

# JACK THE RIPPER. 2002 PDF EDITION

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Last Update: Tuesday, November 14, 2006. Approx. 30,000 words.

ISBN 0 9578625 4 7

ABN 56668295728

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This author, who has written about Francis Thompson, grants his readers an imaginary summary of things as if written by his suspect.

*'Black it is to describe this species, thus I shall begin with light. My own perspective on life has caused me to accept certain principles. Some of them have found favour due to their assistance when trying to solve problems. One that has proved useful is the knowledge that we can only see by the eye what the mind can bear to feel. Unless there are beings, such as I, to witness light, as motes of dust do, suspended in the still air of a sanctuary, even the rays of the blessed sun are made black. So too may light be flashed back from a void. For the ability to perceive what is gross illuminates what is dark and through illumination makes what is small and dull into beings both monstrous and radiant. Yet I tell you, those that have read on, that whatever has followed, although based on myself, has been 'ghost written' by a mediocre poet who to me is not unlike a particle isolated and alone in a distant place and far off time. He is a man of little or no originality and of finite personality he speaks of me only because fear has bent him to his knees, not all the perfumes of all the world can remove his stench of fear. Prick his words and they will lie bleeding. So what if there is a little blood? It been many years now since this world has been born through me and my day has come and, pity for us all, I must die. Let my tears be his blackest ink and as I attempted to write in the blood of my five sisters, allow his fingers on the keys to impress upon you what I think. It is for this reason that I Francis Thompson have become breathless and to the author re-sign my breath. It is he who tries to grapple my crown of death for he knows that his success is all my power, but knowing this and despite knowing this, he shall speak for me and make his confession as he wears my life as one would a shroud of white.'*

## INTRODUCTION

What if after his murders Jack the Ripper mingled with the highest circles in British society, influencing the likes of Robert Browning, Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw, and D.H. Lawrence? This book explains how the British Poet Francis Joseph Thompson was the culprit responsible for the terrible murders, in 1888, of at least five women prostitutes in London's East End.

This book tells of Thompson's violent childhood, his doomed medical school training, growing fascination with murder and his downward drug induced spiral into vagrancy. Thompson's life and verse is given including Thompson's secret affair with a prostitute and its tragic ending bringing him to a frenzied delirium. Here is recorded the events of the Whitechapel the murders and its sinister parallels to Thompson.

Who was the Ripper? What was his motive? How did he get away with murder? If never caught what horrific avenue did he take? This book promises to give readers an insight into the diabolical mind and ghastly purpose of the world's first and most feared serial killer.

This books explains that the British poet, Francis Joseph Thompson, was Jack the Ripper and that in the autumn of 1888 he hunted down and killed at least five women in London's Whitechapel district. This book will show that Thompson like the Ripper, held a hatred of prostitutes, and had the motive and ability to kill in the East End. Thompson had the same skills possessed by the Ripper, the ability to handle a surgeon's type knife, and working knowledge of anatomy. There are hundreds of suspects for the elusive Ripper. These names include doctors, poets, royalty, shoemakers, butchers, and religionists. People named are Algernon Charles Swinburn, Alios Szemeredy, Prince Albert Victor Clarence, Dr. William Evans Thomas, Dr. Frances Tumblety, Dr. Penchenko, Dr. William Wynn Westcott, Edward McKenna, W. C. Grainger, James Kenneth Stephen, Michael Ostrog, John Druitt Montague, Nicolai Wassili Ukraine, Olga Tchkersoff, Robert Donston Stephenson, Manuel Cruz Xavier. Police officials investigating the case also suspected any of eight socialists, eleven sailors, eleven Asians, eleven gypsies, twelve cowboys, seventy-six slaughtermen, eighty people detained in watch-houses for questioning, a furthur three-hundred people that were followed, two-thousand known lodgers, or the reader of eighty-thousand leaflets that were distributed.

In the year 1913, two seemingly unrelated volumes were published. The thriller *The Lodger* and the anthology the *Works of Francis Thompson*. *The Lodger* was the first novelisation of the infamous Jack the Ripper Murders, to have worldwide success. The suspect in *The Lodger*, written by Marie Belloc Lowndes, was a religious maniac believing he is predestined to kill prostitutes. In her novel, an inquest is held to determine the identity of the killer. During the inquest a surprise eyewitness, named Mr. Cannot, gave the following description the suspect: 'He was a grim, gaunt man, was this stranger, Mr. Coroner with a very odd-looking face, I should say an educated man in common parlance, a gentleman. What drew my special attention to him was that he was talking aloud to himself- in fact he seemed to be repeating poetry.' The brother of Mrs. Lowndes was the writer Hilaire Belloc who was close friend and neighbour of Wilfrid Meynell. It was Mr. Meynell who as well as publishing Hilaire Belloc's poetry produced the *Works of Francis Thompson*. Posthumously released in three volumes of green cloth and gold gilt the *Works of Francis Thompson* were what Viola Meynell, Wilfrid's daughter, would come to call: 'The bringing into existence of the complete counterpart of the man, the body of his mind made whole and perfect.' Francis Thompson was born in 1859. Upon his death in 1907 the *London Times* wrote: 'Thompson...the poet, entirely free from timidity in matters of poetic form, relied not on chastity or perfection of detail, but on the perfervid rush of his genius. Here was a large utterance - large in bulk, speed, in a lavish disregard for economy, and yet, what could not for a moment be mistaken was that the poetry was once great and sincere.'

Francis Thompson's life and poetry has remained obscure. What fleeting fame Thompson had is now mostly regulated into a footnote or anecdote. Typical of current views on Thompson is that of John Heath –Stubbs, who in his book *The Darkling Plain* Stubbs provided criticism and a possible reason for Thompson's obscurity in terms of his verse: 'His affectation of the baroque [elaborate] is mainly an archaic [old] mannerism. Thompson's undisciplined flamboyance in the choice of words and his fondness for complicated, unnatural rhymes may be symptoms induced by his addiction to opium...The whole is almost devoid of meaning... Thompson appears to have been a weak and feckless creature. I am not forgetting Thompson's sufferings. He knew the depths of destitution in the streets of London....But this is sheer sentimentality – an insult in fact to his real sufferings. He was a remarkable and unlikely phenomenon but serious criticism cannot for a moment contend that he is a good poet.' The third volume of Thompson's works titled *Prose* explains his affection for the older style in his critique on the Elizabethan playwright Ben Jonson: 'One striking feature is its modernity. It is more modern than Shakespeare's prose there are many sentences which, with the alteration or so, the substitution of a modern for an archaic inflection would pass for very good and pure modern prose.' Another writer that Thompson noted in his essay, on Ben Jonson, was Samuel Johnson. Francis Thompson gave a simple reason for writing on both Johnsons: 'We have often thought there was a measure of affinity between the two Johnsons- Ben and Sam. Their surnames are the same save in spelling; both have a scriptural Christian name...Both were notably combative.' The English Catholic poet Francis Thompson is known chiefly for his 1888 poem, *The Hound of Heaven*, and his much longer 1895 work, *Sister Songs*. In 1888, Thompson had trained as a surgeon for six years and failed in his attempt for the priesthood. He was living in the West India docks, a homeless man, for three years, with an addiction to opium that had been constant the past decade. Thompson was suicidal, prone to deliriums, and in possession of a dissecting scalpel, and was seeking out a prostitute for whom he had a fancy. The prostitute, upon meeting Thompson, vanished.

The British writer Osbert Sitwell in 1929 wrote in part of his preface for the book on 19<sup>th</sup> century enigmas, *The Sober Truth*, of the crimes of Burke and Hare. These were two Edinburgh criminals who began their careers as body snatchers stealing corpses from cemeteries to sell to surgeons. By 1828, the pair had progressed to murder in pursuit for fresh cadavers. As well as Burke and Hare, Sitwell highlighted the Whitechapel murderer Jack the Ripper in his summary of the age: 'What a romantic epoch that is that unfolds itself! The world could not be changed, as each generation trusted it would be, by a few years of gaslight and steam-engines or telegraph and electric-light...The same age that misunderstood and persecuted Shelly, produced him. The same age that introduced child-labour on large into factories gave birth to Dickens. A thousand false messiahs born into this arid, sure, and religious century. The same period which was the first, perhaps, to organize an efficient police and detective force saw towards its opening Burke and Hare, and towards its close, watched the noiseless and remorseless operations of Jack the Ripper...That series of anonymous and sequent murders that is the most frightening in the annals of English crime. Indeed as this dim, jaunty figure of vengeance slinks down the crooked, rat-ridden alleys, through the beautiful courts of older London, his murders seem to transcend crime and to attend by some of the monstrous and diabolic. But both these series of icy-hearted, calculating slaughters could have only occurred in the nineteenth century, in an age given to the growing worship of science; for with Burke and Hare the murders were committed in order to gain money by supplying the medical market with enough fresh corpses for dissection, while Jack the Ripper displayed an anatomical knowledge that could not have gained in any other epoch. This fact, indeed, while it narrows down the field for inquiry only makes the figure of the murderer more mysterious. Did he belong to the professional classes, this terrible, quiet monster; was he a doctor, a medical student, or a student of a veterinary college, and, if so, for what purpose did he write the horrifying letters?'

*An Anthem of Earth* by Francis Thompson:

*'Science, old noser in its prideful straw,*  
*That with anatomizing scalpel tents [rips]*  
*Its three-inch of thy skin, and brags 'All's bare' -...*  
  
*All which I am; that am a foreigner*  
*In mine own region? Who the chart shall draw*  
*Of the strange courts and vaulty labyrinths [maze]*  
  
*The spacious tenements and wide pleasancess,*  
*Innumerable corridors far-withdrawn,*

*Wherin I wander darkling, of myself?*  
*Darkling I wander, nor dare explore*  
*The long arcane of those dim catacombs, [graves]*  
*Where the rat memory does its burrows make,...*  
*Tarry awhile lean Earth, for thou shalt drink,*  
*Even till thy dull throat sicken,*  
*The draught thou grow'st most fat on; hear'st thou not*  
*The worlds knives bickering in their sheaths? O patience!*  
*Much offal of a foul world comes thy way*  
*And man's superfluous cloud shall soon be laid*  
*In a little blood...'*

London Assistant Chief Constable of Scotland Yard, Sir Melville Mac Naughten, wrote in his *Days of My Years*: 'Suffice it at present to say that the Whitechapel murderer committed five murders and -to give the devil his due - no more. These being Nichols, Chapman, Stride, Eddowes, and Kelly.' Francis Thompson wrote, in his essay *Coleridge*, of an earlier English poet and the sacrifices made for fame: 'He did influence my development more than any other poet...necromancy is performed, so to speak...There remain of him his poems...striving to the last to fish up gigantic projects...over the wreck of that most piteous and terrible figure of the all five star of his glorious youth; those poor five resplendent poems, for which he paid the devil's price of desolate life and unthinkably blasted powers.'

Dr. Robert Anderson was appointed Assistant Commissioner to the CID on August 31 1888. In 1901 Anderson wrote in *The Nineteenth Century*, Of the Ripper's obsession: 'These crimes were a cause of danger to a particular section of a small and definite class of women, in a limited district in the East End. And that the inhabitants of the metropolis generally, were just as secure during the weeks the fiend was on the prowl as they were before the mania seized him, or after he had been safely caged in an asylum.' The five prescribed East End murders began on August 31 1888, with the slaying of Mary Ann Nichols. This was while the police were distracted with a nearby Warehouse fire at the West India Docks. The wanted man, first dubbed the 'Leather Apron,' struck again on September 8, at the rear of the home of Mrs. A Richardson, with the killing of Annie Chapman. On September 30 the Ripper committed the double murders of Elizabeth Stride and Catharine Eddowes. On Lord Mayor's day November 9 1888, Mary Kelly was killed. The *Star*, newspaper observed that the Ripper: 'clearly displayed the skill of a doctor or slaughtermen.'

Upon the Ripper crimes Osbert Sitwell wrote: 'By now all three murders were recognized as the work of one man- a criminal of a very different stamp from the ordinary Whitechapel rough. During that year there happened to be an extraordinary outbreak of crime, and the first two murders passed almost unnoticed among the many that were daily reported in the press. But the uniformity in the details of these tragedies could not fail to attract attention. One account would do for them all. The victim was a middle age woman, widowed or separated from her husband, barely subsisting on her earning as a prostitute. On the night of the crime, she was drunk and penniless. The murderer was a stranger to her until a few minutes before he seized and killed her noiselessly, within earshot of at least half a dozen people. Then careless of detection, he proceeded to mutilate her body.' In 1623 the right of sanctuary was abolished. This right gave protection of outlaws from arrest if they had sought refuge in sanctified ground. In the East End of London St. Mary's, Matefelon, later renamed Whitechapel, for its tower painted in whitewash had been a sanctuary for six centuries. The origins of the name Matefelon are obscure. Historians such as John Stowe's survey of Westminster tell is that in 1428 during the time of Henry VI a parish widow in Whitechapel was murdered while she slept. The felon fled with her jewels and was pursued to the Church of St. George in Southwark where he claimed the right of sanctuary, but the constables ignored his right and brought him back to the city of London. As he was being brought back the women of Whitechapel flung the filth of the street upon him. Hence St. Mary's was given the latter name of Matefelon for soiled felon. However an even earlier account of 1336 has the Whitechapel church as named Mary Matefelon. Some believe the term derives from either the Hebrew or Syrian and means 'She who has born a son.' Others think Matefelon means the place where cattle are killed. As felon means boils in old English it is thought Matefelon could mean a place were boils were cured. Some think Matefelon means a place were felons were scared as 'mate' is old English for scared.. In

old English mater meant macerate. Matefelon is also old French for adder's tongue. Matefelon may have been derived from the Arabic word Mutawaladtun. Although the date that St Mary's church was built is uncertain it is recorded to have existed by 1286 and was probably not built until 1250. It stood until 1875. In 1362, a storm left the church in ruins. The pope of the time granted time off in a year's penance if the sinner visited the church and made an offering on the seven feast days. Money offerings helped restore the church. By the 1780's, St. Mary's had been brought to ruin and regulated to a farmhouse. In 1840 to provide transportation, Whitechapel High Street was built; bisecting St. Mary's. In 1888, Whitechapel consisted of thousands of buildings two or three storied high in rows upon rows. Many building were tenements, backing them were hundreds of large four to six story factories or warehouses. These buildings were in a confusing maze of thin side streets with narrow footpath, all clustered at juncture of Commercial Road and Whitechapel High Street. Most of the smaller streets have road six yards wide, made by bricks encased in dirt and strewn with rubbish. The footpaths rise two inches from the curb and are three yards wide. On the footpath in intervals are metal grates besides small locked wooden doors used to deposit coal. The walls flanking the streets have narrow windows and are often three to four stories. Projecting about three feet from the walls at a height of ten feet are gas lamps for lighting open doorways. It was this area in the autumn of 1888 the Ripper killed five women prostitutes. All were slain within a quarter square mile of each other. Henry Moore was promoted to Inspector of the Metropolitan Police Force in 1878 by 1888 Moore was Inspector for the Whitechapel Murders Investigation. In 1905 Moore was interviewed by reporter Henry Cox from America's *Thompson's Weekly News* in which Moore told: 'In nearly every case the murders were committed on the actual spot where the bodies were found, or very close to it...This, as I say, seems to point to the murderer having a system,...The murderer never shifted his ground.'

Francis Joseph Thompson entered the dictionary in 1913 when the British novelist Thomas Hardy wrote: 'You may be sure I am a Thompsonian.' Near the end of 1888 Wilfrid Meynell, an editor of a magazine named the *Merry England*, rescued the poet from destitution on the streets of London. Wilfrid's son, Everard Meynell was a child when he was first introduced to Thompson. Everard would grow up to write a biography on the English poet; publishing his *The Life of Francis Thompson*, in 1913. Within Everard's book is Thompson's praises of Hardy's work: 'I remember him to have often spoken with particular admiration- that in which Sergeant Troy thralls a woman by sword-play and the swinging of his flashing steel round and round her person.' The scene noted comes from Hardy's novel *Far From a Maddening Crowd* and in part reads: 'the next thing of which she was conscious was that the point and the blade of the sword were darting with a gleam towards her left side, just above the hip; then of their reappearance on her right side, emerging as it were from between her ribs, having apparently passed through her body. All was as quick as electricity. "Oh!" she cried with a fright, pressing her hand to her side. "Have you run me through? -- no you have not! Whatever have you done!" "I have not touched you." said Troy, quietly. "it was mere slight of hand..." "Is the sword very sharp?" "O no-- only stand as still as a statue..." "That outer loose lock of hair wants tidying, he said, before she had moved or spoken. "Wait: I'll do it for you...It appeared that a caterpillar had come from the fern and chosen the front of her bodice as his resting place. She saw the point glistening towards her bosom, and seemingly enter it.'

Previous to the Ripper's murderous exploits on the spring bank holiday of April 6 1888, Emma Smith, of George St, Whitechapel, was murdered. Press reports gave that Emma spotted three men as she stood on a street corner, besides St Mary's Church. While Emma lay dying of peritonitis, she told that near the end of Osborn Street, Whitechapel, the men who stalked her raped her. The police questioned local gang members with no arrests being made. Four months later on the night of Easter Monday holiday of August 7 1888, George Street Whitechapel, was dimly lit by flickering gas lamps. As church bells rang eleven the streetlights went out. Cutting the gas supply, at eleven, was standard practice. It was almost pitch black when at 1:40 a.m., Elizabeth, and George Mahoney, arrived home fatigued. The couple lived at George Yard Buildings off George Street. Fireworks at night had added sparkle to an otherwise gray day of leaden skies heralding immanent rains. As Elizabeth and George passed the darkened first floor landing, they claim to have seen nobody there. Elizabeth left her hat and coat and went downstairs to purchase supper at a candle maker's store in nearby Thrawl Street. Elizabeth returned at 1:50 a.m., ascended the stairs and passed the landing, seeing nobody there. The Mahoneys ate supper and went to bed. At 2:00 a.m., Police Constable Thomas Barrett approached a Grenadier Guardsman, who was standing in nearby Wentworth Street, Whitechapel. The Grenadier, who was aged about twenty-four, and wearing a good conduct badge, told that he was waiting for a 'chum who had gone off with a girl' to return from George Yard Buildings. Constable Barrett hurried the man along, and continued on his beat. Meanwhile the Superintendent of George Yard Buildings, Francis Hewitt, was slumbering in bed with his wife. As the bells of nearby Spitafield's church struck 02:30 a.m., Mrs. Hewitt awoke briefly, to the call of 'Help Murder!' before returning to sleep. On the landing, twelve feet away, from the Superintendent's room, a woman was killed. Another resident of George Yard Buildings, whose room was next door to George Mahoney, was Alfred George Crow. At 3.30 a.m., Crow, arrived home from work and passed the landing, he saw a body, and dismissing it as a sleeping drunk, went to his room to sleep. At around 4:45 a.m., John Saunders Reeves, of number thirty-seven, George Yard Buildings, awoke. Reeves, who had slept ten hours straight and had heard nothing the night before, walked down the stairs to discover the corpse.

Dr. Timothy Robert Killeen performed an autopsy and told that the victim, who was thirty-nine, had been punctured, thirty nine times and two weapons had been used. The first from a dagger like implement able to penetrate her breastbone and the rest: 'apparently with a penknife.' The cause of death was due to blood loss. Police identified the body as that of Martha Tabram who was last seen alive at 11:45 p.m. Tabram who was also known as Mrs. White was last known to be living down the road, at 19 George Street. Tabram failing to pay her rent had become a homeless prostitute. Tabram was found naked from the waist down with her legs spread and raised. Although Dr. Killeen found no evidence of sexual penetration Constable Barret, who also viewed the body, would tell the inquest that 'her position was such as to at once suggest in my mind that recent intimacy had taken place.' The police of H Division had blamed the earlier, April 2, murder of Emma Smith, on neighborhood gangs. Various witnesses told of seeing Tabram with an army private. With sightseers crowding to gaze at the blood soaked flagstones where the body was found H Division now turned their attention to several soldiers from the Coldstream Guards. A line up was organized at the Tower of London, and no charges were laid. Francis Thompson's schoolboy military interests earned him the class honoree title of 'L'homme militaire', which meant 'Our Soldier'. Despite Thompson's academic achievements, he was whipped for absence from class. He had lost track of time, becoming entranced by a retired sergeant's confessions of the ordeals of the Indian Mutiny, in 1857, and the massacre of the British garrison, at Cawnpore. It was on July 30 1878, during the Russian-Turkish war, that the Russians attacked the Turkish town of Plevna. Thompson, then aged nineteen, was a keen follower of the battle. Using planks of wood and chairs Thompson built a replica of the beleaguered city and recreated the battle. Thompson joined the army in 1885. The poet signed up in Manchester, had his uniform fitted, and was discharged a month later for failing at drill. Investigating Inspector Walter Dew, who knew of the earlier murder of Emma Smith, wrote upon Martha Tabram's murder: 'Even the police had abandoned all hope of solving that mystery. Then came the first real evidence that Whitechapel was harbouring a devil in human form. Emma Smith had been murdered on Easter Holiday of the same year. A curious coincidence this. Does it mean that these two nights were deliberately chosen?'

### *Aerial View of Whitechapel, Looking West.*

*St Mary's Church is situated Upper Left.*

## MARY ANN NICHOLS

The 1888 Roman Catholic calendar shows that the August 31 murder of Mary Ann Nichols fell upon Saint Raymund's day. This martyr is the patron saint of Midwives, newborns, children, pregnancy, the falsely accused, and the innocent. One long held hypothesis as to a suspect for the Ripper murders began in 1939 when William Stewart published his *Jack the Ripper: A New Theory*, suggesting Mary, better known as Polly, or Pretty Polly, for her talent in singing, was killed by a midwife. The occupations believed by the police to be that of the Ripper's were the same as those protected under the Catholic Patron saints for the dates of the Ripper's next four victims. Thompson's poem *Memorat Memoria*, which is Latin for 'Memory Recalls the Past', gives these verses:

*'For ever the songs I sing are sad with the songs I never sing,*

*Sad are sung songs, but how more sad the songs we dare not sing!...*

*You have made a thing of innocence as shameful as a sin*

*I shall never feel a girl's soft arms without horror of the skin.*

*My child! What was it I sowed, that so ill should reap?*

*You have done this thing to me. And I, what I to you? - It lies with sleep.'*

Until the 18<sup>th</sup> century Buck's Row where Nichol's body was discovered was called Ducking Pond Lane so named for the pond the lane led to a pond used for the trial of witches and felons. By September 23, 1888 the inquest into the murder of Mary Ann Nichols was completed. The inquest had begun on Monday September 3, 1888 off Whitechapel Road in the library of the Whitechapel Working Lads Institute, then a building adjacent to Whitechapel Station.. The inquest was presided over by Coroner Wynne E. Baxter. The court was told that Nichol's was aged forty-five years old, and had been married to William Nichols who worked as a printer's machinist, for twenty two years. First the couple lived first at Bouverie Street then in Coburg Road off Old Kent Road, having five children. In 1880, Nichols began to drink heavily and they separated from William. Her husband kept custody of their children the youngest being two years old, and became a prostitute. From 1883 to 1887 Nichols lived on and off with another man named Thomas Stuart Drew. Her husband had last seen Nichols in 1886 for the funeral one of their sons who was burnt to death due to the explosion of a paraffin lamp. The last that William had heard from his wife was when she had written him a letter in Easter. Since 1883 and 1888 Nichol's had been an inmate of Edmonton, The City of London, Holborn, and Lambeth Workhouses. Nichols left Lambeth Workhouse on May 12 1888, to become a maid for a family living at Rose Hill Road, in Wandsworth, and on July 12 absconded with clothing worth over three pounds. A few days after this Nichols moved to her lodgings at Thrawl Street but sometimes also lived at 55 Flower and Dean Street. Called to give evidence was Dr. Llewellyn who reported of his autopsy of Nichols. The Doctor told that Nichol's had a slight laceration on the tongue, and a bruise along the lower right part of the jaw, while the left side of the jaw had a circular bruise. On the left side of neck, about one inch below jaw there was an incision about four inches long from immediately below the ear. Also on the left side of the neck an inch lower was a circular incision, which terminated at a point about three inches below the right jaw. This incision completely severed all the tissues down to the vertebrae and cut through the large vessels on both sides of the neck. The incision was about eight inches in length. Dr. Llewellyn thought that the cuts must have been caused by a long bladed knife that was moderately sharp. Also the abdomen was cut very extensively with a deep wound made in a jagged manner. The main injuries were from left to right as might have been done by a left-handed person. The summary of the doctor was that the assailant held his right hand over the woman's mouth. With his left hand, he made a sweep, across her neck, from left to right, slicing both carotid arteries, her windpipe, and into her spinal column. As the woman fell the murder laid her on her back, and keeping her skirt raised, with downward strokes, began cutting into her abdomen, ending the mutilation with a few jabs with the knife. Her stomach was cut in several places and wounds upon her abdomen were sufficient to cause death. It was the opinion of the police that Nichols had first been partially strangled from behind with a necktie. Nichols was last seen alive dining at the Frying Pan restaurant. Everard Meynell wrote in his *Life of Francis Thompson*: 'He would pretend to a certain acumen in the matter of dishes or of waitresses, adjusting his tie and his expression. But who can ever be deceived that there was anyone save a timorous defaulter in the matter of savoir-fair? Not certainly, an A.B.C girl or an observant tramp.'

The warehouse fire that the police had been diverted to on the night of the murder of Mary Ann Nichols was less than a mile away at the South and Spirit Quay. The blaze had begun on the top floor of a large five level building. Underneath were stored cases of brandy in a cellar of about 350 square meters and there were fears of an explosion. The police, most from Whitechapel's H division, held back crowds and prevented looting while the Fire Brigade and the Dock

police were called in to fight the blaze, not bringing the fire under control till midnight. In 1896, Thompson set fire to his London's lodgings. When asked why he did not rouse the landlady, who was also in the house at the time, Thompson quipped: 'A house on fire is no place for tarrying'. In 1897, Thompson moved into the Meynell's residence at Palace Court where he was asked for a book on London. In reply Thompson wrote he wished to dwell on the: 'Houseless wanderer sleeping in the streets' and 'Factory at Night' since I have in mind such a factory across Westminster...In the same section I should dwell on such a neighborhood as New Cut [an area now shortened to 'Cut' in Lambeth] ... And I intend to describe a night fire; and the effects of vistas of lamps in such a neighborhood as Pall Mall, Locality you see is unimportant. It is effect I wish to dwell on; the character of horror, somberness and suggestiveness of, London because I have seen it most peculiarly under those aspects.'

Thompson was born in the family home at number-seven Winckley Street, Preston, Lancashire, on Sunday December 18 1859. His father acted as the midwife. Thompson's parents were recent Catholic converts and their home was a gathering place for the local clergy. Dr. Charles Thompson, at the age of thirty-six, was a homeopath and lay healer; baptizing dying infants. Before setting up practice at the rear of his house the doctor began his career in Bristol and became the house surgeon for the Homeopathic Dispensary in Manchester. Dr. Thompson was seen as affordable and hardworking while poetry, and literature, held little interest for him; unlike his four brothers. The surgeon John Costall Thompson was esteemed for his poem *A Vision of Liberty*. Reverend Henry Thompson published his sermon, *The New Birth by Water and Spirit*, in 1850. Edward Healy Thompson, was professor of English Literature at Dublin University, and sonnet writer. James Thompson was a biographer on his nephew Francis and died fighting in the Boar war before he could publish his work. The poet's mother, Mary Morton Thompson, converted to the Roman Catholic faith when she was thirty-two. After failing in her attempt to become a nun, Mary became engaged to a fellow Catholic. In response to this Mary's Protestant family disowned her. Soon after Mary's fiancée died and she then spent time as a governess before meeting and marrying Dr. Thompson. The surname of Thompson originates from the Aramaic, and means 'a twin'. After her first son lived a day at the age of thirty-seven Mary gave birth to a second and only son named after Saint Francis of Assisi. This Italian saint was the first person to manifest the wounds known as stigmata. This was spontaneous bleeding from locations corresponding with the five wounds of the crucified Christ. The constant pain took two years to kill him. One day Thompson would grow up to write in an essay of his namesake: 'the pain of his stigmata was agonising, but was accompanied by a sweetness so intense as made it ecstatic to him...Pain may be made the instrument of joy.'

As he once did in Preston, in 1857, Dr. Charles Thompson, in 1864, re-opened his homeopathic surgery from the Thompson residence in Stamford Street, of Manchester's Ashton. In 1868 when Thompson was almost nine years of age, and living in Ashton-under-Lyne, an anti-Catholic agitator named William Murphy arrived. He began a series of fiery speeches expounding his hatred for Catholicism. Murphy appealed for the Protestant crowd to riot against the Catholics. A large mob descended upon the two small churches of St. Mary and St. Anne. The interior of St. Anne was destroyed. The crowd then attempted to storm St. Mary while the parishioners, who included the Thompson family, mounted a guard inside. The rioters attacked with bottles and stones. Shots were fired and the Riot Act was read. After three days of continual fighting, the army was called in. By the end, of the rioting, the church of St. Anne's school, and presbytery were broken into. They contained altars, paintings, and statues, which were incinerated. A further 111 houses of the Catholic congregation were gutted. For a month, the entire clergy was obliged to leave town. It was in this year that Thompson would first read the 'Apocalypse'. Francis Thompson wrote of it as: 'An appalling dream; insurgent darkness, with wild lights flashing through it...on the earth hurrying to and fro, like insects at a sudden candle...Such is the Apocalypse as it inscribes itself on the verges of my childhood memories.' Everard wrote upon Francis Thompson: 'fires he always haunted, and his clothes were burnt on sundry occasions, as they were before the class-room fire.' The school, which was chosen, for young Francis, was in the northern county of Durham. It was a Seminary College, which prepared novice priests to take Holy Orders. At his first day of school his fellow students, to initiate Thompson, had him whipped. It was while Thompson was at the seminary that he was disciplined for an attempted arson attack. Refusing to wear the proscribed church robes and demanding that he be allowed to wear one of purple, instead of regulation black, Francis responded to the priest's rebuttal by stealing the church lighters job. The protest, in which he threatened to burn the church, proved a failure. In 1871 Francis tried again. Acting as an altar boy in St. Mary's Church, at the age of twelve, Francis, unexpectedly, seized another boy's thurible. Which is the device, on a chain, used to hold burning frankincense. Francis spun the thurible around, over his head, causing the charcoal embers to be scattered. He had previously unhinged the lid. In 1872, when Francis was aged thirteen, his writing ability was described, by his English master as: 'the best production from a lad his age I have ever seen in this seminary.' When Francis first entered the seminary, in 1870, the report of his studies told that: 'Frank gives the greatest satisfaction in every way.' While at the seminary Francis won 16 of 21 exam finals. In July 1877, as Francis entered his adult years, and his fellow scholars took their Holy Orders for a life in the priesthood, his parents received another report from the school. The letter was from the president of the college who wrote to Dr. Charles Thompson telling him: 'With regard to Frank...I have been most reluctantly compelled to concur in the opinion of his director and others that it is not the holy will of God that he should go on for the priesthood...he has the ability to succeed in any career.'

In 1878, Francis Thompson returned to his Stamford Street home and Dr. Charles Thompson chose that Francis should become a surgeon. In the same month as his return, Francis sat for his entrance examinations into the Owens Medical College, Manchester. He was accepted gaining honors in Greek and Latin with poor marks in mathematics and science. Francis was told to attend college come the end of the summer break. Inside the main hall of the infirmary, patients were taxied in and out. There was a huge bell that tolled for surgeons to give medical aid. When not operating staff and students would sit to chat around a continual fire. The wooden tables, on which patients lay, had leather straps for binding those who struggled. At home Mary Thompson's brother did little to commend himself for family responsibility. Bringing Mary to tell that: 'he required looking after almost like a child, though he was the eldest in the family.' Francis' sister wrote of childhood with her brother: 'we did not have any friends apart from the priests of four or five who would gather to dine and pass the evening...In our play-room he used to get Maggie and me to join him in mimic sieges...he could get into a temper when roused.' In the autumn of 1878, Francis entered his name on the Manchester Royal Infirmary registrar. Lectures and practical experience divided studies. A high physical endurance was vital for the grueling workload. From the first semester the study of anatomy, with dissection classes, was a major course requirement. In 1879, after falling ill with a lung infection, Francis was medicated with laudanum, being wine mixed with opium. To occupy his mind his mother gave him Thomas De' Quincey's, 1821 work, *Confessions of an Opium Eater*. Thompson would come to think of his relation to the dead writer as: 'that of a younger brother to an elder brother.' De' Quincey was born in Manchester and died in 1859, the year of Thompson's birth. De' Quincey became a vagrant in London where he fell in love with a prostitute called Ann. Thompson, in June of 1879, sat and failed the Oxford Local Examinations, in London. On December 19, 1880, after suffering a complaint of the liver, Mary Morton Thompson, Francis' mother died. Mary was aged fifty-eight. It was the day after Francis Thompson's twenty-first birthday. It was sometime in 1882 that James Thompson, uncle to Francis, told that his nephew suffered a mental and physical breakdown. The Owen's College register shows that from May 1882 Thompson was absent from the start of the summer session.

UNPUBLISHED. F. Thompson:

*'Died; and horribly*

*Saw the mystery*

*Saw the grime of it...*

*Saw the sear of it,*

*Saw the fear of it,*

*Saw the slime of it,*

*Saw it whole!*

*Son of the womb of her,*

*Loved till the doom of her'*

Near the end of 1882, Francis Thompson went to the city of Glasgow for his second attempt at the medical finals. Thompson failed the exam again and compensated his poor marks in theory with long hours and a scalpel in the college's mortuary. A medical pastime which brought his sister, Mary, to remark: 'Many a time he asked my father for 3 pounds or 4 pounds for dissecting fees so often that my father remarked what a number of corpses he was cutting up.' In the *People* in 1912 Whitechapel murder investigator Sir Robert Anderson related: 'One thing is certain, namely, the elusive assassin whoever he was, possessed anatomical knowledge. This, therefore, leads one pretty surely to the conclusion that he was a medical man, or one who had formerly been a medical student.' In 1883, after being informed of his son's medical school failure, Dr. Thompson found him a position at a local medical instrument factory. Thompson managed a fortnight's work before being dismissed. In 1885, Francis Thompson's father accused his son of drunkenness. Francis, knowing that the cause of his flushed appearance was opium, denied the accusation. His father then accused him of stealing laudanum from his supply of medicine. It was on the night of November 9 1885, three years ago from the day of the murder of Mary Kelly, that Thompson, leaving only a note, fled his father's Manchester house. All his previous attempts to find a publisher were kept from his parents and all his submissions were either rejected or ignored. Of rail transport Thompson wrote: 'trains I hate as the gates of Hades.' Consequently Thompson walked the 189 miles to London.

Mary Ann Nichol's body was found in Bucks Row near the entrance to an abattoir. It faced London Hospital that stood less than 200 yards away. The police, who had previously held suspicions against East End gang members, or barrack soldiers, began to investigate slaughtermen. The police believed that the killer was able to disguise the bloodstains on their person possibly with a protective leather apron such as those worn by butchers. News of the death of Mary Ann Nichols was first reported in the 'Star', which was an evening paper. A small article was headlined: 'A Revolting Murder Another Woman Found Horribly Mutilated In Whitechapel Ghastly Crimes By A Maniac.' From the first murder the 'Star' believed the crimes were the work of a single villain relating the murders to the horror stories of Thomas De Quincey and Edgar Allen Poe: 'Have we a murderous maniac loose in East London? It looks as if we have. Nothing so appalling, so devilish, so inhuman - or, rather non-human - as the three Whitechapel crimes has ever happened outside the pages of Poe or De Quincey. The unraveled mystery of "The Whitechapel Murders" would make a page of detective romance as ghastly as "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." The hellish violence and malignity of the crime which we described yesterday resemble in almost every particular the two other deeds of darkness which preceded it. Rational motive there appears to be none. The murderer must be a Man Monster, and when Sir Charles [Warren, Police Commissioner] has done quarrelling with his detective service he will perhaps help the citizens of East London to catch him.' On Wednesday September 5 1888, the 'Star' newspaper reported: 'Leather Apron. The Only Name Linked with the Whitechapel Murders.' The article, by reporter Harry Dam, told that police were investigating a man named 'John Pozer' for the murders. The paper told that 'Pozer' was a 'thick-necked silent-moving Jew'. The East End has long been the first port of call for immigrants. In 1881, a Pogrom against Jews begun in Russia involving massacres of the Hebrew population caused 120,000 Jews to flee to England. In 1888 of the 60,000 Jews in the East End 16,000 had settled in Spitafields mainly employed in sweatshops for the clothing trade. The 'Star' continued. 'A Noiseless Midnight Terror. The Strange Character who Prowls About Whitechapel After Midnight - Universal Fear Among the Woman- Slipped Feet and Sharp Leather-knife. From all accounts he is five feet four or five inches in height and wears a dark, close-fitting cap. He is thickset, and his age being about 38 or 40. He has a small, black moustache. The distinguishing feature of his costume is a leather apron, which he always wears, and from which he gets his nickname. His expression is sinister, and seems to be full of terror for the women who describe it. His eyes are small and glittering. His lips are usually parted in a grin which is not only not reassuring, but excessively repellent.' Two women had come forward previous to the 'Star' suspect being reported. The women were residents of Crossingham's Lodging House, which is where Chapman had been staying the four months previous to her murder. One of the women was Elizabeth Allen the other was Eliza Cooper. The same Eliza Cooper who has given Chapman the black eye. The women tell the police that on Sunday September 2, in nearby Church Street they saw a man who they called 'Leather Apron' and asked him if he was the one wanted for the murderer of Mary Ann Nichols. The man responded by acting in a sinister manner and hurriedly walking away. Sergeant Thick of Whitechapel's H Division believed the women to be referring to a man his has known for fifteen years who is generally known as 'Leather Apron'. The 'Star' newspaper had their suspect's name as John Pozer and the sergeant's suspect was name was John Pizer, a Polish, Jewish shoemaker who specialized in ballet shoes. Pizer had been in and out of the police courts for minor violent crimes. On August 4, 1888, Pizer was charged with indecent assault before Thames Magistrates, but the case was dismissed. Before that in July 1887, Pizer, aged thirty-eight, had stabbed a rival shoemaker, James Willis, in the hand in a fight, and served six months imprisonment.

On September 6, 1888, The police placed wanted posters looking for the killer, of Mary Nichols, dubbed 'Leather Apron.' On September 10 1888, John Pizer was arrested in his home as 'Leather Apron'. The connection bandied about, between the name of 'John Pozer', reported in the *Star*, as his own had caused John Pizer to remain in his house since September 4. Pizer would be later released allowing him to sue for damages. Street beatings against Jews, suspected as the wanted 'Leather Apron', had begun The *East London Observer* remarked on the religious tension: 'On Saturday in several quarters of East London the crowd, who assembled in the streets began a very threatening attitude towards the Hebrew population. It was repeatedly asserted that no Englishman could have perpetrated such a horrible crime and it must have been done by a Jew.' Everard Meynell wrote in his biography of Thompson's sleeping habits, and society while homeless: 'The murderer to whom he makes several allusions...In a common lodging-house he met and had talk with the man who was supposed by the group about the fire to be a murderer uncaught. And when it was not in a common lodging-house. It was a Shelter or Refuge that he would lie in one of the oblong boxes without lids, containing a mattress and a leather apron or coverlet, that are the fashion, he says, in all Refuges.'

Mary Ann Nichols spent time as an inmate of Lambeth Workhouse on several occasions for extended periods from 1881 to 1887. It was a Lambeth Workhouse laundry mark on her clothing that led to Nichol's identification by Mary Ann Monk a fellow workhouse inmate. Sir Osbert Sitwell not only wrote on the Ripper but also on Francis Thompson. Sitwell gave time to mention in his introduction to the book *Collected Poems of W.H Davies* that: 'One cold and wet evening Davies was sitting on a broken wooden box near a large brazier in a Lambeth doss-house. In spite of the suffocating fumes it emitted he was reading by the glow of it, for there was no light. The general noise and rowdiness were insupportable, for it was a Saturday night, and everyone who could, or could not afford it had got drunk. In the whole room he was the only quiet man, except for a mysterious stranger who sat opposite and talked to nobody. He, too, was trying to read, and something in the look of him made Davies wonder who he was. Indeed, he would have liked to enter into conversation, but the man seemed wrapped in his book, or else in melancholy thoughts, and a sort of shyness and restraint came over Davies. Many years later, however, when he consented to take part in the reading by famous modern poets, he saw again, on the platform, the stranger of the Lambeth doss-house. It was Francis Thompson.'

## ANNIE CHAPMAN

In April of 1887, Dr. Charles Thompson married his second wife Anne Richardson. His son did not attend. On Sunday September 8 1888, at the rear of a Hanbury Street building, whose front sign read, 'Mrs.A.Richardson. Rough Packing Case Maker,' Annie Chapman was strangled and repeatedly stabbed to death. Chapman's body was discovered by John Davies, a Carman, who had just finished a cup of tea after being awoken by the bells of Spitafields Church chiming 4:45 a.m. Chapman was last sighted walking towards Spitafields Church at 1:50 a.m.. John alerted James Green, James Kent, and Henry John Holland and a police officer was sought. The body was brought to the Whitechapel mortuary and washed clean by two nurses before being examined by Dr. Phillips for clues. The results of Dr. Phillips post-mortem and all official records of the examination have vanished. Thus only contemporary press reports that Dr. Phillips, who examined Chapman's body, believed that: 'No mere slaughterer of animals could have carried out these operations it must have been some one accustomed to the post-mortem room.'

A witness heard at Chapman inquest was a friend of Amelia Palmer a friend of Chapman's. Palmer gave evidence of meeting Chapman on the September 3. Palmer noticed a bruise on the right temple of the Chapman, a woman commonly known as simply 'Dark Chapman'. Palmer asked "How did you get that"? In response Chapman, lifted her crape bonnet to allow Palmer a better view of the marks. Chapman then said, 'Yes. Look at my chest. You know the woman Eliza Cooper.' Chapman tells Palmer that she has had a row with Eliza, a hawkker who she has known for fifteen-years. About a week beforehand Chapman and Ted Stanley, a bricklayer's laborer, who lived at 1 Osborn Street, and claimed to be member of the 2<sup>nd</sup> brigade southern division militia, for the Essex regiment, had come into Crossingham's Lodging house. The house at 35 Dorset Street run by the Deputy Timothy Donovan is a few doors down from where the woman are standing and is where Chapman has lived, using bunk number 29. the past four months. While there, Chapman had seen Eliza switch a florin of Harry the Hawker's for a penny. Chapman told Harry she had seen Eliza do this. Harry took his florin back from Eliza and as a reward gave Chapman the halfpenny. The quarrel had begun when Chapman asked Eliza for a piece of her soap for Stanley to use to wash himself. When Eliza asked Chapman for the remainder of the soap to be returned. Chapman said, 'I will see you by and by.' The two women began squabbling at the Britannia pub at 87 Commercial Street on the corner with Dorset Street. Later in the kitchen of the Crossingham's tenements, Eliza asked again for the soap. Chapman tossed a halfpenny onto the table and said 'Go and get a halfpenny of soap.' They began fighting all the way to Ringers public house where Chapman slapped Eliza saying 'Think yourself lucky I did not do more.' Eliza then attacked Chapman hitting at her eye and chest. Palmer told that Chapman was dressed wearing a handkerchief under a piece of black woolen scarf tied in the front in a knot. On three fingers of her right hand were three brass rings. Palmer said she told Chapman she does not look well and she should take it easy. Chapman replied that if her sister sends her boots she will leave to go hop picking in the Kent.

Palmer first came to know Chapman when in 1886 she lived at 30 Dorset Street. At that time Chapman was living with a metal sieve maker who called himself Jack Sievey. Neighbours knew Chapman then as either Chapman Sievey or Siffey. The Chapman's history was heard by the court. Chapman was married to another man but they had separated since 1882. Her husband was John Chapman an army pensioner and coachman, they had married on May 1 1869. Together they had three children; Emily Ruth was born 1870 and died aged twelve of meningitis. Chapman Georgina was born in 1873 and after leaving for Europe with a performing circus troupe, she was placed in an institution in France. The youngest John was born deformed in 1881 and placed into a cripple's home. John, who was living in Windsor, sent an allowance to her of ten shillings each week to the Commercial Road post office enabling her to afford the room she shared with Jack at 35 Dorset Street. At the end of 1886, Chapman's allowance ceased to arrive. Chapman told Palmer that she was off to find out why the payments had stopped and returned in tears with the news that John Chapman had died of disease on Christmas day 1886 in Windsor. Chapman was unable to pay her part of the rent and Jack Sievey left her and shifted to Notting Hill. Chapman now had to cover all rental costs and even the money lent by relatives could not prevent Chapman's eviction. Chapman found cheaper shared lodgings nearby and paid for them with piecemeal work making matchboxes, tying artificial flowers, and doing crochet work. On Tuesday September 4 Chapman and Palmer spoke to each again after meeting each other re at the intersection of Church Street and Commercial Street, on the corner beside, Christchurch Spitafields. Palmer asked Chapman how she was Chapman said she felt no better and was planning to go into a workhouse casual ward for a day or two. Palmer told Chapman that she looked pale and asked if she has had anything to eat. Chapman said she has not even had a cup of tea. Palmer fished out two pence from her purse and gave it to Chapman. "Here is two-pence to have a cup of tea, but don't have rum", advised Palmer. At around two o'clock in the afternoon of Friday September 7, The last time Palmer saw Chapman was at the entrance to Crossingham's lodgings at number 35 Dorset Street. Palmer asked Chapman if she was still going hop picking. 'I feel too ill to do anything.' Chapman replied. Ten minutes later Palmer saw Chapman still standing on the side of the road. Palmer told Chapman. "You look God-awful". Chapman nodded and then said. "I've been taken queer". Palmer asked Chapman what she was going to do. Chapman then answered. "It's no good my giving way. I

must pull myself together and go out and get me money or I shall have no lodgings." Chapman told Palmer that she might go to see her sister in Vauxhall to borrow some money. On the last night of her life Chapman returned to Crossingham's, her spirits raised by the five pence presumably given by her sister. When Chapman entered Crossingham's she passed the night watchman John Evans; an elderly man nicknamed 'Brummy' by the tenants. Entering the kitchen Chapman sent a fellow lodger to get a pint of beer and then she left to have a drink at the Britannia pub on the corner. Chapman was drunk when she returned from the pub. She sat in the large kitchen enjoying the warmth, from a coke fueled fire and ate a baked potato while gossiping with other lodgers. A resident of 35 Dorset Street, Frederick Stevens shared a pint of beer with Chapman at half-past twelve. Stevens saw Chapman was not well and Chapman told him that she has been in the Whitechapel Infirmary since Wednesday night until today. The kitchen was lit by a flaring gas jet. Above the stove hung battered and stained tin teapots and on a wall was plastered the rules of the house with notices such as 'No Washing on Sundays'. William Stevens, a painter and sometime lodger at 35 Dorset Street entered the kitchen and saw Chapman at a table handling some medicine. Chapman told William that she has been to the hospital and they had given her a bottle of medicine and lotion and a box of pills. As Chapman handled the box it broke apart and two pills fell out. Chapman bent down and picked up a piece of torn postal envelope from the kitchen floor near the fire. Chapman wrapped the pills in the envelope before placing it in her pocket.

It was after 1:30 a.m. on Saturday September 8, when Timothy Donavon the manager came into the kitchen and spoke with Chapman. "Your sitting up late aren't you going up to bed"? Chapman says she will go to bed soon and Timothy leaves her in the kitchen. A short while later Donavon sent the Evans the night watchman to collect Chapman's rent. Chapman went back with Evans to the office and told Donavon. "I haven't sufficient money for my bed, but don't let it I shall not be long before I am in." Timothy was dismissive. "You can find money for your beer but you can't find money for your bed." Left under escort by Evans but called up to Donavon. "Never mind Tim, I shall soon be back don't let the bed." Chapman waited near the entrance for about three minutes then turned to the watchman saying. "I won't be long, Brummy. See that Tim keeps the bed for me." It was about 1.50 a.m. when the watchman saw Chapman walk north and disappear into Little Paternoster Row which led to Brushfield Street.

Amelia Palmer was one of Chapman's friends who identified her remains. As Palmer walked out the mortuary gate into the arms of reporters she cried and said. 'I knowed her; I kissed her poor cold face.' Mr. Bagster Phillips performed Chapman's autopsy. He stated that there was a bruise over the right temple, on the upper eyelid, and on the chest where there were two distinct bruises, each the size of the top of a man's thumb. There was a bruise over the middle part of the bone of the right hand. There was an abrasion over the ring finger, with distinct markings of a ring or rings. Phillips detected signs of strangulation as the face was swollen and the tongue protruding. The incisions into the skin of the throat indicated it was made from left to right. The person who cut the throat took hold of her chin. There were two distinct clean cuts on the left side of the spine. They were parallel from each other and separated by about half an inch. The damage to the muscular structures appeared as though an attempt had been made to separate the bones from the neck. There were indications of the murderer having anatomical knowledge. Portions of the abdomen were missing including part of the belly wall holding the navel, the womb, the upper part of the vagina and a greater part of the bladder. The way that these portions were removed also showed some anatomical knowledge. There were various other mutilations of the body, but Bagster thought they occurred after death. Mr. Bagster noted that the lungs and brain were so badly diseased that the victim had not long to live. There was no evidence of a struggle. The instrument used at the throat and the abdomen was the same. Bagster thought it must have been a very sharp knife, with a thin, narrow blade, and must have been at least 6 inches to 8 inches in length, probably longer. Bagster thought perhaps the weapon was a bayonet. They could have been made by such an instrument as a medical man used for post-mortem purposes, but the ordinary surgical case would not contain such an instrument. A knife used by slaughter-men well ground down might have caused them. Knives used by the leather trade would not be long enough. Bagster said that he himself could not have performed the injuries under a quarter of an hour. It would have taken a surgeon an hour. Bagster said that when the body was found Chapman's intestines were lying above her right shoulder, and that a nearby wooden paling had been smeared with her blood. After four previous adjournments the inquest into the murder of Chapman was completed on September 26.

{From Francis Thompson's, *The House of Sorrows*.}

*'The life-gashed heart, the assassin's healing poinard [knife] draw...*

*The remedy of steel has gone home to her sick heart.*

*Her breast, dishabited,*

*Revealed her heart above,*

*A little blot of red.'*

Residents of 29 Hanbury Street, where Chapman was found, included a hired hand named Francis Tyler and a Mr. Thompson with his family. The murder of Chapman occurred on the feast day for Saint Adrian the patron saint of both Soldiers & Butchers. At the feet of Chapman's body, side by side, lay two brass rings, some shiny coins, and a fine tooth-comb. A water soaked leather apron was found folded in the yard and thought to be a vital clue. The apron reignited expectations that the killer was indeed a butcher. The apron was soon discovered to belong to Mrs. Richardson's son who worked as a market porter. After his rescue Thompson was asked to fill in a top ten list. When asked to write in answer to upon where he most wished to have spent his days his choice, was 'Sussex'. Although dozens of police scoured the surrounding area they could discover no trace of the killer. Detectives recorded for the coroner that resting by Chapman's head were the remains of an envelope that bore the red military seal for the Sussex Regiment. Detectives believed once more the murderer could be a soldier before soon discovering that ordinary members of the public could also purchase the same kind of envelope. The *East End Advertiser* was one of many to express their theories as to a suspect: 'It is impossible to account, on any ordinary hypothesis, for these revolting acts of blood that the mind turns as it were instinctively to some theory of occult force, and the Myths of the Dark Ages arise from the imagination, Ghouls, vampires, blood suckers...for what can be more appalling than the thought that there is a being in human shape stealthily moving about a great city, burning with the first for human blood, and endowed with such diabolic astuteness, as to enable him to gratify his fiendish lust with absolute impunity.'

On the day of the Hanbury Street murder the *Star* newspaper reported. 'Horror Upon Horror. Whitechapel is panic-stricken at another Fiendish Crime....A nameless reprobate - half beast, half man- is at large.' Everard Meynell's warning upon Thompson, the author of the 1888 poem *Hound of Heaven*, for those who choose to learn more of his vagrancy years was that: 'you are every way the gainer by not knowing it...for naked bestiality you must go to the modern bete-humaine.[French for, bestial-human]' The term 'Ripperologist' was coined by the British writer Colin Wilson. His first book *Ritual in the Dark* was based on the Ripper murders, Wilson's other books include *Jack the Ripper Summing Up and Verdict*, co-authored with Robin Odell. Within his book Wilson wrote of one seventeen-year-old sadist: 'It seemed as if he was saying. "Now I am even."'

Lines from Thompson's 'The Hound of Heaven':

*'So it was done:...*  
*I was heavy with the even,*  
*I pleaded, outlaw-wise*  
*Round the day's dead sanctities...*  
*Naked I wait Thy love's uplifted stroke!*  
*My harness piece by piece Thou hast hewn from me,*  
*And smitten me to my knee.*  
*And, slowly gazing, find me stripped in sleep.*  
*In the rash lustihead of my young powers,*  
*I shook the pillaring hours...*  
*Thee harvest, must Thy harvest fields*  
*Be dunged with rotten death?'*

On August 1886, a Protestant Churchwarden named John McMaster aided Francis Thompson. The Churchwarden for St. Martins of the Fields also ran a Bootmaker shop and workrooms, which were located in nearby Panton Street Haymarket. Thompson had been homeless a fortnight when he was sighted by McMaster. Thompson was wandering the Strand when he was found attempting to sell a box of matches to those passing. Thompson had sold all his other goods and the matches were his only possession. From the crowded street's din McMaster called out to Thompson: 'Is your soul saved?' Thompson gave a curt reply: 'What right have you to ask me that question?' McMaster was brought to ask: 'If you won't let me save your soul, let me save your body.'

Thompson was hired by McMaster to work at his bootmakers shop. The store was well known for serving famed writers and publishers. In the front room Thompson wrote poems on the shop's account books. In the rear workshop, he distracted the other shoemakers with conversation. McMaster remembered that Thompson would shout in medical and other arguments and told that: 'There was something wrong between him and the priests...A damp rag of humanity...He was the very personification of ruin, a tumble-down, dilapidated opium-haunted wreck.' In mid-January 1887, Thompson was dismissed after he dropped a wooden window shutter onto a customer's foot. On February 23 1887, five weeks after becoming unemployed by Mac Master, Thompson let fall a crumpled parcel into the *Merry England's*, Kensington letter box in Essex Street. The parcel held some torn pages from McMaster's ledger books that made up a letter, an essay, and three poems. The essay was called *Paganism old and New*, the poems were *The Passion of Mary*, *Dream Tryst*, and the *Nightmare of the Witch Babies*. Thompson's letter to Wilfrid Meynell explained away the laudanum stains and the torn pages: 'Dear Sir...I must ask pardon for the soiled state of the manuscript. It is due...to the strange places and circumstances under which it has been written...on the principle of "yet will I try the last," I have added a few specimens...Kindly address your rejection to the Charing Cross post office.'

Thompson's *Paganism Old and New* quoted the works of Thomas De' Quincey. In 1827 De' Quincey published two pieces. These were his essays *Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts*, which was upon the East End murderer John Williams. In his essay De' Quincey wrote: 'People begin to see that something more goes to the composition of a fine murder than two blockheads to kill and be killed, a knife, a purse, and a dark lane. Design gentleman, grouping, light and shade, poetry and sentiment, are now deemed indispensable to attempts of this nature.' De' Quincey's second publication *The Avenger*, was a fictional story on a series of inexplicable murders, in a city in Germany's northwest, in 1816. De' Quincey gave a bracketed comment in the Opening lines, of *The Avenger*: 'Why callest thou me murderer and not rather the wrath of God burning after the steps of the oppressor, and cleansing the earth when it is wet with blood.' The first page, contained the public's reaction to the crimes: '(for the overmastering sense of a public calamity broke down every barrier of reserve, and all men talked freely to all men in the streets, as they would have during the rockings of an earthquake)' Everard Meynell, in his *Life of Francis Thompson*, told, in a bracketed excerpt, of the relation between both dead essayist's: '{De' Quincey's words become his own by right of succession}' Thompson's *Paganism* essay ended with his praise of, and a quote from, De' Quincey: 'but take as a last one of those magnificent eyes of De' Quincey's 'Master Suspiriarius: "Her eyes were filled with perishing dreams, and wrecks of forgotten delirium."' Everard, then just a child wrote of his mother's Alice Meynell's opinion: 'Told by A.M at 21 Philimore Place, Mother read in bed the dirty ms of *Paganism* and along with it some witch-opium poems she detested.' The poem *Nightmare of the Witch Babies* was withheld from publication. It was about a knight who hunts down women. A portion reads:

*'Swiftly he followed her*

*Ha! Ha!*

*Eagerly he followed her*

*Ho! Ho!*

*From the rank, the greasy soil,*

*Red bubbles oozed and stood;...*

*Into the fogginess*

*Ha! Ha!*

*Lo, she corrupted*

*Ho! Ho!*

*Comes there a Death*

*With the looks like a witch,...*

*And its paunch [stomach] was rent*

*Like a brasted drum;*

*And the blubbered fat*

*From its belly doth come*

*With a sickening ooze-Hell made it so!*

*Two witch babies, Ho! Ho! Ho!'*

Francis Thompson's parcel was pigeonholed and would not be opened for over a year. Thompson claimed that it was in the spring of 1888 that he attempted to commit suicide. He planned it to be by an overdose of enough laudanum to kill two men. Thompson took half when he claims the ghost of the writer Thomas Chatterton saved him. In 1770 Chatterton, finding himself unable to find a publisher, committed suicide by arsenic poisoning. Some months later Thompson was still homeless and walking along a crowded street when he saw a coin rolling in the gutter. He picked it up and seeing that no one claimed it, he kept it. Believing that the coin was a halfpenny Thompson put it in his waistcoat pocket and walked on. Then he decided to turn back the way that he had come. When Thompson reached the same spot where he had found the first coin he saw another coin glittering on the road. Thompson, thinking that it was another halfpenny, picked it up as well. He looked at the coin in his hand and saw a golden sovereign. Francis took the first coin from his pocket and when he held both coins together he saw that they were both gold. Everard recorded, in his *Life of Francis Thompson*, the poet's reaction to the finding of the equivalent of two pounds: "'That was a sovereign too, Evi; I looked and saw that it was a sovereign too!'" he ended with a rising voice and tremulous laughter.'

On Monday September 9, the day after the murder of Chapman, with fourteen suspects residing in Commercial Street police station, the *Daily Telegraph*, reported that with the body of Chapman: 'There were also found two farthings brightly polished, and according to some, these coins had been passed off as half-sovereigns upon the deceased by her murderer.' The Deputy Head of the City Force, Major Henry Smith's boast, in his memoirs, *From Constable to Commissioner*, published in 1910, is that: 'There is no man living who knows as much about these murders as I do.' Major Henry Smith's memoirs, gave an account of his unsuccessful attempt, with two officers, in September, to trace the killer of Mary Ann Nichols and Chapman: 'After the second crime I sent to Sir-Charles Warren that I had discovered a man very likely to be the man we wanted. He certainly had all the qualifications requisite. He had been a medical student, he had been in a lunatic asylum; he had spent all his time with women of loose character, whom he bilked by giving them polished farthings, two of these farthings having been found in the pocket of the murdered woman. Sir Charles failed to find him. I thought that he was likely to be in Rupert Street, Haymarket. I sent up two men, and there he was; but polished farthings and all, he proved an alibi without the shadow of doubt' Pantom Street in Haymarket where Francis Thompson had resided with his shoemaking tools, is less than two-hundred yards from Rupert Street.

Much of Whitechapel had rookeries. These were habitations that and came about chiefly when in 1580 Queen Elizabeth concerned about overcrowding in her city prohibited new building. In consequence many houses particularly in lower working class areas were subdivided to provide more rooms for a growing population. In Spitafield's spacious weaver's mansions had partitions built and courtyards were covered with hastily constructed roofs. Cellars once used exclusively for storing coal and attics built for ventilation became extra accommodation areas. Existing sewerage systems, drainage, and clean drinking water could not sustain the numbers living in family homes. Insanitary conditions set in and disease became widespread. Epidemics such as cholera and dysentery became common. To bring things under control new Acts were passed allowing buildings designated as unsafe to health to be demolished. A prime target for demolition was the habitations in and around Flower and Dean Streets. In 1871 Flower and Dean Street had thirty-one common lodgings each housing an average of twenty-nine people. In 1877 an enterprise that disposed of land here was the Peabody Trust, headed in part by the Rothschild banking firm. The Peabody trust purchased seven and a quarter acres around Goulston Street, and on the eastern side of Flower and Dean Street on the east. In 1882 the trust pulled down and cleared nearby Upper and Lower Keate Streets, Keat Court, Wilson's Place, Sugar Loaf Court, Crown Court, New Court, and parts of George St, and George Yard. 4,200 people were evicted and many of them were made homeless. The sites were sold to the East End Dwellings Company which was partly owned by the widely known Rothschild Bank. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of March 1884 Baroness Charlotte de Rothschild died. The Rothschild's are an old banking firm that began in the Jewish Ghetto of Frankfurt. By 1888 Rothschild were the worlds most powerful bank and headed in England by the founder's grandson forty-four year old Nathaniel Rothschild. Nathaniel, more affectionately known as 'natty', was in 1885 the first Jewish baron. His fame extended to as far as Baghdad where he was treated as a visiting sovereign. Natty was known for his habit of giving money to beggars then running off in fear of their thanks. His grandfather, who died in Sweden was buried in the Brady Street Jewish cemetery in the East End. On her deathbed Natty's mother had her son promise to continue the family's plans to rejuvenate the East End. In the same month of her death a meeting at the Rothschild's banking house in the city resolved to form a building company. With seven thousand pounds the Rothschild's bought the Flower and Dean street rookery. Early in 1885 Nathaniel's interest in the East End brought his appointment as

Chairman of the East End Inquiry Commission set up by the Council of the United Synagogue. An empty parcel of land in Flower and Dean street that had been cleared several years prior became the site of the Rothschild buildings opened on April 2 1887. These parallel buildings are arranged in four blocks each and constructed with floors of reinforced concrete. The buildings were constructed around a quarter acre courtyard. The building had 198 flats and thirty workshops in the attics. A two room flat was priced at four shillings, six pence a week. No trade could be conducted in the rooms and to gain a room a tenant needed a written reference from their employer. Even if a street prostitute could have afforded a room in one of the Rothschild buildings these rules effectively disallowed them applying. Within a month of the Rothschild buildings opening most of the rooms had been let almost exclusively to foreign Jews. A number of Jewish shops had been established in Flower and Dean Street. There being several grocers, a couple of chandlers shop, a kosher butchers, and dairy, a Yiddish bookstall, a tobacconist, and a furniture dealer, and herbalist. In Flower and Dean Street there were still some lodging houses. Most mostly on the southern side of the street. The numbers of tenants in these lodgings dramatically increased due to lack of housing. Examples were No 55 registered for 100 people. No. 56 registered for 46 single persons, and 29 married couples and No. 58 had 34 females and 8 married couples. No.'s 56 and 58 were side by side and was collectively known as the White House. On the opposite side of the White House was No. 6, which stretched right into Brick Lane and was registered for 122 people.

Following Thompson's episode with the two coins that apparently turned to gold he tried selling newspapers. Thompson was given a florin, by a Rothschild's, banker for buying a paper from him. Thompson attempted to pursue the banker to return him his florin becoming vexed when he lost track of him. The paper only cost one penny and the florin was worth twenty. The Rothschild firm began in a Jewish Ghetto in Frankfurt, Germany. By the time Thompson was a vagrant Rothschild were the worlds most powerful banking firm. The 17th century loans of the Rothschild's caused the English poet Lord Byron to muse, in his *Don Juan*:

*'every loan  
Is not merely a speculative hit,  
But seats a nation or upsets a throne.'*

Years later, when Thompson learnt of the death of the banker, he expressed anguish that he could never repay him. Everard Meynell recorded that it was soon after the episode with the florin that Francis became delirious. Everard wrote upon Thompson's mailing habits: 'he sitting in gray lodgings, who crowded into the chilly ten minutes before 3 a.m. the writing of a long letter to be posted, after anxieties over address and gum of which we know nothing, and a stumbling-journey down dark stairs, in a pillar-box still black with threatening dawn.' The Ripper communicated his motive in his letters sent to the press. One note received on Thursday September 27, by Fleet Street's 'Central News Agency', was to become known as the 'Dear Boss Letter':

'Dear Boss,

I keep on hearing that the police have caught me but they wont fix me just yet. I have laughed when they look so clever and talk about being on the right track. That joke about Leather Apron gave me real fits. I am down on whores and I shant quit ripping them till I do get buckled. Grand work the last job was. I gave the lady no time to squeal. How can they catch me now. I love my work and want to start again. You will soon hear of me with my funny little games. I saved some of the proper red stuff in a ginger bear bottle over the last job to write with but it went thick like glue and I cant use it. Red ink is fit enough I hope Ha ha. The next job I do I shall clip the ladys ears off and send to the police officers just for jolly wouldn't you. Keep this letter back till I do a bit more work, then give it out straight. My knife's so nice and sharp I want to get to work right away if I get the chance. Good Luck.

Yours truly

Jack the Ripper

Dont mind me giving the trade name

PS Wasnt good enough to post this before I got all the red ink off my hands curse it No luck yet. They say I'm a doctor now. ha ha'

A central maxim of the Dear Boss letter was: 'I shant quit ripping them till I do get buckled.' In the top ten favorites list Thompson had filled out his choice of motto was: 'Every scope by immoderate use turns to restraint.' The attribution of 'Dear Boss' as an American slang term has caused many to suggest that the Ripper was an American abroad. The writer Katharine Tynan told of Francis Thompson: 'He has done more to harm the English language than the worst American papers.' Of his writings Tynan told of: 'words that if you pricked them, would bleed'. Thompson gave his fear of the sight of flowing blood as his reason for leaving medical school. Perhaps bringing Thompson to blush or grow pale when he wrote in his essay *Paganism Old and New*: 'Red has come to be a colour feared; it ought rather to be the colour loved. For it is ours. The colour is ours, and what it symbolises is ours. Red in all its grades...to that imperial colour we call purple, the tinge of clotted blood,...proudly lineal; a prince of the Blood indeed.' The Ripper letters, at first believed to be a hoax, were verified when one communiqué was delivered with a portion of human kidney said to match a victim. The letter was sent on October 15th to George Lusk, the head of the 'Whitechapel Vigilance Committee' Mr. Lusk's Committee was formed by local traders in response to the Ripper's continued crimes the Committee patrolled the streets and vowed to raise a reward for the killer's capture: 'From Hell- Mr. Lusk. Sir – I send you half a kidne I took from one woman, prasarved it for you, tother piece I fried it and ate; it was very nice. I may send you the bloody knife that took it out if you only wate a little longer. Catch me when you can, Mr. Lusk.' The first of series of letters signed the Ripper arrived at Mr. Lusk's house on October 12: 'I write you a letter with black ink. As I have no more of the right stuff. I think you are all asleep in Scotland Yard with your bloodhounds as I will show you tomorrow night. I am going to do a double event, but not in Whitechapel. Getting to warm there had to shift. No more till you hear of me again. – Jack the Ripper.'

Meanwhile the 'Star' reported: 'The theory of madness is enormously strengthened...Crafty bloodthirst is written on every line of Sunday mornings' doings - everything points to some epileptic outbreak of homicidal mania. A slaughterer or butcher who has been a lunatic asylum, a mad medical student with a bad history behind him or a tendency to religious mania- these are obvious classes on which the detective sense which all of us posses in some measure should be kept. Finally, there is the off-chance – too horrible to contemplate – that we have a social experimentalist abroad determined to make the class see and feel how the masses live.' By October manufactures had begun designing a game for release in toyshops by Christmas titled *How to Catch Jack*. In the game the rules were simple with one player having to move his two 'Murderer' pieces through narrow alleys at one end of the board to safety without being caught by two of the dozen 'Policemen' or 'Journalist' pieces. A postcard from the Ripper was also delivered to Mr. Lusk: 'Say Boss, you seem rare frightened. Guess, I'd like to give you fits but can't stop time enough to let you box of toys play copper games with me. But hope to see you when I don't hurry too much, Bye-Bye, Boss.' Thompson's discussed the technique of Percy Bysshe Shelley the British poet in his essay 'Shelley': 'it is the child's faculty of make-believe raised to the nth power. He is still at play, save only that his play is such as manhood stoops to watch. And his playthings are those, which the gods give their children. The universe is his box of toys.' Dr. Openshaw was the surgeon asked to examine the kidney. He pronounced it as being human and possibly that of Catherine Eddowes. On October the 29, Dr. Openshaw received a letter: 'Old boss you was rite it was the left kidny i was goin to hoperate agin close to you ospitle just as i was going to drop mi nife along of er bloomin throte them cusses of coppers spoil the game but i guess i wil be on the jobn soon and will send you another bit of innerds

Jack the Ripper

O have you seen the devle with his mikerscope and scalpul a-lookin at a kidney with a slide cocked up.'

Assistant Commissioner Dr. Robert Anderson was placed in charge of the Whitechapel murder investigation from October 6 1888, until the case was closed in 1892. Anderson wrote: 'the "Jack the Ripper" letter is the creation of an enterprising London journalist...I am almost tempted to disclose the identity of the murderer and the pressman who wrote the letter.' Author Michael Harrison in his 1972 book 'Clarence' on his suspect Prince Albert Victor examined the Ripper letters and concluded: 'The Ripper was a poet, although as with his handwriting, he falsified his poetic skill to conceal his real identity. But then there are tricks of versification which are so natrual to a poet that he is unaware of them, and so reappear no matter how fundemtally he thinks that he is changing his style.' Everard Meynell wrote of Thompson: 'The streets, somehow, had nurtured a poet and trained a journalist.'

## ELIZABETH STRIDE

On Sunday September 30 1888 Elizabeth Stride and Catharine Eddowes were killed at 1:00 am and 1:45 am respectively. The night of the double murders, was the feast day of Saint Jerome. He was the patron saint of Scholars & Doctors. Of Saint Jerome's *Vulgate*, the first translation of the bible into Latin, Francis Thompson would write: 'in the first place its influence was mystical.'

As the Sunday peeling of the bells of St. Mary's Whitechapel rang out the pony of Carman Mr. Diemshutze's shied. Alerted that some object was blocking the passageway the Carman lit a match and discovered Elizabeth Stride's body. Stride was last seen wearing a solitary red rose and a maidenhair fern worn upon the right breast of her jacket.. In *Sister Songs* Thompson wrote:

*'Pierce where thou wilt the springing thought me,  
And there thy pictured countenance lies enfurled,  
As in the cut fern lies the imaged tree.'*

In his *Ode to the Setting Sun* Thompson wrote:

*'Alpha and Omega, Sadness and mirth,  
The springing music, and its wasting breath-  
The fairest things in life are Death and Birth,  
And of these two the fairer thing is Death.  
Mystical twins of Time inseparable,'...  
Who made the splendid rose  
Saturate [wet] with purple glows?...  
The fern-plants moulder when the ferns arise.'*

On October 2, two private detectives, named Grand and Batchelor, claimed to have found a grape stalk in the drain near the spot where Elizabeth Stride's body was found. They interviewed an East End fruiterer, named Mathew Packer, who identified Stride's body for them. Mathew Packer, told the detectives, of how an hour before the double murder, he had sold grapes to a man, with Stride, who treated him with a sharply commanding manner. He also said that together they both ate the half a pound of black grapes in the rain opposite him,. Mathew Packer's statement was later be taken down by Detective Stephen White. On October 6, Packer was sent a letter:

'You though yourself very clever I reckon when you informed the police But you made a mistake if you though I didnt see you Now I know you know me and I see your little game, and I mean to finish you and send your ears to your wife if you show this to the police or help them if you do I will finish you. It is no use your trying to get out of my way Because I have you when you dont expect it and I keep my word as you can see and rip you up.

Yours truly

Jack the Ripper...You see I know your adress'

Matthew Packer handed the letter to the police and was interviewed by Sir Charles Warren. Of the East End fruiterer's statement Inspector Walter Dew wrote: 'I am puzzled. Frankly, I cannot reconcile the buying of those grapes in the company of the woman he was about to kill, and his reappearance a few days later in the same street...I used to feel at times that the fates were conspiring against us and doing everything to assist the man behind the problem which was daily deepening in mystery.'

For Wilfrid Meynell's daughter Monica, Thompson wrote *The Poppy - To Monica*.

*'With burnt mouth, red like a lion's, it drank  
The blood of the sun as he slaughtered sank,  
And dipped its cup in purpurate [crimson] shine  
When the Eastern conduits ran with wine...  
I hang 'mid men my needless head  
And my fruit is dreams, as theirs is bread:  
The goodly men and the sun-hazed sleeper  
Time shall reap, but after the reaper  
The world shall glean of me, me the sleeper.'*

At about 11:45, previous to her murder, Elizabeth Stride was seen with a stranger, described as 5ft 6in tall, stout, and dressed in a small black coat. The stranger, described as a clerk in appearance, was heard to tell Elizabeth: 'You would say anything but your prayers'. At 12:45 p.m., East End resident and father of two, Israel Schwartz, reported seeing Stride spurn another man at the entrance to 'Dutfields Yard'. The stranger was described by Schwartz, a Jewish immigrant, who knew only a little English, as being of a stout build, with a small brown mustache, and being 5ft 5in tall. Schwartz saw the stranger handle Stride roughly. Previously, in July 1887, a twenty-three year old Polish Jew named Israel Lipski had been found guilty of the murder of Miriam Angel by pouring nitric acid down her throat and was condemned to hang. The name of 'Lipski' thereafter, became a slang term for any men, particularly those of Jewish descent, who were of suspicious character. Schwartz noticed that on other side of the street another man was also watching. This other man was wearing an old black hard felt hat, dark overcoat, and was smoking a clay pipe. As the rejected stranger crossed the road he walked passed and yelled at the man with the overcoat and pipe; 'Lipski!' The man with the pipe looked up and spotted Schwartz, who was beginning to walk away. Schwartz then heard footsteps behind him. The man with the pipe, whom Schwartz recognised as a Gentile, had begun to chase him. Later Schwartz recalled that as he was being chased he felt for a moment that the man might also have been running away. Schwartz was tempted to stop and wait for his pursuer to catch up yet he continued to run. The man gave up the chase when Schwartz passed under the nearest railway arch.

{Thompson from Everard's biography on Thompson.}

*'The screaming horror of the train,  
Rushes its iron and ruthless way amain,  
A pausless black Necessity'*

In 1897 Francis Thompson was living with the Meynell's at their 'Palace Court' residence when he set fire to the cupboard with his clay pipe kept lit in the pocket of his overcoat. Thompson's habit of using around fourteen matches to light his pipe brought Viola, a daughter of the Meynell's, to remark: 'he misspent his powers and wasted his minutes as he wasted matches.' On the night of the double murders, at 02:55 a.m., in Ghoulston Street, PC Long's lantern illuminated a piece of bloodied white apron which was found to match the apron of Catharine Eddowes. Written, with white chalk, on a nearby stucco covered wall was the slogan.

*'The Juwes are  
the men that  
will not  
be blamed  
for nothing'*

In 1993 Gary Roylands, theorist, wrote upon the Ripper murders in the *Criminologist*, summer edition. Royland's article, *Jack the Ripper the Writing on the Wall*, concluded that the slogan, found on the night of the murders, would indicate that the suspect was a Gentile, angry at Jewish witnesses, who had prevented him from further mutilating Elizabeth Stride. Sir Charles Warren arrived, at 05:00 a.m., and copied the graffiti down. At 05:30 a.m., Sir Warren fearing the writing would incite a riot against the Jews erased the message with a wet sponge. In Francis Thompson's poem, *From the Night of Forebeing* Thompson references Daniel a Jewish wise man from the *Old Testament's* *The Book of Daniel*. One story known as *The Writing on the Wall* relates of how Daniel was asked by King Balshazzar to assist in interpreting a message. It had been scrawled by an anonymous hand with a candlestick, upon the plaster of the wall of the King's palace. The King was afraid it may be seditious and none of his men had so far been able to understand it. Daniel interpretation pleased Balshazzar bringing Daniel to prominence in the royal court. Thompson's poem the *Night of Forebeing* has these lines:

*'The struggling wall will scantily grow:  
And through with the dread rite of sacrifice  
Ordained for during edifice,  
How long, how long ago!  
Into that wall which will not thrive  
I build myself alive,  
Ah who shall tell me, will the wall uprise?  
Thou wilt not tell me, who dost only know!..  
The stars still write their golden purposes  
On heavens high palimpsest [A surface on which writing can be erased.]  
Nor any therein Daniel; I do hear.'*

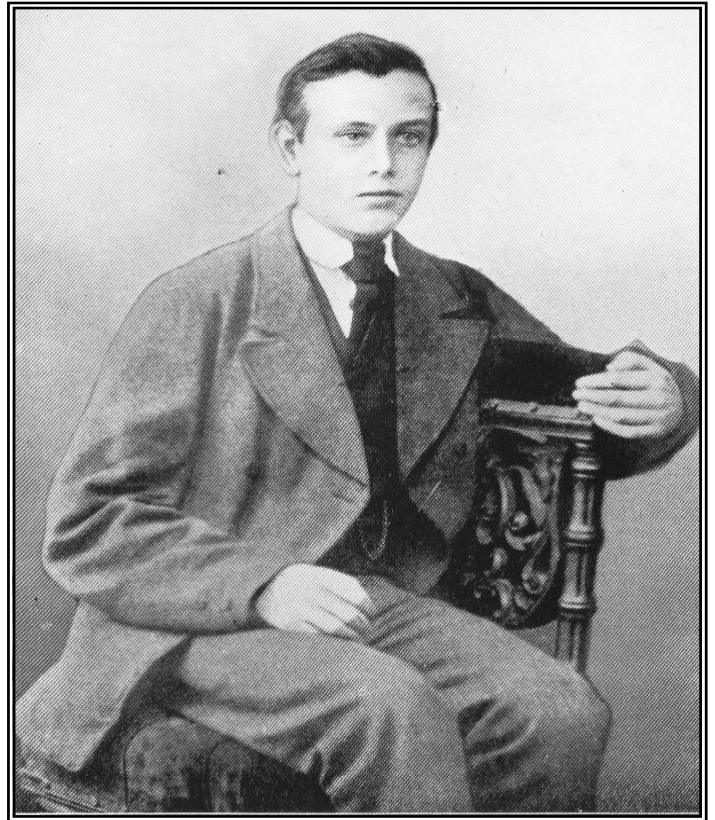
Dr Robert Anderson was in 1888 Junior Assistant Commissioner at Scotland Yard. In 1907 after his retirement Anderson spoke to the *Daily Chronicle* of evidence attained on the Ripper crimes: 'In two cases of that terrible series there were distinct clues destroyed...In one case it was a clay pipe. Before we could get to the scene of the murder the doctor had taken it up, thrown it into the fire-place and smashed it beyond recognition. In another case there was writing on the wall- a most valuable clue; handwriting that might have been at once recognised as belonging to a certain individual. But before we could get a copy, or get it protected, it had been entirely obliterated.'

# Francis Thompson

circa 1867



1874



1873 (with sisters)



circa 1878

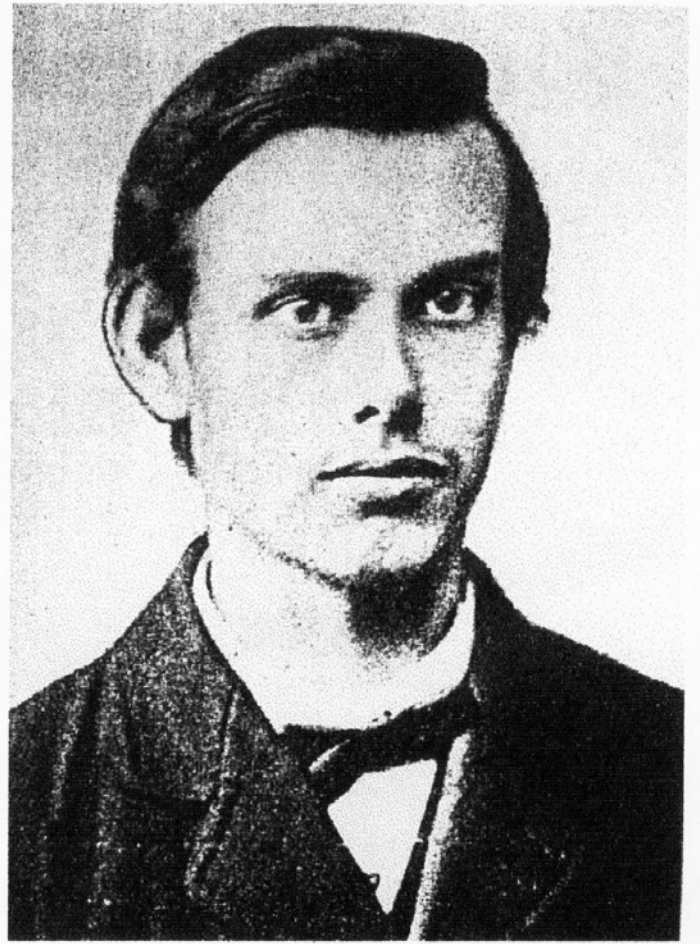
1903



1876



Francis Thompson in 1875



Francis Thompson in 1878 or 1879



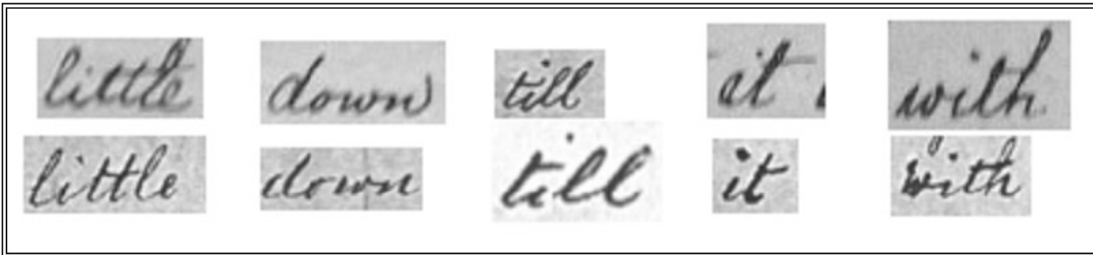
Francis Thompson in 1894



Francis Thompson in 1894

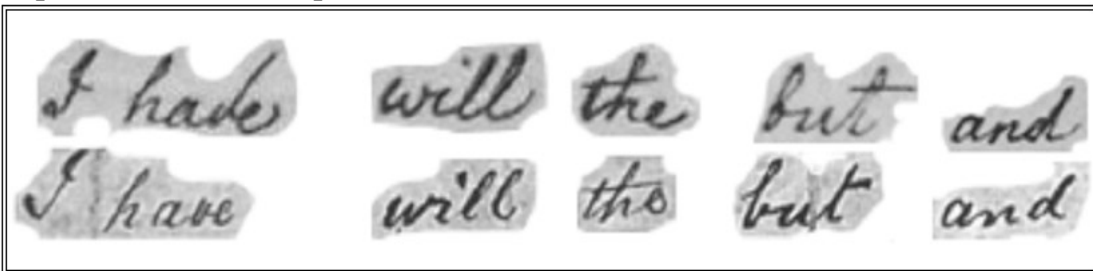
# Handwriting Comparisons

Top Row: Francis Thompson's

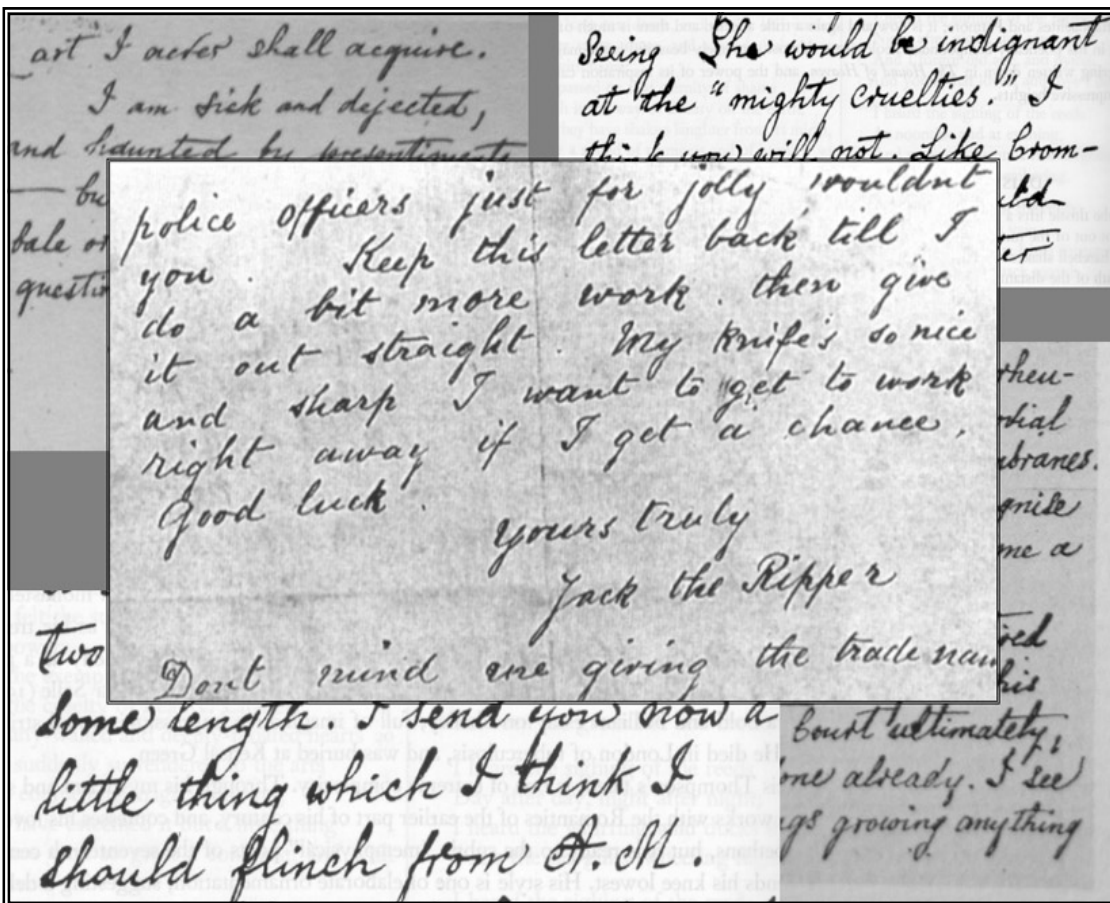


Bottom Row: Jack the Ripper's

Top Row: Francis Thompson's

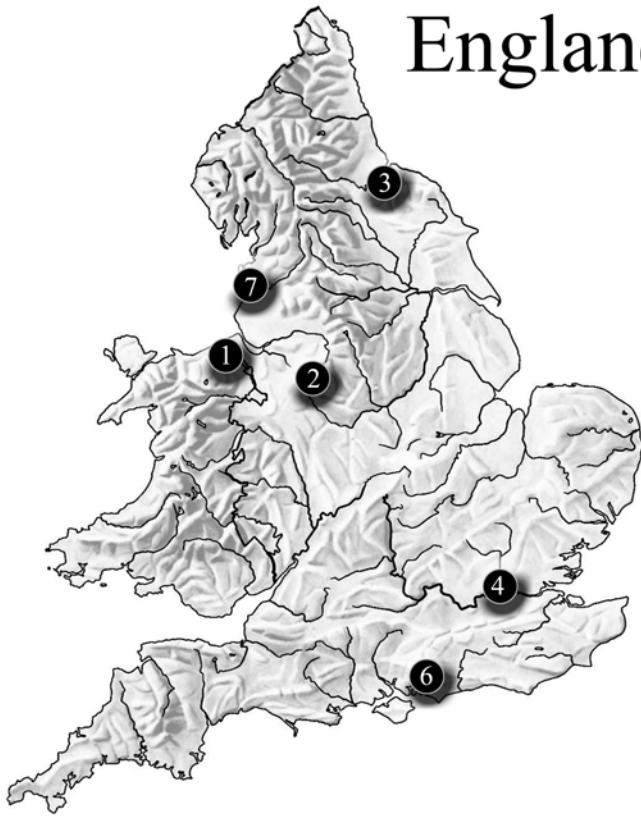


Bottom Row: Jack the Ripper's



In this sample the writing on the top box is that of Jack the Ripper while those beneath are that of Francis Thompson's.

# Francis Thompson's areas of Habitation England.



- 1 Preston
- 2 Manchester
- 3 Durham
- 4 London
- 5 Crawley
- 6 Storrington
- 7 Pantasaph

Locations of  
victim discovery.

Whitechapel

- 1 Mary Ann Nichols
- 2 Annie Chapman
- 3 Elizabeth Stride
- 4 Catharine Eddowes
- 5 Mary Kelly



Vesica Pisces



## CATHARINE EDDOWES

The same morning of September 30, half a mile directly to the west, in Mitre Square, a pinhole was made into Catharine Eddowes neck, at the left carotid artery, killing her instantly. The streets surrounding Mitre Square were Mitre Street to the west, King Street to the north, Duke Street to the east and Aldgate to the south. The main entry to Mitre Square was through Mitre passage. This was a broad entrance well lit with the lights from Mitre Street. On the right was Taylor's Picture Frame Makers that was closed, and empty. Two stone steps to narrow wooden side entrance door. Above the entrance was a second and third story window. The shop's large front display window extended partly to the side as well. Circling the square in a clockwise direction on the left was a four-storied warehouse that belonged to the merchants Williams & Company. The ground floor of the business was the financial officers. On the edge of the footpath nearest the wall were small barred openings into the warehouse's cellar. The warehouse ended at the northwest corner of the square that was lit by a lamppost. Near the lamppost on the northern side was number three Mitre Square the house of Police Constable Richard Pearce and his family. Passed the constable's house was a dilapidated unoccupied house with broken windows and beside this was a Kearley and Tonge warehouse. Kearley and Tonge were a large wholesale groceries that traded under the name of 'International Tea Co' and had stores all over the country. The warehouse ended at the north east corner where a dark covered passage led to St. James Place. The entire eastern side of the square had another Kearley and Tonge's warehouse. Behind the warehouse was the Great Synagogue between King and Duke Streets. The warehouse ended at the southeast corner where there was Church passage that leads to Duke Street. A lantern fixed to the wall dimly lit the entry to the passage. Church passage was covered and above it were windows. On the square's southern side was the rear of a chemical works factory. Near the corner to Church Passage was a door to the factory. On the footpath here was a large square metal grate leading to the sewers. At the southwest corner of the square was a fence to a yard owned by Messrs. Heydemann and company who were general merchants with their shop off Mitre Street. The yard was small and the Heydemann buildings were beyond it. The fence was made from six rows of bricks and wood palings. It has a narrow locked wooden door. At the western edge of the square there was a three storied unoccupied cottage with a window on each story sealed with wooden shutters. Here a wide metal grate on the footpath led into the cottage cellar. Beside the empty cottage was the rear of Mr. Taylor's Picture Frame Makers.

During the Inquest into the death of Eddowes presiding Coroner Mr. S. F. Langham asked Dr. Frederick Gordon Brown, who first examined the body, if the killer possessed great anatomical skill the doctor replied: 'A good deal of knowledge as to the positions of the organs in the abdominal cavity and the way of removing them.' The police came to believe that the killer wore silent rubber-soled-shoes, like those worn in hospitals. Requests that these shoes be issued so the murderer could not hear the police while they made their patrols were denied. The probability that the Ripper had medical ability was restated, in June 1975, when Seymore Shuster published *Jack the Ripper and the Doctor Identification*, in the *International Journal of Psychiatry*.

The year 1895 signaled the *Merry England's* abandonment and the release of Thompson's *Sister Songs*. The poem was originally written in 1891. Wilfrid Meynell did not want his name in the dedication to the 1893 edition. Thompson replied: 'I cannot consent to the withdrawal of your name... Suffer this -the sole thing, as unfortunate necessities of exclusion would have it, which links this first, possible this only volume with your name - suffer this to stand I will feel deeply hurt if you refuse me this gratification.' The published poem had the following stanza omitted.

*'This errant song O pardon its much blame!*

*Now my gray day grows bright*

*A little ere the night*

*Let after livers who may love my name,*

*And gauge the price I paid for dear-brought fame,*

*Knows that at end,*

*Pain was well paid, sweet Friend,*

*Pain was well paid which brought me to your sight.'*

Francis originally wanted this, his most lauded poem, to be called the *Amphicypellon*. In June of 1879 when Thompson went to London for his medical exams he also visited the South Kensington Museum to view the gold treasures brought from the once lost city of Troy. One artifact in particular drew his greatest interest. It was a cup identified as: 'Possibly the Amphicypellon' - a mythical artifact mentioned in the works of the Greek poet Homer. When Francis visited it was on display as part of the Schliemann dig, of 1873. The cup was in the shape of a boat. Both its shape and usage fascinated Francis Thompson. At each end were two spouts and there were large handles on both sides. If wine was being continuously poured into the cup, whilst it was held upright, two could drink from the same cup. Wilfrid urged the title be dropped for that of *Sister Songs*. Thompson insisted that the title page be kept: 'an offering to two sisters'. Supposed magician and occultist Aliester Crowley, told of his thoughts on the Ripper when he was a boy of thirteen: 'One theory of the motive of the murderer was that he was performing an Operation to obtain the Supreme Black Magical Power. The seven women had to be killed so that their bodies formed a "Calvary cross of seven points" with its head to the west.' After the murder of Nichols the killer turned west with the murder of Chapman. He then went southeast and killed Stride, before again making his way west to slay Eddowes. Finally the killer returned to the northeast with Kelly's murder. If a line is drawn, following these directions, given that they are true and equidistant, they make a figure eight pattern. Thompson's poem depicts a number of mythical beasts. These include Dryads, winged tree spirits, who dance in the air making the bells strapped to their feet ring. The spirits trace two circles in a linked figure eight pattern in the air. Engraved upon Francis Thompson's tomb are two linked crowns, one of laurels, and the other of thorns:

*SISTER SONGS*

*'THE PROEM*

*Even so; it came, nor knew it came,*

*In the sun's eclipse...*

*I was aware*

*How the air*

*Was all populous with forms*

*Of all the hours floating down,*

*Like Nereids [Water spirits] through a watery town,...*

*Shot in piercing swiftness came,*

*With hair a-stream like pale and goblin flame,*

*As crystalline ice in water...*

*As grew my senses clearer clear,*

*Did I see, and did I hear,*

*How under an elms canopy*

*Wheeled a flight of Dryads*

*Murmuring measured melody.*

*Gyre in gyre their treading was,...*

*Wheeling with an adverse flight,*

*In twi-circle o'er the grass,*

*These to the left, and those to the right;*

*All the band linked by each other's hand;...  
There was the clash of their cymbals clanging...  
Whereat they broke to the left and right,...  
And I remembered not  
The subtle sanctities which dart  
From childish lips' unvalued precious brush,...  
Yet still my falcon spirit makes her point  
Over the covert where  
Thou, sweetest quarry, hast put in from her!...  
Life and life's beauty only hold their revels  
In the abysmal ocean's luminous levels...*

*PART TWO*

*THE POET & THE ANCHORITE [Hermit]*

*Love and love's beauty only hold their revels  
In life's familiar, penetrable levels:  
What of the ocean-floor?  
I dwell there evermore  
From almost earliest youth  
I raised the lids of the truth,  
And forced her bend on me her shrinking sight...*

*THE OMEN...*

*Yet there is more, whereat non guesseth love!  
Upon the ending of my deadly night...  
At Fate's dread portal then  
Even so stood I, I ken, [knowing]  
Even so stood I, between a joy and fear,  
And said to mine own heart, "Now if the end be here!"...  
So between thy father's knees  
I saw thee stand,  
And through my hazes  
Of pain and fear thine yes; young wonder shone.*

*Then, as flies scatter from a carrion,  
Or rooks in spreading gyres like broken smoke  
Wheel, when some sound their quietude has broke,  
Fled, at thy countenance, all that doubting spawn:  
The heart which I questioned spoke  
A cry impetuous from its depths was drawn,-  
"I take the omen of this face of dawn"...'*

Within 'Sister Songs,' the narrator gives himself the role of a prophet. Thompson's own views on prophecy in relationship to his verse were: 'For me to write or speak at all is to resign myself to the knowledge that I am, in the present, addressing very few. It would be almost impossible, because quite futile, for me to write were I not convinced the few will one day be the many.' The narrator calls himself the 'omen'. Late-Victorians knew the term as the 'voice' or the 'word'. In 1905 Francis recalled his birth in a letter to Everard: 'I was born in the shadow of the winter solstice, when the nights are long. I belong by nativity to the season of "heavy Saturn" Was it also, I sometimes wonder, under Sagittarius?...Were it so, it would be curious; for Sagittarius, the Archer, is the Word.' Thompson told of prophets: 'He brings up treasures from the deep sea of his time Impenetrable by those who only look on the surface-levels; but the deep waters of his time are the surface waters of a time to come.'

*{SISTER SONGS CONTINUED}*

*'And now?-'  
The hours I tread ooze memories of thee, Sweet,  
Beneath my casual feet.  
With rainfall as the lea,  
The day is drenched with thee;  
In little exquisite surprises  
Bubbling deliciousness of thee arises...  
The splendent sun no splendour can display  
Till on gross things he dash his broken ray,  
Force were not force, would spill itself in vain;  
We know the Titan by his champed [bitten] chain.  
Stay is heat's cradle, it is rocked therein...  
And though he cherisheth.  
The babe most strangely born from out her death,  
Some tender trick of her it hath, maybe;-  
It is not she!...*

*PART FOUR THE MIRAGE.*

*As an Arab journeyth*

*Through the sand of Ayaman,  
Lean Thirst, lolling its cracked tongue,  
Lagging by his side along;  
And a rusty-winged Death  
Grating its low flight before,  
Casting ribbed shadows o'er  
The blank desert, blank and tan:  
He lifts by hap [chance] toward where the morning's roots are  
His weary stare,-  
See's although they plashless [blank] mutes are,...  
Even so  
Its lovely gleamings  
Seemings show  
Of things not seemings;...  
And murmurous still of its nativity...  
Eve no gentlier lays her cooling cheek  
On the burning brow of the sick earth  
Sick with death, and sick with birth,  
Aeon to aeon, in secular [not of religion] fever twirled,...  
As the innocent moon, that nothing does but shine  
Moves all the labouring surges of the world...  
And Awe was reigned in awe,  
At one small house of Nazareth; [Where Christ was Born]  
And Golgotha [Where Christ was Crucified]...  
**THE CHILD-WOMAN**  
Yea, and His Mercy, I do think it well,  
Is flashed back from the brazen [brass] gates of Hell...  
Saw breath to breathless resign its breath,  
And life do homage for its crown of death,...  
So is all power, as soul in thee, increased!  
But, knowing this, in knowledge's despite*

*I fret against the law severe that stains...*

*PART SIX*

*TO A CHILD HEARD REPEATING HER MOTHERS VERSES*

*Thy spirit with eclipse;*

*When -as a nymph's [nature spirit] carven head sweet water drips,*

*For others oozing so the cool delight*

*Which cannot steep her stiffened mouth of stone...*

*A passionless statue stands.*

*Oh, pardon innocent one!*

*Pardon at thine unconscious hands!*

*"Murmurous with music not their own; I say?..."*

*Where he sows he doth not reap,*

*He reapeth where he did not sow;*

*He sleeps, and dreams forsake his sleep*

*To meet him on his waking way...*

*The hardest embrace has failed, the rapture fled,*

*Not he, not he, the wild sweet witch is dead!*

*Where spirits of so essential kind*

*Set their paces,*

*Surely they shall leave behind*

*The green traces...*

*Elfin-ring*

*Where sweet fancies foot and sing.*

*So it may be, so it shall be,-*

*Oh, take the prophecy from me!*

*What if the old fastidious sculpture, Time,*

*This crescent marvel of his hands*

*Carveth all too painfully,*

*And I who prophesy shall never see?*

*What if the niche of its predestined rhyme,*

*Its aching niche, too long expectant stands?*

*Yet shall he after sore delays  
On some exultant day of days  
The white enshrouding childhood raise  
From thy fair spirit, finished for our gaze;  
While we (but 'mongst that happy "we"  
The prophet cannot be!)-...  
Why should amazement be our satellite?  
What wonder in such things?  
If angels have hereditary wings,...*

*PART SEVEN*

*A FORETELLING OF THE CHILDES HUSBAND*

*Ah help, me Daemon that hast served me well!  
Not at this last, oh, do not disgrace!  
I faint, I sicken, darkens all my sight...  
For at the elfin portal hangs a horn  
Which non can wind [play] aright  
Save the appointed night...  
With mystic images, inhuman, cold,  
That flameless torches hold...  
With breed from Heaven's wrought vesture...  
Ere death's grim tongue anticipates the tomb's  
Siste viator, [raised life] in this storied urn  
My living heart is laid to throb and burn,  
Till end be ended, and till ceasing cease...  
Wantonner between the yet untreacherous claws...  
Now pass your ways, fair bird and pass your ways,  
If you will;  
I have you through the days!  
And flit or hold you still,  
And perch you where you list [land]  
On what wrist,-*

*You are mine through the times!*  
*I have caught you fast for ever in a tangle of sweet rhymes*  
*And in your maiden morn*  
*You may scorn*  
*But you must be*  
*Bound and sociate to me;*  
*With this thread from out of the tomb my dead hand shall*  
*Tether thee!...*  
*Go, Sister-songs, to that sweet-pair*  
*For whom I have you frail limbs fashioned,*  
*And framed featously,-...*  
*And ye shall know us for what things we be...*

*INSCRIPTION...*

*Where ghosts watch ghosts of blooms in ghostly bowers:-*  
*For we do know*  
*The hidden player by his harmonies,*  
*And by my thoughts I know what still hands thrill the keys.'*

Mr. Wilfrid Whitten, of the *Academy*, described Thompson: 'when he opened his lips he spoke as a gentleman and a scholar...His great brown cape...nondescript garb...a basket slung over his shoulder on a strap a strange object his fish - basket, we called it...the bulky cape...His low voice had a peculiar quaver, a slight wobble in tone, that empathized its curiously measured cadence.' Thompson's sister Mary described her brother. Starting and ending with appearance of his eyes: 'A dark gray with a bluish shade in them - something like the shade one sees in mountain lakes. Full of intelligence and light. His hair was very dark brown, so dark as to appear almost black at first sight. His complexion was sallow rather than pale, drawing further attention to his eyes.' Soon after the death of Detective Sergeant Stephen White, (warrant number 59442). An article, in the *Peoples Journal*, which appeared, on September 26 1919, by someone known only as a 'Scotland Yard man', told of a meeting between Detective Sergeant White and Dr. Robert Anderson. The *Peoples Journal* recorded that Sergeant White asserted that he had spoken to the murderer moments before the discovery of the body of Catharine Eddowes. Detective Sergeant White is said to have told: 'For five nights we had been watching a certain alley way just behind the Whitechapel road...I was turning away when I saw a man coming out of the alley. He was walking quickly but noiselessly, apparently wearing rubber shoes, which were rather rare in those days. I stood aside to let the man pass, and as he came under the wall lamp I got a good look at him. He was about 5 feet 10 inches in height and was dressed rather shabbily though it was obvious that the material of his clothes was good...His face was long and thin, nostrils rather delicate and his hair was jet black. His complexion was inclined to be sallow...The most striking thing about him, however, was the extraordinary appearance of his eyes. They looked like two luminous glow worms coming through the darkness. The man was slightly bent at the shoulders, though he was obviously quite young - about 33 at the most - and gave one the idea of having been a student or professional man. His hands were snow white, and the fingers long and tapering...The man stumbled a few feet away from me and I made that an excuse for engaging him in conversation. He turned sharply at the sound of my voice, and scowled at me in a surly fashion, but he said "Goodnight" and agreed with me that it was cold. His voice was a surprise to me. It was soft and musical, with just a tinge of melancholy in it, and it was the voice of a man of culture - voice altogether out of keeping with the squalid surroundings of the East End. As he turned away one of the police officers came...there was the body of a woman...It was clearly another of those terrible murders. I remembered the man I had seen and started after him as fast as I could run, but he was lost to sight in the dark labyrinth of East End mean streets.'

A Philadelphia journalist Mr. R. Harding Davies journeyed to Whitechapel with Inspector Henry Moore. The Inspector's description of the East End to the visiting journalist was printed on November 2 in the *Pall Mall Gazette*: 'I might put two regiments of police in this half-mile of district and half of them would be as completely out of sight and hearing of the others as though they were in separate cells of a prison. To give an idea of it, my men formed a circle around the spot where one of the murders took place, guarding they thought every entrance and approach, and within a few minutes they found fifty people inside the lines. They had come in through two passageways, which my men could not find. And then, you know these people never lock their doors, and the murderer has only to lift the latch of the nearest house and walk through it and out the back way.' Henrietta Barnett, Wife of the East End Missionary Samuel Barnett wrote of Whitechapel's poorer districts and gave an account of the conditions of destitution where in some parts the annual mortality rate was one in twenty-five: 'None of these courts had roads. In some the houses were three storeys high and hardly six feet apart. The sanitary accommodation being pits in the cellars; in other courts the houses were lower, wooden and dilapidated, a standpipe at the end providing the only water. Each chamber was the home of a family who sometimes owned their indescribable furniture, but in most cases the rooms were let out furnished for 8d a night. In many instances broken windows had been repaired with paper and rags, the banisters had been used for firewood, and paper hung from the walls, which were the residence of countless vermin.'

A letter in the *Daily Telegraph* advised: 'Such exiting revivalism as the Salvation Army movement may be responsible in a measure for the mind of the criminal.' Using the pseudonym of Tancred, Francis Thompson wrote a notice in the January 1891, edition of *Merry England*, called *Catholics in Darkest England*. It was written as a reply to a book called *In Darkest England*, written by General Booth the head and founder of the Salvation Army. Thompson's view was: 'I see upon my right hand a land of lanes, and hedgerows...I look on my left hand...A region whose hedgerows have set to brick, whose soil is chilled to stone; where flowers are sold and women...the boys are ruffians and proliferates, the girls harlots in the mother's womb...You have sown your dragons teeth...From dragon's teeth, dragons;'

Headlines on October 1 in the 'Star' newspaper read: 'The Murder Maniac Sacrifices Another Woman To His Thirst For Blood...Two Victims This Time...Both Women Swiftly And Silently Butchered In Less Than An Hour.' On October 2 1888, the acclaimed Clairvoyant Dr. Robert James Lees, (1850-1931) of Peckham, approached the police to assist in the investigation. The police denounced Lees as a fool. On October 4, Lees offered to be on call for Scotland Yard. His offer was respectfully declined. Also on the 4th, Commissioner Warren wrote to the private secretary Ruggles Brise Mathews. His purpose was to express his wish to move from a position of law enforcer to lawbreaker as a means to capture the Whitechapel killer. Sir Warren felt that he was: 'quite prepared to take the responsibility of adopting the most drastic and arbitrary measures that the Secretary of the State can name which would further the securing of the murderer, however illegal they may be, provided the HM Government will support me.' On October 6, Roderick MacDonald, a coroner's assistant for the victims, suggested that the Whitechapel victims may have been drugged with a form of laudanum. On November 8, Sir Charles Warren resigned as Commissioner. A seemingly odd trait shown by Warren, as head of the Metropolitan Police Force, was his use of poetry in his drafted orders. One example reads:

*The Commissioner has observed there are signs of wear*

*On the Landseer Lions in Trafalgar Square.*

*Unauthorised persons are not to climb*

*On the Landseer lions at any time.'*

Thompson's essay *Paganism Old and New*, partly reads: 'Paganism as a natural religion...the theatre unroofed to the smokeless sky...contrast the condition of to-day. The cold formalities of a Lord Mayor's Show..."The fool," says Blake in a most pregnant aphorism, "The fool sees not the same tree as a wise man sees"...the most lovely and important feature in woman- the eye. This may have some connection with their apparent deadness to colour...to paint and perfume with the illusion of life a corpse...dead songs on dead themes...everything most polished...Vice carefully drained out of sight....a most shining Paganism indeed - as putrescence also shines.'

## MARY KELLY

The murder of Mary Kelly, occurred on Friday November 9 1888. This was the feast day for Saint Theodore the patron saint of soldiers. Mary Kelly, born in Limerick, in 1863, was killed, and terribly mutilated, at number thirteen Millers Court, Whitechapel. Kelly's face was slashed repeatedly, her ears, nose, and breasts were sliced off. Her stomach was ripped open and her heart, kidney's, liver & uterus were severed. These pieces were laid about her bed and nearby furniture. The November 1888 edition of the *Merry England* contained Thompson's *Bunyan in the Light of Modern Criticism*. In his small essay Thompson gave advice to his readers: 'He had better seek some critic who will lay his subject on the table, nick out every muscle of expression with light, cool, fastidious scalpel, and then call on him to admire the "neat dissection"' Kelly's body was first discovered at 10:45 a.m., by Thomas Boyer an Indian army pensioner. Walter Dew, who defied orders from his superior, Inspector Beck of: 'For God's sake, Dew, Don't look.' looked through the window, of Mary's room, and later wrote: 'the mental picture of that sight which remains most vividly with me is the poor woman's eyes. They were wide open, and seemed to be staring straight at me with a look of terror' Francis Thompson's 1895 poem the *Mistress of Vision*

*'But woe's me, and woe's me,*

*For the secrets of her eyes!....*

*All things by immortal power*

*Near or far,*

*Hiddenly*

*To each other linked are,*

*That thou canst not stir a flower*

*Without troubling of a star'*

Police surgeons took Mary Kelly's eyes from their sockets and had them photographed in the hope that the retinas had developed an image of the killer's face. Mary Kelly's Defacto, Joseph Barnett, told that all that was left to identify Kelly, apart from her eyes, were her ears. Although Kelly was known to be about three months pregnant, the fetus could not be found. Queen Victoria spoke to Sir Charles Warren, by phone, discussing the case. Meetings at number 10 Downing Street were rescheduled to decide on what was to be done. Being the Lord Mayors Show crowds had already gathered to view the newly appointed Mayor, the Rt., Hon. James Whitehead. He had personally offered 500 pounds for the capture of the Ripper. As news of Kelly's murder rippled throughout the throng, hundreds raced towards Millers Court forcing police to erect barricades at streets leading to the crime scene. A diminished crowd gave cheer to the Mayor as he made his way to his formal investiture at the Guildhall Library, less than a mile from the murder scene. The Guildhall was opened in 1872 and was bequest of London's trade guilds to become well known for its rare collections and century old survey maps. When Thompson was homeless he spent a 'good deal' of his time amidst the bookshelves of the Guildhall library musing over old books and survey maps until, after complaints from the attending librarian, he was barred from entering by the police.

George Hutchinson, a witness to Mary Kelly's inquest, gave an account of her last moments. Hutchinson, who had already given details at a Commercial Street police station interview, confirmed that at 02:00 a.m.: 'A man coming in the opposite direction to Kelly tapped her on her shoulder and said something to her. They both burst out laughing. I heard her say all right to him and the man said "You will be all right for what I have told you" he then placed his right hand around her shoulders. He also had a kind of small parcel in his left hand with a kind of strap around it...They both went up the court together...She said she had lost her handkerchief. He then pulled out his handkerchief a red one and gave it to her.' Lewis Hind, an associate of the *Merry England*, described Thompson: 'on his back was slung the weather worn satchel.'

Sarath Kumar Ghosh a one time fellow lodger gave a description of Francis Thompson: 'He was of medium height, but very slight of frame, which made him taller than he really was. His cheeks were so sunken as to give undue prominence to a little gray beard that was pointed at the end but otherwise untrimmed. It was his garb that was against him, and in violent contrast to the traditional smartness of City men. His trousers were dark far too dark for summer, frayed at the ends, spotted with tallow [candle wax] marks. His coat was gray-and did not match his trousers-stained with tea leaves.'

The greatest incongruity was that he wore an ulster though the heat was great. It had been originally brown in colour, but was of several different hues in patches.' On November 10 1888 Dr. Phillips, who had performed Mary Kelly's post-mortem, wrote in his inquest report: 'I think he must be in the habit of wearing a cloak or overcoat or he could hardly have escaped notice in the streets if the blood on his hands or clothes were visible...He is possibly living among respectable persons who have some knowledge of his character and habits and who may have grounds for suspicion that he isn't quite right in his mind at times. Such persons would probably be unwilling to communicate suspicions to the Police for fear of trouble or notoriety.'

The immediate affects of the murders were told by Inspector Walter Dew, in his Memoirs: 'It was only to be expected that the knowledge that in their midst stalked a human devil who could pass noiselessly among them and the murder at will, was too much for the overwrought nerves of many women and children. A large number fled from the district as from a plague, and thousands of those whose circumstances compelled to remain, made it a habit for a time never to venture out alone after dark. Mothers were fearful for their daughters whose work compelled them to travel home in darkness; husbands were anxious about their wives; young men for their sweethearts. The terror was contagious. It communicated itself to the children who ran home with fear in their eyes at the slightest scare and were awakened by fearful nightmares after they had been put to bed.'

Queen Victoria followed events in Whitechapel. After the murder of Mary Kelly the Queen wrote to the Marquis of Salisbury: 'This new and most ghastly murder shows some very decided action. All these courts must be lit, & our detectives improved. They are not what they should be. You promised, when the 1<sup>st</sup> murders took place to consult with your colleagues about it.' The Marquis replied on November 11: 'Sir Warren has resigned before the murder, because his attention had been drawn to a regulation of the Home Office forbidding writing to the news papers on the business of the Department while on leave. His resignation has been accepted. This horrid murder was committed in a room. No additional lighting could of prevented it.' On the 13<sup>th</sup> the Queen relayed in continuing correspondence: 'The Queen has received with sincere regret Mr. Mathew's letter of the 10<sup>th</sup> in which he reports the resignation of Sir Charles Warren...Still the Queen thinks that in the small area where these horrible crimes have been perpetrated a great number of detectives might be employed that every possible suggestion might be carefully examined, and if practicable followed.' Sir Warren's resignation dwelled on the Ripper when he wrote: 'The failure of the police, so far, to detect the person guilty of the Whitechapel murders is due, not to any new organisation in the department, but to the extraordinary cunning and secrecy which characterize the commission of the crimes.'

*The Times* wrote on November 13 1888: 'In this, as in other crimes of the same character, ordinary motives are out of the question. No hope of plunder could have induced the murderer to kill one who, it is clear, was reduced to such extremity of want that she thought of destroying herself. The body bore the marks of the frenzy and fury, which characterized the previous murders. An appetite for blood, a love of carnage for itself, could only explain what has been done. And there are some indications of dexterity if not anatomical skill, such as would be possessed only by one accustomed to handling a knife.'

## AFTERWARDS

{Thompson's *The Way of the Maid*}

*'Feeling the infinite must be*

*Best said by triviality,*

*And while she feels the heavens lie bare,*

*She only talks about her hair.'*

The prevailing profile upon the serial killer is that he is an apparently harmless, yet alluring, drifter. Of noted intelligence he is in his twenties and feels intense isolation. Preferring to kill relative strangers, near to their current area of habitation. The formative years are considered important to making of an adult of sound mind and so when criminal psychologists ascertain the mental state of a homicide suspect they often look to the client's childhood. One method is the establishment of the 'Triad'. Many convicted serial killers, when questioned, have divulged three attributes; bed-wetting, torture of animals, or other mutilation themes, and arson. The founding of a 'Triad', although not seen as conclusive proof of a suspect's guilt, can give strong indications of latent aggressive behavior. The United States serial killer Edmund Kemper III killed ten people and told: 'it is more or less making a doll out of a human being...Taking life away from them, a living human being, and then having possession of everything that used to be theirs. All that would be mine. Everything.' During one Christmas, when Edmund Kemper III was a child, his grandparents gave his sister a doll. It vanished only to be found by the sister decapitated and handless. When Francis Thompson was a child he complained the right to own a doll. Of one doll in particular he would write: 'With another doll of much personal attraction, I was on the terms of intimate affection, till a murderous impulse of scientific curiosity incited me to open her head, that I might investigate what her brains were like. The shock which I then sustained has been a fruitful warning to me, I have never since looked for a beautiful girl's brains.' Researcher Elliot Lleyton, in his book, called 'Compulsive Killers', gave a dissemination of the mind of the serial killer: 'The multiple murder does not appear at random through history. He appears at special points in social evolution, during periods of particular tension...Indeed, one is driven to note the number of professional, especially medical titles attached to their names, Dr. William Palmer, Dr. Thomas Cream, Dr. Marcel Petiot and many others....In any case, the multiple murder is quite a different person: most often on the margins of the upper-working or lower-middle classes, he is usually a profound conservative figure who comes to feel excluded from the class he so devoutly wishes to join. In an extended campaign of vengeance he murders people unknown to him, but who represent to him (in their behavior, their appearance, or their location) the class that has rejected him.' Thompson gave this description of prostitutes: 'These girls whose Practice is a putrid ulceration of love, venting foul and purulent discharge- for their very utterance is a hideous blasphemy against the sancrosancity of lover's language!'

Francis Thompson's primary areas of habitation feature in the deeds of other infamous British murderers. In 1864 when Thompson was aged five he became lost whilst out shopping with his mother in the market of Ashton-under-Lyne, near Manchester. It was an unforgettable moment for Thompson as the first time that he felt: 'world-wide desolation and fear.' In the 1960's, a child was kidnapped from Ashton's marketplace. He would be tortured and killed by the couple, Myra Hindley and Ian Brady, in an event to be remembered as the 'Moors Murders'. On January 31 2000, Manchester resident, dubbed by the press 'The Gentle Murderer,' Dr. Harold Shipman was convicted for killing fifteen of his elderly female patients through a lethal dose of morphine. He was formally charged at Ashton-under-Lyne's Police Station. Dr. Shipman, who is believed to have killed a further one hundred and fifty people, is considered England's most prolific murderer. It was in Manchester that Thompson, a doctor's son, studied as a surgeon and first began his chronic opium habit gained from the addictive morphine the drug contained. It was also in Manchester in 1977 that Peter Sutcliffe, the 'Yorkshire Ripper,' picked up a prostitute before killing her at the 'Southern Cross,' cemetery. Another of Sutcliffe's killings was in Preston - where Thompson was born. In 1886, while Thompson was homeless, he spent his nights sleeping on the Charing Cross embankment of the Thames River. In the 1980's, before Dr. Shipman, there was Dennis Nilsen. Known as England's second most prolific murderer - Nilsen's victims included tramps found sleeping along the Charing Cross embankment. When Thompson was fourteen in 1873, he began studies at Durham. In the same year Mary Ann Cotten, England's third most prolific murderer, was tried in Durham and hung for the lethal poisoning of fourteen males. The youngest victim was aged fourteen. In 1906, Thompson boarded at a monastery in the town of Crawley Sussex. He had been previously living in Kensington. In 1949, police captured the multiple murderer George Haigh at his Kensington hotel. Haigh confessed to killing his last victim in Crawley Sussex.

The secretary to the writer George Bernard Shaw's was Blanch Patch. In 1944 while Patch and Shaw were dining at Crawley's Oslow Court Hotel, Haigh, who would be hung for murder, snapped at a noisy child, snarling: 'I'll kill that bloody child if it doesn't shut up.' Shaw then turned to Haigh telling him that he was destined for the gallows. In March 1944 Haigh was involved in a car accident and experienced repeating nightmares. Haigh described his most common one: 'I saw before me a forest of crucifixes, which gradually turned into trees. At first there appeared to be dew, or rain, dripping from the branches, but as I approached I realised it was blood. Suddenly the whole forest began to writhe and the trees, stark and erect, to ooze blood...A man went to the each tree catching the blood...When the cup was full he approached me. "Drink," he said but I was unable to move.'

In 1891 Thompson was living in the Harrow Road district near to the site of the Tyburn tree. This 'tree' was a platformed-gallow, made with a frame of wood. From 1536 to 1681, during the English Reformation, 100 Roman Catholics were executed, upon the tree. Crowds of 200,000 would converge to witness the condemned be beheaded, disemboweled, cut-into-sections, or hung. The hangman was known to amuse the crowd: pushing the hanging corpse, or shaking its hand. Thompson wrote of the Tyburn tree:

*Rain, rain on Tyburn tree,  
Red rain-a-falling;  
Dew, Dew on Tyburn tree,...  
Ah, happy who  
That sequestered secret knew,  
How sweeter than bee-haunted dells  
The blosomy blood of martyrs smells!  
Who did upon the scaffold's bed,  
The ceremonial steel between you wed.'*

In 1888 when Shaw was music critic for the *Star* the paper's editor suppressed publication of a letter written by Shaw on September 19. Writing under the pseudonym of Jesus Christ- Shaw asked: 'The editor of the *Star* Sir. Why do you try to put the Whitechapel murders on me? Sir Charles Warren is quite right not to catch the unfortunate murderer, whose conviction and punishment would be conducted on my father's old lines of an eye for an eye, which I have always consistently repudiated. As to the eighteen centuries of what you call Christianity, I have nothing to do with it. It was invented by an aristocrat of the Roman set...When I see my name mixed up with your paper, I feel as if nails were going into me- and I know what the sensation is like better than you do.' Another letter written for the *Star*, by Shaw, upon the deeds of the Whitechapel murderer, was printed. Shaw's letter was titled *Blood Money to Whitechapel*, and told of what had been brought about by the East End killer: 'some independent genius has taken the matter in hand, and by simply murdering and disembowelling four women, converted the properties class into an inept sort of communism.'

On August 11 1890, Frances Thompson wrote a lengthy letter to Alice Meynell, in which he made brief mention of another writer, Oscar Wilde: 'shall I add, the immortal Oscar Wilde? (A witty paradoxical writer, who, nevertheless, "meo iudicio", [passing judgment] will do nothing permanent because he is earnest about nothing)' In 1894 Wilde would write his play *The importance of being Earnest* The leading character was named Jack. Wilfrid Meynell knew Oscar Wilde and his wife Constance who wrote a letter in 1893 to Wilfrid stating: 'Come and read 'Poems' to me. I want to become saturated with Francis Thompson; I am becoming so now, and he takes me up into regions of mysticism where I live a new life, and am happy!...Oscar was quite charmed.' Oscar Wilde exclaimed: 'Why can't I write poetry like that? That is what I've wanted to do all my life.' Between January and June of 1915, the writer David Herbert Lawrence moved to Sussex where he lived at the Meynell's family estate of Greatham cottage. This cottage was purchased in part from the funds made by royalties from the sales of Thompson's works. While completing his novel 'The Rainbow' Lawrence wrote from Greatham of the future of literature: 'We will be Sons of God who walk here on earth...We will be aristocrats, and as wise as the serpent in dealing with the mob. For the mob shall not crush us or starve us nor cry us to death. We will deal cunningly with the mob, the greedy soul, we will gradually bring it to subjection. We will found an order, and we will all be Princes, as the angels are.' The neighbouring estate of Greatham cottage was the residence of the writer, and friend of the Meynells, Hilair Belloc. Marie Belloc Lowndes, Hilair's sister,

famed for her 1913 *The Lodger* the first widely successful novelisation of the Ripper murders. In 1926 the film director Alfred Hitchcock launched his career with '*The Lodger*' – an adaptation of Lowndes' book. In 1960 Hitchcock would make another adaptation with *Psycho*, based on a book by the author Robert Bloch who in 1984 wrote *The Night of the Ripper*. The Irish writer Katherine Tynan published Thompson's essay *Shelley*, in the Dublin in 1912. William Butler Yeats, the Irish poet, dramatist, and prose writer. W.B Yeats's was a close friend with Tynan from 1886. In 1888 Tynan lived at the Meynell's Palace Court home. Yeats often spent evenings at Palace Court, and sent continuous correspondence addressed to Katherine Tynan as living at their address. Yeat's first met Francis Thompson at a meeting for the 'Rhymer's Club', an exclusive group of fellow poets.

In 1989 *The Encyclopedia of Modern Murder*, written by Colin Wilson & Donald Seaman was published. Within the Encyclopedia Colin Wilson wrote: 'insanity or paranoia no longer provide an adequate explanation for crimes of sick violence...Psychologically speaking, it would be inaccurate to describe any crime as motiveless...What we are encountering here is what Sartre called 'magical thinking', meaning completely illogical thinking that cannot possibly accomplish its object-like an ostrich burying its head in the sand. And magical thinking is a vital clue to the psychology of crime...A tramp who had never owned a home might well feel that if only he could live in a country cottage he would be perfectly happy... since the Victorian era, society has been moving in the direction of sexual frankness...The roots of the present lie in the past...the criminal is afflicted with magical thinking- a kind of self-chosen blindness and deafness.'

The established avant-garde art & culture magazine, *Rapid Eye*, in their 1992-95, *Creation Books* release, explored coincidence in the realm of magical thinking: '[Ted] Bundy, for instance, killed over twenty girls in the mid-70's, usually strangling or battering them to death in an uncontrollable frenzy. He carried out several of these murders in accordance with an astrological timetable. The overall sequence also contained a disproportionate number of 'double initial' victims:...Six out of twenty isn't enough to constitute a pattern [James] Austin concedes, but it is significantly higher than the distribution of double initials in the population as a whole. Bundy is now known to have had marginal occult connections, as did several of his victims. Was he too caught up, willy nilly, in some kind of Twilight Language stratagem? Some of the evidence may fall apart on close examination, but there is a definite residue of data here that cannot be dismissed as "mere" coincidence.' Colin Wilson noted the case of a Sunday school superintendent, named Theodore Durrant who, aged twenty-four, killed two girls in a Baptist church. He also wrote of a failed seminary student, called Royden Sharp: 'If, in fact, Sharp had been in his twenties in 1888 -instead of a schoolboy- he would be the ideal suspect for the Ripper murders.' The book's preface, given by the Editor, J.H.H Gaute, told: 'The mystery of Jack the Ripper will never be solved.' Gaute ended, his preface, with a poem that described a hanging, called *Eight O'clock* by Mr. A.E Housman. It was his brother Lawrence Housman who designed the cover to Francis Thompson's 1892 book *Poems*. An article written by Colin Wilson, for the English Journal *The Criminologist* titled *The Dominant Five Percent*, told of the 1963 theory of John B. Calhoun's that at any one time, one member of a species has a genetic bias to lead twenty of the same species. The theory classes murderers and writers within this narrow margin. Richard Whittington-Egan gave the Forward to Wilson's and Odell's book, *Jack the Ripper Summing Up the Verdict*. Whittington-Egan warned others who felt that they could suggest a Ripper candidate: 'Those who seek to identify the Ripper should come with clean feet!...It would be a foolish- or exceptionally fortunate- investigator who could give it a lie.' Whittington-Egan also gave the forward, for the writer Stephen Knight's book *Jack the Ripper. The Final Solution*,: 'A great part of the fascination of the Jack the Ripper case has always been its abiding mystery; the puzzle, the tantalizing endless permutations of possibility- and impossibility- which it throws up, spinning the mind like a white mouse in whirring wheel. It may be that, after so long, subconsciously. I don't want the answer to be found, the guessing game to end. For what is deader than a puzzle solved, a crossword completed?'

From November 1885, to August 1886, Francis Thompson stayed at a number of cheap lodgings paid for by his father. Thompson gained no steady employment and his income was minimal. Thompson tried his hand as a bootblack. Complaints from a nearby shopkeeper caused the police to order him to move from the corner on which he had established his business. Thompson thereafter relied on the pennies gathered in tips for carrying luggage, minding cabs, or selling matchboxes, and newspapers in Soho. Thompson wrote of his father and stepmother in his unpublished poem, *The Ballad of Fair Weather* in the following verses:

*'My father, too cruel,*

*Would scorn me and beat me;*

*My wicked stepmother*

*Would take me and eat me,*

*They looked in the deep grass*  
*Where it was deepest;*  
*They looked down the steep bank*  
*Where it was steepest;*  
*But under the bruised fern*  
*Crushed in its feather*  
*The head and the body*  
*Were lying together, -*  
*Ah, death of fair weather!*  
*Tell me, thou perished head,*  
*What hand could sever thee?...*  
*My evil stepmother,*  
*So witch-like in wish,*  
*She caught all my pretty blood*  
*Up in a dish:*  
*She took out my heart*  
*For a ghoul-meal together,*  
*But peaceful my body lies*  
*In the fern-feather,*  
*For now is fair weather.'*

In increasing poverty Francis Thompson was forced to sell his books and his clothes became such rags that, in fear that he would be dragged off by the authorities, Thompson ceased to claim his father's allowance. His depictions of the streets of London, during his vagrant years, were in the form of brief jottings only, such as: 'My two ladies'. Sometimes he wrote only a single word: 'Murder'. He wrote of London: 'We lament the smoke of London-it were nothing without the fumes of congregated evil, the herded effluence from millions of festering souls. At times I am merely sick of it....Nothing but the vocabulary of the hospital, images of corruption and fleshly ruin,...The very streets weigh upon me. These horrible streets with their gangrenous multitudes, blackening ever into lower mortifications of humanity! The brute men; these lads who have almost lost the faculty of human speech, who howl & growl like animals, or use a tongue which in itself a cancerous disintegration of speech.' When describing London it was as if he was writing less about it as a city and more as an open wound: 'Seamed & fissured with Scarred streets under the heat of the vaporous London Sun, the whole blackened organism Corrupts into foul humanity, Seething & rustling through its tissues.' Thompson had personally delivered his parcel of poems and his essay *Paganism Old and New*, to the Essex St. letter box of the Meynells on Feb. 23 1887. Over a year later the Wilfrid Meynell, deciding to have a bonfire, took Thompson's now dusty parcel, and opened it. Before consigning it to the flame's, the editor, first as a joke, proceeded to read aloud Thompson's the *Passion of Mary*. The poem had been written on Sunday September 19 1885. Thompson wrote the poem on the night of the sermon given by Fr. Richardson, the brother of his future stepmother, in St Mary's church, Ashton-under-Lyne. Part of the poem tells:

*'The red rose of this Passion-tide*  
*Doth take a deeper hue from thee,*

*In the five wounds of Jesus dyed,  
And in thy bleeding thoughts, Mary...  
O thou who dwellest in the day!  
Behold, I pace amidst the gloom:  
Darkness is ever round my way  
With little space for sunbeam-room!"*

Wilfrid Meynell sent a letter to Thompson's Charing Cross post box. His letter would be returned in September as undelivered. Meynell's April edition of the *Merry England* contained Thompson's *Passion of Mary*. On April 14 1888, Francis Thompson wrote to Meynell. 'Dear Sir...I forwarded to you for your magazine a prose article...and accompanied it by some of the verse...To be brief, from that day to this, no answer has ever come into my hands...I am now informed that one of the copies of verse...is appearing in this month's issue...I have no doubt that your explanation, when I receive it, will be entirely satisfactory to me.' Thompson gave his postal address as a chemist in Drury Lane. Wilfrid approached the chemist, given in Thompson's letter, and was told that the poet still owed money for his previous purchases of opium. Wilfrid paid Thompson's debts and asked for the chemist to direct Thompson to contact him at his 'Merry England' office. When, a month later, Thompson failed to respond, Wilfrid Meynell continued to publish Thompson's poems with 'Dream Tryst' in May and his Paganism essay in June.

While Francis Thompson was a vagrant he formed a friendship with a prostitute. Upon hearing of the publication of his poem in the 'Merry England', Thompson returned to the streets to seek her out. Contemporaries described him, at this time as appearing: 'like a sleep-walking ghost, dazed shining eyes and scarecrow figure.' Everard Meynell detailed the final conversation, between Thompson and his secret admirer, and her growing resemblance to his late mother: 'After his first interview with my father he had taken her his news "They will not understand our friendship." She said, and then, "I always knew you were a genius." And so she strangled the opportunity; she killed again the child, the sister; the mother had come to life within her.' In Footnote 27 of the Appendix to John Evangelist Walsh's, 1987 book, 'Strange Harp, Strange Symphony the Life of Francis Thompson'. Walsh writes: 'At this time occurred the most bizarre coincidence in Thompson's life. During the very weeks he was searching for his prostitute friend, London was in an uproar over the ghastly deaths of five such women at the hands of Jack the Ripper...it is not beyond possibility that Thompson himself may have been questioned. He was, after all, a drug addict, acquainted with prostitutes, and, most alarming, a former medical student!'

The husband and wife editors of the 'Merry England' maintained that sometime in September Wilfrid, born William Francis, and Alice Meynell, born Alice Thompson, rescued Francis Thompson. Wilfrid assured that he had placed Thompson in a private hospital. This was said to be due to physical exhaustion. Thompson's stay was considered to have spanned a time of between six to twelve weeks. The dates of his admittance, or release, the name of the attending doctor and the name of the hospital remains unknown. The time of Thompson's hospitalization was stated, in 1893, in the 'Merry England', to be two or three months making it sometime, in December, that Thompson was released. Thompson's hospitalization was not mentioned in Everard Meynell's biography. A penciled note, by Wilfrid Meynell, in a copy, housed at Boston College, states: 'Six week's My Son!'

Thompson biographer Father Terence Connolly was instrumental in the creation of the Francis Thompson Museum at the Boston College Library. Father Connolly worked as a prison chaplain before, along with Wilfrid and Alice Meynell, he arranged publication of Thompson's posthumous works. In researching the poet's life Connolly traveled to England and had the opportunity to meet one of Thompson's seminary college teacher's, Father Adam Wilkinson, who had instructed Thompson fifty years previously. Of their introduction, arranged by a colleague, the Father told: 'We found the aged priest, sitting before a blazing hearth fire, reading a detective story in Braille. He was then eighty years old...."Just a minute, Fathers, please. I must not lose my place. Oh, my! They're hot on the trail of the murderer." As he spoke, he marked the place in some mysterious way, placed the book on the mantel over the fire, and then extended his hand in welcome.' Of Thompson Wilkinson would remember: 'His tastes were not as ours. Of history he was very fond particularly of wars and battles...he sought to put some of their episodes into the concrete.' In October 1888 an unidentified decayed woman's torso was found where the concrete was set to be laid on the work site of New Scotland yard. Speculation grew that the body was yet another Jack the Ripper victim. In response the assailant, normally glad to claim his guilt, denied any connection when he wrote to the *Central News Limited* on October 5:

'Dear Friend

In the name of God hear me I swear I did not Kill the female whose body was found in Whitehall. If she was an honest woman I will hunt down and destroy her murderer. If she was a whore God will bless the hand that slew her, for the woman of Moab and Median shall die and their blood shall mingle with the dust. I never harm any others or the Divine power that protects and helps me in my grand work would quit forever. Do as I do and the light of my glory shall shine upon you. I must get to work tomorrow treble event this time yes yes three must be ripped I will send you a bit of face by post I promise this dear old Boss. The police now reckon my work a practical joke ha ha ha Keep this back till three are wiped out and you can show the cold meat.

Yours truly      Jack the Ripper.'

Thompson claimed that in December 1888 he accepted that the unnamed prostitute he had searched for could not be found. Thompson again visited Wilfrid Meynell 'many days later'. In January 1889, the Meynells sent Thompson to a Franciscan priory in Storrington. A Saint Bernard, that patrolled the yard, attacked the poet who was given a room on the top floor. Here he began to write discussions on poetry and verse and once more take up opium. In February 1889, Thompson wrote to Wilfrid Meynell with a request: 'Dear Mr. Meynell...Can you send me a razor?...Any kind of razor would do for me; I have shaved with a dissecting scalpel before now...I would solve the difficulty by not shaving at all., if it were possible for me to grow a beard, but repeated experiment has convinced me that the only result of such action is to make me look like an escaped convict.' Thompson, in July 1889, published his poem *Non Pax-Expectatio*; or 'A pause in Battle' within the poem are the words:

*'Hush! 'tis the gap between two lightning's...*

*Behold I hardly know if I outlast*

*The minute underneath whose heel I lie;*

*Yet I endure, have stayed the minute passed,...*

*Who knows, who knows?'*

Francis Thompson's only published tale was written in Autumn 1889. His short story, which is called *Finis Coronat Opus* or the 'End Crowning Work', is set in a once upon future kingdom during Autumn. It is narrated by a poet, named Florentine who, for the sake of being crowned the city's chief poet, holds a pagan sacrifice. Part of Thompson's story tells: 'He sprinkled in the flame that burned before the head, some drops from a vial; he wounded his arm, and moistened from the wound the idol's tongue, and stepping back he set foot upon the prostrate cross...A darkness rose like a fountain from the altar, and curled down-ward through the room as wine through water, until every light was obliterated....

[Entity]:

"Knowest thou me; what I am?"

[Florentine]

"My deity and my slave!"

[Entity]

"Scarce high enough for thy deity, too high for thy slave, I am pain exceeding great and the desolation that is the heart of all things...I am terror without beauty, and force without strength, and sin without delight, I beat my wings against the cope of Eternity...Thou knowest me not but I know thee, Florentine...thou must be baptised in blood not thine own!"

[Florentine]

"Any way but one way!"

[Entity]

"One way: no other way...Thou must renounce her or me...Render me her body for my temple, and I render thee my spirit to inhabit it."

[Florentine]

"I consent!"...If confession indeed give ease, I who am deprived of all other confession, may yet find some appeasement in confessing to this paper. With the scourge of inexorable recollection I will tear open my scars. With the cuts of pitiless analysis I make the post-mortem examen of my crime...I reared my arm; I shook; I faltered. At that moment, with a deadly voice the accomplice-hour gave forth its sinister command. I swear I struck not the first blow. Some violence seized my hand, and drove the poniard down. Whereat she cried; and I, frenzied, dreading detection, dreading above all her awakening, - I struck again, and again she cried; and yet again, and yet again she cried. Then her eyes opened. I saw them open, through the gloom I saw them; through the gloom they were revealed to me, that I might see them to my hour of death. An awful recognition, an unspeakable consciousness grew slowly into them. Motionless with horror they were fixed on mine, motionless with horror mine were fixed on them. How long had I seen them? I saw them still. There was a buzzing in my brain as if a bell had ceased to toll...I know you, and myself. I have what I have. I work for the present...I do not repent, it is a thing for inconsequent weaklings...To shake a tree, and then not gather fruit- a fools act...What a slave of fancy was I! Excellent fool...Of course it is nothing; a mere coincidence that is all. Yes.; a mere coincidence, perhaps if it had been one coincidence. But when it is seven coincidences! Three stabs, three cries, three tolls, three lines, three hairs, three years, three days; and on the very date these coincidence meet...It may be a coincidence; but it is a coincidence at my marrow sets. I will write no further till the day comes.' Thompson also in 1889, for the *'Merry England'*, wrote a short essay called 'Literary Coincidence.' Everard Meynell described Thompson's state of delirium before his rescue: 'And now he knows not how or why, his weakness has passed, and he is drifting along the streets, not wearily but with dreadful ease, with no hope of having resolution to halt. Time matters little to him as the names of the streets, and the faces of the clocks present, to his thinking, not pictures of time and motion, but stationary, dead countenances. Noting that the hands of one have moved, he wonders at it only because its view of the passage of time is so laughably at variance with his own.'

Elizabeth Blackburn, the Assistant Editor of the *Merry England*, remarked on Thompson: 'outside the pale of humanity...with a child's fits of temper and want of foresight and control.' The Meynell's enthusiasm for Thompson's *Poems* was spurred by, a family friend, the poet Robert Browning's commendation. Browning who was visiting Asolo, Italy, wrote to the Meynells, on October 17 1889: 'Both the Verse and Prose are indeed remarkable' Browning died in Venice two months later. Francis Thompson later wrote upon Browning's help: 'Browning stooped and picked up a fair-coined soul that lay rusting in a pool of tears...As though one stirred a fusty rag in a London alley, and met the eyes of a cobra scintillating under the yellow gas lamps.' Thompson wrote about his poems to Wilfrid Meynell, in January of 1890, From Storrington Priory: 'I am painfully conscious that they display me, in every respect, at my morally weakest...often verse written as I write it is nothing less than a confessional, a confessional far more intimate than the sacerdotal one. That touches only your sins.'

Thompson's Unpublished:

*'Hate, Terror, Lust and Frenzy*

*Look in on me with faces...*

*I hear on immanent cities*

*The league-long watches armed,*

*Dead cities lost*

*Ere the moon grows a ghost,*

*Phantasmal, viewless, charmed.'*

In 1891 Dr. Charles Thompson, cut his son out of his will. Francis Thompson had returned to London to live in various lodgings off the Harrow Road district. From a house in Elgin-avenue Thompson wrote to Wilfrid Meynell: 'When next I became conscious of matters sublunary [below the moon] found myself wandering somewhere in the region of Smithfield Market and the time late in the afternoon...I thought I had disciplined myself out of these aberrations.'

Another London murder, feared to be the work of the Ripper, occurred on February 13 1891, when Constable Thompson discovered the body of Frances Coles. The police briefly arrested James Thomas Saddler who was acquitted when Thomas Fowls testified for him. On March 4 1891, Francis wrote to Wilfrid: 'If you see in tomorrow's paper anything about a body being recovered from the Thames, perhaps you will kindly call and identify it?'

Clairvoyant Henry James Lees suffered a physical collapse during the Whitechapel murder investigation. He was ordered, by his medic, to take an extended holiday to the continent. Upon returning to London the clairvoyant, and his wife, were on board an omnibus, at Notting Hill. The bus stopped to pick up passengers, and Lees began to feel uneasy. A man got on the bus and sat down. Lees whispered to his wife: 'That is Jack the Ripper.' His wife laughed and told him he was a fool. Lee hushed her: 'I am not mistaken I feel it.' The omnibus rode along Edgware Road. As it turned right into Oxford Street Lees' suspect alighted the bus. Lees and his wife also got off and followed the man until he waved down a cab which he got in and was lost from sight. Everard Meynell in his *Life of Francis Thompson* spoke of Edgware Road and Thompson: 'Edgware Road was his Rambla, his Via dei Palazzi his Reu de Rivoli;...His inattention in the Edgware Road was out and out; one marvels that he ever turned the right corner, and not at all that he was knocked down by a cab...inattention in the Edgware Road made the place as blank as a railway tunnel...Riding in an omnibus he would not know whether Mlle. Polair or a Sister of Charity were at his side' In 1892, four years after the murder of Mary Kelly, the police closed the Whitechapel murder case declaring it as unsolved. Francis Thompson, after his rescue by the Meynell's, visited Cardinal Manning. In 1892, Manning died and Thompson was obliged to write a tribute. An excerpt from his poem *To the Dead Cardinal of Westminster* reads:

*'So ask; and if they tell*

*The secret terrible*

*Good friend,*

*Tell!*

*Lest my feet walk hell'*

Alice Meynell told that this poem was: 'rather on himself than on the dead, an all but despairing presage of his own decease, which, when sixteen years later it came, brought no despair.' In September 1892, Thompson wrote to Alice Meynell, in reply to her request that he keep away from her family. Thompson's letter reads: 'if you knew all as I know it, you would feel that never man had more claim on you for patience than I have...perhaps when the curse of me is removed from the house it will settle back into its ordinary condition.' In December, of 1892, after a continued relapse into drug addiction, the Meynells sent Thompson to a monastery in Pantasaph, Wales, from where he admonished: 'that infectious web of sewer rats called London...the villainous blubber brained public.' He did not neglect to mention his readers: 'The public has an odd kind of prejudice that poems are written for its benefit.' In June 1896, Thompson wrote on tragic literature: 'pathos gains on you imperceptibly as a mist, and you are unaware of it until it grips you by the throat.' Madeleine Meynell, another daughter of Wilfrid and Alice, spoke for herself and siblings by remarking of Thompson that: 'We rather despised him.' Thompson praised the writer W.E. Henley: 'He still takes us by the throat of old. He still takes us by the throat, but his grip is not compulsive. Yet now and again the old mastery thrills us, and we remember. It is good to remember.' Henley wrote the following in reply: 'What a Jackass is your F. Thompson!' One unsigned comment on Thompson, merely noted as from that of a close friend of the family, runs thus: 'The way in which you have compared the coming of Frank Thompson to the Messiah is approaching the profane.' Everard noted of Thompson: 'While in the streets he had his tea to drink and his murderer to think about.' Mr. J. Louis Garvin, of reported that after speaking with Thompson he was overwhelmed by the poet's knowledge of the merits of the A.B.C and the Lyon's teashops. In the *Bookman* Mr. J.L. Garvin praised the 'apocalyptic vision,' of Thompson's poetry. Garvin became the London Editor for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, supervising editions 12 to 14. Upon first reading Thompson's works, Garvin exclaimed: 'the poems began to swarm in my head like bees.'

Francis Thompson views on prophecy, in relationship to his verse, was that: 'For me to write or speak at all is to resign myself to the knowledge that I am, in the present, addressing very few. It would be almost impossible, because quite futile, for me to write were I not convinced the few will one day be the many.' Thompson told of prophets: 'He brings up treasures from the deep sea of his time Impenetrable by those who only look on the surface-levels; but the deep waters of his time are the surface waters of a time to come.'

Thompson lived in Panton Street before being fired in 1887. Behind Panton Street runs Coventry Street Haymarket, during the blitz of the Second World War, on Coventry Street was the Cafe de Paris. In 1941, The Cafe de Paris was a gathering place for the social elite. The Cafe was underground beneath a cinema and had exits onto Panton Street. Thompson wrote an essay about dolls titled, 'The Fourth Order Of Humanity'. Part of his essay read: 'In the beginning of things came man, sequent to him woman; on women followed the child, and on the child the doll. It is a climax of development; and the crown of these is the doll...I questioned, with wounded feelings, the straitened feminine intolerance which said to the boy: 'Thou shalt not hold a baby; thou shalt not possess a doll...By eloquence and fine diplomacy I wrung from my sisters a concession of dolls...I dramatized them, I fell in love with them...One in particular I elected...She was beautiful. She was one of Shakespeare's heroines...I desired for her some worthy name; and asked my mother: Who was the fairest among living women? Laughingly was I answered that I was a hard questioner, but that perhaps the Empress of the French bore the bell for beauty. Hence, accordingly, my Princess of puppetdom received her style; and at this hour, though she has long since vanished to some realm, where all sawdust is wiped for ever on dolls wounds, I cannot hear that name but the Past touches me with a rigid agglomeration of small china fingers.' On the night of March the 8th, as the Cafe de Paris ballroom thronged swaying to the music of Ken 'Snakehips' Johnson and his band, two bombs dropped from a German Luftwaffe plane flying overhead, fell through the roof and landed on the rostrum. One exploded killing 'Snakehips' and eighty people instantly. Victims were laid out in the lee of the cinema above. The mangled remains were described by Anthony Jacobs, an author who viewed the bodies, as having: 'a kind of unreal sheen, they looked like beautiful dolls that had been broken and the sawdust come out...Whenever I go down Coventry Street now I remember that dream, and those bright, dead dolls with dust on them.' The Cafe's ballroom, billed as the safest in London, was modeled on that of the Titanic. The Ocean Liner the Titanic was billed as unsinkable. A victim of the Titanic sinking was William Thomas Stead. In 1888 W.T. Stead. was editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. He is popularly believed to be a Ripper informant. Stead wrote a series of scathing articles upon Sir Anderson the Assistant Commissioner of the CID. Stead questioned Anderson's absence from London during the Whitechapel murders. Of Sir Anderson, who was vacationing in Switzerland, Stead wrote: 'The chief official who is responsible for the detection of the murderer is as invisible to Londoners as the murderer himself.' In 1886 Stead, wrote an article called *How the mail Steamer Went Down in Mid-Atlantic, by a Survivor*. Stead's story was upon a collision at sea between two ships. In the story the surviving passengers battle over the lifeboats. The 1892 edition of Stead's *Review of Reviews*, had a story called *From the Old World to the New*. It was upon a fictional vessel named the Majestic. On board is a clairvoyant who gains a vision of a disaster in which a nearby ship collides with an iceberg. Stead supported Francis Thompson. On January 12 1891, Stead wrote to Thompson upon his article *Catholics in Darkest England*: 'Dear Sir-I beg to forward you herewith a copy of the "Review of Reviews", in which you will find your admiral article quoted and briefly commented upon. Permit me to say that I read your article with sincere admiration and heartfelt sympathy.' On April 14 1912, The Titanic struck an iceberg and, including Stead, sunk 13,000 feet downward to the seabed of the Atlantic. Stead died whilst reading a book in the Second Class Smoking Cabin. Everard Meynell noted the Titanic disaster in relationship to Francis Thompson: 'There perished with Mr. Stead in the Titanic disaster in 1912 a Catholic priest, who had shortly before sailing recommended 'The Hound of Heaven' (the strangely significant line 'Adown Titanic glooms of chasamed fears') to a friend, as antidote to decadent poetry'

In 1906, Francis Thompson, aged forty-seven years, was boarding at the Capuchin monastery in Crawley, Sussex, and gave his view of the world: 'Prophecies of foreign complications in the East, and universal war, are drawing nearer and nearer to fulfillment. Smallpox has broken out in West Kensington, & at that time {I have no later news} was spreading rapidly. Disaster was and is, drawing downwards over the whole horizon. And I feel my private fate involved in it.' Upon Thompson's, return to London, he lived at number 128 Brondesbury Road, London. Miss L.Frey, daughter of Mrs.A.Frey, his landlord, made casual mention of how he would pass the time when alone: 'I remember when I used to pass his door, which had a glass panel with a red margin, with cut glass corners, I used to hear him saying "Oh God, Oh God."'

In August 1907, Francis Thompson stayed at Newbuildings, the Sussex estate of the writer and diplomat Wilfrid Scawen Blunt. Of the Manchester poet Blunt wrote: 'he was much annoyed by the wasps, which were particularly numerous...At last one bit him...it raised a blister which remained an interest to him...His whole interest in the last few days has been his wasp bite, which has been made worse by the ammonia....I doubt his living over Christmas.' Blunt would later revealed: 'it was so arranged that nothing was known of Thompson's death till mine and a number more articles about him were ready to print.' Blunt prefaced his record of the fate of the wasp in question with: 'Sir, to leave things out in a book merely because people tell you they will not be believed, is meanness,' Blunt told that immediately after being bitten by the wasp, Thompson cursed his wasps and that consequently they vanished from the garden for three years. Thompson was hospitalized for a week before his death at St John's and St Elizabeth's Wood infirmary. A daughter of the Meynells was used to lure Thompson by having feigned sickness and admitting herself to hospital. Upon entry he was searched for drugs. Found in the sole of Thompson's shoe was a bag of opium powder.

It was Tuesday November the 12th, 1907, that Francis Joseph Thompson, at the age of forty-eight years, died in the corner of the second floor of isolation ward five. Thompson weighed less than thirty-two kilograms. The term 'morphomania' was used to indicate a drug-related death. It was said that his condition was aggravated by tuberculosis. This disease, typified by the coughing up of mucus mixed with blood, was a condition not previously known to have been manifest. After the first hospital chaplain refused to give the dying poet last rights another priest was called in. Father Smith, the replacement did perform last rights though he was unsure as to the identity of the man being blessed. Thompson's will was drawn up, and witnessed by a patient, granting all rights to Wilfrid Meynell. On November 16 1907, Francis Thompson was buried in St Mary's Catholic Cemetery, Kensal Green London.. Within three years of Thompson's death, his poem the *Hound of Heaven* had sold 50,000 copies. Much of what Thompson wrote vanished. This included a history of the church, which was destined for Rome, and a series of narratives of his time on the streets, which were completed in 1901, and burnt by Wilfrid. Francis' sister Margaret burned his letters. In addition to his poetry Thompson wrote over 500 reviews and articles. The majority of them were published anonymously and only forty contained his signature.

In the *Illustrated London News* the writer G.K Chesterton chanced to write of Thompson: 'Great poets are obscure...because they are talking about something too large for anyone to understand, and, because they are talking about something too small for anyone to see. Francis Thompson possessed both these infinities...In Francis Thompson's poetry...you can work infinitely out and out, but yet infinitely in and in. Chesterton's also wrote a simple summary of his times: 'The shortest way of describing the Victorian age is to say that Francis Thompson stood outside of it.' Appreciation for Thompson's poems found no bounds in the *Speaker*, where one could read that: 'Mr. Thompson's poetry at its very highest attains a sublimity unsurpassed by any Victorian poet.' The writer Thomas A. Kempis, in the *New Chronicle*, and the *Bookman*, assured his readers that he spoke for himself and others when he declared: 'In all sobriety do we believe him of all poets to be the most celestial in vision, the most august in faculty...In a word a new planet has swung into the ken of the watchers of the poetic skies...It is patent on the first page that there is genius of rare inspiration...page after page reveals the rich and strange, and the richer and stranger...the reviewer feels the necessity of caution...He is an argonaut of literature.' For Francis Thompson, a self declared mystic, and prophet, whose deathbed papers contained notes on reincarnation, the *Mercury de France* provided a simple outline of the poet: 'he went mad and death happily put an end to his miseries.'

When after Thompson's death his executors went through his meager possessions they found that he had begun to keep newspaper clippings. One was a cutting from the *Daily Mail* was an article titled *Maria Blume's Will*. Maria Louisa Blume was murdered in 1907 by a carpenter named Richard Brinkley. Mrs. Blume was seventy-seven years old when she and Brinkley met. Mrs. Blume had a house in Fulham and Brinkley wanted it. Brinkley drew up a will leaving him Mrs. Blume's house and her money. He gained her signature by saying he was seeking names for those wishing to attend a seaside holiday. Two days after Mrs. Blume had signed Brinkley poisoned her by lacing her drink with cyanide. Relatives became suspicious and went to the police. Brinkley's trial at Guilford Assize was amongst the first to introduce forensic evidence. The inks used for the will's signature were compared and the handwriting was examined. It was on the handwriting evidence that Brinkley was found guilty. On August 31 1907, nineteen years since the Ripper wrote 'Red ink is fit enough I hope Ha ha.' and on the anniversary of the Ripper's first murder, Brinkley was hung in Wandsworth prison. Why Francis Thompson would consider the subject of the Brinkley case worth his while is anybody's guess. Surely, it was not to compose a poem on her murder.

In January 1973, William Stewart published *Jack the Ripper - Sort of Cricketing Person?* in *The Cricketer*. Thompson was a keen fan of the England vs. Australia test matches, begun in 1877 and made cricket a canvas to his thoughts with the following stanza entrusted to his future biographer Everard Meynell:

*'The pride of the North shall droop at last;...*

*An Austral ball shall be bowled full fast,*

*And baffle his bat and pass it by.*

*The Rose once wounded shall snap at last.*

*The Rose long bleeding it shall not die.*

*This song is secret. Mine ear it passed.'*

Thompson wrote, in 1897, of his works to be: 'as much science as mysticism! but it is the science of the Future, not the science of the scientist...The 'Orient Ode,' on its scientific side, must wait at least fifty years of understanding. For there was never yet a poet, beyond a certain range of insight, who could not have told the scientists what they will be teaching a hundred years hence.'

{From Thompson's 'Orient Ode' }

*'Burning Lion, Burning Lion  
Comes the honey of all sweet  
And out of thee, the Eater, comes forth meat...  
Be it accounted unto me  
A bright sciential idolatry!  
God has given thee visible thunders  
To utter thine apocalypse of wonders  
And what want I of prophesy.'*

Lewis Hind told of Thompson's enthusiasm for both sport and war: 'He wrote on anything. I discovered his interest in battles and strategy of great commanders was as keen as his concern on cricket, and retired generals ensconced in the armchairs of service clubs wondered. Here was a man who manipulated words as they manipulated men.'

The writer and academic Sir Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch, gave an estimate of Thompson: 'denying that he is a poet, and an extraordinary fine one, is to lose one's head just as wildly, and less pardonably.' On the posthumous publication of Thompson's essay 'Shelley', in July 1908, Quiller-Couch wrote: 'Let us deal with Francis Thompson. Had he no friend to burn this manuscript?...Thompson was a wretch...Francis Thompson was so much in love with his miserable self that he could not bear the thought of his own extinction;...Forget Francis Thompson, to remember his songs, and here we have his putrid corpse indecently disinterred and thrust under our noses....Let the flowers grow on Thompson's grave; let none exhume the body!' Francis Thompson's essay argued the acceptance of the poet Shelley, into the catholic fold: 'to reinvigorate the stock, its veins must be replenished from hardy plebeian [Latin for 'common'] blood....So I dissolve and die, and am lost in the ears of men: the particles of my being twine in newer melodies and from my one death arise a hundred lives.' For Sir Francis Meynell, son of Wilfrid Meynell, Thompson wrote his *To My God Child*. It was the last line of the end stanza that was to be etched upon the headstone of Francis Joseph Thompson:

*'And when, immortal mortal, droops you head,  
And you, the child of deathless song, are dead:  
Then, as you search with unaccustomed glance...  
Pass the crystalline sea, the Lampards seven:-  
**Look for me in the nurseries of Heaven,'***

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The Victorian State Library, La Trobe University Library, Melbourne Salvation Army Archives, The British Library, British National Art Library.

## 'Arab Love Song'

*Now while the dark about our loves is strewn,  
Light of my dark, blood of my heart, O come!  
And night will catch her breath up and be dumb.  
Leave thy father, leave thy mother  
And thy brother;  
Leave the black tents of thy tribe apart!  
Am I not thy father and thy brother,  
And thy mother?  
And thou- what needest with thy tribe's black tents  
Who hast the red pavilion of my heart?*

F.J. Thompson 1910.

## Correspondence:

Wilfrid Meynell, Thompson's friend & heir, was once on the board of the Burns & Oates publishing house. This publisher produced and sold Thompson's first works of prose and poetry. In June 7 1999 the author wrote to Burns & Oates with an early draft of this book then titled 'Paradox' Their reply was:

*'Dear Mr Patterson...In view of the connections between Burns and Oates and Francis Thompson and the Meynells I hope I might keep this copy as an interesting contribution towards a possible history of the firm. I certainly do not find it in any way lacking in goodwill, sympathy and respect, so please set your mind at rest on that score.*

*Best wishes.*

*Paul Burns Commissioning Editor,'*

In response to suggestions that much of the hypotheses of Thompson being the Ripper was coincidence this author wrote to Ken Anderson the writer of the books 'Coincidences: accident or design?' and 'Extraordinary Coincidences' asking if the connections were merely a series of coincidences. On January 22, 2002, Mr. Anderson replied:

*'Dear Richard,*

*Thank you for sending me a copy of 'Jack the Ripper... I do not think your connections between Thompson and the Ripper crimes can be dismissed as pure coincidence, as the fact you have gathered are quite substantial and do not appear to rely on chance as their basis... However, I would not be too concerned about stressing that element of your work, the facts you have gathered are far more important and it is these I would, had I been the author, stress*

*Yours sincerely*

*Ken Anderson.'*

An independent Review by Ingrid Taylor from the 'All About Murder Website' at:  
<http://www16.brinkster.com/allaboutmurder/index2.html> reads:

*'If you've ever been caught up in the controversy over the most infamous crime in history, then come along with Richard A. Patterson as he explores every dimly lit back alley in London's East End to put to rest the question of "Who was Jack the Ripper?"*

*Excellent research backed up by an extensive bibliography attests to Patterson's diligence in getting to the bottom of this ageless puzzle. You may not have heard of Francis Joseph Thompson until now, but by the time you've finished reading this in-depth study of the man, you won't be able to walk alone in the dark again! Thompson, "a self-declared mystic, and prophet" was in actuality "the very personification of ruin, a tumble-down, dilapidated opium-haunted wreck." His fixation with death and pain were common subjects of his dark and gruesome poetry, which is liberally quoted throughout the book. Among his fans he counted such notables as Oscar Wilde and George Bernard Shaw,...Despite six years of medical training, Thompson's addiction to opium saw him spiral down to such moral and physical depths...By 1891, his father had him cut out his will. Did his father suspect that his son was Jack The Ripper? Was this the same man that killed no less than five prostitutes with a surgical skill unequalled in its day? The same scarecrow of a man that taunted London's Police with letters claiming a superior intelligence? Or who believed skill and evasion of capture was due to 'divine intervention'? You be the judge...'*

*Outstanding and would definitely reread it. Noteworthy.'*