

On the road with Jack the Ripper

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In 1988 a Federal Bureau of Investigation special agent, John E. Douglas, compiled a brief report on the Jack the Ripper case.¹ In contradistinction to the tiresome sensationalism that blights the field of Ripperology, this short document is remarkably considered and is thus an invaluable resource. It refuses the temptation to provide a name for the killer and rather helps us build an understanding of the type of person the Ripper might have been. It benefits as a report from the rather unfortunate fact that the United States has such a rich tradition of serial killers. However, it remains constrained in the same manner as all other approaches to the case; namely, the sloppiness of the original investigation, the ad hoc approach to autopsies and crime-scene photography, and the total absence of techniques we take for granted in our CSI-saturated world.²

The report begins with the victims by noting, as is well-known, that the Ripper targeted heavy-drinking prostitutes.³ At the time, the working-poor women of London would often turn to prostitution in order to afford doss-houses, usually due to drinking their money away during the day, and would thus be forced to remain on the streets until the early hours.⁴ The economics of the times would further lead, I would conjecture, to riskier behaviour in spite of the presence, as with the later murders, of a serial killer operative in the area. My ambition in what follows is to grasp the psycho-geographical conditions allowing for Jack's crime-spree

¹ John E. Douglas, 'Jack the Ripper, Part 1 of 1,' *FBI Records: The Vault* (July 6, 1988), <http://vault.fbi.gov/Jack%20the%20Ripper/Jack%20the%20Ripper%20Part%201%20of%201/view>. Hereafter FBI followed by the pagination.

² I write briefly about the atmospherics of the time and how it hindered police tactics at Paul J. Ennis, 'Jack the Ripper and the case of Emma Smith,' last modified April 3, 2013, <http://blog.oup.com/2013/04/jack-the-ripper-emma-smith-whitechapel/>.

³ FBI, 2.

⁴ 'Smith was attacked, like many women in her trade, as she left one of the many local pubs populated by the working-poor of London. She may very well have found herself, like the canonical Ripper victims, in the dangerous situation of needing to recuperate the money she had spent boozing. Money was needed for a bed at one of the local doss-houses. The easiest way to do this was street prostitution and this took place in the early hours of the morning. This entailed hanging around pitch-black streets; street lamps being rare and sparse,' Ennis, 'Emma Smith.' On conditions for working-class women during the time see Andrew August, *Poor Women's Lives: Gender, Work and Poverty in Late Victorian London* (New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson Press, 1999).

to continue rather than to focus on the brutality of the specific murders. In this sense, what interests us here is not what Jack did to his victims, but how he managed to do it.

It is my contention that the geography and psychosphere of East End London were in Jack's favour.⁵ To set the broad scene, imagine contemporary London stripped of electric lighting, absent of CCTV cameras, and lightly policed in predictable beats.⁶ Now, replace each contemporary building with tenements, bricks-and-mortar, old-and-dirty industry, rudimentary hygiene standards, smoke with unknown provenance, men and women passing through in constant streams at all hours, from work and from the pub, and you are somewhat closer to the grimness of London's East End in 1888.⁷

As the FBI dossier notes, the geographical profile of the murder-scenes follows a pattern evident in other serial-crimes.⁸ The first scene, at Buck's Row, is the original, and the area is avoided by the Ripper from then on.⁹ Considered, according to the FBI analysis, as the 'primary comfort zone,' the suspect moves toward a 'secondary' one as resources focus on the primary.¹⁰ Intriguingly, the analyst notes that the primary zone would surely have included further Ripper crimes, but let us stick with the canonical five for reasons of economy, although Douglas would attribute other known murders to the Ripper.¹¹ The secondary zone comprises the nexus, roughly triangular, formed between Hanbury Street,

⁵ This term is used by Rust Cohle in the first episode of *True Detective* to express a certain atmospheric of locale and neatly captures the mix of negative psychological and geographical intrication that tends to pervade bleak settings. See *True Detective*, written by Nic Pizzolatto and directed by Cary Joji Fukunaga (2014; Burbank, California: Warner Home Video, 2014), DVD.

⁶ Ennis, 'Emma Smith.' See also Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005).

⁷ An excellent account of the streetscape of the time can be found in William Fishman, *East End 1888* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988).

⁸ FBI, 3.

⁹ This was the murder of Mary Ann Nichols on the 31st August, 1888. Generally considered the first canonical murder victim of the Ripper.

¹⁰ FBI, 3.

¹¹ FBI, 3.

Dutfield's Yard, Mitre Square and Miller's Court (the reader is encouraged to trace these lines in the map below to familiarise themselves with the area).¹²

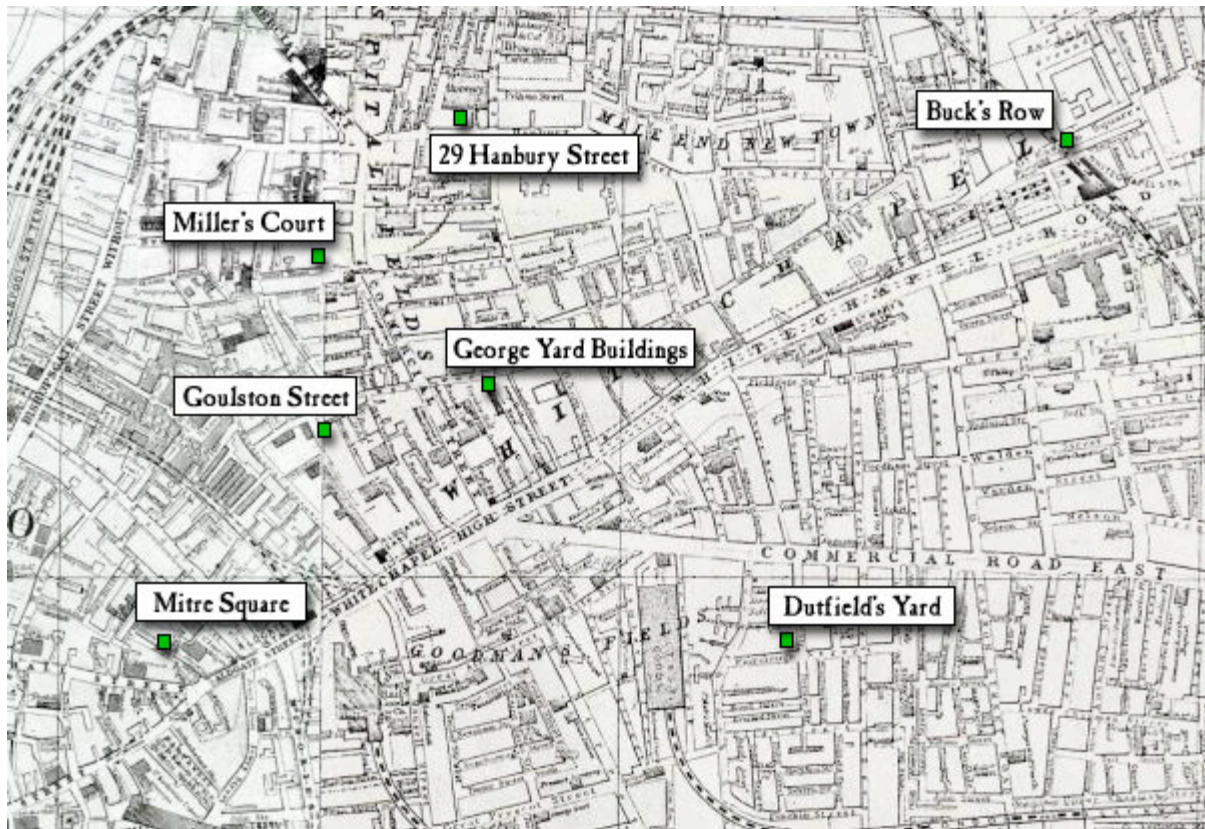


Figure 1: Crime scene locations, from an '1888 Ordnance Survey Map of Whitechapel Area.'¹³

Whilst here one can agree that there is a clear triangular formation within the secondary zone, it is curious that Douglas does not mention how one could also read the first three murders as forming one too: running from Buck's Row to Hanbury Street to Dutfield's Yard. In fact, since Douglas, and general consensus, consider primary zones as more likely to be closer to the killer's home, this triangle seems more significant, because the second triangle is formed on the basis of the double-event which was, in itself, caused by Jack being disturbed in the act and so forced to find a second victim. Hence, the first triangle is the more natural one relative to the contingent nature of the second, and perhaps gives us a better sense of his original spatial intentions.

¹² In order, the next victims are Annie Chapman, 8th September, followed by the double-event of Elizabeth Stride and Catherine Eddowes on the 30th September and finally Mary Jane Kelly on the 9th November.

¹³ '1888 Ordnance Survey Map of Whitechapel Area,' *Casebook Productions*, accessed December 16, 2014, http://www.casebook.org/victorian_london/maps.html.

The Ripper, in moving zones, clearly knew to keep moving, but nonetheless did strike out a recognisable sphere of influence. Perhaps worried that a pattern was discerned, one amongst many reasons possible, there is a slight wait between the fourth and fifth murder, from the 30th September to the 9th of November 1888, which could speak to Jack's cautiousness as time passed. That he then disappears, if it was calculated based on possibility of capture, is genuinely impressive. Barring an unrelated arrest, suicide, his being murdered, or another contingent matter, it is perfectly plausible that Jack, if he were, say, aged thirty in 1888, could have happily lived into his nineties, which is long enough for him to have borne witness to the Second World War.¹⁴

Who then was Jack? Well he was a Jack, for sure. As Douglas notes, cases of female lust serial killers are rarely encountered.¹⁵ Furthermore, our best witnesses, although conflicting in detail, always refer to a male.¹⁶ As the profile suggests, we can also assume he was a white male on the simple basis of the racial profile of the population at the time.¹⁷ We are also informed that killers of this type are generally in their late twenties to mid-thirties, although the report itself refuses to exclude different age-ranges.¹⁸ Finally, our suspect is also someone who 'does not look out of the ordinary,' but nonetheless dresses up ever so slightly in order to entice his victims into initiating contact.¹⁹

The psychological profile generated by the report is perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the document: our suspect was, it is suggested, 'raised by a domineering mother and a weak, passive and/or absent father.'²⁰ Tellingly, his mother was quite possibly a drunk consistently

¹⁴ I will return to this toward the end of the article, but I am also working on a more robust analysis of precisely what the implications of Jack's living on would have been.

¹⁵ FBI, 5.

¹⁶ In the specific case we will be focusing on, that of Elizabeth Stride, a male is mentioned by all the credible witnesses whose testimony we will examine momentarily.

¹⁷ FBI, 5. Again a non-white male would have surely emerged in witness statements if this had been a distinguishing feature as it most certainly was in the East End at the time.

¹⁸ FBI, 5.

¹⁹ FBI, 5.

²⁰ FBI, 5. The following portrait is gleaned from the FBI dossier.

in the company of different men (an informal 'prostitute' in the mind of Jack, one imagines). As expected this neglect leads to detachment and, as is quite well-known concerning serial killers, this culminated in a lack of empathy that is first externalised in minor acts of arson and the torture of animals. In time such practises escalate until the targets are human beings.²¹

Stewing away at work, something solitary most likely, our killer, the quiet type, did not spend too much time in the company of others. There is one exception, and here the report provides us with a space to begin our journey with Jack. He comes alive, we hear, in local pubs, especially after a few drinks allow him to temporarily overcome his shyness. And what is this process? The lessening of inhibitions when inebriated is familiar to us all. Except with Jack this did not mean he might dance, or flirt with the bar lady. Rather, it means the fantasies of his working days, churning away ever so slightly, bubble-up to the surface. The anxiety that cripples such a type socially without alcohol - shaky hands, low confidence, over-thinking, unease - all recede. This is worrisome because these are precisely what keep the fantasies in check. They retard the advance of strategically carrying out such fantasies, which require a degree of grace, social charm, the illusion of fitting-in, self-confidence, and a smattering of courage. Granting his effectiveness as a killer, these traits were there in his personality all along, but constantly re-routed by nervousness and so dissipated. Intoxication rendered explicit what was implicit in his character – the heightened traits necessary to fulfill acts of sociopathy.

Alcohol, then, is, as ever, a bridge to violence. Let us begin where we find it, in the public house, of which the East End boasted many.²² In what follows we are concerned with Jack on the road, emerging from the public house, intoxicated, in the mood, and ready to stalk. And we will focus on September 30th 1888, because it places us squarely in the middle of the five canonical murders. Jack has already murdered Mary Ann Nichols on the 31st of August at Buck's Row, the primary zone, and has since murdered Annie Chapman on the 8th of September at 29 Hanbury Street, the first in the secondary zone. Both killings are audacious in their execution and in both instances, Jack, of course, escapes. The night of the 30th of

²¹ See, for example, Paul O' Brien, 'Religion, Domination And Serial Killing: Western Culture And Murder,' in this volume.

²² See Mark Girouard, *Victorian Pubs* (London: Studio Vista, 1975).

September, however, is notable for being the one time that Jack was interrupted, thus leading to a second killing on the same night.

Now, there are a number of reasons why the first killing is more significant, and these broadly relate to the number of witnesses or bystanders that were present in the vicinity of Berner Street (now Henriques Street) where Elizabeth Stride was found murdered. In essence, it is Stride's murder that speaks strongest of Jack's skill as a killer. The murder scene is, one must also note, in close proximity to Commercial Road, a well-known and busy London thoroughfare connecting the City of London to the 'docklands' area (roughly encompassing contemporary Canary Wharf). We can get a sense of the wider terrain from a contemporary map:

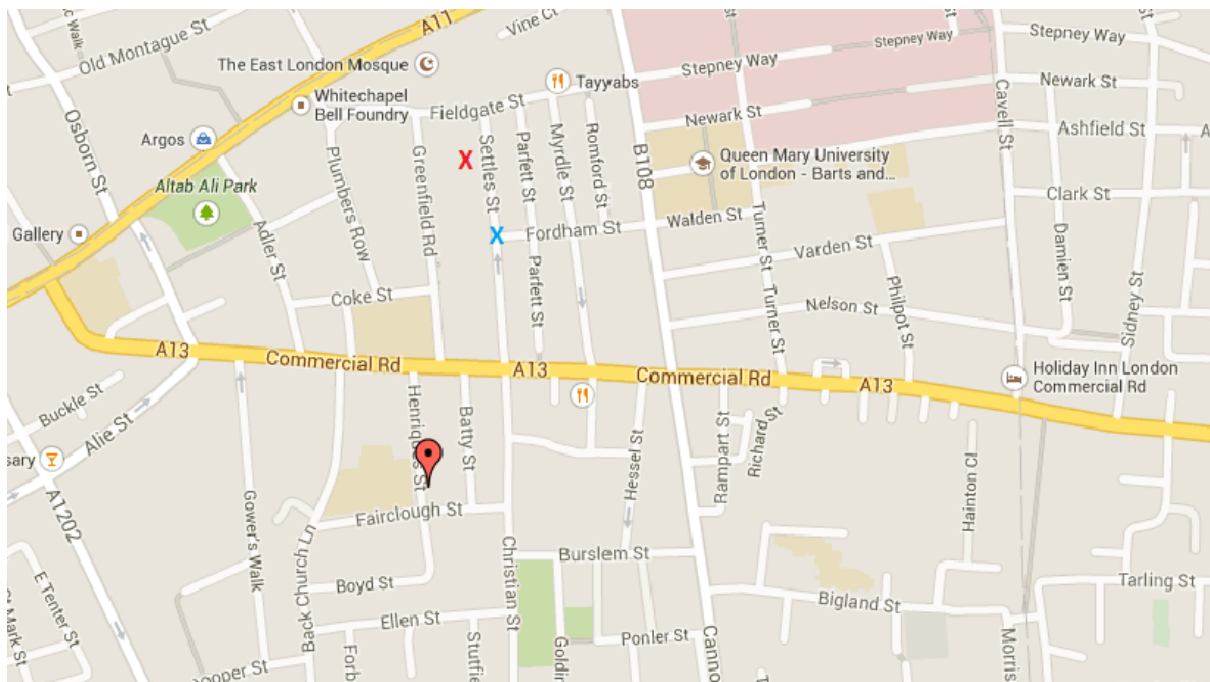


Figure 2: Commercial Road and environs.²³

Notably, Berner Street runs from North to South and takes us to the southernmost tip of Jack's murders. The site of the murder is located on the West side of the street prior to the junction (across from where the red balloon stands in the above map). Now, assuming that Jack, going by how northerly his other murders were, reached Berner Street on a downtrend,

²³ Google Maps. 2014. 'Henriques Street.' Accessed December 16. <https://www.google.ie/maps/place/Henriques+St,+Shadwell,+London+E1+1NB,+UK/@51.5135844,-0.0653904,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m2!3m1!1s0x48760334bceb5847:0xfd21bcd08550173d>.

it seems plausible that he approached it by way of Commercial Road. There are four routes into the street by turning off Commercial Road. One may walk directly down Berner Street, or one can enter, via Christian or Batty Street (to the East of Berner Street), or by Back Church Lane (to the West). In these three cases one would cut through Fairclough Street and then turn up to Berner Street at the intersection.

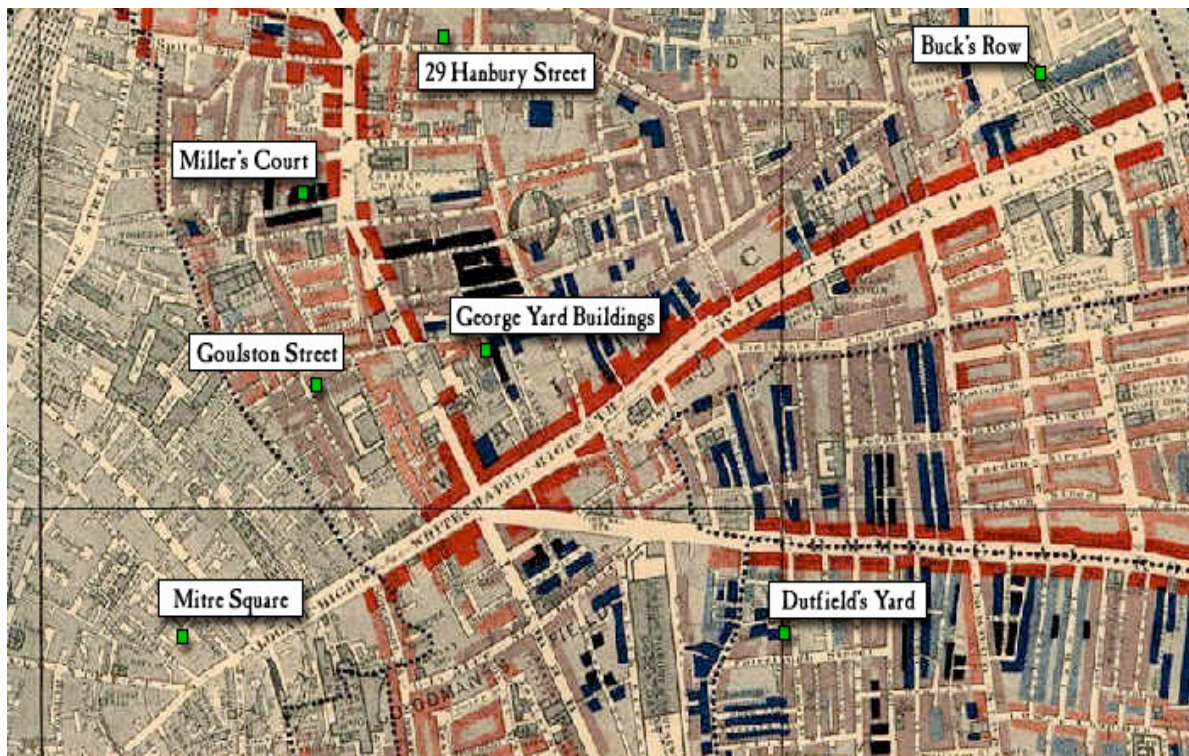
On the 29th September we know that Stride had been drinking at the Queen's Head pub at 6.30 p.m., returned to her lodging house, and then headed back out again at approximately 8.00 p.m.²⁴ She was not seen again until 11.00 p.m., when two local labourers, John Gardner and J. (possibly John) Best, tell us she was with a gentleman at the Bricklayer's Arms on Settles Street, which runs North to South on to Commercial Road and is to the West of Berner Street.²⁵ The distance to the crime scene is relatively short, but the time between the sighting and the murder runs at two hours (her body was found at 1.00 a.m.).²⁶ Gardner and Best, for whatever reasons, gave their account to a newspaper and it seems possible the police considered the timeframe too far off to consider her companion a suspect. Furthermore, as we will see, there are far better witnesses. Most likely this fellow was a client who rather unfortunately brought Stride unintentionally under the gaze of Jack.

However, going by the FBI analysis it is surely not beyond the realm of probability that Jack was either present in the Bricklayer's Arms or was watching from outside for signs of a prostitute at work. Given that it was relatively early, this may have been necessary, since it may have taken a few more hours before women became desperate enough to roam in numbers by the edgier East End streets for doss-house money. Commercial Road, as we see in the map generated by Charles Booth below, was populated by a slightly better class of characters than the wider area was known for, and this, as Booth puts it, 'Middle-class,' is represented by the red lines running alongside Commercial Road. However, a simple turn in most directions leads directly into what Booth's map describes as 'Lower-class: vicious, semi-criminal' areas, of which Berner Street falls into roughly.

²⁴ 'Inquest Report,' *The Times*, October 4, 1888. Due to various historical contingencies the original reports are lost, but a fairly accurate picture can be built from newspaper reports from the time.

²⁵ 'Interview,' *Evening News*, October 1, 1888.

²⁶ Approximately two-hundred yards according to Gardner and Best. 'Interview,' *Evening News*, October 1, 1888.



The Streets are coloured according to the general condition of the inhabitants, as under --

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fairly comfortable. Good ordinary earnings Middle-class. Well-to-do. Upper-middle and Upper classes. Wealthy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower class. Vicious, semi-criminal. Mixed. Some comfortable, others poor. 	<p>A combination of colours -- as dark blue and black, or pink and red -- indicates that the street contains a fair proportion of each of the classes represented by the respective colours.</p>
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Figure 3: Charles Booth's Map of London Poverty, 1889.²⁷

Let us assume that Jack had, in fact, been inside the Bricklayer's Arms on Settles Street that night. Perhaps his recent escapades have been playing on his mind and, as always, he knows the best method of quelling an anxious mind is to drink. He is drinking at an almost exactly triangulated point from the first two murders, which runs from Buck's Row, then west to Hanbury Street, and then southeast to Settles Street. The shift south is possibly carefully considered. The assumption may have been that Jack was operating above the Whitechapel Road and the mass of streets between it and Commercial Road may have acted as a kind of psychological barrier that he would now come to exploit. This is not to suggest there are any major stumbling blocks between moving between the two, there are not, but there is, at least, enough superficial distance, coupled with time passing, that may have triggered a trend of throwing caution to the wind outside his presumed hunting ground.

²⁷ 'Charles Booth's Map of London Poverty, 1889,' *Casebook Productions*, accessed December 16, 2014, http://www.casebook.org/victorian_london/maps.html.

Jack, having imputed this, may have chosen the Bricklayer's Arms precisely for its proximity to Berner Street and its surrounding entry points. One possibility, is that Jack could have been biding his time ever so slightly, to let Gardner and Best enter and settle into the pub. With most eyes on Stride and her client, a less conspicuous lone male could easily slip out of the Bricklayer's unnoticed. Either way, Stride's client is soon led (or leads) in the direction of Berner Street, where it is a half-hour to forty-five minutes before the pair are spotted again. Jack, to my mind, has been loitering not far behind them. A safe pace so as not to arouse suspicion, perhaps availing of intermittent stoppages to ensure his presence is not felt or only minimally felt.

The next sighting of Stride, if not necessarily of Jack, is at 11.30 p.m., when William Marshall, stood outside his home at 64 Berner Street, first glimpses a couple, and then, at 11.45 p.m., makes a more distinct identification of Stride with a 'decently dressed' gentleman, 'with the appearance of a clerk,' a few doors down from his house.²⁸ Marshall's home and the sighting take place on Berner Street, but not where one might expect them to be. For instance, in following the map below, an X marks Boyd Street, which Marshall uses to situate the couple in his testimony: 'She was on the pavement opposite No. 63 [Berner Street], and between Christian-street and Boyd-street.'²⁹ Much of this suggests that Stride is, at this time, still with her client from the public house, and that, given the time-lapse, they have taken a rather leisurely route down Berner Street. It is not clear whether they have done so directly or from a side-route.

²⁸ 'Inquest Report,' *The Times*, October 6, 1888.

²⁹ 'Inquest Report,' *The Times*, October 6, 1888.

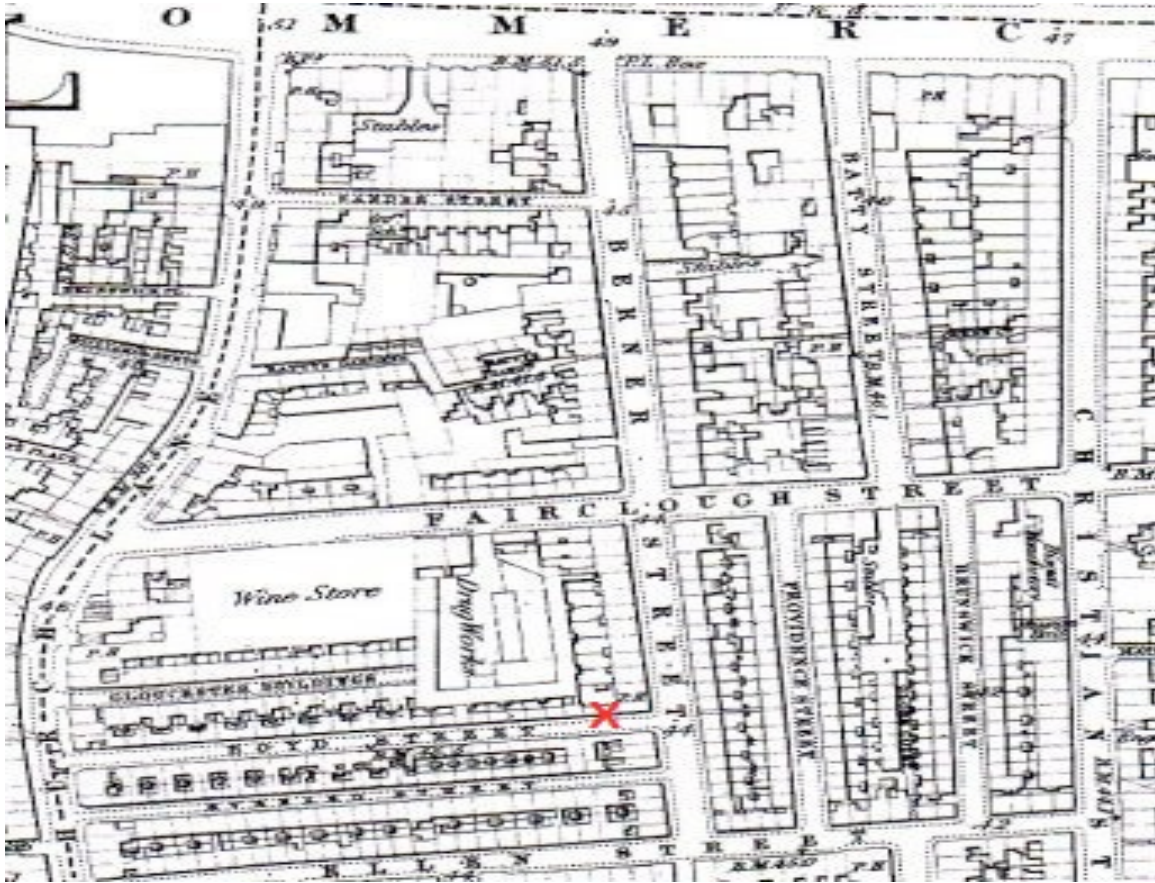


Figure 4: Boyd Street.

Now, between Marshall's sighting and the next, there are other people in the area we should take note of. William West is at the International Working Men's Educational Club which, as we see in the following image, is the building with the cart-wheel located right beside Dutfield's Yard, and leaves at 12.15 p.m.³⁰ Other possible street-dwellers are Charles Letchford, who was passing at 12.30 a.m., Fanny Mortimer, who claims to be loitering outside her home at 36 Berner Street between 12.30 a.m. and 1.00 a.m. (she also mentions a young couple in the area prior to the murder),³¹ Morris Eagle, who is passing through the yard at 12.35 a.m.,³² and finally, Joseph Lave, who was getting fresh-air in Dutfield's Yard at

³⁰ 'Inquest report,' *Daily Telegraph*, October 2, 1888.

³¹ Reported in *Evening News*, October 1, 1888. Mortimer did witness a suspicious character at roughly 1.00 a.m., but he was later identified as Leon Goldstein, who, upon realising it was him, was promptly cleared as a suspect for mundane reasons as one can see in Paul Begg, Martin Fido and Keith Skinner, *The Complete Jack the Ripper: A to Z* (London: John Blake Publishing, 2010).

³² Reported in *The Times*, October 2, 1888.

12.40 a.m.³³ So, people were about, but this does not seem to have deterred Jack in any strong sense.



Figure 5: The International Working Men's Educational Club.³⁴

At 12.35 a.m. our best witness appears, one Police Constable William Smith, on his beat down Berner Street. He spots Stride and a gentleman opposite the Working Men's Educational Club. His testimony, granting his profession, is worth quoting in full:

[Coroner]: Was the woman anything like the deceased?

[Smith]: Yes. I saw her face, and I think the body at the mortuary is that of the same woman.

[Coroner]: Are you certain?

[Smith]: I feel certain. She stood on the pavement a few yards from where the body was found, but on the opposite side of the street.

[Coroner]: Did you look at the man at all?

³³ *Evening News*, October 1, 1888

³⁴ 'Berner Street and Dutfield's Yard,' *Casebook Productions*, accessed December 16, 2014, http://www.casebook.org/victorian_london/sitepics.w-berner.html.

[Smith]: Yes.

[Coroner]: What did you notice about him?

[Smith]: He had a parcel wrapped in a newspaper in his hand. The parcel was about 18in. long and 6in. to 8in. broad.

[Coroner]: Did you notice his height?

[Smith]: He was about 5ft. 7in.

[Coroner] His hat?

[Smith]: He wore a dark felt deerstalker's hat.

[Coroner]: Clothes?

[Smith]: His clothes were dark. The coat was a cutaway coat.

[...]

[Coroner]: Did you see the man's face?

[Smith]: He had no whiskers, but I did not notice him much. I should say he was twenty-eight years of age. He was of respectable appearance, but I could not state what he was...³⁵

The most important detail? The small parcel. That Smith sees this couple roughly twenty to twenty-five minutes before the time of Stride's murder, and that the male is carrying a parcel, almost invariably leads newly-minted Ripperologists to believe Smith definitely did glimpse Jack. The location fits neatly too, just meters from Dutfield's Yard. Notably, Smith gives us a very definite age, he believes the man was about 28, which would place him squarely within the age-range of the FBI profile. This time we hear of respectable appearance, but not of dress per se or of profession, which Smith cannot place. At approximately 12.45 a.m., we have another witness, one James Brown, but Brown admitted to have not been able to see much in the darkness.³⁶ The timing here is very close to that of the next incident which, if Brown had witnessed, he would surely have paid more attention to. One possibility is that Brown, slightly misjudging the time, had in fact passed the couple briefly alluded to by Fanny Mortimer as being in the vicinity of Berner Street prior to and after the murder.³⁷

³⁵ 'Inquest Testimony,' *The Daily Telegraph*, October 6, 1888.

³⁶ 'Inquest report,' *The Times*, October 4, 1888.

³⁷ *Evening News*, October 1, 1888.

It is essential that we get to one of the most famous witnesses of all in the Ripper case, namely, Israel Schwartz, who we find walking down Berner Street at 12.45 a.m. (coming down from Commercial Road). Right outside Dutfield's Yard, Schwartz encounters a couple. Based on a translation of Schwarz's testimony, we are told that when he...

got as far as the gateway where the murder was committed, he saw a man stop and speak to a woman, who was standing in the gateway. The man tried to pull the woman into the street, but he turned her round and threw her down on the footway and the woman screamed three times, but not loudly. On crossing to the opposite side of the street, he saw a second man standing lighting his pipe. The man who threw the woman down called out, apparently to the man on the opposite side of the road, 'Lipski,' and then Schwartz walked away, but finding that he was followed by the second man, he ran so far as the railway arch, but the man did not follow so far.

Schwartz cannot say whether the two men were together or known to each other. Upon being taken to the Mortuary Schwartz identified the body as that of the woman he had seen. He thus describes the first man, who threw the woman down:- age, about 30; ht, 5 ft 5 in; comp., fair; hair, dark; small brown moustache, full face, broad shouldered; dress, dark jacket and trousers, black cap with peak, and nothing in his hands. Second man: age, 35; ht., 5 ft 11in; comp., fresh; hair, light brown; dress, dark overcoat, old black hard felt hat, wide brim; had a clay pipe in his hand.³⁸

This account is famous for a few reasons. Stride will be found at 1.00 a.m., a mere fifteen minutes later, and Schwartz positively identified her body. The age profiles of our suspects also fits closely that provided by Smith. We are in the late-twenties, mid-thirties range we would expect when we include the second man. Indeed, that second man. We will get to him in a moment, but as it goes, we know Schwartz first encounters a couple close to the murder scene, there is a tussle and the male forces her to the ground, Schwartz wisely decides to

³⁸ Note these are not precisely Schwartz's words, but reported by Chief Inspector Donald Swanson and based on a translation of Schwartz's testimony. See Begg, Fido and Skinner, *Jack the Ripper*, 385-386. Alternative accounts exist, but here we remain with the official one.

move to the opposite side of the road, only then to notice a second man (on the same side of the road) standing on the corner, roughly at the junction of Fairclough Street. In the official statement, the presence of this second man, who lights his pipe, prompts the first to shout 'Lipski' at the pipe-smoker.³⁹ It is impossible to tell why he does so, but it prompts the pipe-smoking man to briefly follow Schwartz. It seems possible the slur was directed at either the pipe-smoking man to let him know a 'Lipski' or Jew (Schwartz) was nearby and interrupting them. That the pipe-smoking man then follows Schwartz seems to attest to this. Note, of course, that this event takes place outside the International Working Men's Educational Club, a Jewish club, and the comment may have been no more than common prejudice from a client and his friend who were assuming anyone in the area is there to enter the club, possibly via Dutfield's Yard, and here some territory was being marked out for some kind of act (intercourse or, potentially, murder). Hence they felt the need for a small act of intimidation. The pipe-smoking man only briefly follows Schwartz.

If these two gentlemen were simply in the area, drunk and fooling around, they were doing so, quite likely, in Jack's presence, albeit very much unknown to them. Being realistic, it seems quite likely that one of these two men was Jack. Now, the description of the man arguing with Stride does fit the age-profile provided by Smith, but the respectable appearance angle is not mentioned. Furthermore, the sloppiness, aggressiveness, and noisiness do not seem to fit his modus operandi. If we are content to exclude this gentleman, then either the pipe-smoker turned back, having scared off Schwartz, or Jack engaged Stride after both gentleman had moved on. There is, after all, fifteen minutes still at play here. What would make this final possibility, that none of these men were Jack, remarkable, is that it then becomes possible that Jack had not been seen by any key witnesses at all, but nonetheless had been loitering, by necessity, nearby the entire time. Whatever the case may be, Stride is dead soon afterwards, and Jack, if it is indeed Jack, is disturbed by Louis Diemschutz's pony as it enters Dutfield's Yard, and then he, whoever *he* is, disappears again.⁴⁰

³⁹ See Martin L. Friedland, *The Trials of Israel Lipski: A True Story of Victorian Murder in the East End of London* (London: MacMillan, 1984). To put it in context, Lipski was a common ethnic slur against Jews relating to a murderer of that name who had killed nearby in 1887 (on Batty Street).

⁴⁰ *Daily News*, October 1, 1888.

Think once more of all those people present in the area. Each bound for anonymity but for their imbrication within the sprawl of the Ripper case. We are speaking here of relatively late hours, past midnight, on the weekend. Each individual is going about their business in a relatively quiet, but nonetheless rough area. They are accustomed to violence to a degree. They are somewhat aware that a serial killer is operating in the East End. He has killed but twice yet. A third and fourth will be added by the time the populace awakes, and there will be no doubt by then what they are up against. Later, Jack will perform arguably the most vicious murder on historical record, and then the silence that lasts more than a century, and will, one suspects, continue indefinitely.

The FBI analysis deems it unlikely that this silence was due to suicide, concluding instead, that it was due to a possible arrest for another offense or, in line with other cases of this kind, that Jack knew he was close to being identified, possibly through an interview with the police. Had such an interview taken place, Douglas infers that Jack would have appeared relaxed, visibly unshaken by his crimes, after all he believed they were justified, that he was merely removing 'perishable items - who were like garbage.'⁴¹

Speculation aside, Jack's performance as aesthetic cipher for the East End streetscape involves a simple dialectic. The internationalisation of pervasive amorality is externalised on victims of indifference to Victorian London. The slum that operates as commercial passage or site of charity or middle-class hysteria is expected to sprawl incoherently according to contingent necessities. First, fallen businesses collapse into doss-house floors upon which those laid-low eke out fitful sleep. Wind sweeps into cracked windows. Gin props up the days of slum-dwellers. The concept of finance lives in the West End, glimpsed as it passes along the Commercial Road. Slim markets sustain in the most basic manner. Tattle and ornaments are cautiously guarded on the body. Not to be left lying around. Endemic knife-crime permeates the night. Violence just is. Menial jobs occupy the slightly-fortunate in return for a non-life where to be awake is to be at work. Immigrants then, as now, flood in and nobody likes it. Poverty, knife-crime, immigration. East London is a circle. Jack just cut triangles through it. A bleak poem ensuring that Whitechapel is inscribed in the wider culture's memory as a site of enduring cruelty. Jacks are the scars that first pock-marked the emerging

⁴¹ FBI, 7.

atmospherics of this industrialised hellscape. The countryside is bled and the city fed. Fed with a psychosphere of uprooted confusion. Intrication of anonymous selves becomes normalised. This is your future. This is how we will come to live. We will learn to live it through a haze of repression, bouts of disorderliness, and occasional passivity.

And it works, for the most part. The cityscape accelerates and inhabitants absorb its traits. Slum compression and contraction breed distinct survival skills. Enclaves demarcate zones of humanity and quasi-humanity. But also encourage, through environmental pressure, different styles of intelligence. In the slum, goodness may be found, but you will find no better human-predator elsewhere. The educated desire Jack to have been a man of learning. The suave medical doctor. No harm if his get-up is slightly theatrical. Middle-class professionals were no strangers to prostitutes, of course, nor anatomy. Though they might have found it harder to sit unnoticed, as Jack surely did, in local public houses in the rougher parts of the East End. In fact, as Gardner and Best's testimonies attest, one would have needed to look the part not to have been noticed. One would need to have been engrained with the face of the slum. This visage cannot be removed no matter how far one climbs up the ladder. Jack is of the street.

Jack is acclimatised to the feint light and the distinction between constable boot and prostitute heel. He can differentiate between those who notice and those who choose not to see. He knows that in certain conditions there are those who will not resist when given the chance to die. And as Jack loiters outside Dutfield's Yard he embeds with the psychosphere. He cannot master it, but he has externalised what it has internalised in him. The inside comes out. The entire world learns to see how far indifference to the slum goes. And how it goes. 'Bring your cameras as I guide you through the crime scenes of Jack the Ripper,' the guides inform us, 'but stay close, this is a rough area.'