

# The Bilge Pump

Vol. 11, No. 02 - February, 2023  
*The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the  
Barque Lone Star - founded November, 1970*



## PLEASE NOTE: **March 05, 2023 Meeting** NOTICE

We will be conducting our next monthly meeting virtually on **March 05** at 1:00 pm central. I will send out the link for the meeting the week before the meeting. The story for the month is "The Adventure of the Six Napoleons".

**Bob Katz, BSI, ASH**, will lead the discussion on the story of "The Adventure of the Six Napoleons".

**Rich Krisciunas, ASH**, will look at the legal aspects of the story.

**Joe Fay** will provide a summary of one of the "writings on the writings".

**Danna Mancini**, will be our featured guest speaker, who will be speaking on "Plans, Patents, and Submarines".

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For more information concerning our society, visit: <http://www.dfw-sherlock.org/>

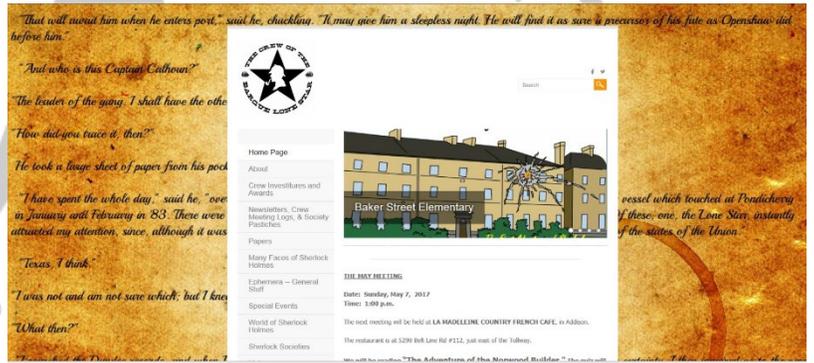
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You can friend us on Facebook at: <http://www.facebook.com/BarqueLoneStar>

<p><b>Who dunnit:</b></p> 	<p>Third Mate Helmsman Spiritual Advisors</p> <p>Secretary Historian Webmaster</p>	<p>Steve Mason, BSI Walter Pieper Don Hobbs, BSI Dr. Jim Webb, BSI Cindy Brown Pam Mason Rusty Mason</p>	<p><a href="mailto:mason.steve8080@gmail.com">mason.steve8080@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:waltpieper@att.net">waltpieper@att.net</a> <a href="mailto:221b@verizon.net">221b@verizon.net</a> <a href="mailto:jimrwebb@ix.netcom.com">jimrwebb@ix.netcom.com</a>  <a href="mailto:myrkrid08@yahoo.com">myrkrid08@yahoo.com</a></p>
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Our Website:

[www.dfw-sherlock.org](http://www.dfw-sherlock.org)



Our Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/BarqueLoneStar/>

# FEBRUARY 05 SUMMARY

Cindy Brown

There were 75 in attendance at this ZOOM meeting.

The meeting was opened by **Rudy Altergott**, who did the Toast on Friendship.

We then proceeded to the quiz on today's story, "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton".

Next our own **Bob Katz**, **BSI**, **ASH** lead a discussion of the story for the month.

There is a wealth of riches for Sherlockians in the form of virtual meetings, stage plays, and conferences being held across the country this year.

Congratulations were extended to Crew members who are also new members of the Baker Street Irregulars, David Harnois and Cindy Brown, and to Greg Ruby for getting the Two Shilling Award.

**Sandy Kozinn**, **ASH** then did a limerick of "Charles Augustus Milverton".

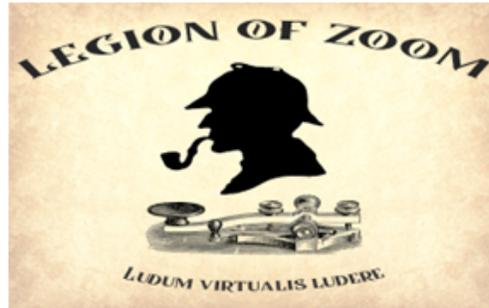
Our guest speaker for the month was **Bob Stek**, **BSI**, who spoke on "How to Observe Like Sherlock Holmes", which was very well-researched and wonderfully presented.

We next had a beautifully performed magic trick by crew member Micah Cover, which amazed all the participants.

For our next meeting, in **March, 2023**, the story will be "The Adventure of the Six Napoleons", and the featured speaker will be **Danna Mancini**.

**Rich Krisciunas** then did the closing toast, to the Crew of the Barque Lone Star.

*As always, thanks so much to Cindy Brown, BSI, for keeping the notes of the meeting.*



## **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Legion of Zoom Virtual Conference "The Sitting Zoom at 221b Baker Street"**

**Sunday, February 19, 2023**

**2 pm Eastern, 1 pm  
Central, 11 am Pacific**

**Last year we had a  
wonderful inaugural  
meeting, including  
representatives from 7  
different countries...**

### **Confirmed Speakers**

- **Catherine Cooke, "The Book of Life"**
- **Susan Dahlinger, "The Bruce-Partington Plans"**
  - **Beth Gallego Clifford Goldfarb, "Fordham, the Horsham Lawyer"**
- **Mark Jones, "Peter Jones"**
- **Burt Wolder, "The Third Pillar from the Left"**

**For more information and to register, go to:**

**<http://www.dfw-sherlock.org/2023----2nd-annual-virtual-conference.html>**

# Please Mark Your Calendars "Lone Star Holmes"

A look at Sherlock Holmes past, present & future  
**May 26 – 27, 2023**

## Tentative Speakers include:

Barbara Rusch, BSI, ASH, MBt

Tim Johnson, BSI

Marino Alvarez, BSI

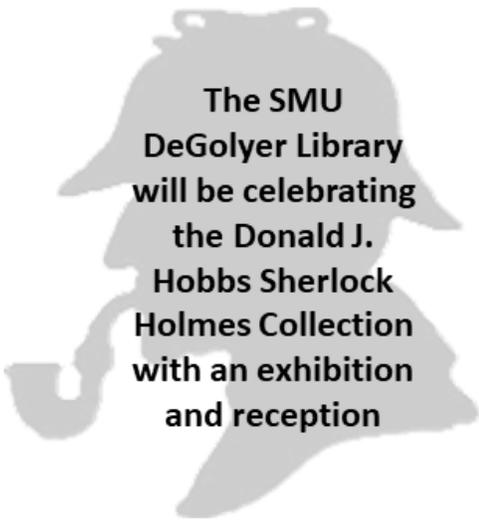
Glen Miranker, BSI

Russell Merritt, BSI, ASH

Rob Nunn, BSI

## Keynote Speaker

Peter E. Blau, BSI, ASH, MBt



The SMU  
DeGolyer Library  
will be celebrating  
the Donald J.  
Hobbs Sherlock  
Holmes Collection  
with an exhibition  
and reception

Registration and hotel  
information may be  
found at our website:  
[www.dfw-sherlock.org](http://www.dfw-sherlock.org)

Co-hosted by Southern Methodist  
University, DeGolyer Library, and the Crew  
of the Barque Lone Star Society

## Lone Star Holmes

(A look at Sherlock Holmes past, present & future)  
Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX  
May 26 -27, 2023



# WRITTEN IN THE STARS

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD, Lone Star Deck-Mate

CONGRATULATIONS – THIS IS LIESE’S 100<sup>TH</sup> ESSAY ON THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES... WE ARE PROUD TO CONTINUE INCLUDING THESE EACH MONTH.

In *A Study in Scarlet*, Watson pronounced Holmes’ knowledge of astronomy as “Nil,” and went so far as to describe their discussion about his disinterest in the solar system.

“If we went round the moon it would not make a pennyworth of difference to me or to my work,” Holmes told him. Later, he reaffirmed his belief that only certain subjects were worthy of being stored in his “brain attic” in “The Adventure of the Five Orange Pips.”

John O’Brien, however, suggested Holmes did know something of the subject because he referenced astronomers and their use of “the personal equation” in calculating the sun’s position in “The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual;” discussed “the obliquity of the ecliptic” in “The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter;” and was familiar with Moriarty’s treatise on asteroids in “The Final Problem.” (1)

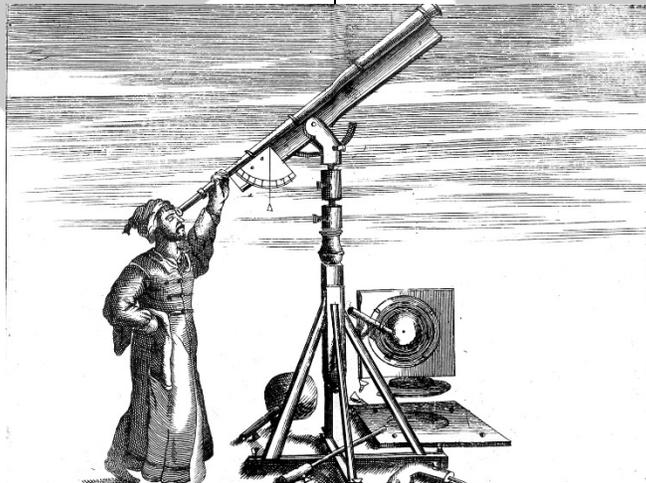
Despite Watson’s early observation and Holmes’ own assertions regarding his knowledge of the topic, he did have a grasp of the oldest science when needed.

Astronomy was the first natural science to realize a high level of complexity and did so more than 4000 years ago. The Babylonians, Greeks, and those in Islamic countries all built upon the earliest observations of the movements and positions of the sun, moon, planets (Venus was observed as early as 2000 BCE), and stars.

Those studying the heavens were able to build upon earlier work because the subjects studied remained stable over millennia.

They could be mathematized and provided religious and philosophical meanings as well as useful predictions such as the flooding of the Nile. (2) While astronomy progressed outside of Europe, the study languished until 1175 when the Italian Gerard of Cremona translated Claudius Ptolemy’s work on the stars and planets’ motion from Arabic to Latin.

With the creation of universities (such as Oxford), the teaching and study of astronomy were included as part of the curriculum. Ptolemy’s geocentric model (with the earth as the center of the universe) remained the accepted paradigm until Nicolaus Copernicus published his heliocentric (planets revolve around the sun) theory in 1543, simplifying the movement of the planets.



His and other works (including Galileo’s) were banned by the church (3) and another 100 years passed before it became the standard concept of the universe. (4)

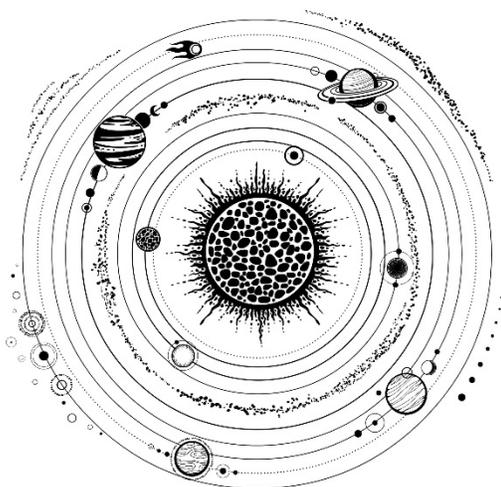
Galileo owed his observations of the stars and planets to a rather crude telescope he used to study the moon’s geography. (5)

As telescopes became more sophisticated, the identification of additional planets, their moons, and even asteroids occurred. The first asteroid was discovered in 1801, with three more identified over the next six years. The fifth was not found for more

than forty years, but astronomers mapped the 100<sup>th</sup> by 1868.

While no copies of Moriarty's treatise remain (William Walsh posits it was because the contents were so disturbing, the British government destroyed all copies (6)), speculation as to its subject involved the existence of asteroids in an area between Mars and Jupiter created when a planet in that orbit was destroyed and a possible similar event occurring to Earth. (7)

In addition to discovering further heavenly bodies and mapping them (astrometrics), astronomers in



Victorian England also contributed to astrophysics—the composition and movement of those bodies. (8)

Of particular importance to the development of this field was the spectroscope. Used first to analyze the chemical makeup of Earth's materials, astronomers later employed the instrument to identify the sun's composition through its spectra. (9)

Such advances in Victorian times were not lost on Holmes. While he might not have been as concerned with the mathematical complexity and study of asteroids as Moriarty once showed, he must have found the topic of some value and added portions to his brain attic for use in certain situations.

- 1) James O'Brien *The Scientific Sherlock Holmes*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, page 145
- 2) <https://www.britannica.com/science/astronomy/History-of-astronomy>
- 3) Ibid
- 4) <https://sci.esa.int/web/gaia/-/53196-the-oldest-sky-maps>
- 5) [https://www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/9-12/features/telescope\\_feature\\_912.html](https://www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/9-12/features/telescope_feature_912.html)
- 6) William Walsh, "Asteroids, Comets, and the Structure of the Solar System" in Dana Richards (ed.) *My Scientific Methods*, New York: The Baker Street Irregulars, 2022.
- 7) Brady E. Schaefer "Sherlock Homes and Some Astronomical Connections," British Astronomical Association, 1993.
- 8) Sally Mitchell, *Victorian Britain*, New York: Garland Publishing, 1988.
- 9) <https://history.aip.org/exhibits/cosmology/tools/tools-spectroscopy.htm>

# JACK THE RIPPER'S IDENTIFICATION: CONFIRMED, OR NOT, BY DNA

Brenda Rossini

In 2012, I published, "Jack the Ripper, a Shanda" (Yiddish "shame") based on my surmise and search of the historical record. From it, an indisputable suspect arose rather conclusively, I thought: Aaron Kosminski. Recently, a DNA analysis confirmed my earlier conclusion that in 1888, a Polish immigrant, Aaron Kosminski, slaughtered five women in Whitechapel within several weeks.

## DNA or not?

In March 2019, the DNA test results of a bloodstained shawl reportedly belonging to victim Catherine Eddowes and worn at the time of her brutal murder, 30 September 1888, was announced by Russell Edwards and an effusive media. The announcement coincided with the publication of Edwards' Naming Jack the Ripper.

Edwards is shown in an online photograph holding a stunning, stain-free, expansive blue-and-brown silk scarf. It looks, to the practiced female eye, no older than, say, five years. Edwards bought it in 2007 at auction. The scarf had been consigned by descendants of policeman Amos Simpson. At some point in the 1990s, Simpson's descendants loaned the shawl to Scotland Yard's Black Museum. The family said Simpson had been permitted to take the scarf, which was then made a part of his estate. The scarf had been passed from hand to hand since 1888. It was therefore contaminated, and without doubt, inadmissible into evidence.

There cannot be a break in the evidentiary chain. Evidence is securely stored until a case is no longer pending. The Ripper case has never been conclusively solved. Second, by what legal procedure would a policeman be permitted to take possession of a crucial piece of evidence—property of the Crown—and then allowed to devise it to his descendants? Third, how and why would the Crown permit the auction of material that is its and the country's property?

According to Edwards, the shawl must have been Kosminski's, not the victim's, as Edwards initially alleged. It appeared from analysis to be of Russian provenance and too fine to have been owned by Eddowes. Aaron Kosminski was an immigrant from Russo-Poland. Edwards

employed molecular biologists, chemists, and analysts to examine the shawl. They declared that spots of blood and semen were present on the shawl from which they extracted DNA. Edwards then went on to reveal that DNA, from Eddowes' and Kosminski's unidentified descendants, confirmed that Kosminski was Jack the Ripper.

My 2012 findings appeared in the following: 1. Sherlockian Ruminations of a Stormy Petrel (MX Publishing, 2. as a book review of Charles Nicholls' *Traces Remain*, "On the 'New' Jack the Ripper Suspect," at [readworthybooks.blogspot.com/search?=%5BJack+the+Ripper%5D](http://readworthybooks.blogspot.com/search?=%5BJack+the+Ripper%5D) and later, 3. in the Strand Magazine, in Roger Johnson's "I am an Omnivorous Reader" (Sept. 2017).

I followed a different path to reach my conclusion that Aaron Kosminski was the Ripper. No one else trod that path. I attribute the sundry sleuths' lack of familiarity with Jewish ritual. "...those moral and mental aspects of the matter...present the greatest difficulties" (*A Study in Scarlet*.) The Kosminski sleuths shared a lack of awareness, or scholarship, thus circumventing the "moral and mental aspects of the matter." The identification of these singular clues about Kosminski was essential to the elements of time, place, manner, witnesses, and preservation.

## Pre-DNA Ripper suspects

Dedicated detectives and authors reviewed the suspect list, witness statements, and evidentiary documents compiled by Scotland Yard and the inquests of 1888. Moreover, the myriad Ripper theories began in the 1960s when amateur forensic sleuths combed the opened files of Scotland Yard, and from which disparate theories were deduced.

The Yard and local police committed their inquiries to a host of suspects. One Yard suspect was George Chapman, unrelated to murder victim Annie Chapman. He arrived in London in 1888 as Seweryn Kłosowski. He was a barber, Polish-speaking but still unfamiliar with Whitechapel streets. He changed his name to George Chapman, but met his end on the gallows in 1903 after he

was convicted of the poisoning deaths of his several wives, beginning in 1897. The modus operandi was inconsistent with that of the Ripper.

At some point, Scotland Yard was informed by a witness that he had seen the suspect with a victim, and that he was “the Polish Jew Kozminski” (“Kozminski” was a surname easier to pronounce without the diacritical marks of Aaron’s Polish surname of *Kośmiński*). *The police were so convinced that they surveilled his residence(s) and possible workplaces. Yet, in the dark? The Yard commiserated of the immigrant community’s suspicion of authorities and its unwillingness to hand over a suspect who was also a landsman.*

Nothing led to Kosminski’s arrest. Without DNA, how did that come to be? How were suspects identified? The answer is, from circumstantial evidence, direct evidence, and witness statements. Such procedures endured until the font of criminal discovery--the use of DNA--unfolded, beginning in about 1983. In this case, the DNA results were unreliable and incredible.

South African historian, Charles Van Onselen, identified “Joe” the Ripper, aka Joe Fox/ Joe Silver, as the sexually-motivated perpetrator of Whitechapel. Van Onselen’s Joe Fox was a pornography entrepreneur (new on the Victorian horizon with the advent of photography), a brothel-keeper and criminal habitué...an immigrant trying to make a large living and unable to do so legitimately. Fox, however, lived in South Africa. He had emigrated there in the late 1890s from New York and London. He *may* have made a brief detour to Whitechapel in the 1890s, but this was well after the 1888 Ripper murders. There was no recorded transit of Joe Fox/Joe Silver to Whitechapel, or to England, in 1888.

Other books, relatively contemporaneous with my 2012 “Jack the Ripper as *Shanda*,” neglected Aaron Kosminski. Understandably, the omissions may have been attributable to fear of accusations of anti-Semitism. These included Diane Gilbert Madsen’s creative *Conan Doyle Notes: The Secret of Jack the Ripper* (2014); Giles Brandreth’s *Jack the Ripper: Case Closed* (2017); and the obtuse anthology of *9 Jack the Ripper Books Any Amateur Detective Needs to Read* (2016) in which, according to the nine amateur detective-authors, Jack the Ripper’s identity was up for grabs.

In 2011, Hartley Nathan (“The Penang Lawyer”), barrister, legal scholar, and author, in *Who Was Jack the Ripper* narrowed the investigative possibilities: “The authorities and upper classes assumed that the perpetrator must be a foreigner or a low-class savage,” but he left it to the reader to deduce conclusion from

myriad suspects. Certainly, Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson’s investigations of the more squalid crimes had led to foreign and swarthy suspects, e.g., savages. However, Holmesian upper class aristocrats were more likely to have engaged in blackmail, stolen government documents, or escaping the terror wrought by demon hounds.

Some Ripperologists profiled upper-class suspects as Jack the Ripper. They apparently wandered, unrecognized, in the early pre-dawn hours, through the unfamiliar streets of Whitechapel in east London. Author Charles Nicholl was left unpersuaded by celebrity novelist Patricia Cornwell’s accusation of artist Walter Sickert as the Ripper in two books: the 2002 *Portrait of a Killer* and in 2017, *Ripper: The Secret Life of Walter Sickert*. She could not place Sickert at the murders at any time whatsoever. She may have convinced the public media of inconclusive DNA results, but not so Charles Nicholls. Sickert’s handwriting and grammar did not match letters received by Scotland Yard.

In his *Ripper* study, Hartley Nathan devoted a chapter to “My Favorites”-- none of whom was Jewish. He too did not countenance Cornwell’s wrong-headed tarring of Walter Sickert, a serious and celebrated painter who lived in France with his long-term mistress in the 1880s.

The Royal family was not immune from Ripper profiling. Prince Albert Victor, grandson of Queen Victoria, though dogged by rumors that he was homosexual, was placed by sleuths in the alternative--that of being bisexual and having a pathological mania against prostitutes. This speculation led to a book in 1976 by Steven Knight with the unfortunate title of *Jack the Ripper: The Final Solution*. Prince Albert was not in London at the time of the murders, and died in 1892, age 28, in an influenza epidemic.

In her above-referenced book, Diane Gilbert Madsen, a prominent author of mystery and fiction, described Conan Doyle’s remarks on the Ripper murders during his 1894 trip to America. As brilliantly narrated by Margalit Fox in *Conan Doyle for the Defense*, Doyle was as near a defendant’s barrister as he was creator of the world’s most astute private investigator. Ms. Madsen explored Conan Doyle’s remarks about the savage, yet unsolved, murders.

Conan Doyle recalled his 1892 visit to the Scotland Yard Museum. On display was the letter sent to police by the purported Ripper. According to Doyle, Holmes would have adjudged the quality of the stationery and the handwriting, and then traced them to other written articles of the sender. He would have published the letter

in leading newspapers, enlisting the assistance of millions of readers and dedicated amateur sleuths. Doyle thought the suspect would have dressed as a woman to enable a stealthy approach to the victim, and that he would have had a rudimentary knowledge of surgery. Doyle did not mention the Catherine Eddowes' shawl as having been on display at the Museum.

### THERE WERE JEWISH SUSPECTS

Today's resurgence of anti-Semitism in the UK, the Continent, as well as the United States, is a situation fraught with difficulty for members of the Tribe. However, mental illness, murder, and other foul felonies are indiscriminate in commission so far as the human species is concerned. Into these shadows, the identity of Jack the Ripper must come into focus.

Whitechapel, the site of the murders in 1888 was 95% Jewish—a result of mass emigration from a convulsed and bloody Russia/Poland. The same population was evident in nearby Spitalfields and Aldgate, where the suspect, and the victims, lived, worked, and operated.

Most of the Jewish suspects were excluded by dates, alibis, and other negations,

One persisted posthumously, and it was not Joe Fox. Jack the Ripper was Aaron Kosminski. The name, "Jack the Ripper," was a bit of quick-wittedness by a letter-writer to the police claiming himself as the wanton killer.

Author Robert House accused Kosminski as the Whitechapel killer in *Jack the Ripper and the Case for Scotland Yard's Prime Suspect* (2010), but he hedged his bets with a plethora of "maybes," i.e., he wasn't quite sure it was Aaron Kosminski.

Numerous home addresses had been reported for Kosminski, but none were sifted from among work applications, correspondence, memberships, receipts, doctors, synagogue attendance, English classes, and so forth. He may have lived with his adult brother, Wolf Abrahams, and his wife Betsy at 3 Sion Square. The area was bombed and decimated by the Nazis during the Blitz.

### MY PATH TO THE RIPPER

Some Ripper endeavors were serious forays, some fanciful, and others improbable. Too many were flexible with dates. Most were flummoxed by the cessation of the murders after November 1888.

It would not have been unlikely, at the time, for Prime Minister William Gladstone to have approached Sherlock Holmes about the murders of the Whitechapel

women—Gladstone was renowned for his proselytization of fallen women. The evidence surely would have led Holmes to solving the "curious incident," though in the Ripper case, more accurately a "curious incidence."

I followed an overlooked path and, unlike Holmes, proceeded instinctively. The murders occurred on the weekends. With that, I concentrated on the graffito, written in chalk, above a passageway in Goulston Street where Catherine Eddowes had been killed:

"The Juwes are the men That Will Not be Blamed for Nothing."

The graffito was observed by an astute investigating officer. What a clue! But it seemed incendiary to the officer, something that could offend that community. He wrote down the words exactly as they had been printed in chalk, and then wiped off the letters.

Recall Holmes' translation of the German word for "*Rache*" written in blood on a wall by the 6 ft.-tall victim (*Study in Scarlet*, 1887). "It was child's play," quoth Holmes. *Study in Scarlet* was published a year prior to the murders. It was not inconceivable that the Ripper had read the story in the *Strand Magazine*.

The graffito indicated to me a personal motivation. The writer was both familiar and angry with the superstitious calumnies of blood libel attributed to Jews (in Russo-Poland). A translation might be, *You cannot just continue to blame us (the Jews)! And, if Jews must be blamed for something, HERE is something that will really cause a Ripple.*

### WHO WAS AARON KOSMINSKI?

First, the surname. His Polish surname was Kościński—the "minski" from where the ancestors may have hailed, and Koś (pronounced "Kosh") was Polish for "blackbird" ...so, a surname ascribed to a Jewish family being forcibly resettled from Russian Minsk to the Polish city of Kłodawa in Aaron's historical past.

Aaron Mordke Kosminski was born September 11, 1865 in Russo/Poland, in Kłodawa. Golda nee Lubnowska was his mother, and of four older children. The father, Abram, disappeared from the family records. The Jewish cemetery of Kłodawa was destroyed in the manner of many Jewish properties and sacred places in Poland, so there is no evidence of whether Father Abram remained and died in the town.

About 600 families lived in the Jewish section, a shtetl. The people were close-knit, fearful of the gentiles, accused of blood libels, their homes plundered for hidden gold or jewels, and subjected to murderous attacks and

pogroms. There were fears, insults, beatings, hunger, anxieties, thefts, and unstable years of resettlement and theft of property. What must it have cost the Jewish psyche?

Aaron would have studied, written, and read Hebrew, and been bar mitzvahed at 13. His family, like most, was strictly observant. At home and in the town, he would have spoken Yiddish. Thus, he was fluent in two languages, with a smattering of Polish. His brother, Isaac, had already moved to London, where he had opened a tailor shop in Whitechapel. While Golda raised Aaron, the older children worked.

In their small home, Aaron, as the youngest, would have had no end to the control of his mother and two sisters. There was no father to direct the boy if he reacted aggressively. On reaching puberty, Aaron would have had his brother and his rabbi, but no immediate paternal attention.

The family observed the weekly Sabbath. Aaron would have helped his mother in the ritual slaughter of a chicken for the pot. He would have ritually washed himself, before and after. A smooth, strong-bladed knife, approved by the rabbi, would have been used to cut the chicken's throat, swiftly, from left to right. All fat would be removed before it was salted and drained entirely of its blood. Aaron recited prayers for this weekend ritual.

In 1881, Tsar Alexander II was assassinated by Russia revolutionaries. The consequence was, yet again, pogroms, including one in Warsaw, Poland. Masses of Jewish émigrés fled to England, and specifically to where financial sponsors lived and worked...in London's East End.

Within a year, the Kosminski family departed Kłodawa. Aaron accompanied his brother and two sisters. They left behind their mother, Golda, who joined up with them later, once they were situated with Isaac. Aaron was age 17, eight years younger than his siblings. They would have traveled by wagon to the rail transport for northern Germany, and then boarded a steamer to London.

### ARRIVAL IN WHITECHAPEL

The Kosminskis had been poor in Poland, and they remained poor in Whitechapel—but in England, their children could become educated and prosperous citizens. Naturalization was not a difficult prospect with fluency in the English language and financial wherewithal.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was inevitable that the exodus from Eastern Europe would include damaged individuals. It was so much a concern that in 1880 statistics were compiled as to Jewish psychoses, but which corroborated a growing legitimization of anti-Semitism (a word coined in 1879 by the German agitator, Wilhelm Marr).

From the varied accounts of Aaron Kosminski's life in London, he was a mental case, worked intermittently, he was a beggar, or a barber, or a butcher, or that he ate from off the street, and so on. Neighboring Jews were said to be familiar with his manner and his habits.

### LIFE IN WHITECHAPEL

Aaron's family set to work in a tailoring business. They also Anglicized their names.

With no written records of his employment, it is not an improbable inference that Aaron was an itinerant workman in Whitechapel, and most particularly, in the adjoining Spitalfields' kosher butchers. In the police reports, it was said that he worked in Butcher's Row. He would have become stronger with the arduous work and on a better diet than he'd had in Poland.

He had a working knowledge of *shechita* slaughter of chickens from his home rituals in Poland. Aaron would have worked the night shift, in the hours when animals were killed before the morning stalls opened for business. There was no refrigeration yet.

In the butcher's kill room, Aaron would use the prescribed smooth-bladed knife, swiftly, causing painless death to the poultry. He knew to sever the frontal structures, but not the limbs. He would have known that if the animal were defective that it should be discarded. The washed chicken would be stuck into a funnel, to let its blood drain. Aaron would know how to proceed with the ritual dissection of the organs. Just as quickly, Aaron would move on to the next chicken. By this point, he would have become inured to the chicken-killing.

No doubt, a ritual inspector was on site, perhaps one who owned the butcher's. He likely retired for the night once Aaron set to washing and eviscerating the chickens.

As he walked home at night, he may have worn his leather apron and washed in the public water pumps along the way. Aaron would have been bearded in the tradition and also worn a cap. His Yiddish accent would have been apparent.

England had social and charity centers in Whitechapel, where Jewish immigrants would learn the language and become proper English Jews. Into his adulthood, Aaron would have there learned to read and

write some English. Why “Juwes” in the graffito? In England, the spelling may have been “Jews,” but they were the sons of Judah and so “Ju.”. The Brits as yet often referred to the Jewish people as Hebrews or Israelites.

All was not without serendipity in Whitechapel. In 1880, Charles Fox published a celebrated version of *Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. Sweeney Todd was dedicated to slitting the throats of the upper class, and, inspired by utilitarian – or perhaps Russian revolutionary theories-- his female assistant converted the victims to tasty meat pies for the poor. He wasn't a real person, but in Aaron Kosminski's time, *Sweeney Todd* was performed to enthusiastic audiences again and again.

In 1888, inspired by the Ripper murders, author Benjamin Farjeon, himself an immigrant Jewish resident of Whitechapel, produced his version, *Devlin the Barber*. The legend of the throat-cutting barbers played on in musical ditties and penny dreadfuls or shilling shockers.

These diversions were not in the Canonical milieu. Though Holmes was not averse to seedy venues, e.g., *The Man With the Twisted Lip*. (1891), his sleuthing, more often than not, involved the aristocracy, or high-functioning master criminals.

### THE WOMEN AND THE MURDERS

The women slain by Jack the Ripper were prostitutes, i.e., poor and bereft of financial support. The crimes were intentional and methodically planned. He left no clues and he evaded capture.

The details were that in the year 1888, five prostitutes were murdered in the night, between Aug. 31 and Nov. 9, 1888, in the untypical quiet of London's overcrowded immigrant district. The women died while working, on the street, except for the last, who was slaughtered in her lodgings, without uttering a sound.

1. The Weekend Murders occurred before or after the Sabbath and the Jewish High Holidays.
2. The Sabbath (*shabbos*) – Friday dusk to Saturday dusk.
3. The Jewish High Holidays in 1888 were Thursday, Sept. 6 -- Rosh Hashanah day 1; Friday Sept. 7-- Rosh Hashanah day 2; Saturday, Sept. 15, Yom Kippur.

Two women died proximate to the High Holidays. Three died before or after observance of the weekend *shabbos*. From his mother in Poland, along the family's

route through Germany, and to the streets of Whitechapel, Aaron would have become familiar with those forbidden to him-- gentile girls who bore the disparaging Jewish term, *shiksehs*. Like some of the chickens, these women were also discardable.

**I. Mary Ann (Polly) Nichols**, discovered 3:40 a.m. Friday, Aug. 31. Aaron would have been walking home from work, before *shabbos*.

**II. Annie Chapman**, last heard at 5:30 a.m., Saturday, Sept. 8. Before morning *shabbos* service at the synagogue and the day after Rosh Hashanah.

There was no activity from September 8 until after September 15, Yom Kippur, the holiest day, when Jews gathered in the synagogue to ask forgiveness of sins.

### III and IV

Two on one day: **Liz Stride** 12:45 a.m. and **Catherine Eddowes**, about an hour later, at 1:45 a.m., Sunday, Sept. 30. Sunday was not a day of observance. Aaron would again have worked to prepare for the morning butcher business. He wouldn't have had time to wash after Liz Stride. He would have walked, covered in Stride's blood, as if he'd been returning from Spitalfields Butcher's Row, and moved on to Catherine Eddowes.

**V. Mary Jane Kelly**, last seen or heard in her lodgings, 2:30 a.m., Friday, Nov. 9 (before *shabbos*). Kosminski accompanied her to the room she rented.

The hours and dates indicate planning. They were in the hours when Jews were sleeping. Later, they would be preparing for the *shabbos* or High Holidays.

Aaron made himself available for nightwork, and it fit into his course of action... to kill defective women. He wasn't interested in men, who could struggle and beat him at his game. And, if the account of remnant semen on Catherine Eddowes' shawl is true, then he reached sexual gratification upon a corpse. Catherine Eddowes was murdered an hour after Liz Stride, and the purported DNA analysis would indicate that Kosminski moved swiftly to a second murder in order to finish with masturbation and climax atop Eddowes.

The bodies of the murdered women were mutilated with a bladed instrument.

With the victim quickly subdued, he cut her throat, from left to right. The knife was never found, but the effects upon the victims were markedly evident. Their

throats had been cut by a smooth, strong-bladed knife—perhaps a butcher’s knife.

In “*Silver Blaze*” (1892), which Watson reports took place in 1888, Holmes found in Straker’s pocket, an ivory-handled knife with a delicate, inflexible blade marked Weiss and Co. London. “...A very delicate blade devised for very delicate work.” Holmes surmised that Straker had first practiced upon the tendons of sheep before he attempted to slice the tendon of Silver Blaze.

Though Whitechapel was an overcrowded slum, Kosminski took his chances, as did the prostitutes, that there would be no officials to catch them. The darkness of the streets worked to the benefit of both streetwalker and perpetrator. Some witnesses stepped forward to describe the killer, but the identifications proved varied and ultimately without consequence.

None of the prostitutes was Jewish though there were Jewish prostitutes. According to Van Onselen, as well as Conan Doyle’s colleague and fellow spiritualist, William T. Stead, an anti-white-slavery campaigner, Jewish pimps controlled East End brothels and protected their women. Some women were trafficked to America. Joe Fox, Van Onselen’s Ripper suspect, may have found his prospects in this manner.

Jewish prostitutes awaited their customers indoors. The Ripper sought gentile women—vulnerable women, sodden drunk on street corners, and unable to recognize him. Nor did he have to worry about a protective pimp in the shadows.

The crimes were committed close to Kosminski’s home. Someone in the area of the murders had the ability to disappear though bloodstained. Thus, the killer lodged in proximity to the murders.

All the victims were killed within a mile of the Spitalfields market and slaughterhouses. Blood-soaked workers in their leather aprons were commonplace. They came through Whitechapel towards home, or to the public sinks, or the cesspools.

The fourth murder (Catherine Eddowes) was a ½ block from his home, and near Rabbi Hermann Adler’s Great Synagogue. Eddowes’ customer was thought to have been observed by three Jewish men, Joseph Lawende, Joseph Levy, and Isaac Schwartz.

The graffito about “the Juwes” was printed in chalk after Eddowes’ murder, above a wooden passageway near the murder. The chalk would have been used to mark prices at the butchers.

Significantly, every observant Jew is taught that God’s word be “inscribed on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” (Deuteronomy 6:9). Kosminski took the

time to write the admonishment as the purpose of his endeavors. A sacred duty was conducted in accordance with ritual.

The Ripper killed the women at their street assignments, except for the last one, Mary Jane Kelly. Again, Kosminski was presumably observed talking to Kelly. The witness said the suspect/customer lent Kelly his red kerchief. If that were so, it wasn’t found beside her remains.

They entered her shabby quarters providing him with cover for a more extensive kosher butchery. There, according to police accounts, Mary Jane Kelly was brutally mutilated, after her throat had been cut, her limbs bent and askew as that of a chicken being eviscerated frontally, and bled. The room was a pool of blood.

It is easy to conclude from Mary Kelly’s body that the Ripper was insane. According to the investigating police officer, she had been slaughtered like a pig—sliced and severed, and the tissues of the neck severed down to the bone.

He had planned those murders. He was scrupulous in avoiding capture or identification. He was methodical in the slaughter, and he was brutal.

### WHY KOSMINSKI?

In 1888, Chief Inspector Swanson conducted a lineup, routine during the Ripper investigation. Kosminski was a suspect among hundreds of others. He had been observed by a Jewish cigarette salesman, Joseph Lawende, who may have spotted him standing with Catherine Eddowes. Lawende was walking from a club with two friends, including butcher, Joseph Levy—who may have recognized Kosminski the butcher. Lawende (later “Lavender”) recalled that he was shabbily dressed, about 5’7”, and wore a peaked cap and red bandanna. He believed the man was Jewish. At the lineup, Kosminski was positively identified but released and placed under surveillance.

### DID THE JEWISH COMMUNITY SUSPECT?

Observant Jews did not read the newspapers during shabbos. They would have been unaware of the murders until Sunday. They could have presumed that only a degenerate, not unlike those in Russia and Poland who accused Jews of blood libel, would have desecrated their sacred time and space.

Would a rabbi, or a butcher, or the kosher inspector where Aaron worked have suspected? Perhaps. They

observed him, possibly at a distance and saw a pallid, strange, unmarried, orthodox loner. They may have known his family and felt both pity and loyalty.

### LIFE IN AN ASYLUM

Just like that, the murders ceased. There may have been other victims, but opinions about the killer remained mixed because of divergences in the manner of death or method. Ripperologist Martin Fido, in *The Crimes, Detection and Death of Jack the Ripper* (1987), searched through asylum records to explain the reason for why the murders stopped, but these only allowed for speculation. Though Kosminski was ultimately certified a lunatic, in 25 years of confinement in an asylum, he never divulged a single reported clue.

From December 1888 through mid 1891, there were infrequent confinements, or the family kept him indoors. In 1890, he appeared in court accused of walking an unmuzzled dog. He had been with the dog, alone, on the streets of Whitechapel, and a police officer arrested him. In court, his brother, Wolf, stepped up, presumably as guardian, and identified Aaron with an alias, the patronymic of “Aaron Abrahms”—his late father having been Abram Kosminski. The family, still strictly observant, could not pay Aaron’s assessed fine on a Saturday (“the Jewish Sunday”), but had to wait until the following Monday to do so. Walking with a dog indicated Aaron had found companionship, but a dog that needed to be muzzled was a sign of self-protection as well as a danger to the public. It is also not difficult to infer that the police still had him under observation.

The family then undoubtedly considered the danger Aaron still presented. He was again walking the streets. They would have been aware that the Ripper murders had stopped while he was kept indoors, away from butcher shops or workplaces. Were he to continue and were he caught, the family’s would itself be faced with insecurity from among its community.

A year later, in February 1891, the family, with Golda having arrived in London, prepared for Aaron Kosminski’s permanent confinement—doctor certifications, financial testimony, naturalization. The family obtained certification from a doctor that Aaron was a lunatic. In a courthouse today, had he been tried for the murders, he

would have been adjudged guilty but mentally ill and confined to a mental institution for his natural life.

Jacob Cohen, a relative with more fluency in English, gave the reasons for the family’s request. These included statements that Aaron was unemployed, dirty, unstable, self-abusing (i.e., masturbation), frightening, aggressive, and, worse, that he had threatened his sister with a knife. He had arrived with them at the asylum with his hands tied behind his back. They knew.

The family asserted that Aaron had not worked in years, perhaps exculpating him from his previous night-shift work at Butcher’s Row. They might also have guarded themselves against being financially responsible in affirming that the adult Aaron had no money and did not work. Golda signed the order for the permanent confinement of her youngest, changeling son. It marked the end of his Jewish ritual observance. It marked the end of his family’s distress for they never again were to visit him.

The first of two asylums was Colney Hatch. In 1894, he was transferred to the remote Leavesden Asylum in Hertfordshire, north of London. Both were stately institutions surrounded by woodlands.

Though the family said Aaron had become uncontrollable and aggressive, at the asylum, he was reported as indolent, of clean habits, dull, and incoherent. His Yiddish may have sounded thus to an English-speaking staff, and asylum use of opium and opiates to calm patients was widespread. As there were entries in the asylum reports that Aaron was at times aggressive and excitable, the staff must have readily relied on pharmacology to control him. Reports in the asylum records include Kosminski’s repeat masturbation, not an infrequent male habit. It is unfortunate that semen analysis did not arise until the early 1900s.

Discipline was strict, activities and some work was expected, and the coed residents were kept segregated. During his 25-year confinement, there was no mention of the police coming to question him, nor that Kosminski ever once mentioned the Ripper murders. He died in 1919 at the Leavesden Asylum, of unspecified causes, weight 96 lbs., age 54. The weight loss, at that age may have been attributable to cancer.

# THE WORLD OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: A FEW RED-HEADED TUNNELING CONSIDERATIONS

Alexander E. Braun

Throughout most of man's history, tunneling has been somewhat of a hit-or-miss matter. Building a tunnel based on empirical (i.e., learning from others' mistakes) experience usually worked well. The sewers of ancient Rome are a good example. The *Cloaca Maxima* is in good shape and has been in use since 600 B.C., as are many of the Roman bridges and roads.

Lacking the mathematics and information necessary to calculate materials' stress limits, Roman engineers tended to work by approximation—using past experience to approach a different task—and overbuild everything, which is why so many of their efforts have lasted so long.

That, of course, was not the case with John Clay (alias Vincent Spaulding) and his friend and accomplice Duncan "Archie" Ross—their time and resources were at a premium. So what kind of tunnel could these two have dug? Watson does not tell us much. All we know is that it started in the basement of Jabez Wilson's pawnshop and that between it and the bank was a street that was a much-traveled two-way artery.

There were no power tools back then, so the would-be robbers probably had to dig their tunnel much in the way those escaping from a prisoner of war camp did during World War II—with mattock and shovel.



For purposes of calculation, let us posit that the tunnel was five feet tall (1.5 meters), five feet wide and 120 feet (37 meters) long (possibly longer).

Although these dimensions at first glance may appear excessive, it must be considered that this was not a simple escape tunnel which had to be just large enough to allow a single person at a time to crawl through it.

It had to be sufficiently spacious to enable the two partners in crime to drag across several heavy bags of gold coins—having decided to leave the original boxes behind as each of the 20 full containers would have weighed well in excess of 180 pounds (82



kg)—hence the chisel and bags carried by Clay into the underground bank vault.

Dragging out the 30,000 gold Napoleons (≈\$9,000,000 today) across required a fairly sizable tunnel to enable the quick number of back-and-forth trips through it required to lug out the loot—over 2,800 pounds (1,300 kg) of it. It would have been impossible to do this within the

time they had by crawling in the dark on one's knees while dragging behind a heavy bag of gold.

The soil beneath the streets of London is composed of alluvial blue clay. The construction of our hypothetical tunnel would have required digging out some 32,000 pounds (14,500 kg) of clay, roughly about 16 tons. This presents a disposal problem. What do you do with the debris that results from the building of the tunnel? Piled up, would form a 3,000-cubic-feet (85 m<sup>3</sup>) cube, some 14 feet (4 meters) per side; hardly something that you can hide in a dark corner of the cellar behind a few old baskets, or flush down the sewer.

It must be assumed that until the Red-Headed League decoyed Wilson away from the premises, Clay would have been unable to do much serious digging during his "photographic" interludes. During this period, he was probably doing his sighting work and other calculations, to determine the precise

alignment and length of the tunnel that they had to dig.

So while the pawnbroker was out copying the *Encyclopædia*, over the following eight weeks between the two they would have had to dig (and dispose of) more than 700 pounds (318 kg) of dirt per day, to get the tunnel ready by the desired time.

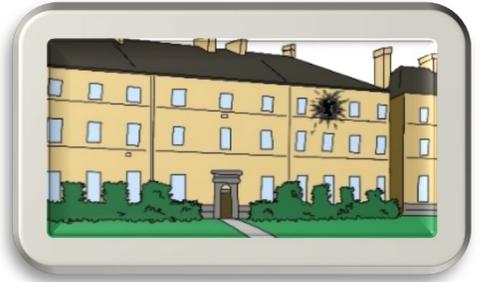
Added to this would have been the necessity of shoring the walls and ceiling as they worked, because a large part of it went under a very busy, two-lane street increasing the risk of collapse. This would have subtracted time from the digging effort, also requiring that the necessary shoring timbers be stealthily brought in.

It is easy to see why they had to get Wilson out of the building!



# Baker Street Elementary

Created by: Joe Fay, Rusty & Steve Mason



BAKER STREET ELEMENTARY  
NUMBER 442 - 02/12/2023

FAY, MASON & MASON

THE TEACHER WROTE  
SOMETHING INTERESTING ON  
MY SPELLING QUIZ...



THE FIRST ADVENTURES OF HOLMES AND WATSON

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"DID YOU ENCRYPT ALL YOUR  
SPELLING WORDS, OR DID  
YOU JUST NOT STUDY?"



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WELL AT LEAST SHE  
GAVE ME AN 'E' FOR  
'EFFORT'.



THAT'S AN 'F' !!

