficult to prove that a murder has taken place. Therefore, Efficient disposal of the victim is of prime importance.

Inside Information

A conviction can rest wholly on the pathologist's ability to identify the remains and the more imaginative the approach, the more likely it is to avoid detection. The wife of Dr. Crippen was found de-boned and we talk to Lindsay Siviter about the case and her collection of Crippen artifacts.

Despite their best attempts, Husband's often give detectives the evidence they need. A map with X marking the spot where detectives would find the body was found in one husband's car. A Cisco engineer was found to have a Google map search from the day before the murder on his computer - zoomed in to the exact location of the crime and claiming that *National Security would be breached by admitting this as evidence* did not help the case.

Murderers often 'live in the Moment', a NYC man beat his wife to death for serving a vegetarian dinner. His defence that beating his wife was 'customary in Pakistan' so the sentence should be reduced to manslaughter did not succeed.

Author James Murphy sifts through the evidence of the Wallace case. Did Wallace murder his wife or as a chess player, was he convinced that he would always be one move ahead of those trying to catch him?

Wives with knives kill husbands quite often and make up 40% of spousal murders. This commitment to getting rid of the husband might give you 'the willies' and what husband can forget John Bobbitt and his wife taking a knife into the marital bed - although a woman's weapon of choice is usually poison.

Mary Ann Cotton could never keep a husband for long, could it have been something to do with her cooking?

This wasn't the situation in the kitchen of 10 Rillington Place where Ethel, wife of Reg Christie, turned out a super shepherd's pie. But as author Jonathan Oates tells us, this couldn't prevent her husband murdering her and putting the remains under the floorboards.

George Chapman was also fond of poison and as author Helena Wojtczak tells us, Chapman took great satisfaction in slow - poisoning three women with tartar emetic, which contains antimony.

But as we mentioned, when it comes to murder, poison is usually the choice of the fairer sex and that reminds me of an old joke. Shopping in a supermarket a woman opened a bottle of cleaning fluid, took a sniff and recoiled at the smell. A passing assistant came to her assistance.

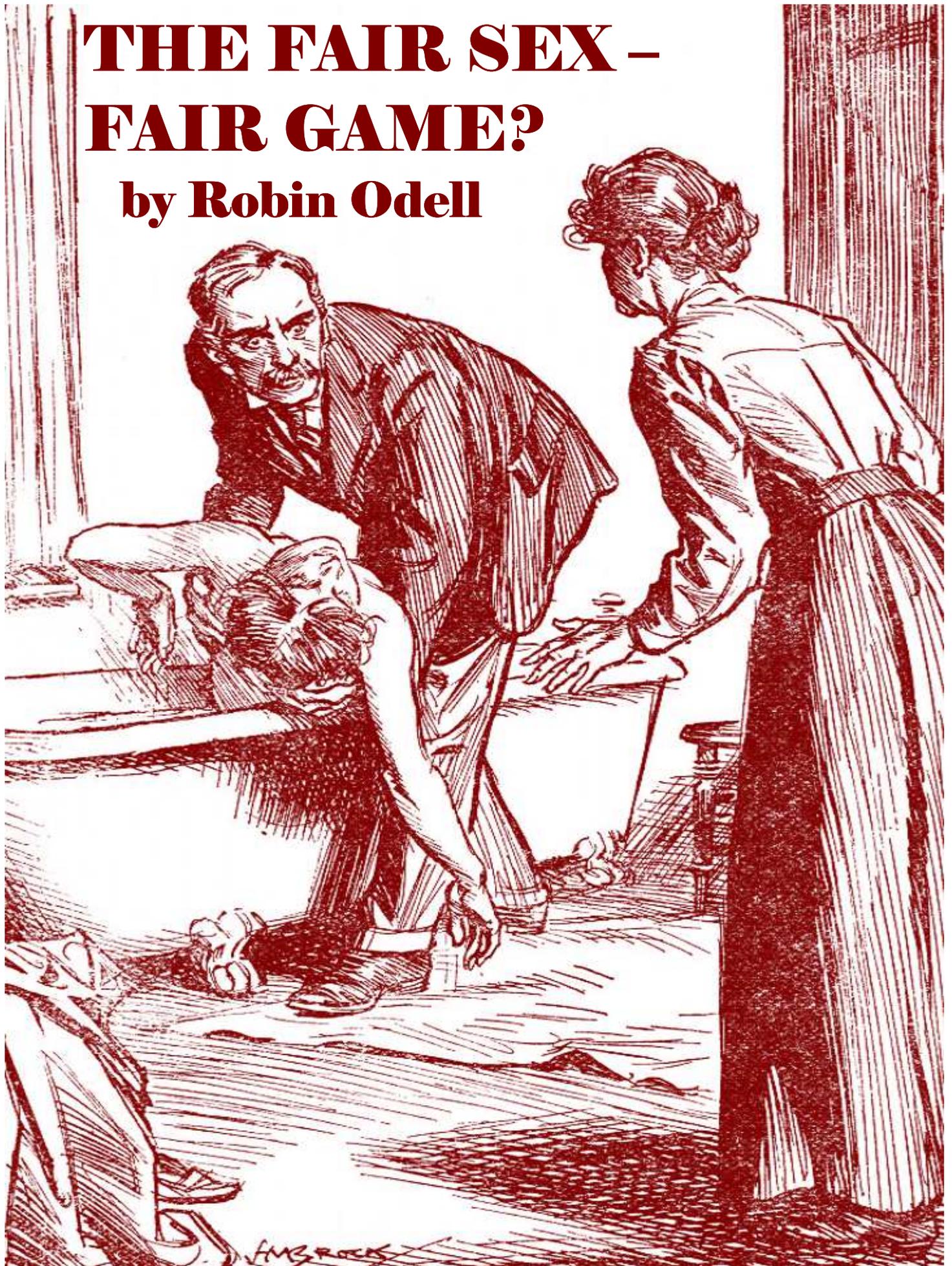
"You should try this one perhaps" he said "it's completely odourless."

"Wonderful! That's just what I'm after" she said "the question is, will he be able to taste it?"

However, before you start planning the disposal of 'your other half' we would like to point out that murdering your significant other is invariably a bad idea. If contemplating this and you are not already a doctor, we would urge you to seek medical help.

THE FAIR SEX - FAIR GAME?

by Robin Odell



The Twenty-First Century has seen an upsurge in both levels and frequency of violent attacks made on women by their consorts, husbands and partners. Every week the media feature stories with gruesome headlines about demonic killings, ritual murders, beheadings, stabbings, shootings, bludgeoning and poisoning. For the perpetrators, no reason seems too trivial or too bizarre. Wife murder is not a new phenomenon, it is the intensity and barbarity involved which makes these crimes in today's world seem ever more bestial.

Of course, there is traffic in the other direction – that is wives murdering husbands or partners – but it pales into insignificance compared with men killing members of the fair sex. The perverted reasoning, arrogance and self aggrandisement of the macho male and his expectation of committing the perfect crime and the self glorification that goes with it, seems to recognise no bounds.

The annals of true crime contain many accounts involving the murder of unwanted and disaffected wives, mistresses and spouses by their husbands and lovers. There are some striking similarities in the methods used and explanations given, while all manner of ploys are adopted to dress up murder to look like accident, suicide or death from natural causes.

One of the greatest challenges confronting the murderer is disposal of his victim's body. At great inconvenience, this can be achieved by dismemberment, secret burial or disposal in a watery grave. But there is always the danger that the corpse will resurface or be discovered, providing a forensic trail leading back to the murderer. Far more effective is to contrive a method whereby the nature of death is disguised and the body becomes less of a problem.

A time-honoured method is the use of a household bathtub to drown the victim in circumstances contrived to give the appearance of death by misadventure. Accompanied by pre-emptive suggestions of ill-health, this can provide an effective smokescreen. Such a *modus operandi* was adopted by George Joseph Smith, the infamous "Brides in the Bath Murderer", and followed by others since.

Scenarios embraced by wife murderers are aimed to deceive and mislead investigators and achieve the holy grail of the perfect crime. Hence, a roll-call of faked car crashes, death meted out by intruders, the employment of hired assassins, trunk crimes and poisoning to name but a few approaches.

It's Bath Time!

While his fellow countrymen were fighting and dying in France in 1915, George Joseph Smith, sometime dealer in antiques and a player of the harmonica, was plotting the death of his third wife. He had already disposed of two spouses having devised what he thought was a foolproof murder scheme using the bathtub as an implement of death. His cunning plan was to make murder look like misadventure and to gain financially in the process. While

he might have got away with one such killing, his mistake was to repeat the exercise.

Smith married a clergyman's daughter in December 1914 and took out a life insurance policy on her behalf. The couple moved to London and, following his earlier practice, insisted that his wife made an appointment to see a doctor. This was part of his scheme whereby he planted the seed that she was prone to bouts of dizziness.

On 18 December, the landlady at their lodgings heard splashing noises coming from the bathroom, accompanied by sounds of Mr Smith playing his harmonica. Mrs Smith was later found dead in the bath, supposedly drowned after a fit of giddiness. No doubt to the satisfaction of her husband, a verdict was given of death by misadventure.

The similarity of the third Mrs Smith's death with those of her two predecessors was noted and her husband was arrested. In due course, he was tried for murder when, in an historic moment in court, the pathologist, Dr Bernard Spilsbury, pointed out that the bath was too small to permit accidental drowning. His reconstruction was that Smith lifted up his wife's body by the knees while pressing her head down beneath the water. The harmonica player was found guilty of murder and suffered the ultimate penalty.

Smith had demonstrated how the bath might be used as a tool for procuring death in circumstances which appeared to be untainted by criminal intentions. After all, he had got away with it in on two previous occasions. His methodology attracted numerous followers who sought to emulate his cunning plan.

Thus, in 1957, Kenneth Barlow used his medical knowledge as a male nurse to secure his wife's demise. He called a doctor to the house where they lived explaining that his wife had complained of feeling unwell prior to taking a bath. He said that when he checked up on her he found her submerged beneath the water. He tried artificial respiration but failed to revive her. He realised, he said, that she had drowned.

There were no marks of violence on the body but the examining doctor was astute enough to note that the eyes of the dead woman were widely dilated – an indication of the involvement of drugs. A post mortem revealed injection marks on the body which proved to be the result of receiving a large dose of insulin. Barlow had access to insulin in the hospital where he worked and had been unwise enough to quip to a fellow nurse that insulin could be used to commit the perfect murder. Thanks to careful forensic work, he did not achieve his ultimate goal.

Another attempt at the perfect murder involved a bath filled with water and connected to the electricity supply. The intended victim had a shocking experience when she stepped into the bath at her home in Cardiff. The result was a blue flash and a benumbed leg. When her husband, Peter Ellis, appeared on the scene, he told his wife that the shock was caused by static electricity. He knew better, of course, because he had secretly connected a live power cable to the bath overflow. Mercifully, Julia Ellis had not touched any

surface that would have earthed the current and killed her. Ellis stood to gain a considerable sum of money in the event of his wife's death but his attempt to electrocute her and make murder appear to be death by misadventure failed. It transpired that he had been seeing another woman and, when his wife learned of this, she went to the police to express her fears that her husband had tried to take her life. While he denied attempted murder when he appeared in court in 1993, the jury thought otherwise and delivered a commensurate verdict.

What might truly have been a perfect murder came unstuck for commonplace reasons. James Camb, a ship's steward, encountered actress Gay Gibson who was a passenger on an ocean liner heading for England from South Africa in October 1947. When the vessel was off the coast of Sierra Leone, the actress was reported missing. Searches were made to no effect and it was assumed that she had accidentally fallen overboard.



The Porthole As Evidence – taken from Eileen Gibson's cabin

It was known that Camb had visited her cabin and, when the ship docked at Southampton, he was closely questioned. He admitted that he had a liaison with Gibson at her invitation and, during a sexual encounter, she had a fit and died. He panicked and pushed her body through the porthole and out into the Atlantic.

There were reasons for believing that the actress might have been strangled and abrasions on Camb's arm indicated the possibility of a struggle having taken place. A further suggestion was put forward that Gibson died of a heart attack or a fit during sexual intercourse. What told heavily against Camb was his failure to summon help and his possible belief that no charge could be brought against him because there was no victim's body.

This is a common misconception harboured by many murderers and, in Camb's case, even the shark-infested waters of the Atlantic Ocean could not cover up his crime. At his trial in 1948, in a case that made many headlines as the "Porthole Murder", Camb was judged to be guilty.

Secret Burial

Successfully disposing of the victim's body is an ever-present problem for the murderer and some make elaborate preparations to deal with the situation. One such was Dr Crippen who, famously, thought he had got away with it by burying his fatally poisoned wife in the cellar of their London home in 1910. Not every murderer wishes to have his victim's body interred so close by as Crippen – Cora lay only a few yards from where he sat at the dining table! Others have opted for secret burial in the garden, putting a modest distance between their victims and themselves.

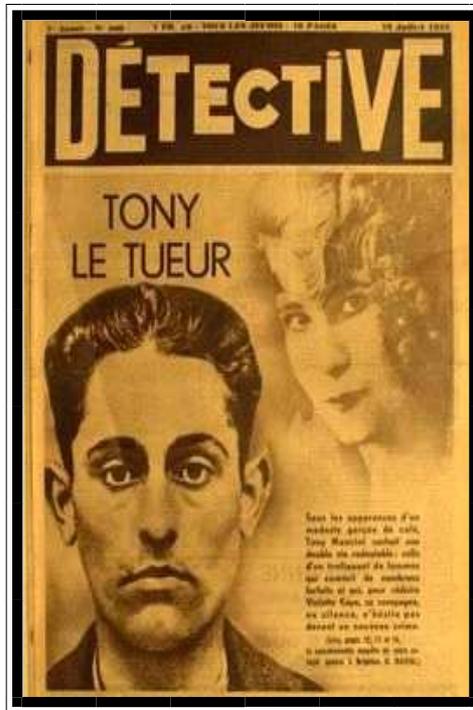
"The Belvedere Garden Tragedy", as it was called, made a sensational story in its day, although not quite in the same league as "The Cellar Murderer". In July 1931, Charles Lewis called at his local pharmacy in Kent to purchase a supply of cyanide. He explained that he needed it to kill insects in his garden. A few days later, he telephoned his employers to tell them that he was unable to come into work because his wife and daughter had died.

In due course, the police paid a visit to Mr Lewis to find that his house was deserted. Following a search of the garden, their attention focussed on the pond which showed signs of recent construction work. When the adjacent area of disturbed soil was dug up, investigators brought to light the bodies of Mrs Lewis, her daughter and the family dog.

Attention next switched to the whereabouts of Charles Lewis and it was discovered that he had journeyed to Scotland aboard a coastal steamer. During the voyage, a passenger, presumed to be Lewis, was lost overboard. The body was not recovered and it was thought that the man who had fatally poisoned his wife and daughter and buried them in the garden, had taken his own life. Of course, that was merely an assumption – the question was, did he jump or was he pushed?

Another garden burial followed a violent argument between husband and wife in Luton in 1971. Mavis Chambers, in a drunken state, got into a row with her husband, Ronald, and he fatally stabbed her with a kitchen knife. His next moves were to bury her body in the garden and go through the pretence that Mavis's absence was accounted for by her admission to a mental hospital. He perpetuated the fiction that she was still alive when he sent Christmas cards from them both to family members.

This remained the situation until 1976 when Mavis's family became suspicious about her whereabouts and posted her as a missing person. As a result of police enquiries, officers visited Ronald Chambers and made a search of the house and garden during the course of which they found a shallow grave containing his wife's remains. When questioned, he offered the explanation that Mavis had attacked him with a knife and, during the ensuing struggle, she fell back onto the blade and killed herself. He said he had buried her secretly because he did not think his explanation of events would be believed. He was correct in this, as he discovered when a trial jury found him guilty of murder.



Left Luggage

In the 1950`s, trunks of various descriptions used by rail passengers to convey their belongings on train journeys came into favour for more sinister reasons – hiding and transporting bodies of murder victims. It was part of the “out of sight – out of mind” policy practised by the murdering fraternity. Among the exponents of this method of disposal was Tony Mancini, in what came to be called “Brighton Trunk Crime No.2”

He worked as a waiter in the Sussex seaside town where he met Violette Kaye, They were mutually attracted and set up home together in 1933. Problems arose when Violette took exception to Tony’s propensity for eyeing up other women. His response to her disapproval was to kill her and explain her disappearance by saying she had gone off to live in Paris. Mancini moved to new lodgings in Brighton, taking with him a heavy trunk which he installed in a cupboard.

Meanwhile, in what proved to be an amazing coincidence, a trunk was found at Brighton Railway Station which, on examination due to the smell it emitted, contained the headless body of a woman. This was “Brighton Trunk Murder No.1”. Mancini was on the list of those whom the police wished to interview about the crime but, it seemed he had absconded to London.

During his absence, police gained access to his Brighton house and, stowed in a cupboard, found a trunk containing the body of Violette Kaye. Employing the classic formula of denial, Mancini said that he had not murdered his partner. His story was that he had found her lying dead on the bed and, in a panic, decided to hide the body as he did not think his explanation would be believed - a familiar component of the “it wasn’t me” formula.

So, in the space of a few months, Brighton had experienced two trunk crimes, the first of which remained unsolved and, the second, despite his protestations, was eventually brought home to Mancini. He pleaded not guilty to murder at his trial and, brilliantly defended by one of the day’s

great court advocates, won a not guilty verdict. The truth finally came out over forty years later when he made a confession.

The humble trunk as a convenient receptacle to hide a body was trumped in 2006 when Peter Wallner dreamed up what he believed to be a foolproof disposal method after he killed his wife to clear the way for his extra-marital activities. Having battered her to death, he concealed her corpse in a freezer which he kept in the garden shed. There it remained for the next three years.

Wallner told his dead wife’s family who lived in South Africa, that she had died of a brain haemorrhage. He provided them with an urn purporting to contain her ashes, which in reality, was the debris from a garden barbecue. His plan fell apart when he decided to remove the body from the freezer prior to going abroad to live. Abandoning any semblance of careful planning, he took the body out of the freezer and dumped it in the regular refuse wheelie bin outside his house.

Struggling to move the heavy bin, the refuse collectors examined its contents and discovered the defrosting body of Mavis Wallner. Using a time-worn excuse, he explained that he had retaliated when she attacked him over his alleged infidelity. Not surprisingly, no one believed him, least of all his trial jury who found him guilty of murder.

Beware of Intruders

A catalogue of excuses has been offered to account for the murder of a wife or lover. Among them is the “It wasn’t me Guv, it was an intruder what done it!” defence. This was the nature of the explanation given by Alun Phillips for the death of his wife, Nadine. Seemingly happily married, things started to go wrong when she had a flirtation with another man and her husband declared that he would kill her if she was unfaithful to him.

In May 1999, Phillips called the police to his house saying that his wife had been murdered by an intruder. She had been tied up, forced down into a bath full of water and drowned. Officers found no evidence of any break-in or signs of intrusion at the house. Phillips became the chief suspect not least because of the threats he was known to have made against Nadine. He was charged with murder and found guilty.

When Carol Wardell was found dead in her car in a Warwickshire lay-by in September 1994, her husband, Gordon, made a tearful appearance on television appealing for information that would lead to the capture of her killers. He claimed that his wife of twelve years had been tied up when a gang attacked them in their home. According to his account, the intruders also tied him up and gagged him before abducting his wife and taking her to the office where she worked and forcing her to open the safe. They escaped with the money, suffocated Carol and abandoned her to her fate.

Wardell came under suspicion because of a previous offence which had put him on the police radar. Meanwhile, he went through a sham performance of having been so weakened by his ordeal at the hands of the alleged intruders that he had been reduced to using a wheelchair – at least when he was observed by others. He turned out to be a schemer who had studied the psychology of being interviewed so that he could deal with questions from the police. His deception was not good enough to fool experienced detectives and, in due course, he was charged with murder and staging the theft of a large sum of money.

Another entry in the repertoire of husbands disposing of their wives is the use of a hit man to put distance between the victim and true perpetrator. In May 2006, Nisha Patel-Nasri was alone at the family home in north London when she went outside to investigate noises that she thought might have been due to intruders. Her worst fears materialised when she was set upon by a gang, one of whom was wielding a knife which he used to inflict grievous wounds on her and left her dying in a pool of blood on the ground.

Nisha's husband, Fadi-Nasri, who worked as a taxi driver, was supposed to be away on a job but in reality was socialising with his mates. This was contrived to give him an alibi for the time the three men he had hired as assassins killed his wife and made their getaway. Suspicion was aroused when details came to light about his double life. He had forsaken his wife in order to indulge his lusts with a prostitute. Nisha remained an obstacle so he paid hitmen to kill her while he was away from home innocently playing snooker. His duplicity and murderous intentions were unravelled in court and he paid the price by being given a life sentence.

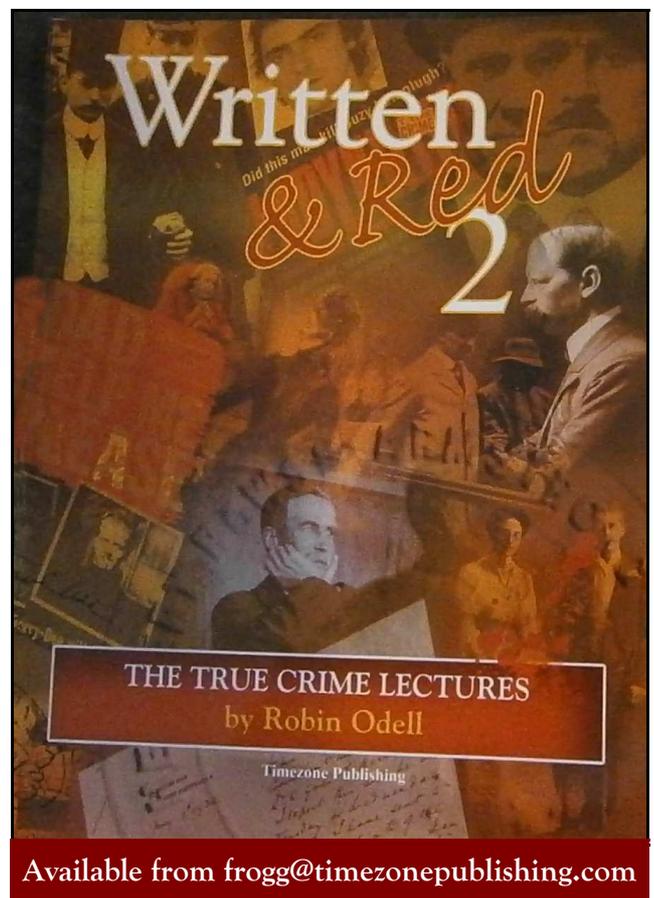
It seems that every conceivable method and circumstance has been exploited to achieve the murderous ends of husbands wishing to eliminate unwanted wives and spouses. In these respects, human ingenuity seems to recognise no restraints. The three cardinal features of

murder in general – motive, method and opportunity – have all been exploited to the fullest extent. Fortunately, some would-be murderers have proved to be too clever for their own good and end up facing the consequence of their actions.

No account of murderous activities in any sphere would be complete without reference to poisoning, the coward's weapon and an imagined route to the perfect crime. While on holiday in Egypt, staying at a hotel in Luxor in 1998, John Allan called for medical assistance when he claimed to have found his partner, Cheryl, lying in a distraught condition on the bed in their room. It was believed she had suffered a heart attack and died where she lay.

Allan was an unemployed chemist who was supported financially by Cheryl, a successful lawyer, and his partner for seven years. A search of the home they shared turned up evidence of Allan's duplicity, including his interest in pornography and prostitutes. Also discovered was a forged will which would entitle him to a large sum of money in the event of Cheryl's death. Suspicions that he had poisoned her with cyanide were confirmed when traces of the fast acting toxin were found in her body at post mortem.

This conjured up a cynical scenario in which the occupants of a hotel room in a romantic setting overlooking the River Nile were enjoying evening cocktails. Allan mixed Cheryl a gin and tonic which she sipped oblivious of the fact that he had laced it with cyanide. The coward's weapon had the expected effect and Cheryl joined the legions of unsuspecting women killed by their partners in acts of domination, personal gain and use of criminally distorted reasoning.



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WILLIAM WALLACE: MURDERER

BY
JAMES MURPHY

The Wallace Case¹ is one of the most enduring, unsolved murder mysteries in the annals of crime. It has generated a voluminous literature second only to that engendered by the case of Jack the Ripper. For decades, in common, they have intrigued crime connoisseurs, who periodically stand a new suspect in the dock for trial. But, in common again, a majority verdict is never reached, and opinions continue divided as to guilt or innocence.

The essentials of the case are that on Tuesday night, 20 January 1931, Julia Wallace was murdered in her home at 29 Wolverton Street, in the suburb of Anfield, Liverpool. Her husband, William, was found guilty of her murder and

sentenced to death. However, the Appeal Court quashed the verdict, and he was released from prison. The police sought no one else in connection with the murder, and Wallace died in hospital on 26 February 1933 of a long-standing kidney complaint.

Ever since, the question has been: if Wallace was innocent, then who murdered his wife? The question, however, is a misstatement. The Appeal Court ruled the charge of murder was “not proved with that certainty which is necessary in order to justify a verdict of guilty.” That is, Wallace, was suspended in the limbo of the Scottish verdict: the charge against him was *not proven*. He was neither guilty nor innocent.



The body of Julia Wallace

The police failed to grasp the forensic intricacies of the murder, and consequently the prosecution case suffered and ultimately failed. Had certain evidence been fully appreciated and subsequently exploited at the trial, Wallace would have been found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

On Monday night, 19 January at 7.15². Wallace took a tram from Breck Road to his chess club in the city centre. He was first seen by James Caird, at 7.45. Later, the club captain, Samuel Beattie, gave him a message: a Mr Qualtrough had telephoned the club at 7.15, asking Wallace to call at his home, 25 Menlove Gardens East, on Tuesday night to conduct some business for his daughter's twenty-first birthday.

Wallace claimed he knew no one by that name, was unsure of the address and enjoined his chess mates to discuss the best route there: someone suggested going to Smithdown Road via the terminus at Sellow Lane; Beattie said the address was probably close to Menlove Avenue and to journey there via the Penny Lane terminus, and advised Wallace to look up the address in a street directory³. Wallace reiterated that he did not know the address, but added he would find his way there: after all, he boasted, he knew Liverpool.

William Herbert Wallace was a commission and collection agent for the Prudential Assurance Company. He walked the streets of Clubmoor, selling cheap life insurance policies to, and collecting the weekly premiums from, the working class residents, the policy paying a small lump sum to cover funeral expenses when the policy holder died. Agents were not restricted to their assigned districts, but chased new commissions anywhere in the city, as Wallace was about to do. He told Caird that Qualtrough's business was probably an annuity for his daughter, which would earn him a decent commission.

Caird accompanied Wallace home, and suggested reaching Menlove Avenue via Queen's Drive. Wallace himself now claimed to know the way: he would take a tramcar into the city centre and a second one out to reach Menlove Avenue. That is, should he decide to go, since he was not sure he would, he told Caird.

Wallace left home at 6.45 Tuesday to visit Mr Qualtrough. He spent a fruitless hour in the Menlove Avenue area and beyond trying to locate him, only to learn the address was bogus: Menlove Gardens North, South and West existed, but not East. Returning home at 8.45, he found the doors of his home locked against him. He entered eventually, witnessed by his next-door neighbours, only to find Julia murdered.

The murder scene was the parlour at the front of the house. Julia was prostrate on the hearth rug in front of the gas fire. The pathologist, Professor MacFall, reported she was bludgeoned to death by eleven blows to the head: the skull was crushed and brain matter exposed; the left meningeal artery was ruptured, and blood from this source, and cast-off from the weapon, splashed the walls and the furniture.

According to McFall, the killer must have been soaked in blood. But he left behind no bloody fingerprints, palm prints, drips, smears, footprints: in fact no blood or blood-staining outside the parlour⁴. There were no clues to his identity: no fingerprints, hairs, fibres, and no murder weapon. However, no instances of a heavily blood-stained killer wandering the streets and alleyways in the vicinity were reported; and no accounts were received of a motor car collecting the bloody killer from the scene. The murderer must have cleaned up in the house.

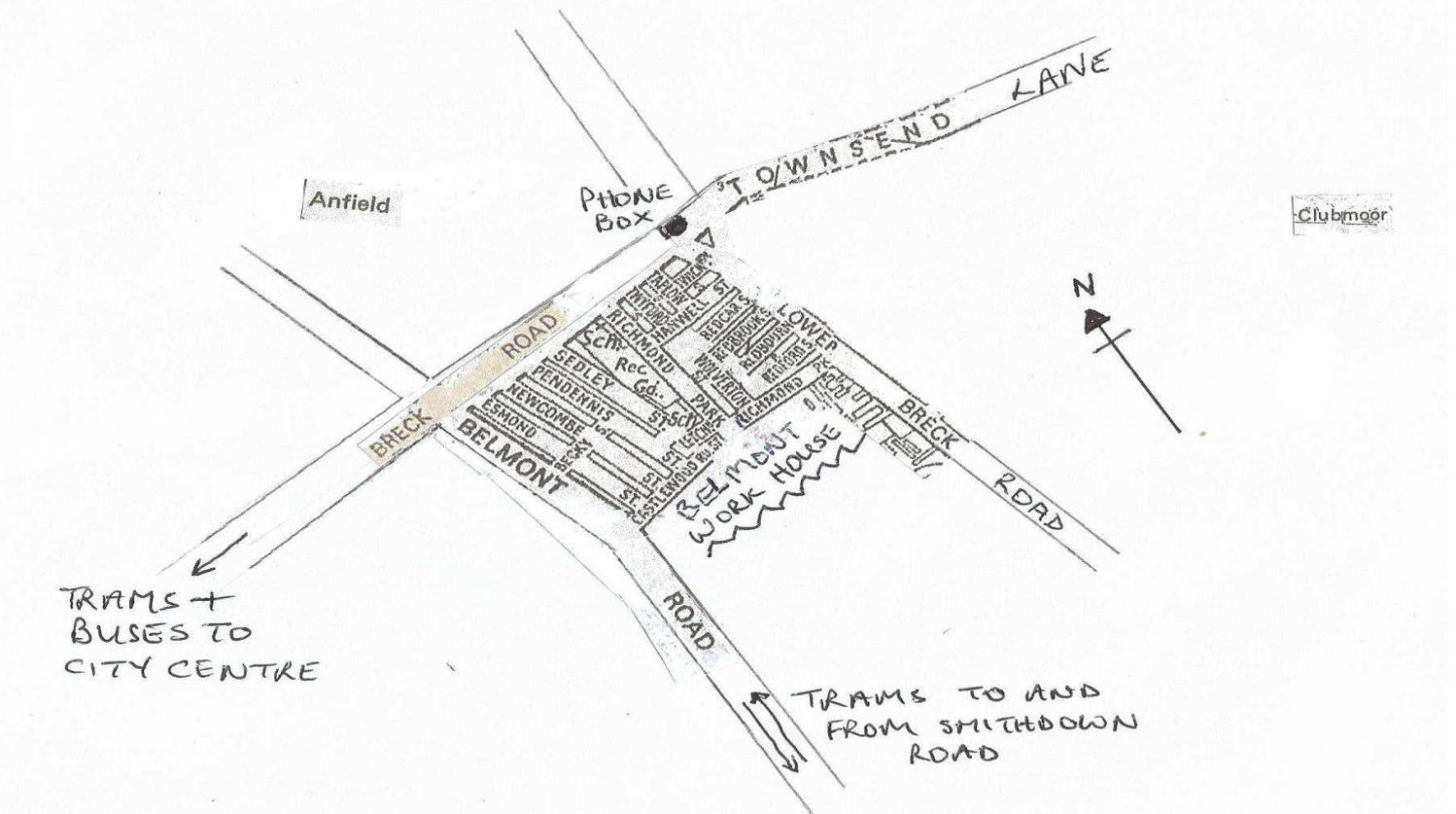
There were no signs of forced entry into the house. Wallace kept money therein from his collection round. The assumption was that Qualtrough had lured Wallace from home in order to steal this cash; Julia had admitted him; and when she tried to prevent the theft, was murdered: a case of a robbery-gone-wrong.

In the house, police found no indication of a life-and-death struggle anywhere; and little sign of disorder or theft: in the front bedroom, bed clothes and some hats were thrown about; the kitchen appeared undisturbed except that Wallace's money box was missing £4 in hard cash, and a

door on a small cabinet was broken; Julia's hand bag was untouched, as was a roll of pound notes in a jar on the mantelpiece in the middle bedroom.

Apart from the head wounds, there were no other marks of violence on Julia's body: in particular, no defensive wounds to her hands or arms. The evidence indicated that Julia had just lit the gas fire and was kneeling with her back to the room. Her killer came up behind her and attacked her. The assault was deliberate, unprovoked and unexpected; and delivered with the frenzy of overkill, according to MacFall.

When Wallace left home on Tuesday night, he walked through to Belmont Road and caught the number 26 Circular tram to the beginning of Smithdown Road. This thoroughfare ran south-east for two miles from the edge of the city centre to Penny Lane. Like Spellow Lane, Old Swan, and the Pier Head, among others, Penny Lane was a major tram and bus terminus and transfer point for many suburban and city routes: a sprawl of tram sheds overseeing a splay of intersecting tram-lines and *in-and-out-loops*. Such termini, strategically situated throughout the Liverpool area, were well known to Liverpudlians who used the trams and buses all week, day and night, to



The thief was not in fact a thief: he was an assassin, with one purpose, and one purpose only in mind, to kill Julia; and any signs of theft were staged to cover up this singular purpose. Who would stage a robbery to cover a murder? *Cui bono?* Who benefits? No one other than William Wallace.

At the time, the police concluded correctly that Wallace had contrived a clever domestic murder, that Qualtrough was the mask behind which he hid in order to strike down his wife; and which he did before he left home on Tuesday night.

Nevertheless, this vital evidence, gleaned from a forensic perusal of the murder room and the crime scene, was not pursued at the trial with any incisiveness or authority.

But, the most damning evidence against Wallace was also neglected: his aberrant and absurd behavior on Tuesday night, when he played out a charade, a pantomime, which clearly demonstrated his guilt.

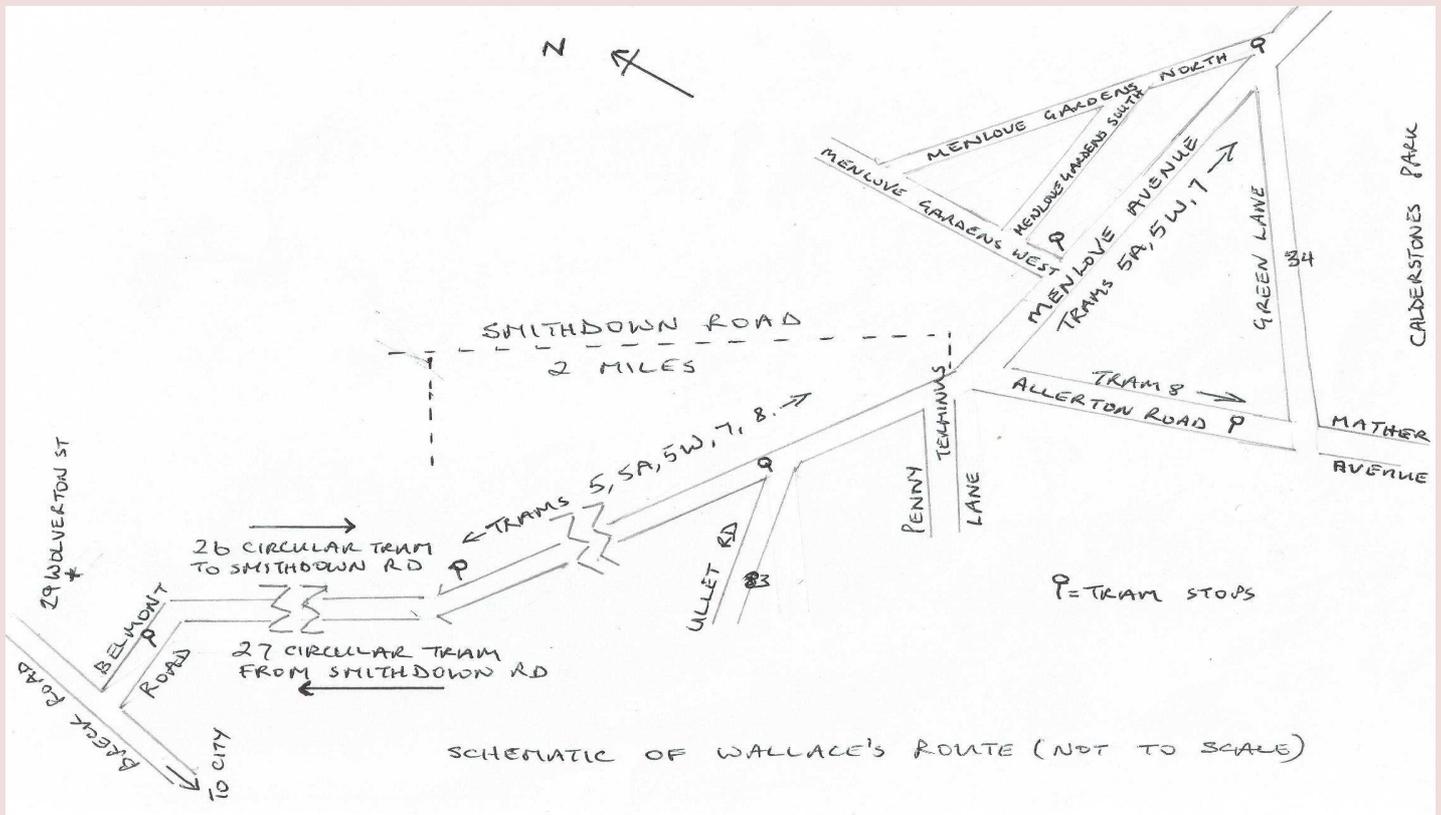
traverse the city for work and leisure.

From the Penny Lane terminus, Smithdown Road forked: right into Allerton Road, left into Menlove Avenue. Five trams served Smithdown Road to Penny Lane terminus and beyond, all originating in the city. The number 5 terminated at Penny Lane; the numbers 5A, 5W and 7, passed through Penny Lane and along Menlove Avenue to Calderstones and Woolton; and the number 8 travelled through Penny Lane, into Allerton Road and to Mather Avenue. Route numbers and destinations were clearly displayed and illuminated on the front and rear of all Liverpool trams.

Half way along Smithdown Road, Ullet Road made a T-junction. Amy Wallace lived at 83 Ullet Road. She was married to Wallace's brother, Joseph. Julia and William were frequent visitors to Amy's home, and journeyed from Belmont Road on the number 26 Circular tram to Smithdown Road, and caught any of those five trams to the top of Ullet Road, where they dismounted and walked down to Amy's house.

The Wallaces visited Calderstones Park on several occasions, as recorded in Wallace's diary. To get there, they travelled from Belmont Road on the 26 Circular tram to Smithdown Road and by 5A, 5W or 7 via Penny Lane to Menlove Avenue, wherein they passed the entrance to Menlove Gardens West on the left, and the entrance to Green Lane on the right, prior to dismounting for the entrance to Calderstones Park.

That Tuesday evening at 7.06, a number 5 tram bound for Penny Lane only approached Wallace. Now began the pantomime: the self-assured and self-reliant insurance agent, who had bragged he "knew Liverpool", abruptly vanished; and in his stead was a bumbling, fretful stranger, with no idea of where he was, and who needed to rely completely on the patience and assistance of others to reach his destination. He asked the conductor, Thomas Phillips,



Green Lane formed a triangle of roads between Menlove Avenue and Allerton Road. Joseph Crewe was Wallace's superintendent at the Prudential. He lived at 34, Green Lane. Wallace visited Crewe at home for violin lessons. Crewe advised Wallace to take either a number 8 via Penny Lane to Allerton Road and to dismount at, and walk up, Green Lane to his home; or a 5A or 7 via Penny Lane to Menlove Avenue and to dismount at, and walk down, Green Lane to his home. After, as usual, travelling from Belmont Road to Smithdown Road on the 26 Circular tram.

Along Smithdown Road to Penny Lane and beyond, was very familiar territory to Wallace: he knew the locations of Ullet Road, Penny Lane and Menlove Avenue and where they were situated in relationship to one another; and knew he needed a 5A, 5W or 7 to reach Menlove Avenue.

In arriving at Smithdown Road on Tuesday, Wallace was not following the route he himself had suggested to Caird: "a tramcar into the city centre and a second one out to reach Menlove Avenue." However, Wallace was clearly of the mind that he knew the way to Menlove Avenue; and that Menlove Gardens East was near Menlove Avenue, as proposed by both Beattie and Caird, and that the latter was his starting point.

whether or not the tram went anywhere near Menlove Gardens. Wallace could plainly see from the illuminated number and destination that it went only as far as Penny Lane; and knew that Menlove Avenue-Gardens lay beyond that point. Phillips said no, and advised him to board, to purchase a penny ticket and to transfer to a 5A, 5W or 7 at the Penny Lane terminus. Wallace told Phillips he was a stranger to the district, and had important business at Menlove Gardens East.

Ticket Inspector Angus boarded also. Phillips collected fares, then Wallace accosted him again, stressing once more Menlove Gardens. When Angus inspected his ticket, Wallace repeated his destination. Angus told him to change at Penny Lane and catch a 5A, 5W or 7 tram. Minutes later, Wallace again badgered Phillips, asking how much further it was to his transfer point; and where he had to change. Once more, Wallace was told Penny Lane and which trams to take.

For a man who had travelled the route many times, his conduct was bizarre. Even had he been a stranger, his behavior was extraordinary, his demands excessive, his angst unwarranted. And, another singular piece of theatre was to follow.

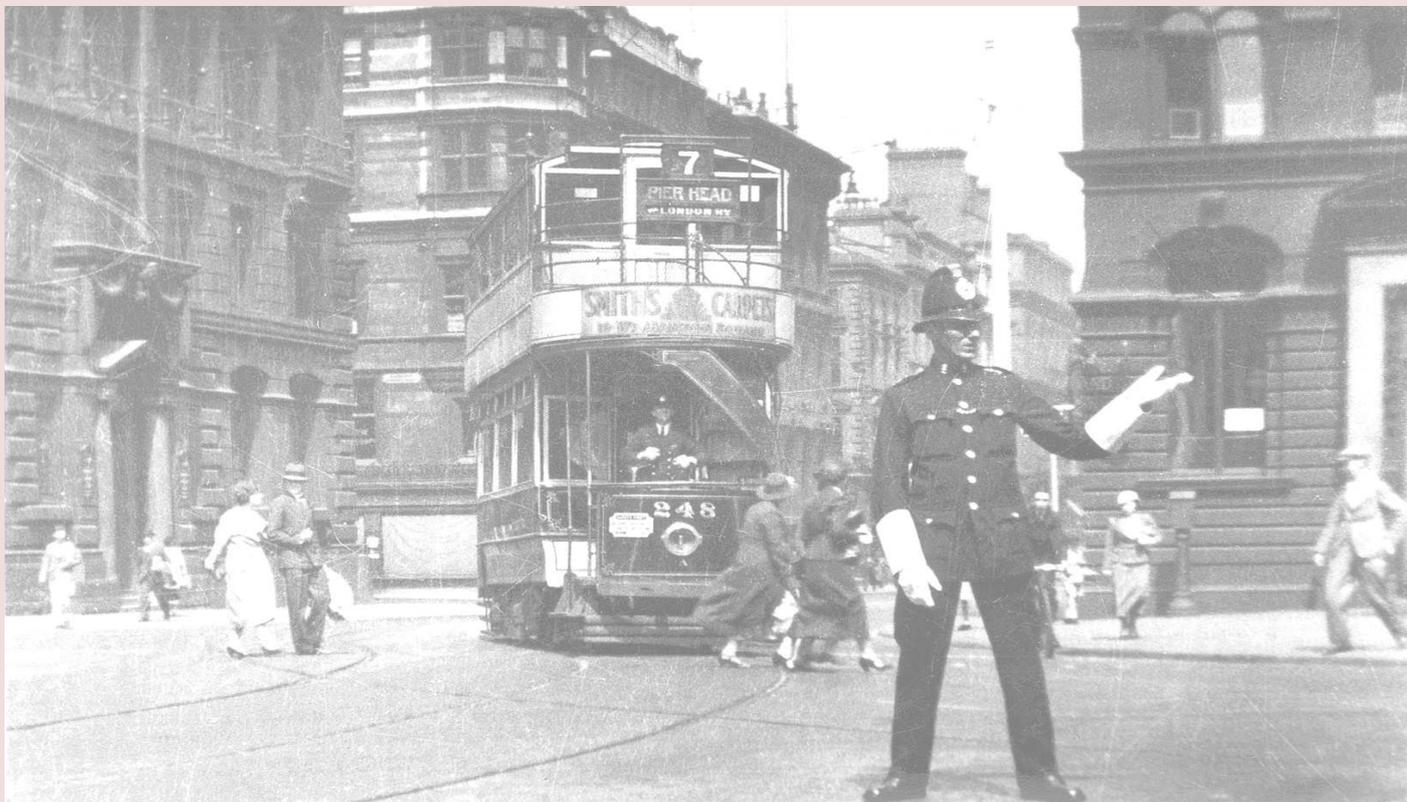
As the tramcar entered an *in-loop* at the terminus, Phillips called out for Wallace's benefit:

"Menlove Gardens East. Change here."

He directed Wallace towards a waiting number 7 tram in an *out-loop*. But then he had to shout to correct the bungling Wallace. Incredibly, Wallace was making for another

a policeman he was a stranger to the area, and without badgering anyone for assistance, he boarded the number 8 tram and rode it back via Penny Lane to the beginning of Smithdown Road; and from there he took the number 27 Circular tram to Belmont Road, where he dismounted and walked home.

Later, Phillips, Angus, Thompson, the policeman all



number 5 situated in a second *out-loop*, and clearly showing its number and destination, readying for its return journey to the city, readying to go back the way he had just come. Phillips re-directed him to the number 7.

At 7.15, Wallace boarded a number 5A tram bound for Calderstones via Menlove Avenue. He asked the conductor, Arthur Thompson, to put him off at Menlove Gardens East. The tram entered Menlove Avenue and halted at the entrance to Menlove Gardens West. Thompson told Wallace to dismount, pointing out that Menlove Gardens was a triangle of roads and that Menlove Gardens East was probably one of the three. Again Wallace claimed he was a stranger to the area.

Wallace then searched for Mr Qualtrough. During his hunt, he wandered down Green Lane to Allerton Road, where he informed a policeman he was a stranger to the area; and in return learned the address he sought was false. After checking the time on their pocket watches, the two men parted.

Finally, Wallace consulted a street directory in a newsagents; and had confirmed finally that Menlove Gardens East did not exist. He then decided to return home and he was peculiarly lax and relaxed about this. Having just told

recalled to the police the blundering and bemused stranger William Wallace in fine detail; and the times when their paths crossed his. All were co-opted, like the chess club members on Monday night, into Wallace's conspiracy. Strangely, the conductor on the number 8 tram did not remember Wallace.

There can be no doubt that the purpose of the charade, of Wallace's aberrant behavior, was to have himself noticed in order to establish an alibi. With only himself and Julia at home, the best he could hope for as an alibi was to be observed as far away from home at times close to the approximate time of her death for reasonable doubts to be entertained as to whether or not he had time in which to kill her. And this Wallace readily achieved: between 7.06, when the pantomime began, until his return home at 8.45, witnessed by neighbours, his movements were noted and remembered down to the minute.

Julia was last seen alive at 6.30 by the milk delivery boy, Alan Close; Wallace impressed himself on Phillips at 7.06. That gave him a window of thirty-six minutes in which to kill Julia, clean up and reach Smithdown Road. He had plotted the murder, calculated all the angles, anticipated contingencies and was fully prepared and ready to act.

Had the facts of Wallace's absurd behavior been tested at trial, along with the forensic evidence from the crime scene, no Appeal Court could have overturned the justly found verdict of guilty. William Wallace murdered his wife on 20 January 193; and the law should have been allowed to take its course.

Since the murder, several candidates have been promoted as suspects in Julia's murder, from next door neighbours, to Wallace's work colleagues, either as thieves or lovers of Julia, or both. However, the evidence to indict and convict them does not exist.



Chief among the contenders is Richard Parry, a petty thief who worked with Wallace until let go under a cloud by the Prudential. Wallace told the police Julia would admit Parry to their home in his absence. But why he would allow an unsavoury individual into his home is a mystery. Parry had a well-documented, cast-iron alibi for the night of the murder, courtesy of Olivia Brine and Harold Dennison. He had no alibi for the Monday night, for the Qualtrough telephone call. But why should he have one? Had he been involved, no doubt this mastermind of the Qualtrough plot could have contrived an alibi to allay any suspicion.

Alternatively, it has been suggested that Parry worked with a partner, a man named Marsden, who was also once employed by the Prudential and worked as a substitute on Wallace's round when he was ill. But, he was fired because of financial irregularities. And, like Parry, he was named by Wallace as someone Julia would allow into the house. Again, why Wallace would allow a man of dubious character into his home is a mystery. Supposedly, Marsden was the actual killer, while Parry made the Qualtrough telephone call. The two men were involved in a sex-for-sale relationship with Julia.

Julia was elderly, feeble and a virtual recluse, venturing out

only to the local shops and to see her doctor. In constant ill health, she dressed in drab, home-made clothes and wore a piece of cloth fashioned as a child's nappy because of her urinary incontinence. MacFall reported she had a constipated bowel, that her vagina was "clean and no evidence of blood", her uterus "virginal and clean". No evidence was found of libidinous young men beating a path to her door.

Why did William Wallace murder his wife? What was his motive?

It is not incumbent on police, prosecution or writers to demonstrate motive in the commission of a crime. It is necessary and sufficient to prove beyond a reasonable doubt only that the accused had the opportunity to commit the crime and was responsible for its commission.

Nevertheless, motive might be found in the contrasting personalities of the protagonists.

Julia was not all she claimed to be. When she married Wallace in 1914, she was registered as the thirty-seven year-old daughter of veterinary surgeon, William Dennis, and his French-born wife, Aimée. In truth, she was a month short of her fifty-third birthday, the second of six children born to William Dennis, a tenant farmer, later publican, and his wife, Anne, daughter of a farm labourer. Julia claimed she learned French at her mother's knee, and, as an adult, taught the language and the pianoforte as a governess at various appointments up and down the country.

No member of her family attended the wedding; and none were present at her funeral. There was a rift between Julia and her siblings. She lived in a fantasy world, was distracted and detached, constantly anxious about her health, and did not, according to her charlady, Sarah

Draper, keep a clean home. Wallace condescendingly treated her as the little woman of the house, unable to comprehend the intricacies of character and plot in fiction and prone to forgetfulness and the *vapours*.

Wallace was not all he craved to be. He was a miserable failure: his poor life choices, including his marriage, exacerbated by a debilitating illness, made him, in the words of a work colleague, Alfred Mather “the most cool, calculating, despondent and soured man,” he ever had the misfortune to meet.

Born of working class parents, William Wallace had a brother, Joseph, two years his junior. Both were driven men, but only Joseph was a success. As the elder, William was expected to show the way; but it was his sibling rival who took the lead. After serving his time as a printer, Joseph moved abroad, plying his trade in India, China and Malaya, and earning a small fortune equivalent in today’s money to almost £6,000,000. His only child, a son, Edwin, became a doctor.

In contrast, William lived in Barrow-in-Furness, a major shipbuilding town, which was home also to the world’s largest steel works. Young men were in great demand in the shipyard and the steel mill. However, he took an apprenticeship as a draper’s assistant in a department store.

Ambitious to improve his station, he moved to Manchester to work for Whiteway Laidlaw and Company, outfitters to the Army and the Colonial Service. Later, he followed Joseph to India. In an era when the Empire needed technologists and technical expertise, William arrived in India wielding only a tape measure. He was *in trade*, and not even top class trade, that position held by the Army and Navy Stores. He was bottom of the ex-patriot social order, no better than a servant, and living in a dormitory-barrack, with little or no privacy, his disappointment deep, his pay even lower.

Again, he emulated Joseph and followed him to Shanghai, where he was spared further humiliation by illness. A kidney complaint overtook him, and he was returned to England where his left kidney was removed. And it was following recuperation, and while working as an agent for the Liberal Party in Harrogate, that he met and married Julia. Whether or not he knew Julia’s true age is unknown.

Wallace took the job with the Prudential in Liverpool following the outbreak of the Great War, in which he did not serve in any capacity. He was ambitious to improve his education and his prospects. Early days, he studied chemistry at Liverpool Technical College, and taught the subject at the same institution on a part-time basis. No one knows why he gave up that position: probably failure to gain an academic qualification. Nevertheless, he studied history and philosophy, and followed popular accounts of true-life murders. He considered himself an intellectual. With James Caird, he was a founder-member of his chess

club; but for the majority of his playing days, he was again at the bottom of the pile, and only a third class player.

The childless Wallace was not promoted in sixteen years with the Prudential. He considered the job beneath a man of his sensibilities, experience and intellectual abilities, believing it was a young man’s job to be out on the streets daily in all weathers, mingling with the common herd. He ought to have been a supervisor, like the younger Joseph Crewe, in whom he tried to curry favour, working inside a pleasing office at Prudential HQ in the city centre. However, his abilities, or lack of them, undermined his ambition.

Julia was in her seventieth year when she died; Wallace almost fifty-three. She was frail and decrepit, and could well have been suffering with the onset of dementia⁵. What did Wallace have to look forward to? Years and years of nursing an elderly woman without thanks, sinking further and further into the mire of mediocrity? Did he balk at the prospect? Did he know Julia had lied about her age? Did he blame her and her deceit for holding him back, for his own failures, for the lack of recognition of his intellectual abilities? Did he still dream of personal success and recognition? Did he want one more chance, unencumbered by the burden of Julia, in which to succeed?

Did he want to free himself of her? Was that his motive for murder?

Perhaps yes, perhaps no. That the motive is uncertain is irrelevant to the question of who murdered Julia Wallace. And the answer to that question is: William Wallace.

¹Taken from *The Murder of Julia Wallace* by James Murphy. Bluecoat Press, 2001.

²All times associated with Wallace are suspect. All others are those given by witnesses.

³Kelly’s Street Directory was the most popular, the bible for insurance agents and newsagents.

⁴A small spot of blood was found on the rim of the toilet bowl. It was never ascertained to whom it belonged.

⁵The average life expectancy for a woman in 1930 was 62 years.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT'S POLICE CODE 1889

NEIL R A BELL and ADAM WOOD

FOREWORD BY
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Chairman of the Metropolitan and City Police Orphans Fund

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Frogg Moody talks to Wynne Weston Davies about his new book - **THE REAL MARY KELLY**

How long have you been interested in the subject of JtR?

A: I didn't have a particular interest in JtR beyond the average person's curiosity. I certainly didn't set out to try to discover his identity. It was a gradual process during the course of family history research. I was trying to trace a member of my father's family who had disappeared from the record in the 1880s – the last possible sighting being in the Census of 1881. I did know that a member of his father's family had been a prostitute in London and that it was a dark family secret and gradually it all came together although it took more than 5 years before I was reasonably convinced. I am a scientist and I first set out to try to prove why it couldn't have been Francis Craig. Two events in particular helped to change my mind: first the discovery that he had moved to the East End at about the same time that MJK turned up there and then left soon after the last murder. The second was the discovery that he had killed himself by cutting his own throat with a razor.

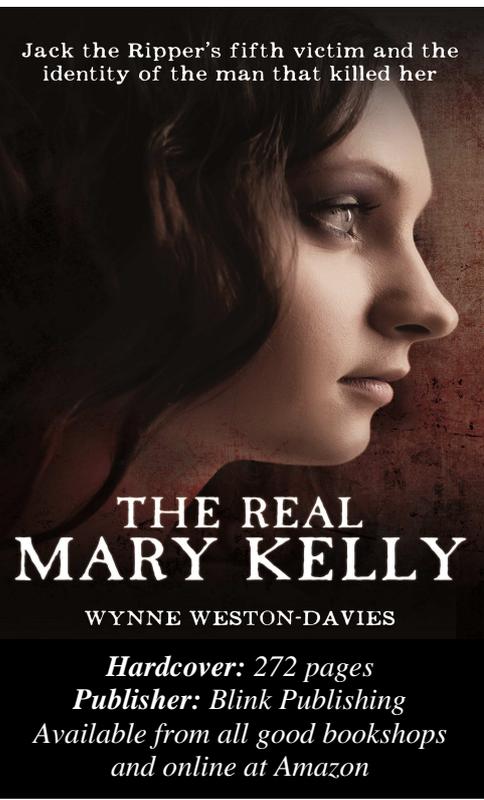
Many books have been published on the subject of JtR. Recently one has speculated, through DNA, that Aaron Kosminski was the killer. What are your thoughts on this?

As far as that actual case is concerned there seems to be only tenuous circumstantial evidence that the shawl was recovered from the Eddowes murder scene and there is some doubt about the DNA evidence. I am a scientist working in field of DNA but until the scientist concerned puts the full data set in the public domain it is difficult to comment.

Why did you decide to write this book – how long have you known about MJK?

Only since I started to read about the subject after beginning to wonder what had happened to my great aunt Elizabeth. In 2011 I went to look at one of the known brothels from which she had worked, in Drummond Street, near Euston

Jack the Ripper's fifth victim and the
identity of the man that killed her



THE REAL MARY KELLY

WYNNE WESTON-DAVIES

Hardcover: 272 pages

Publisher: Blink Publishing

*Available from all good bookshops
and online at Amazon*

Station. It was an autumn evening and there was a bit of mist swirling around the lamp posts and it put the idea of Jack the Ripper into my mind. At that stage I didn't even know the year in which it had taken place except that it was in the second half of the 19th century. After that I started to read about the affair and gradually accumulated a large library on the subject.

Many researchers/Ripperologists have looked for the true identity of Mary Jane Kelly. Indeed, it could be referred to as the 'Holy Grail' of Ripper studies! What research have you carried out to reach your conclusions?

I have read everything I can about her and tried to relate that to my great aunt Elizabeth. As I said, as a scientist I first tried to find reasons why it couldn't have been her. There are really only two things against it. Firstly, many people including Joe Barnett believed that MJK was Irish although others said that she was Welsh and that she both spoke Welsh and had a Welsh accent. Secondly there is the question of age. Joe said that she was about 25 and that is the age on her death certificate. Elizabeth would have been 32. Her landlord, John McCarthy said that she looked about 30 and, as Philip Sugden pointed out, the police estimates of the ages of the victims were usually much younger than they turned out to be. Death is better than Botox – it makes people look younger than their actual age because it relaxes all the facial muscles, not that that was a consideration with MJK. Also, like many prostitutes at the time, Elizabeth frequently deducted years from her age in official documents.

Other than that most things seem to tally fairly well. Elizabeth was from a middle class background rather than the semi-destitute backgrounds of the other victims, she had worked in an upmarket French brothel near Knightsbridge (or very probably had since her madam, Ellen Macleod,

ran such an establishment). Her younger brother was called Johnto, although he was never in the Scots Guards. But of course this is only scratching the surface and the book contains much more detailed evidence and more information about it can be found on <http://amzn.to/1MyBoqX>.

Many books speculate about Mary's Irish past but not much is known about her time in Wales. Did your research reveal anything about her family connections in Wales?

Well yes, assuming that MJK and Elizabeth Weston Davies are one and the same I know a great deal about her past since her brother, Johnto, was my grandfather. Her father Edward started as a domestic servant and then became a coal miner in the mining boom of the late 1840s. He subsequently worked for the same employers, the Edwards/Londonderry slate quarries, for the rest of his life, first as a quarryman, then a policeman on the Corris slate railway and finally as a quarry agent. His wife, Anne, whose grandmother was a Weston, went to Wales in about 1843 to become lady's maid to Mary Cornelia Edwards who later became the Marchioness of Londonderry. Her daughter Elizabeth went to London to become lady's maid to the same woman much later in her life. It was when the Marquess died in 1884 that Elizabeth decided not to return to Wales with the widow but to take a job with Ellen Macleod.

What are the key points that convince you that you have the correct Mary Jane Kelly?

There was only one Mary Jane Kelly in Ripper terms. The question is whether that was, as I believe, an alias assumed by Elizabeth when she escaped to the East End to evade her husband who was stalking her and would not accept that she had left him. Many prostitutes used the alias Mary Kelly, Catherine Eddowes used the name Mary Ann Kelly when she was arrested on the night of her murder, since the word Kelly was almost synonymous with prostitute at the time. When she first arrived with Mrs Buki MJK apparently first said that she was Welsh but then changed that to Irish brought up in Wales and, presumably, adopted the name MJK. If Francis was making inquiries for a young Welsh woman in the vicinity it was much safer to pretend to be Irish and use an Irish sounding name. The man who Joe Barnett assumed to be her father who came looking for her in 1886 was, I believe, her husband Francis who was 20 years older than Elizabeth.

Do you think the mutilation of MJK give us any indication that the killer may have had anatomical knowledge?

No, not in the case of MJK which was an orgy of savage butchery but in all the other cases, particularly Annie Chapman and Catherine Eddowes there was definite evidence of excellent anatomical knowledge and dissecting (rather than surgical) skill. Francis's father was passionate about anatomy and I believe that either he taught Francis dissection or even that Francis may have been a failed medical student. His suicide note said that 'it would only

pain you to see the Doctor's treatment.' I think that he thought of himself as the Doctor and his treatment was what he had meted out to his victims.

As someone who has taught dissection, do you draw any conclusions from the mutilations of the other victims of JtR?

Yes, many. Firstly, they were not, except in the case of MJK, meant to be mutilations. They were intended to look like dissections such as a medical student would have done. This linked them all together as the work of one man. The midline incision skirting the umbilicus to the right is still the way that surgeons, pathologists and medical students open the abdomen. Anyone else would have gone straight down the middle. The mobilisation of the small intestines in order to gain access to the pelvic cavity is, again, something that only someone with anatomical or surgical knowledge would have known how to do. Excising the left kidney by what is called the anterior approach is, as Dr Brown recognised, is exceedingly difficult even in a well-lit operating theatre let alone on the pavement, in darkness, in Mitre Square. I could write a whole book about the question of the anatomical knowledge and surgical skill of JtR. And, incidentally, Mr Thomas Bond who rubbished JtR's skills in that respect only saw the body of MJK and he was not, contrary to popular opinion, an operating surgeon himself. He only saw out-patients at the Westminster Hospital himself at the time.

In your book, does knowing the identity of MJK allow you to actually reveal the killer – did she in fact know her killer?

Certainly she knew the killer. It was her estranged husband Francis Craig who she had been trying to evade for nearly three years. I think he gained access to her room by trickery, possibly disguising himself as a woman – remember all that burnt woman's clothing in the grate? I am sure that he would have let her see his real identity before he killed her, she remained conscious long enough to cry 'Oh – murder!'

So what's next for Wynne Weston-Davies – can we expect more books in the future?

That's a hard one to answer. I could probably write another two or three books on the subject – how I actually went about doing the research, what made me start out in the first place. However I also have other subjects about which I would like to write including a biography of George Robert Sims who is a fascinating character and with dark secrets of his own which have never previously been revealed. All of that may have to take second place to my day-job; I have just been appointed Medical Director of a UK/US biotechnology company which is engaged in cutting edge (if you'll excuse the expression) medical research and that will take up a great deal of my time in the next three years. As you know, I have been given permission to exhume the body of Marie Jeanette Kelly by the UK Ministry of Justice although there are difficulties in precisely locating the grave. If that comes about and DNA evidence proves my relationship I may have to consider a sequel.

The Murders at 10 Rillington Place

Jonathan Oates

‘So many men do seem to murder their wives’ said Miss Marple at the end of another whodunit (4.50 from *Paddington*) in which the husband has been revealed as the guilty party. It is a sad but unfortunate fact of life that murder often occurs within the family. I intend to discuss a well known case of wife murders, though the dissimilarities are greater than the similarities.

This is the case of the murders at 10 Rillington Place of 1949 and 1952. Much of the ink spilt on this case concerns either the alleged miscarriage of justice where Timothy Evans was hanged for the murder of his daughter Geraldine, a crime thought by many to have been perpetrated by his neighbouring tenant John Christie, or the phenomenon of the serial killer, with Christie being responsible for several killings of women over a decade. Add the fact that Christie has been accused of necrophilia and certainly killed women for sexual reasons, then we have a true tale of terror.

There are other aspects to this sordid business and one which is often overlooked is that Christie was a wife murderer. So, I would argue, was Evans. This is not the time or place to detail Evans’ guilt though the evidence is there (see John Eddowes, *The Two Killers of Rillington Place*, Jonathan Oates, *John Christie of Rillington Place, Biography of a Serial Killer* or for the really determined, the files at the National Archives) and the judicial investigation carried out in 1965-1966 concluded that Evans was probably guilty of killing his wife.

What follows takes for granted that part of the 1966 review. It is to compare and contrast the modus operandi of two very different men who both killed their wives for different reasons but in the same house, three years apart.

Domestic murder is usually the irretrievable breakdown in the relationship between man and wife. The actual killing is rarely planned and is often a spur of the moment decision taken against a history of less violent conflict. Juries therefore usually find this to be manslaughter, not murder. Yet the latter does happen.

The Evanses married at Kensington Registry Office in the autumn of 1947 after a fairly brief romance. Both were young (Beryl was born in 1929; her husband Timothy in 1924). They had a child in the following year, one Geraldine. Yet relations were poor. In large part this was due to Tim Evans. He was a bad tempered young man, poorly educated and told lies. His job as a van driver for Lancaster Food Products did not bring in much money and the couple were in debt to the landlord, the hire purchase companies and others. He was a petty thief and liked drinking on the way home. When he heard his wife had had a mild flirtation with another man he went to her place of employment and made a scene, resulting in her dismissal. When a brief affair with a friend of his wife’s ended, he threatened to kill her. Neighbours had seen them rowing and had seen Tim try to push his wife out of the window. She had at least once used a bread knife to defend herself with. His wife was no pushover and would try to give as good as she got, both verbally and physically. It is also possible that she drank as well.

In early November 1949 another baby was on the way; neither Evanses desired it nor could afford it. Beryl’s father recalled seeing her on the 5th November and that she wanted to leave her dismal surroundings. This may well have been the catalyst for the tragedy that was to overwhelm the family.

To give an impression, in Evans’ words about the state of relations between himself and his wife in the immediate prelude to the killing, let us read what he had to say:

‘I had a letter from J. Brodericks telling me I was behind in my payments for my furniture on the hire purchase. I asked her if she had been paying for the furniture and she said she had, then I showed her the letter I had received from Brodericks then she admitted she hadn’t been paying it. I went down to see Brodericks myself to pay them my one pound a week and ten shillings off the arrears so then I left the furniture business to my wife. I then found she was in debt with the rent. I accused her of squandering the money so that started a terrific argument in my house. I told her if she didn’t pull herself together I would leave her, so she said, “You can leave any time you like”, so I told her that she would be surprised some day if I walked out on her. One Sunday, early in November, I had a terrific row with her at home, so I washed and changed and went to the pub dinner-time. I stopped there till two o’clock. I came home, had my lunch, left again to go out, leaving my wife and baby at home, because I didn’t want any more arguments... I went home sat down and switched the wireless on. I made myself a cup of tea. My wife was nagging till I went to bed at 10 p.m. I got up at 6 a.m. next day, made a cup of tea. My wife got up to make a feed for the baby at 6.15 a.m.

She gets up and starts an argument straight away. I took no notice of her and went into the bedroom to see the baby before going to work. My wife told me she was going to pack up and go down to her father in Brighton. I asked her what we was going to do with the baby, so she said she was going to take the baby down to Brighton with her so I said it would be a good job and a load of worry off my mind, so I went to work as usual so when I came home at night I just put the kettle on, I sat down my wife walked in so I said "I thought you was going to Brighton?" She said, "What for you to have a good time?" I took no notice of her. I went downstairs and fetched the pushchair up. I come upstairs she started an argument again. I told her if she didn't pack up I'd slap her face. With that she picked up a milk bottle to throw at me. I grabbed the bottle out of her hand, I pushed her, she fell in a chair in the kitchen, so I washed and changed and went out. I went to the pub and had a few drinks. I got home about 10.30 pm. I walked in she started to row again, so I went straight to bed'.

off my van and strangled her with it. I then took her into the bedroom and laid her on the bed with the rope still tied round her neck. Before 10 pm that night I carried my wife's body downstairs to the kitchen of Mr Kitchener's flat as I knew he was away in hospital'.

He then fed Geraldine, put her to bed and had a smoke. He went out that night and returned late.

'I then went downstairs when everything was quiet, to Mr Kitchener's kitchen. I wrapped my wife's body up in a blanket and a green tablecloth from off my kitchen table. I then tied it up with a piece of cord from out of my kitchen cupboard. I then slipped downstairs and opened the back door, then went up and carried my wife's body down to the wash-house and placed it under the sink. I then blocked the front of the sink up with pieces of wood so that the body wouldn't be seen. I locked the wash house door, I come in and shut the back door behind me. I then slipped back upstairs. The Christies who live on the ground floor were in bed'.



Timothy Evans and 10 Rillington Place

On Tuesday 8 November, the Evanses met in their two room flat on the top floor of the dead end house that they lived in. Another argument occurred. No one else was in the house; the Christies were out and the other tenant was in hospital. There were no restraining influences. Then, in Evans' words:

'I come home at night about 6.30 pm my wife started to argue again, so I hit across her face with my flat hand. She then hit me back with her hand. In a fit of temper I grabbed a piece of rope from a chair which I had brought home

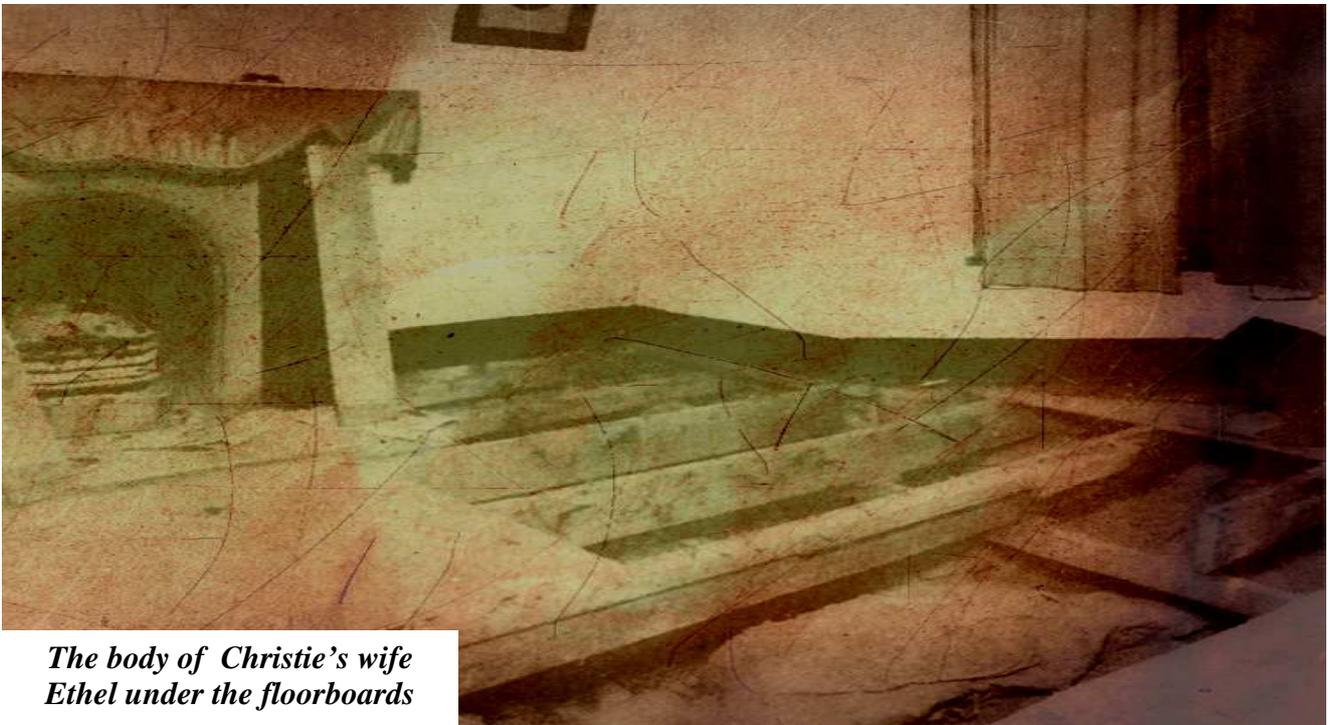
Unable to bear his baby's screams any longer, he killed her by strangulation. This may well have occurred on the same day that he killed his wife. Neither crime was pre-meditated. They took place in the heat of the moment, after a long build up of tension. Evans concealed the corpses in the wash-house in the back yard of the house and fled to Merthyr Tydfil where his uncle and aunt lived. He later confessed to the police, was tried for murder and hanged, though was tried for the murder of his daughter, not that of his wife.

The killing was a very ordinary domestic tragedy. To cite two other examples in west London. Alfred Gilbert, another Welshman in London, though in the 1930s, had an argument with his wife over money matters in their Perivale home in 1936, with the result that he strangled her. Five years later in Acton, William Deane and Nancy his wife, had been having rows because of her adultery. The result was that he stabbed her to death in their kitchen. The Christies seemed to be quite different, and the motivation for the murder of his wife was very unusual. They had been married for decades, having wed in Halifax in 1920 when in their early twenties. Although they had been separated from 1923-1933, probably due to Christie's petty villainy, they were reunited when he was in Wandsworth Prison for yet another minor theft. They decided to resume married life, this time in London. They never had any children, though Ethel had had a miscarriage early in their wedding. Both had known lovers in their separation, and it is unknown whether either knew of these. By middle age, sex was almost non-existent.

Kathleen Maloney, a prostitute in her twenties, with whom he had indulged in some nude photography, in the autumn of 1952.

Yet how could he kill again? His modus operandi was to invite women back to his house in order to gas them prior to sexual intercourse and then strangulation and burial. He could hardly do this when his wife was present. It has been said that she exercised some form of informal control over him, but she was clearly unaware of such. It also meant that she was in a very vulnerable and dangerous situation, though she did not know it.

Christie had some affection for his wife. She was the only one of his six victims that he felt any remorse for. He was to kill her, not for any perceived failing on her part nor because he hated her, but simply because she was in the way. So, on the evening of the 14 December 1952 he strangled her with a stocking and put her corpse under the floorboards. Unlike his other victims, he did not use gas nor did he have intercourse with her. In his statement to the police he said:



*The body of Christie's wife
Ethel under the floorboards*

Relations between the two seemed to be good. Christie was an active husband about the house with DIY and also helped out with the shopping. Neighbours had never seen them argue and there is no evidence that they ever came to blows. They seemed the picture of a reasonably contented middle aged couple.

Yet his wife did not know all of Christie's past life. In 1943 he had strangled Ruth Fuerst and in 1944 Muriel Eady had met a similar fate. Both corpses had been buried in the back garden and there was never any suspicion of murder. Both had been killed when Ethel had been absent from the house. Christie later stated that he had got a thrill out of murder and that a corpse held more fascination for him than a live woman. He wrote that after his second murder, 'Once again, I experienced that quiet peaceful thrill. I had no regrets'. In 1951 and 1952 he seems to have wanted to kill again and was approaching women and girls in cafes and elsewhere, ingratiating himself with them. One was

'My wife had been suffering a great deal from persecution and assaults from the black people in the house, No. 10 Rillington Place, and had to undergo treatment at the doctor's for her nerves. In December, she was becoming very frightened from these blacks and was afraid to go about the house when they were about, and she got very depressed.

'On December 14 I was awakened at about 8.15. a.m. I think it was my wife moving about in bed. I sat up and saw she appeared to be convulsive. Her face was blue and she was choking. I did what I could to try and restore breathing, but it was hopeless. It appeared too late to call for assistance, that is when I could not bear to see her so. I got a stocking and tied it around her neck to put her to sleep.

Then I got out of bed and saw a small bottle and a cup half full of water on a small table near the bed. I noticed that the bottle contained two pheno-barbitone tablets and



it originally contained 25. I then knew she must have taken the remainder. I got them from the hospital because I couldn't sleep. I left her in bed for two or three days and didn't know what to do. Then I remembered some loose floorboards in the front room. I had to move a table and some chairs to roll the lino back about half way.

Those boards had been up previously because of the drainage system. There were several of these depressions in these floorboards. Then I believe I went back and put her in a blanket or sheet or something and tried to carry her. But she was too heavy and so I had to sort of half-carry her and half drag her and put her in that depression and cover her up with earth. I thought that was the best way to lay her to rest. I then put the boards and lino back. I was in a state and didn't know what to do, and after Christmas I sold all my furniture'. Christie later said, 'I did not want to be separated from her. That is why I put her there. She was still in the house'.

In at least two aspects, this account is incorrect; Dr Camps, the pathologist who carried out the post mortem, later found no trace of barbiturate in Ethel's body. Secondly, the murder was almost certainly premeditated as suggested by Christie withholding his wife's letter to his sister in law, which was written by her on 10 December, but the date of which was altered to one five days later by Christie, before being posted. However, there seems little doubt that Christie strangled his wife on about 14 December 1952. Christie asserted throughout that this was a mercy killing and later said, 'I loved my wife. I hated seeing her suffer. I decided to end her pain forever. My wife died peaceably and with practically no pain'. His words show that he justified the murder to himself by the use of euphemism, 'I put her to sleep'. However, unlike four of his other victims, he did not render her unconscious with gas prior to strangulation: she knew she was being killed. His motive was almost certainly because of his desire to kill again. Having killed already with importunity, he had the

serial killer's addiction to murder and could not resist this aspect of his nature which had remained dormant for years. Christie later said, 'After she had gone, the way was clear for me to fulfil my destiny'.

He went onto kill not only Kathleen Maloney, but Rita Nelson and Hectorina Maclellan, before leaving his home of 16 years, being arrested, confessed to murder and was tried for the murder of his wife. He was found guilty and sentenced to death, being hanged by Albert Pierrepoint on the same gallows at the same prison as Evans, just over three years later.

In conversation with the Principal Medical Officer at Brixton, Dr John Matheson, the doctor noted that Christie 'showed signs of emotion' when he talked of his wife and that 'he wept for the first time'. After he had received the death sentence, Christie ensured that photographs of his wife and a copy of the marriage certificate were sent to her sister, Lily Bartle. In what was a significant understatement, he wrote in a covering letter 'and an apology for any trouble I *may* have brought about' (my italics).

Evans and Christie were very different men, but they had this in common: they lived in the same house at the same time and they both murdered their wives by strangulation. Yet their motivations were different. The Evans' marriage was fraught with quarrels and violence, mainly due to Evans' manifest inadequacies, whereas that of the Christies was routine and humdrum, but peaceful. Evans did not plan to kill his wife; he would be guilty of manslaughter, not calculated murder. Yet he seems to have shown no remorse for her death. Christie on the other hand, was cold blooded. A double murderer already he had acquired a liking for the sense of power and authority that killing gave him. He wanted to do so again but could only do that if his wife was removed. And that meant killing her. He regretted this, but his love of murder overshadowed that for his wife. Therefore it became a question of when he would do so.

Bigamy, Betrayal and Bathtubs The Story of George Joseph Smith

By Ben Johnson

Since the rise of British Empire and the subsequent growth of London into the sprawling mass of humanity we know today, the East End of this uniquely majestic city has largely dominated the pages of every encyclopaedia of true crime.

Of course, the reasons for this macabre history are well known. The area, especially during the Victorian era, was overcrowded, scarcely policed, and almost entirely inhabited by those who lived their lives without wealth or privilege. Money had to be made, and as such, a common choice was to turn to the only option available, a life of immorality and wrongdoing.

Throw into the mix a gradual migration of over a million souls, desperately searching for work in order to feed their children, and often taking refuge from persecution and tyranny. This was an area where anyone could slip into the shadows of a thousand bystanders, and drew many less conscientious inhabitants into its warren of narrow streets and dark alleyways.

For every man that worked to earn a few pennies, there was another man waiting to take them from him. It was a time and place of desperation, and only those who knew the ways of the city could even hope to live a moderately comfortable life. For most, poverty would inevitably lead to desperation, and for a smaller percent of the population, this desperation would imperceptibly lead to crime.

By the time the East End's most famous villain stalked the dark alleyways in search of victims, another character who

would later grace the pages of the very same history books had reached adolescence, and would no doubt have listened intently to stories of *the Ripper*. This boy had been born in the heart of the nation's black hole, and would add his own story to the dark legends of the East End.

A Whitechapel Urchin

George Joseph Smith was already an unruly sixteen year old by the time *the Ripper* dominated the headlines of the nation's press, and had already gained something of a reputation in the local area as an untrustworthy thief, and opportunistic swindler. This was an adolescent who would think nothing of taking a wallet, but those who knew Smith would hardly believe that he would one day be capable of taking a life.

Born in 1872, in the infamous area of Bethnal Green, Smith at least had the privilege of having been raised by a working family. His father was an insurance agent in the city, although would have still struggled to make ends meet on wages which would have been little more than those of an office clerk, and times were often hard in the Smith household.

By the tender age of nine, Smith had already tasted crime, punishment, and captivity. He had quickly learned the art of theft from his time spent roaming the streets of Bethnal Green, and had been caught in the act. Being removed from his family to a reformatory in punishment, one would have hoped that, by the time he returned home, Smith would have learned his lesson.

Much to the disappointment of his family, Smith had failed to heed the warning of his childhood incarceration, and would spend time at her majesty's pleasure on a number of occasions before reaching his thirties.

However, despite his great love of the East End, it was as he reached his late twenties that Smith decided to pursue new interests further north in Leicester.

This unexpected move was fuelled, and bank-rolled by his newly found passion for the opposite sex. Outwardly, Smith had seemingly found love in a trusting, young woman, just nineteen years of age, but behind the facade of romance, he had found a willing victim who would accommodate his every need without question.

Having persuaded the woman to steal from her employer, Smith immediately used the proceeds of the crime to open a baker's shop in Leicester. This illegally funded attempt to establish a legitimate business was, however, doomed to fail from the outset, as the theft had been discovered, and Smith was soon sentenced to 12 months imprisonment for his indirect part in the crime.

The Power of Love

Upon his release from prison in 1897, Smith would soon find another woman whom he could manipulate and profit from. Caroline Thornhill was a hard-working and respectable young woman, who soon found herself captivated by the charming and intelligent man who initially treated her with great care and respect.



*George Smith with his first victim,
wife Beatrice Mundy*

The couple soon married, with Smith using the alias Oliver George Love. His wife was aware of some wrongdoings in her husband's past, and accepted his wish to marry under a pseudonym, but sadly, was blissfully unaware as to the extent of Smith's eventful and extensive criminal past. For the moment, they were a picture of wedded bliss, and Caroline readily accepted her new husband's decision to relocate the couple back to the city of his birth.

Their new life in London started brightly, with Caroline finding work as a maid in a respectable household. However, as time passed, and Smith used the salary of his wife to fund his own life of lethargy and greed, it would seem that the devotion of just one woman was not to be enough for this despicable lothario. Just a year into their marriage, Smith had met, wooed, and illegally married another impressionable woman

Unaware of her husband's unforgivable secret, Caroline was still entirely devoted to the wellbeing of her husband, and as such, began to steal from her employer on Smith's orders. A number of new employers, dismissals and near escapes later, their luck had run out, as they were caught and arrested after relocating to Worthing, and subsequently relieving another employer of his cash.

Caroline accepted the crime as her own doing, and was immediately sentenced to 12 months imprisonment, during which time she seems to have come to her senses, as on her eventual release, she reported her husband to the police for his part in the crime. As a habitual offender, Smith was sentenced to two years behind bars. In 1903, fearing retribution, Caroline fled to Canada when

news came of her husband's impending release, this would soon prove to have been an extremely lucky escape. Smith himself returned to his secret wife, but had no intention of renewing the relationship. In a matter of days he had helped himself to the poor woman's savings, and left without explanation.

Breathtaking Bigamy

The money he had taken seems to have satisfactorily funded the lifestyle of George Smith for the next five years, as this womanising villain appeared to have vanished from sight until 1908. The reappearance of this dishonest bigamist was, of course, in the event of another marriage.

Smith married Florence Wilson, again, illegally, as his marriage to Caroline was still legally binding. Ms Wilson was a widow, with property in both Worthing and Camden. The heartless fraudster was to stay with the gullible widow for less than a month, before sneaking away into the distance with £30 of her savings, and every piece of furniture from her Camden residence.

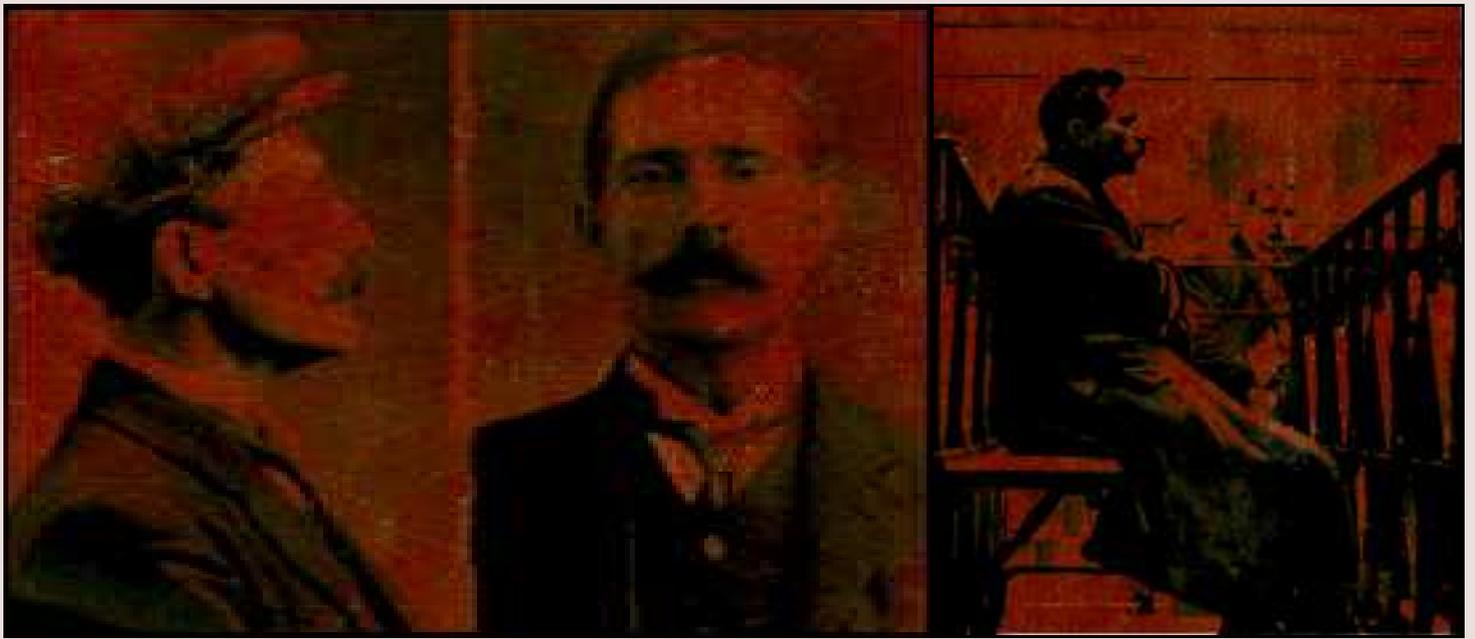
Just 27 days after marrying Florence Wilson, Smith incredibly married again, this time in Bristol. The unfortunate bride was Edith Peglar, who had replied to Smith's advertisement for a housekeeper. Although another bigamous marriage, there does seem to have been a tiny spark of affection between Smith and Peglar, as he would often disappear for months on end "for work", but would always return home with money for his "Dear Edith."

On one such lengthy absence, Smith took the opportunity to tie the knot once more, and under the name George Rose Smith, took another trip down the aisle with Sarah Freeman, who was to suffer the same humiliating fate as Florence Wilson, having been deserted and robbed of her savings, this time in the form of £400 worth of war bonds. Unbelievably, this serial bigamist wasn't close to being finished yet, as before the outbreak of the Great War, Smith would be married to three more women, Bessie Munday, Alice Burnham, and Alice Reid. In just six years, Smith had entered into an astounding seven bigamous marriages. Unforgivably leaving several women destitute and alone, or in some cases, leading them to a much worse fate.

It is interesting to surmise just how many women would have walked down the aisle with Smith, had it not been for the quick intellect and suspicious nature of a Blackpool boarding house owner (although, suspicion and vigilance are probably common traits in every Blackpool guest house owner) who had paid particular interest to two stories printed a year apart in the national press.

Notes from a Blackpool Guesthouse

In January 1915, Joseph Crossley wrote a letter to Inspector Arthur Neil of the Metropolitan police, enclosed along with the letter were two newspaper clippings, both of which seemed to carry a very similar story, although one was dated December 1913, and the other, December 1914.



The clipping from 1914 told a heartbreaking story of a young woman who was found dead in her bathtub by her husband and landlady. This had occurred in Highgate, London, and had made the national newspapers due to the unusual circumstances of death, and the wealthy location in which it had occurred. The deceased was named Margaret Lloyd (nee Lofty), and her widower husband named as John Lloyd.

Crossley had noticed the similarity between this story, and another which had appeared in a local Blackpool newspaper in 1913. This told a very familiar story of a seemingly healthy young woman having died whilst in the bathtub. The woman, Alice Smith (nee Burnham), had been found by her distraught husband, a Mr George Smith. Intrigued by the similarities, Inspector Neil felt compelled to follow up on Mr Crossley's suspicions, and wasted no time in travelling to Highgate, where he surveyed the crime scene with interest. The bathtub in which Mrs Lloyd had died was fairly small, and had only been just over half filled when death had occurred.

Speaking to the coroner who had signed the death certificate, Neil asked if there were any injuries to the body, to which the coroner, Dr Bates, replied that he had only found a small bruise just above the left elbow. The evidence was baffling; and without a motive or any signs of violence, putting a legitimate case together would be exceedingly difficult.

That is, until Inspector Neil began to look into the financial arrangements of the unlucky couple, and found, to his great suspicion, that a will had been made out just three hours before the tragic accident, the sole beneficiary being her husband. It had also been noted with interest that all of Mrs Lloyd's savings had also been withdrawn that very same day.

The Price of a Life

Matters came further to a head when on the 12th January, 1915, Dr Bates sent for Inspector Neil, informing him that, just three days before her wedding, Mrs Lloyd had also

taken out a life insurance policy for a considerable sum of money.

Instantly seeing a dreadfully convenient chain of events for the widower, Neil submitted his misgivings to his superiors, and as such, was given permission to travel north to Blackpool, in order to investigate the almost identical death which had occurred on the Lancashire coast less than a year before.

Again, Neil found that a large life insurance policy had been taken out by the deceased, and was currently in the process of being under scrutiny by the Yorkshire Insurance Company. This was noted with interest, but was to become crucial to the case when it was revealed that, before agreeing to take lodgings at the guest house, the deceased's husband, Mr Smith, had asked to inspect the bathtub.

Inspector Neil immediately contacted the insurance company, and asked that they continue the proceedings. A report from the local coroner was also submitted, in an attempt to hurry the proceedings. This was the break that was needed, no man, if guilty of such a crime, would be able to resist collecting on the insurance policy of his late wife.

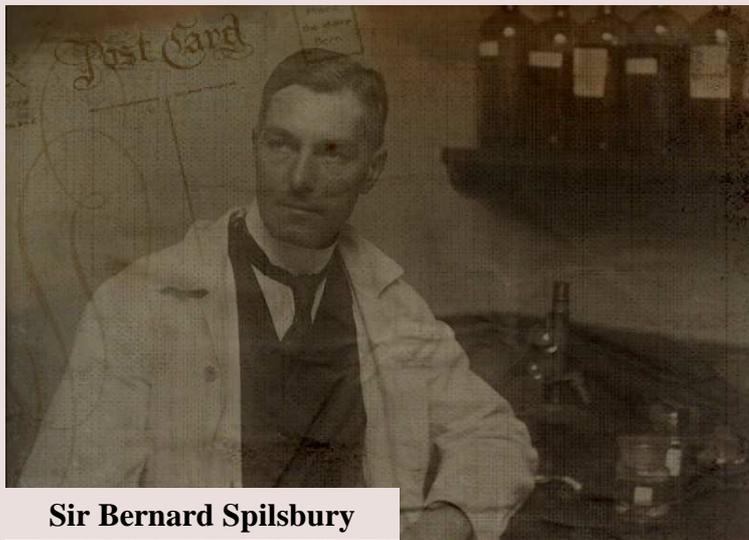
The insurance office was put under constant surveillance, and just days later, on February 1st, 1915, a man who perfectly matched the description of both Mr Lloyd and Mr Smith arrived at the offices to collect his payout. Inspector Neil was ready and waiting, and approached the nervous man masquerading as the grieving Mr Lloyd. Without an ounce of pretence or subterfuge, Neil simply approached the man and asked him to identify himself. The man confirmed himself to be Mr Lloyd, widower of Margaret Lloyd. Wasting no time, and relying on the element of surprise, Neil then asked Mr Lloyd if he was also George Smith.

The man denied this claim angrily, but Inspector Neil was sure that he had apprehended his suspect. Asking Mr Lloyd /Smith to attend the local police station with him to answer some questions on suspicion of bigamy (Neil was careful not to mention the suspicion of murder

in fear of causing the man to panic and try to escape), at which, the wealthy widower quietly admitted that he was none other than George Joseph Smith.

The police now had their man, and were a step closer to solving the seemingly unexplained deaths which took place hundreds of miles, and almost a year, apart. Such was the intrigue and interest in the case, a high profile team was assembled to tackle the case, and none were more high profile than the Home Office pathologist, Bernard Spilsbury.

Spilsbury was the real life Sherlock Holmes of the mortuary, and had been involved in several famous cases, most notably the successful prosecutions of notorious killers Dr H H Crippen and Frederick Seddon, before lending his expertise to the mystery which was quickly becoming known as “the Brides in the bath” due to the gaudy headlines of the national press, who had now become insatiably interested in the case of two, incredibly similar, domestic deaths.



Sir Bernard Spilsbury

On Spilsbury’s orders, the body of Margaret Lloyd was exhumed to examine the body for signs of drowning. Unfortunately, the results of the ensuing post-mortem were inconclusive, but found that the deceased had died instantly, as if afflicted by some kind of stroke. However, another development in the case was about to fall into the lap of the grateful police.

Help from Herne Bay

Just a week after the arrest of George Smith, who was currently being held on remand in Wandsworth Prison, another letter arrived care of Inspector Neil. This time, the author of the letter was none other than the chief police officer in the seaside town of Herne Bay, Kent. As in letter received from Blackpool at the outset of the investigation, the contents included an official report into a death, the circumstances of which were strikingly familiar.

In 1912, a man named Henry Williams had rented a house in Herne Bay for himself and his new wife, Beatrice Munday. The house was old, and as such, had no bathroom plumbing. Just weeks after moving in, Mr Williams had rented a bathtub from a local shop, and had arranged for this to be carried up to the bathroom of his rented accommodation.

Days after the installation of the temporary bathtub, Mr Williams had taken his wife to see a local doctor, Frank French. Speaking on behalf of his wife, Williams had informed the doctor that his wife had suffered from an epileptic fit. However, when speaking to the lady directly, she informed Dr French that she had suffered from nothing more than headaches, for which she was prescribed some moderate painkillers.

Some days later, Dr French was awoken in the middle of the night by Mr Williams, who claimed that his wife was suffering from another fit. Attending the house, the doctor found the woman to be sleeping heavily, and took his leave, ensuring the volatile Mr Williams that he would include the house in his morning rounds the next day.

Dr French kept his word, and was shocked to be informed upon reaching the house that Mrs Williams had died during the night, having drowned in the bathtub. Finding the woman still in the bath, with her head submerged and feet protruding from the tub, Frank French immediately attributed the death to a fit suffered whilst bathing.

An inquest was set up to investigate the death, but as no signs of violence could be identified, the cause of death was noted as drowning. In light of this, Mr Williams was soon awarded the sum of over £2000, payable in the event of his wife’s death, as stipulated in a will made out less than a week before the demise of the late Mrs Williams. By the time the incriminating letter from Herne Bay was received, Bernard Spilsbury had travelled to Blackpool in order to perform an autopsy on the body of Alice Smith. Again, the results were inconclusive. There were no signs of violence, no poison in the system, and no signs of any underlying medical condition.

Things were going a little more smoothly for Inspector Neil, who had sent photographs of George Smith to Herne Bay in order for Dr French to identify the suspected killer. These were immediately confirmed as being photographs of Mr Williams, and George Smith was now (pardon the pun) in increasingly hot water. Frustrated by the lack of forensic evidence, but refusing to give in, Bernard Spilsbury made his way south, taking a detour to perform yet another autopsy, this time in Herne Bay. This time, there was a tiny glimpse of revelation, the body showed definite signs of goose bumps, a common sign in any case of drowning.

“Eureka”

The bathtubs in which the three women had died were all brought to London, and arranged side by side in the laboratory of the tenacious Spilsbury, and for over a month, the Home Office Pathologist spent every waking hour poring over the dimensions of the tubs, and the measurements of the deceased. One by one, every possibility was being removed, until only the truth could remain.

Choosing to examine the possibility that Beatrice Williams *had* suffered an epileptic fit, Spilsbury found that a person of that height would have actually stiffened their limbs during a grand mal, and therefore, would have actually raised their head from the bathtub.

Even in uncontrollable spasms, the tub was just far too small for Mrs Williams to have drowned.

The investigators now had three bathtubs, three deaths, one suspect; and no cause of death. This was the kind of puzzle which men like Spilsbury and Neil thrive on. However, the two intrepid professionals were also only too aware that this was the kind of case which could make, or destroy, the reputations of those involved. It was time for some practical examination, and in a very unusual, yet astoundingly inventive, course of action, Inspector Neil asked for, and was given permission, to hire three female divers. The women were comfortable with being submerged in water, and as such, would act as willing guinea pigs in one of the most unusual forensic tests ever devised.

One can only assume that Neil had paid the participants well, as they spent the next day with a policeman and a doctor systematically attempting to drown them in a bathtub. It was found that any attempt to force the head under water would have resulted in such a struggle there would definitely have been signs of injury, and a large amount of water in the lungs.

In the world's second most momentous "*Eureka*" moment to have happened in a bathtub, Neil attempted to take one of the volunteers by surprise, quickly pulling her feet and allowing her head to rapidly glide underwater. There was panic all around as it was instantly realised that the woman had instantly stopped moving. This may be a breakthrough, but the first concern was, understandably, for the unfortunate volunteer.

Eventually, the woman was revived after half an hour of attention from Neil and an accompanying doctor.

Eventually, when she was able to offer her memory of the strange event, she recalled no memory of it whatsoever, apart from a rush of water over her head before she lost consciousness.

This seemingly random act, was actually one of the possibilities suggested by Bernard Spilsbury, albeit one which seemed to be something of a straw-clutching suggestion. However, as Spilsbury had suggested could happen, the sudden flood of water into the nose and throat had caused the diver to go into shock and lose consciousness, explaining the lack of water in the lungs which would have occurred during a violent attempt at drowning.

This was the break in the case which everyone had been hoping for. Neil and Spilsbury now had a positively identified suspect, a motive, and a method of murder for each of the three mysterious deaths. George Joseph Smith was charged with the three murders of 23rd March, 1915.

Twenty Minutes

While the majority of his countrymen fought bravely overseas and died in their hundreds of thousands for their country, Smith was to meet his fate under the auspicious statue of Justice at the Old Bailey. For him, there remained no chance to be remembered as a hero. Smith was rightly branded as a coward and a cold killer in the press as his case went to trial.

Smith had however, been subject to an unfortunate piece of luck. Only the evidence into the murder of Beatrice

Williams had been deemed admissible in court, meaning that he would only stand trial for the murder of one of his wives. However, the judge, Mr Justice Scrutton did allow findings into the other two deaths to be included in the trial in order to establish the pattern of these heinous crimes. Of course, the prosecution counsel, Sir Edward Marshall Hall, angrily protested the mere mention of these technically unproven murders in court. But, the Judge reiterated that he was acting in accordance with English Law, and allowed the full details of the three murders to be heard in court, in front of a packed and rowdy courtroom. The evidence against Smith was so overwhelming, that when the time came for him to take to the stand to give evidence in his own defence, he simply refused, handing a note to his counsel in which he asked to be spared the ordeal of answering for his crimes. This had been a short, yet momentous trial, which would live long in the both the nation's press, and the hearts and minds of a nation already suffering greatly in the midst of the Great War. The jury retired to make their decision, and returned to the courtroom in around twenty minutes. They had unanimously found Smith guilty of the murder of Beatrice Williams, and had they been given the opportunity, would also have instantly found this cruel and cowardly character guilty of two more murders. Smith was sentenced to hang. Immediately removed from the courtroom, and back to the confines of Maidstone Prison, Smith instructed his counsel to appeal the sentence, on the grounds of the other two deaths being used as evidence against him. However, the Home Office soon agreed that the Judge had acted impeccably, and in accordance with the law. The sentence would stand.

Friday the 13th

Friday the 13th is popularly believed to be "*unlucky for some*", and in August, 1915, it was especially unlucky for George Joseph Smith, as he was escorted to the gallows by the hangman, John Ellis, who, coincidentally, had also performed the executions in the cases of Bernard Spilsbury's two other most famous victories, namely those of Dr HH Crippen and Frederick Seddon.

Aged 43 years old, and without a friend in the world, Smith went to his death as the most despised man in England. There would be no sympathy for this serial bigamist and convicted killer as he walked his last steps on to the trapdoor. British men were dying in their hundreds every hour overseas, and there would certainly be no tears shed over George Joseph Smith.

As the trapdoor opened, and Smith plunged from view, the nation instantly went back to the business of fighting a dangerous enemy. Hundreds of thousands of British husbands, fathers, and sons would eventually rest in unmarked graves, yet the only man who deserved such a fate was now left hanging for the customary hour before being taken down from the gallows.

There was no time for the nation to celebrate the death of such a callous individual; there was a war to be won. However, in the homes of a handful of women across the country, there was time for a moment of consideration, which would quickly give way to a sigh of relief.

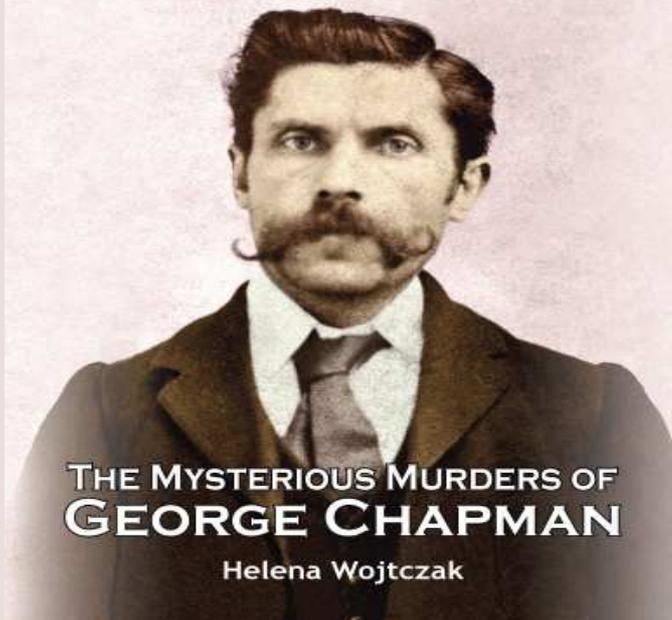
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JACK THE RIPPER AT LAST?



George Chapman, the pseudonym of Polish-born Seweryn Kłosowski was hanged in 1903. Between 1897 and 1902 he murdered three women with whom he was cohabiting, by slow-poisoning them with tartar emetic, which contains antimony. Author Helena Wojtczak tells us something about how she was prompted to write the first biography of the man known as the Southwark Poisoner and why he is such an enigmatic figure.

I'm not a Ripperologist; however, my academic interests skirt around Jack the Ripper: Victorian London, criminology, social history. In the early nineties I was fortunate enough to live with a man who happened to own a collection of classic Jack the Ripper books, so I took the opportunity to read them all. George Chapman was just one of the many suspects featured. Later, I wrote my degree dissertation on late-Victorian prostitution in London's East End, which touched upon the Whitechapel Murders. Between 2002 and 2009 I wrote and published five books and three large websites on women's history, and have given many public talks and university lectures on that subject.

My curiosity about George Chapman was aroused in 2011, when my eye was drawn to a YouTube video made by a local historian. It presented the four locations in Hastings that are associated with Chapman (two houses, his shop and the shop in which he purchased poison).

Because the film-maker was vague about one location, I popped into the local library to establish exactly where it was. I intended to help him to make his video complete and accurate. Whilst there I discovered also that the three locations he was sure about were wrong. When I shared my findings with him, his response was to explode with anger and to refuse to correct his film. This irritated me, so I decided to make my own video. But I'm no film-maker, so the idea soon converted into a plan to

publish a local history booklet instead.

The Demon Barber of George Street (the location of Chapman's barbershop in Hastings) was to be a forty-page booklet, mainly outlining his poison crimes and briefly assessing his candidacy as Jack the Ripper. The research would be easy: his story appears in numerous books and websites; even his trial is online. I'd simply assemble all the facts in chronological order, rewrite them in my own style, and then add some in-depth local history.

This plan soon went awry. Firstly, I noticed discrepancies in the various retellings; this warned me that some of them were wrong — but which? It became clear that information was being twisted to suit the writers' personal biases. Rumours, hearsay and assumptions were being asserted as genuine history. Some authors quoted from conversations that I knew could not possibly have taken place! As I researched more deeply, it became clear that some of the most important of the generally accepted and repeated 'facts' about Chapman were actually lies. This drew me more deeply into his life than I had originally intended, and tracing the provenance of the myths became almost as interesting as establishing his life story. Driven by a compulsion to set the record straight and present Chapman's true story to the world for the first time, I devoted all of my free time to the project for the next three years, striving to untangle facts from myths and Inventions and to present only factual information and assessment. Of course, I allowed myself to speculate, but in an honest manner, letting the reader know clearly where something was mere guesswork.

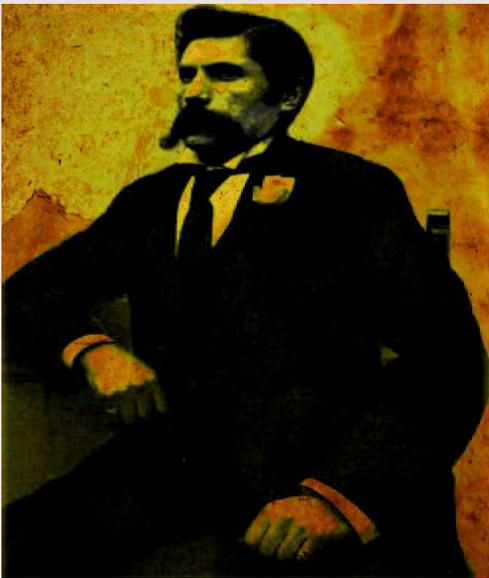
Early on in this research process, several Ripperologists urged me to abandon the idea of a local history booklet and to publish a full-scale, proper biography of Chapman, both as a serial poisoner and as a JTR suspect. Such a book, they argued, was long overdue and would be eagerly purchased by hordes of Ripperologists, both at home and abroad. It was not possible, they argued, to assess Chapman as a Ripper candidate until a true and accurate version of his life story were published.

The ironic thing about George Chapman is that his crimes as a poisoner are at least as fascinating as his candidacy as Jack the Ripper, and yet almost all interest hitherto shown in him focuses solely on the Ripper connection, with the poison murders only mentioned in passing, or as proof that he was a 'killer at heart'. However, Chapman as a triple-poisoner is both more straightforward and more interesting. His actions, behaviour and motives, and his psychological state, are intriguing. In each case, he persuaded a 'respectable' woman, raised in an era of highly repressive Victorian morality, to cohabit with him outside of marriage. Having done so, he then killed her, seemingly for no

reason. His chosen method of murder was to cause the most amount of suffering and to stretch it out over the longest time possible, and to do all this right under the very noses of close relatives, friends, employees, and — above all — doctors. He comes

across as thrilled with his ability to outwit, puzzle and perplex medical men, to the point where one begins to wonder whether this could have been the point of the entire exercise. Did he kill his three girlfriends merely in order to win a bet with himself that he could commit three murders in plain sight of many people, and get away with it? If so, surely that would make him clinically insane. No sane person would kill three innocent people just to prove a point, or merely for fun. On the other hand, could someone be insane, and yet live and work for years at very close quarters with various people without showing any sign of being insane?

JACK THE RIPPER AT LAST
by Helena Wojtczak is priced £12.99 and can
be bought on Amazon. For author-signed
and/or dedicated copies, readers should buy
direct from www.hastingspress.co.uk or eBay.



Frogg Moody talks to Helena Wojtczak

If as you mention, Chapman's crimes might have been conducted to outwit medical men, could this have also been a reason why Chapman might have changed his M.O. from the Ripper murders (organs removed) to murdering three girlfriends (poison)?

Excellent question! Yes, this is indeed possible. We must never forget that nothing physical or geographical rules him out as a Ripper suspect. He lived in the area at the right time and, as a single man living as a lodger or in a shared house, he had the requisite amount of privacy and freedom of movement. He also had sufficient medical knowledge and he even fits some witness descriptions of a man who may have been the Ripper. On the other hand, it is argued that his M.O. and signature are sufficiently different to outweigh all of that. Perhaps changing the method was part of his "game". If so, he won. We would need to consult a criminal psychologist to establish how much conscious control a murderer has over his signature and M.O. After all, if these things could be changed, surely more killers would do so to evade capture.

You are obviously interested in the psychology of George Chapman, are you also interested in the psychology of other murderers?

Sorry, no. I think this is pretty much a one-off for me.

Could you tell us how you came up with the title of your book please?

It had several incarnations. After "The Demon Barber of George Street" I toyed for a while with "The Southwark Poisoner" and even mocked up a few book covers with that title. The problem with that was, Chapman is famous as a Ripper suspect, and so it was imperative that the title include the words "Jack the Ripper". I played about

for weeks with various permutations of "The Southwark Poisoner: Was he Jack the Ripper?" but they all seemed so clumsy and long.

Keith Skinner came up with the title I eventually published with, during an email about another matter. It was based on what Chief Inspector Abberline, who headed the Ripper case in 1888, was supposed to have said when Chapman was on death row in 1903: "We've got Jack the Ripper at last!" The substitution of a question mark for the exclamation mark introduces a note of scepticism. The title is asking: "Is he indeed Jack the Ripper at last?" and the book attempts to answer that question, as well as presenting a full account of the poison murders.

When the book was published, how was it received by Ripperologists?

The reviews were beyond my wildest dreams. Because I'm not a Ripperologist, and because a lot of people in the Ripper community are extremely knowledgeable, I was painfully conscious of my position as a "Jilly-come-lately". I was worried that people might think me presumptuous, even cheeky, to barge in and publish a Ripper suspect book. But I was completely wrong. The reviews took me completely by surprise: one after another famous names, published authors, researchers and readers praised the book to the skies. For a few days I felt like I was in a dream. I nearly fell off my chair when one very well-read and knowledgeable Ripperologist said it was the "finest suspect book in 125 years". The book has attracted many compliments and also invitations to speak at the Whitechapel Society, the annual Ripper conference and New Scotland Yard.

Have you considered writing another biog of another murderer?

I'm not sure what my next book will be, but I'm sorry to report that it won't be another Ripper suspect book, nor anything to do with crime - unless, of course, something exciting presents itself again and sucks me in!

MURDERABILIA

A DYING TRADE?

BY FROGG MOODY

When I was 13 years old, I found a human skull. I was playing in the woods behind my aunt's house and she had warned me off going there as it was used as a hangout for undesirables. I didn't listen. Later on after digging around I found a First World War bayonet and other bones which took pride of place on my bedroom shelf! Was this human skull and associated bones the result of a murder and had I, without actually realising it, become a spotty-faced teenage Murderabilia collector?

The definition of Murderabilia is a collector of items associated with murder and violent crimes. This has become big business in the USA and the hobby is certainly on the increase here in the UK. My first serious introduction to Murderabilia was an invitation by the author Stewart P. Evans to view his personal true crime collection which included a number of hangman's nooses. Stewart explained to me:-

"I was collecting true crime ephemera and pumping quite a lot of money into the hobby. There was a buyer/seller called Eric Barton also known as 'The ghoul of Richmond Hill.' Eric was given this name because he would scan the obituary columns when some high-profile person had died, and then contact the widow to see if he could help dispose of the husbands collection! Eric's main interest was Dr. Crippen but in the true crime field he had picked up some choice stuff. He had managed to get a collection of James Berry the Hangman's stuff, a collection of Crippen material, Jack the Ripper related things and so on....."

It was through Eric Barton that Stewart also acquired the famous 'Littlechild Letter'. Stewart P. Evans:-

"I knew that J.G. Littlechild was head of the Special Branch at Scotland Yard at the time of the Jack the Ripper murders. As I started reading this particular letter sent to me by Eric, I came across the name of a Ripper suspect (Francis Tumblety) that I'd never heard of being named by a chief inspector of Scotland Yard – I couldn't believe it! Even before I had finished the letter I knew this was going to be a book – that was in 1993 and two years later the book was published." (The Lodger, The Arrest and Escape of Jack the Ripper by Stewart P. Evans & Paul Gainey)

Another collector of Murderabilia is Joel Griggs, curator of 'The True Crime Museum' in Hastings who told me: -

"It was after being made redundant from my teaching job that I decided to take my interest in true crime to another level" Joel told us. "The caves at White Rock became available to house the museum but even before the museum stated I was collecting items relating to true crime. Now I contact museums for artifacts to display and I also have police contacts..... Then there's the internet which is a valuable resource for collectors of Murderabilia."

The case of H H Crippen, hanged in 1910 for the murder of his wife Belle Elmore ranks as one of the most sensational in the history of classic crime. Researcher and author Lindsay Siviter has become fascinated with the case to the point of collecting Crippen related Murderabilia. We recently asked Lindsay about her interest in H H Crippen.

"Out of the many true crime cases that I find fascinating, the infamous case of the murder of music hall actress Belle Elmore aka Cora Crippen is definitely the one that interests me the most after the Ripper! I first became aware of the Crippen story as a child when I watched a video on Scotland Yard's famous Black Museum presented by the then Curator Mr Bill Waddell. That series was great as not only did it tell the facts but it was set against a dramatized reconstruction of the events. As a teenager my immediate feeling was to question whether such a mild mannered gentleman could really have murdered and dismembered his wife and hidden her remains in the cellar. Such is the naivety of youth!"

I decided to investigate the case myself and over the years have bought many magazines and books. Something about the case to me just does not add up, despite the fact in law the case was black and white, made famous by its transatlantic chase and subsequent hanging of the murderer. However, there were small details which keep nagging me ie: why would anyone go to the trouble of carefully dismembering a corpse and de-boning the body to get rid of potential evidence of identification, only to be stupid enough to leave a pyjama jacket with an identifiable label still attached? Also what happened to Cora's head? And most pressingly of all to me whether Ethel Le Neve

was the quiet naïve shy woman history has portrayed her or was she involved in the death of her lovers' wife?

After I finished University I worked in various museums then did my Masters Degree in Egyptology but my passion for true crime was always in the background simmering away. In 2005 I was researching the murder case of Emily Dimmock (The Camden Town murder case 1907) and I decided I would track down where she was buried. When I went to the cemetery to see her final resting place I was asked by a member of staff whether I would like to see the grave of Cora Crippen and of course I said yes please! Shortly after that special day of visiting the final resting place of the famous Belle Elmore I went to a talk at Scotland Yard given by Crippen historian David James Smith. We briefly chatted about the case and his presentation really inspired me to continue my research on the case.

After being invited to be a guest lecturer myself at the Metropolitan Police History Society I was kindly invited to visit the famous Black Museum and I rushed straight over to the Crippen exhibits which I had seen on the video all those years ago! It was a day I will never forget and yet an even better one happened when several years later I became one of only two official Volunteers at The Crime Museum (the other being the lovely Ripper author and researcher Keith Skinner). I will never forget the day I was allowed to hold all the Crippen exhibits as I helped to organise their re-display in the showcase. To see Cora Crippen's actual hair in curlers and the pyjama jacket so close up was amazing and I felt as though I was holding some very special relics of true crime history.

Recently the Crime Museum loaned The Wellcome Trust various court sketches of the Crippen trial executed by the talented court sketch artist William Hartley. They were featured in an exhibition titled: "Forensics: The Anatomy of Crime" and appeared alongside other amazing Crippen artefacts including some of the actual slides containing samples of Cora Crippen's scar from the London Hospital archives which were used as a means to identify the body in the cellar as Cora's and subsequently used in evidence against Crippen at his trial. The sketches bring to life the court room drama and show us what many of the people associated with the case looked like and are valuable glimpses into one of the most famous trials at The Old Bailey.

In the Crime Museum archives I discovered that we once had the actual gun belonging to Crippen in the collection which was found in his house. However, sadly this and other relics including a poker are now lost. I believe this was the actual gun that Ethel Le Neve had been using in her shooting lessons with Crippen who was teaching her how to shoot in the back garden! Various targets were listed in the property seized from Crippen's house later on and several witnesses heard shots in the early hours on the night the police believed Cora was killed. Perhaps Cora was shot but as her head and most other body parts were never found I guess we will never know.

While working at the museum I have been so privileged to handle and research many Crippen related objects and documents and last year in 2014, I finally decided to visit the National Archives and see the original police files on the case which I found fascinating. Shortly after I purchased my first Crippen relic, a letter signed by the man himself written on "The Aural Remedies Company" headed notepaper dated 16 June 1910 just a few weeks before he fled with Ethel abroad. A few months later I bought an original four-sided broadsheet titled "The Execution of Dr Crippen: The Naughty Doctor" and two original postcards showing the murder house and Ethel and Crippen in court. I also soon after this acquired a first edition copy of a small pamphlet titled: "Ethel Le Neve Her Life Story, With the True Account of Their Flight and Her Friendship for Dr Crippen, Told by Herself".

Crippen is one of the few remaining waxworks in the famous Madame Tussaud's Waxworks on Baker Street. In the archives there is a picture of him being saved from an awful fire in 1925. It shows him being covered with a blanket and carried out to safety which seems quite ironic. In the summer of 2014, I was given special permission to help the archivist at Madame Tussaud's to sort through the Chamber of Horrors relics and objects in order for them to be boxed and moved to a new location. Amongst the most amazing relics I handled were a pair of Crippen's spectacles, one of his pamphlets and a case containing vials of his homeopathic remedies. In the past Tussauds had acquired Crippens suit, Ethel Le Neves clothing and the food trolley from Hilldrop Crescent! the latter still exists at Tussauds large object archive at Alton Towers.

In December 2014 I finally went to the site where the Crippen house used to stand at 39 Hilldrop Crescent. Although his house sadly no longer exists there are others nearby that survive which help us to re-create what no 39 would have looked like. I also visited nearby streets where various witnesses in their statements claimed to have heard suspicious things around the time of the murder. For me as a historian this kind of topographical research is vital to understanding the history of any true crime case and is always valuable.

Another example of this and a coincidence is that I recently moved to Bloomsbury and discovered that I am living around the corner from where Crippen and Cora had lived in two properties in Store Street which still stand. Also I am only a short walk from Crippen's office in Craven House opposite Holborn Station where he had written the letter I own! Sadly his office in New Oxford Street where he was interviewed about Cora's disappearance by Inspector Walter Dew and from whence he and Ethel left on their last journey together has been demolished.

In 2014 I was approached by a film company making a documentary on Holloway Prison. I was interviewed on camera about Ethel Le Neve and the Crippen case and although sadly in the end they did not have the time to

include Ethel's story it forced me to get to know the facts more thoroughly.

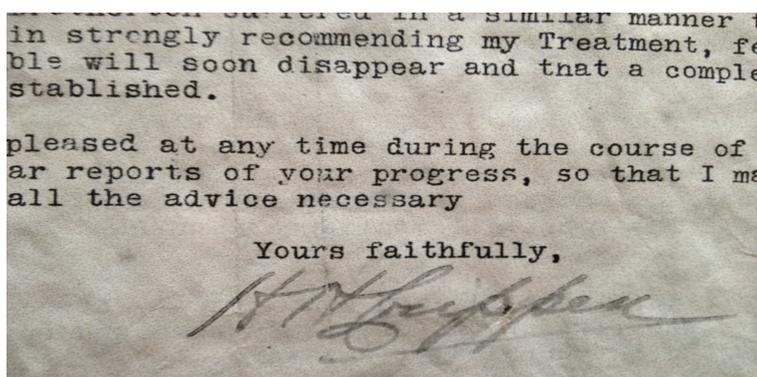
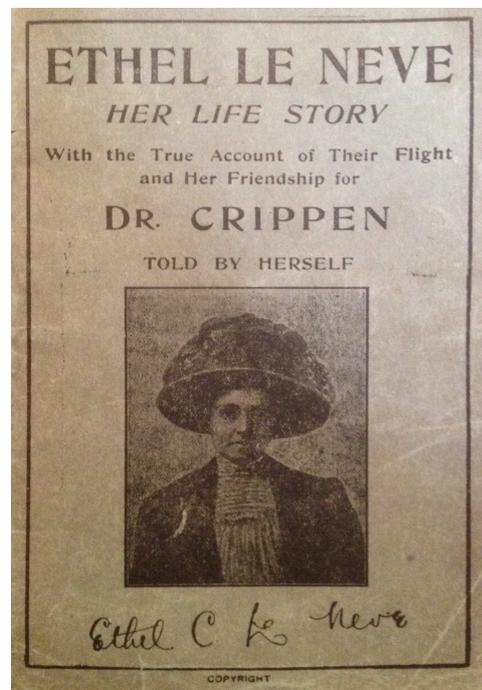
In 2014 I was asked by a friend whether I would like to see several original Crippen letters which belonged to a lady who knew of my interest and was happy for me to handle them and take photos. Many were written by Crippen to a supportive friend called Lady Somerset and were composed in his prison cell just days before he was hanged. They show a passionate man protesting his Innocence and one adoringly faithful to his mistress.

However there was also a letter written by Cora Crippen and one by Ethel Le Neve whose surviving letters are very rare. I'm so glad I had the opportunity to study these unique letters as a few weeks later the owner sold them at auction for £11,000! Sadly the collection was divided and went to various buyers so I am so glad I took photos and copies of them.

A few months ago I spent a week in hospital for some tests and while there bored, I discovered via the internet of an auction containing various Crippen relics! I called the auction house from my hospital bed who informed me the article I had read was two days old and the sale had happened yesterday! I was absolutely gutted! I explained my passion for the case and my work at the Crime Museum with the Crippen objects and to my astonishment the manager told me that the American buyer had not left his credit card details and was not returning his calls so after another hour the auction house was willing to re-sell them for a discounted price and that I could buy them if I wished to!! It was truly my lucky day! The manager had hoped the collection of items would stay in the UK and together as a collection so he was pleased I had called! As soon as he told me the knock down price I said from my hospital bed "yep I will have them thank you!". The deal was done and I now own some amazing Crippen relics including two 1910 newspapers, medical equipment, a brooch belonging to Cora and the best item of all: a pair of Crippen's gold rimmed spectacles! After purchasing the items I was allowed to contact the seller to confirm provenance and the story of the family proved accurate when I privately researched the facts so I am very happy with my little Crippen display at home!"

Lindsay is currently compiling a list of known Crippen relics (documents and objects) which have existed or still exist today. If you would like to share any knowledge of the whereabouts or existence of any Crippen objects please email the editor who can pass your message onto Lindsay who will add it to the list!

Also you may have heard in the press over the last few weeks that from October 9th 2015 to April 10th 2016 there will be in an amazing temporary exhibition at



**Top - Lindsay Siviter at the grave of Cora Crippen.
Top - Part of Lindsay's Crippen collection, a book signed by Ethel Le Neve.
Middle - More from Lindsay's collection including Crippen's spectacles!
Bottom - Crippen's signature on a letter owned by Lindsay.**

The Museum of London titled: "The Crime Museum Uncovered". Over 600 objects are being loaned by the Crime Museum, including several iconic Crippen relics. This is the first time these objects will be able to be seen by members of the public...don't miss a unique exhibition and opportunity to view some infamous true crime relics!!

FROGG MOODY TALKS TO LINDSAY SIVITER

Q - It has been suggested that the body in the cellar was not Cora Crippen at all and that the DNA actually suggests a man's body. What are your thoughts on this?

A – I think that is not true. All the evidence at the time, the police documents and forensic evidence suggest that this was Cora's body down in the cellar and the fact that recent DNA and examinations of the slide and finding male DNA on them is purely down to cross-contamination. 99% of all the scientist who would have held them at the time would have been male and I just think its cross-contamination and it was Cora's body down there.

Q- Because looking at Spilsbury, he said the remains contained a scar. It has been suggested that it wasn't but it was actually a fold in the skin....

A – Well I'm not a scientist but having read the evidence I would like to think it was Cora's scar from the operation she had done to remove her ovaries and that was one of the identifying mark that proved who was in the cellar . But even without the scar tissue, the other evidence of the pyjama jacket down there and her hair! The hair that we have in the Black Museum surrounded by her curlers shows that whoever was down there dyed their hair seems to prove it's Cora anyway – the hair proves the identification in my view.

Q – It is said that Crippen was giving his lover Ethel Le Neve shooting lessons in the back garden of Hilldrop Crescent. Could it be that Ether was in some way responsible for the murder of Cora and that Crippen was protecting her in some way?

A- Although the history books have never said that, personally I have always thought that Ethel knew more. That's not to say I believe she actually killed Cora but I think she defiantly knew more from the evidence I've seen. Yes she was having target and shooting practice, that targets were found in the house afterwards, the museum had Crippen's gun and Dew knew of the gun in the house at the time. Various shots were heard on the night of the murder around one in the morning from Brecknock Road and other residence but it was never really talked about in the trial – it was never really needed to be because they believed Crippen was the murderer and that's who they were going for. For Dew, that's the way the evidence was going and there was never going to be any need to look for anything else or anyone else. But as an historian, im looking at all the evidence, I'm finding new little tit-bits and thinking hang on a minute....

Of course, its difficult because Cora's head was missing and yes, she may have been poisoned and there may have been poison in the body – there's so many reasons why Crippen may have drugged her. But we don't have the head so was she shot first? There's so much we don't have because the body was de-boned – but why would someone who has gone to all this meticulous pain to dispose of the body be so silly as to leave an identification mark of the pyjama jacket, it makes no sense! Where did the rest of the body go – and where's her head?

Q – What about you as a historian and researchers and the fact that you have chosen to collect Crippen artefacts, is that just a fascination with the case, are they research items for a proposed book – what is the fascination with collecting this memorabilia?

A- Because the case had such a fascination for me since I was young, to own something that belonged to such a famous murderer – when you spend so long researching something

you feel like you have a connection with these people. For me, a museum person who loves relics, just to be able to hold something that these people touched themselves and wore and actually used.... Its something quite magical. I didn't buy them particularly to put on display although I would be quite willing to let a museum do so in the future. Its just the closes I will ever come to meeting the people themselves really.

Q- Obviously you work at the crime museum, you are surrounded by crime object's the whole time , do you sometimes look at these things and think, God, I'd love to have something by Haigh or....

A- Yes and I collect other things as well. If ever anything comes up at auction that I can afford – I have letters by the Kray's and all sorts of bits and pieces – a part of them leaves their trail on these objects their energy in a way, passing through them....

Q- So part of your hobby is the collecting of Murderabilia?

A- Yes which it's a dream come true working at the Crime Museum because these exhibits well, its not just a knife or gun, yes its been used in a famous crime but I feel that part of that person is still retained on those objects – that is something I find quite amazing – its almost connecting you and the past together, like a timeline. Its not a question of 'I must have an object from Haigh or the such like, its when they come up – availability. I know there are other collectors – Stewart Evans who has an amazing collection of crime memorabilia.....

Q- If you collected something from say Crippen, how interested are you in meeting someone from that persons family – someone actually living....

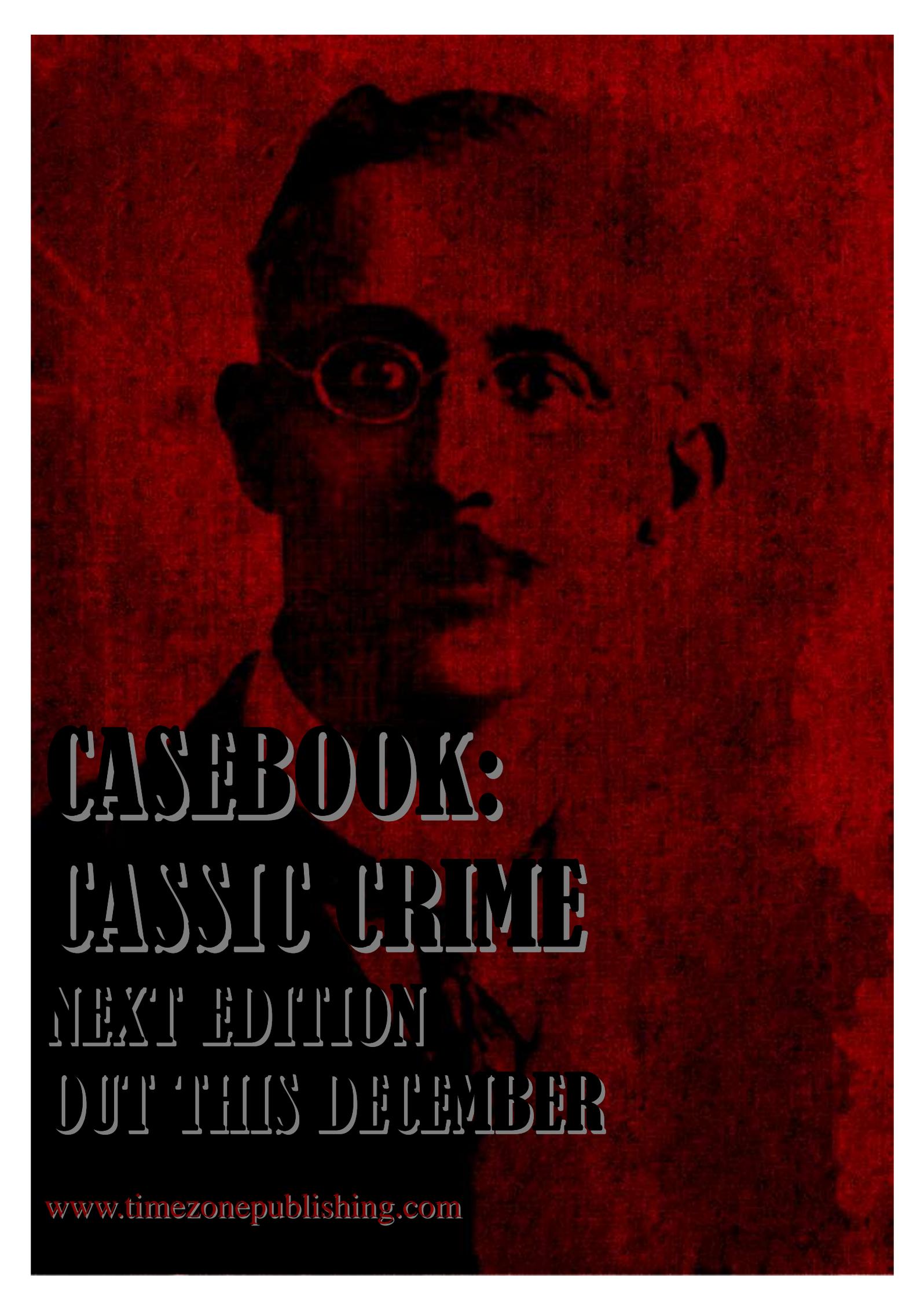
A- Very interested! In fact I'm only one step away from meeting Ethel Le Neve's children.... I'm the sort of historian who if I can track down the descendents from famous crimes then yes because you never know what these descendants are going to have its almost another link to that persons again, its their DNA your talking to, their lineage, their family. Its their oral history, their story which the history books have not written down and its those tit-bits that can completely change history.

Q- As you know our next edition is how to murder you wife. I understand you have an interest in the brides in the bath murder...

A- I do have a strong interest in George Smith, the brides in the bath. The Crime Museum doesn't have anything on display, but we did use to have and we still own one of the baths that he used to murder one of the victims – we have the bath he used at Blackpool. The Herne Bay bath we believe, went back to the shop owner where he had hired it from but the Highgate bath is owned by madam Tussauds, they have that in their store facility. I've actually visited the Blackpool site, the murder house and the Highgate house so I've been to two of the murder sites. I've also done a little bit of research on some of the victims.....

Q- Is there very much stuff hidden in the depths of the Crime Museum or Tussauds.... I mean artefact that perhaps people haven't had time to catalogue and therefore not seen the significance of what it actually is – is there scope for you to find things out?

A- Definitely with the Tussauds archive because that's never been catalogued or sorted. Last summer I went to help them box all the relics and the objects. There's a big store facility at Alton Towers – that's where all the big stuff is like Dennis Nilson's television and the George Smith's bath and a hundred other things which I haven't seen yet. On site in baker street there was quite a lot of smaller objects in boxes that they haven't really gone through yet.



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