REVISITING THE MAYBRICK ‘DIARY’

Part One

William Beadle

In forthcoming editions of 'The Journal' WS1888 Chairman, William Beadle will be revisiting many of the issues and debates that have dominated the modern era of Ripperology.

Ten years ago I decided to update my 1995 work ‘Jack the Ripper: Anatomy of a Myth’ to incorporate new information on William Bury which had come to light since its publication. But with research, when you kick one door open you find another confronting you and it quickly become clear that a completely new book was required. That work will, I hope, be published next spring.

I had originally planned to assess recent suspects and theories and I had already prepared a chapter on them. But as my new work took shape it became apparent that the chapter would not dovetail with it. It seemed a shame to waste the material and in the spring of 2002 I asked my friend and fellow Whitechapel Society member Christine Warman if she would like to publish it in ‘Mensa’s’ crime magazine, which she edits. Christine kindly said yes and reproduced it in the June and July editions. As the Maybrick ‘diary’ continues to intrigue us I thought the ‘Whitechapel Society 1888 Journal’ might also like to make use of the critique, along with my assessment of Francis Tumblety and other suspects which will appear in a future edition. The ‘diary’ is now firmly settled into its niche in Ripper literature and whilst I do not personally believe that it is the solution to these crimes it has undoubtedly helped maintain interest in them and brought many benefits, particularly new members who have joined the rest of us falling under the spell cast by the gruesome events of that terrible long ago Autumn.

That fascination means that Ripperology is, and will remain, the broadest of churches with room for all views.

Bill Beadle

James Maybrick was a Liverpool cotton merchant who died of arsenical poisoning in May 1889. Following his death Maybrick's young wife Florence was charged with murdering him, tried and convicted. She served fifteen years in prison. But many believe Florence Maybrick was the victim of a miscarriage of justice.

In March 1992 an unemployed Liverpool scrap merchant named Michael Barrett approached London Literary Agency Rupert Crew with a journal purporting to be James Maybrick's confession to the Jack the ripper murders. Subsequently a watch turned up, also in Liverpool, inscribed with the initials of the canonical victims, 'J Maybrick', and the words 'I am Jack'.

Such are the bare facts of what has now become ripperology's greatest debate. Is the diary genuine; was James Maybrick indeed Jack the Ripper? The story of the diary is an extraordinary one; or at least the claims are. Michael Barrett originally said that he had received it in May 1991 from a friend of his, Tony Devereux, who died three months later. But in June 1994 Barrett issued a statement through his solicitor that the diary was a fake concocted by him.1

A new twist was added four weeks later by Barrett's wife Anne Graham (she has since divorced him). She claims that the diary was in her possession and that she secretly put Devereux up to giving it to her husband in the hope that he would turn it into a novel. So where did Anne Graham get it from? She says from her father Billy Graham. Prior to his death in November, 1994, Billy Graham confirmed this saying that his step-mother, Edith passed it on to him in 1943 telling him that it was from 'granny', thought to mean Edith's mother, Elizabeth Formby. In 1889

1
Formby ran a laundry near the Maybrick residence and was friendly with a servant there. Apparently Formby was the local ‘fence’. It was suggested that she stole items filched from the Maybrick home and in this way came into possession of the diary. Although it passed through many hands nobody seemingly read it prior to Anne Graham. Billy Graham also made the eye popping claim that his grandmother was in fact Florence Maybrick who had his father at the tender age of 16 in Hartlepool. This is not verifiable, especially as Billy Graham's grandparents are recorded as being an Adam and Alice Graham, née Spence.

Moving on to the evidence, reams of expert testimony about the dating of the ink and the handwriting have been adduced. Thus far, ink experts appear to be marginally in favour of the ink having been manufactured after 1889. Handwriting experts are more positive that the journal is not in Maybrick's hand. Views are unlikely to change, especially those of scientific experts, and it would seem that, at best, the diary's supporters are likely to achieve no more than a draw.

The style of writing also appears to be more in tune with the twentieth century than the nineteenth. Attempts to find words and phrases not in use in Victorian times have not borne fruit, but perhaps more interestingly there is no methodology peculiar to Victorian times. For example, Dickens ‘Our Mutual Friend’ abounds with phraseology like:

“In these times of ours, though concerning the exact year there is no need to be precise”.

“Wheresoever the strong tide met with an impediment, his gaze paused for an instant” and “partly to the circumbient air”.

One would expect a nineteenth century journal to be more in keeping with this, elaborate style of writing than the Maybrick diary is. Instead, what we find throughout are words and phrases more in common in the late twentieth century.

A very significant discrepancy is that James Maybrick simply does not fit the psychological profile of a serial killer. In 1888 he was 50; no multicide has ever erupted at such a late age, as far as I am aware, including drug users, as it is alleged Maybrick was. He was a successful business man who yearned for a knighthood, not an anti-social misfit frustrated in a menial occupation.

He was domiciled not in London, but Liverpool, and serial killers normally operate within their own locales. As Professor David Canter remarks, Maybrick's residence challenges this thesis (Criminal Shadows P/B page 135) Nor did Maybrick have any known connection with the East End of London. His ex-mistress was residing there in 1888, but their affair had taken place twenty years earlier and seems to have been restricted to Liverpool and Durham. Leading on from this, Maybrick is known to have had his share of girlfriends and in Florence he wooed and won a highly attractive young woman twenty years his junior. This is all wholly unlike the accepted profile of 'Jack the ripper' which depicts him as a man unable to socialise or interact with women. Maybrick had children, a distinct rarity among serial killers, whose sexuality is of death not life, a point borne out by one of the few who did produce offspring. Fred and Rose West treated their children barbarically and murdered one of them. At the end of his journal, Maybrick shows remorse, an alien concept to multicides except when they can gain something from it. More typical of the genre is John Wayne Gacey. When the mother of one of his 33 victims said that he should be executed many times over, Gacey sneeringly responded that she should take 33 Valiums.

John Douglas, one of the world's top experts on serial killers and their psychology, draws attention to a major contradiction between the diarist and the 'ripper' murders. The diarist takes great care to plan his campaign and avoid capture only to explode in a frenzy of butchery with the murders themselves. The former is the hallmark of a highly organised multicide, the latter that of a disorganised impulse killer. (The Cases That Haunt Us H/B page 74). Whilst Douglas sees in the 'ripper' some aspects of what is known as a mixed offender, i.e. straddling the gap between 'organised' and 'disorganised' murderers, here the contrast is so stark as to make the
differences irreconcilable. We shall return to this point again as it has important ramifications for another claim put forward by the diary's supporters. Maybrick's age likewise seriously tells against him in the identification stakes. Judging by his photograph he looked fifty and all the witnesses describe a much younger man. In fairness, eyewitness evidence is inherently unreliable, but one would expect some descriptions at least to be nearer Maybrick's actual age.

We can now turn to the diary's contents and ask the question; would they have convinced the police that the confession was genuine? In 1889, possibly, although there would still have been puzzling flaws to contend with, some of the details of the Chapman and Eddowes murders could only have come from somebody with insider knowledge such as the murderer himself. But it was not impressive by 1991 when they were in the public domain. Here the flaws stick out like a collection of sore thumbs; plus the diary is silent on discoveries since 1989.

The diary's adherents claim that they are in a catch 22 situation; if the diarist gets his facts right then he has cribbed them off other sources; if not then it proves the journal is a forgery. Like it or not that is the only test which can be applied. No forger is going to sign off with the words “yah, boo, sucks”. And the test works. In 1947 Walter Graham Rowland was executed for the murder of a prostitute. Before Rowland was hanged a man named Ware confessed to the crime but later retracted his confession. But by applying the standards which the diary lobby complain about I was able to show that Ware's confession was wholly credible whereas his retraction was not.3

There is of course a direct comparison here with the ripper diary. Let us look at it in detail. The diarist's stated motive for embarking on the murders is his wife's infidelity with another man. Florence is referred to throughout as the ‘whore’ (or ‘bitch’) and her lover the ‘whore master’. The affair allegedly commenced at the beginning of 1888. Maybrick takes his revenge by first strangling a prostitute in Manchester and committing the murders. He rounds out 1888 by attacking and leaving for dead another woman in Manchester and, circa February, 1889, injures or kills a further victim, the journal is signed ‘Jack The Ripper’ and dated May 3rd, 1889. Maybrick died on May 11th.

Although never actually named, the ‘whore master’ is identified from an incident at the 1889 Grand National as Alfred Brierley, a friend and business associate of Maybrick's who had a brief, but barely adulterous, affair with Florence in 1889. (The sexual side of it lasted a mere three days, March 21st - 24th, a point confirmed by Brierley in a letter to her on May 6th, 1889).

The evidence is that their relationship slowly blossomed during the late autumn and winter of 1888-9. This is verified by a number of sources. Charles Ratcliffe, a friend of James Maybrick, in a letter dated November 2nd, 1888: ‘think Alf is getting the inside track with Mrs M's affections.’

James Maybick’s brother, Edwin, to Florence's mother, Baroness Caroline von Roques, May 1889: ‘She met him this winter at some dances.... she was always so quiet and domestic before, I would never have believed it of Florie, but this winter she was changed and would go out to dances’ (with Maybrick and Brierley.)

Von Roques later reiterated this in a letter to the Home Secretary on August 4th, 1892: “The December of 1888 was the first time during her married life she had been able to dance or had been out in society; and her health was then stronger. She was left unattended by her husband...”

Now there is one glaringly obvious problem here; Florence's relationship with Brierley did not get going until after the canonical Ripper murders were over. Indeed, judging from Ratcliffe's letter the first glimmer of affection between the couple was only starting to appear around the time of Mary Kelly's murder. This is a bind which the diary's supporters have not been able to get out of, try as they might. Paul Feldman argues in his 1997 pro-diary work, ‘Jack the Ripper: The Final Chapter’ that Florence had other lovers and that Brierley was not the one alluded to in the first part of the journal. In fact, the diarist is consistent in his references to the ‘whore master’
throughout, including the Grand National incident in which Brierley becomes the clearly identifiable culprit. But let us examine the argument and see where it takes us.

Feldman points to an entry in the diary, purporting to have been made circa Christmas 1888, just at the time Brierley's acquaintanceship with the Maybricks was beginning to flourish, in which Maybrick says that not content with one 'whore master' Florence also has eyes on a second, i.e. Brierley. Subsequently, the diarist alludes to the possibility that Florence may 'take two', uses 'lovers' and 'affairs' in the plural and writes after the Grand National that 'all' had taken her. In support of this Paul Feldman proffers a letter from another Florence, a Miss Aunspaugh, which indict Mrs Maybrick as a serial adulterer from 1882 onwards.

The husband may indeed be the last to know but six years is rather a long time to wear a cuckold's cap without being aware of it! In fact, it is at this point that the whole house of cards collapses. Florence Aunspaugh's letter somewhat obviously derives from one written to her father, John, by the ubiquitous Charles Ratcliffe who, equally obviously, by that time, no longer had the inside track on matters Maybrick following James's death, because his letter is full of preposterous errors about the case. There is no need to go into them all, just those concerning Florence and her so-called lovers.

"...Mrs Maybrick was sick in bed when James died. He had been dead only a few hours when Michael (another Maybrick brother) forced her to get up and go with Tom (a third brother) to Liverpool on a trivial affair which he represented to her as being most important. Whilst she was gone Michael and two policemen searched the house and in her room they claim to have found quantities of arsenic, thirteen love letters from Edwin, seven from Brierley and five from Williams." (author's note; the last named may have been a solicitor).

I'm afraid that whoever was filling Ratcliffe's head with this nonsense had a vivid imagination to make up for his or her ignorance of the facts, there was no subterfuge to get Florence out of the house. She was lying down in a spare bedroom when the search was made, not by Michael and two policemen, but Michael, Edwin, and two sisters, friends of the family, one of whom had at one time been engaged to James. They found not 25 letters, just three, only one of which - from Brierley - was regarded by Michael, and later by the police, as being of any importance, the contents of the other two, and who sent them, are unknown.

Charles Ratcliffe then fed John Ausnspaugh this grossly distorted and distended account of what had happened, and Florence Aunspaugh later enlarged upon it herself, a classic example of the old and much loved and practised game of Chinese Whispers.

There is not one scintilla of evidence that Florence Maybrick was the cotton brokers' exercise bike. There is no evidence that she had any lovers aside from the brief dalliance with Brierley, and that was at a time when she was consulting solicitors about the possibility of divorcing Maybrick. (See Bernard Ryan and Lord Havers QC, MP 'The Poisoned Life of Mrs Maybrick' P/B pages 34 - 82)

All of which deprives the diarist of his motive for the murders. In point of fact, James Maybrick's reaction to discovering Florence's dalliance with Alfred Brierley was rather more standard than cutting up prostitutes the year before the affair actually took place! He dragged her around the bedroom, punched her in the eye, and gave orders for her mail to be intercepted (March 29th, 1889).

May 3rd, (when he allegedly completed the diary), was the last day Maybrick was able to leave the house and that was for two brief periods only, a lunchtime visit to his office and an evening walk. He spent the rest of the day in bed, the arsenic beginning to take its deadly toll. He hardly seems to have been in the condition, or had the opportunity, to finish writing a journal. The final entry is a bleak one, longing for a death which he predicts will come before June.
In fact, there is no evidence prior to May 10th that Maybrick seriously imagined he was dying. As late as the 7th his doctors thought he would be well again in a few days, and that morning he had remarked cheerfully: “I am quite a different man altogether today”.

An extraordinary remark from someone who has recently signed a full confession to being ‘Jack the Ripper’ and left it in a place where he thought it would be found.

We now turn the clock back to 1888. In Whitechapel, says the diarist, he rented a room in Middlesex Street. Middlesex Street is central to the East End murders save for Polly Nichols. But no actual address, or any other details, is provided. Why? Because they could be specifically checked against street directories? But here, alas, the horse has already bolted. The opening page of the diary finds Florence and Brierley trysting in Liverpool's Whitechapel district, while Maybrick takes his ease in the Poste House pub and plots his murder campaign. Or rather, it doesn't, because the Poste House did not exist as such in 1888. It was then known as The Muck Midden. The main post office was not built until 1899, and thereafter the place was called The New Post Office Hotel until the 1960s when it finally became known as The Poste House. Like the timing of Florence's affair with Brierley, this is another blind alley the diary does not find its way out of. All sorts of counterpoints have been put forward. Perhaps the diarist was actually in a London pub? Research showed that there was no such place in London in 1888. Back to Liverpool and The Old Post Inn which has, says Shirley Harrison in The Diary of Jack the Ripper existed since the 1840s. But it has never been known as The Poste House and Shirley honestly admits that the issue remains an unresolved puzzle (New Edition of The Diary of Jack the Ripper P/B page 78). Of course, there is a simple answer which is that the diary is a forgery.

Now to the murders. The first takes place not in London, but Manchester. No trace of it has ever emerged, nor of the other Manchester attack in December 1888 - the woman left for dead - there is in fact a curious postscript to the latter crime because the diarist implies he returned home and beat Florence. I say ‘implies’ because the passage is ambiguous as to whether he actually means Florence or whether he is still referring to the victim. Shirley Harrison plumps for the former. If so, then there is no evidence of any such beating. Florence never mentioned it to anyone, or displayed marks or injuries resulting from it, and the servants heard nought; all very unlike March 29th, 1889.

In this context we should also look at the assault or murder which the diary claims for the winter of 1889. Exactly when we do not know, although it can, chronologically, be charted as having taken place prior to March 12th. Here, the alleged Maybrick states that he struck too soon and was almost caught, but next time he will “take all”.

There is no trace of any such crime, at least not in the East End in the first few months of 1889. But it does sound curiously like the murder of Frances Coles in February 1891. Coles’ killer was thought to have been interrupted by the approach of a policeman and only her throat was cut. So was our diarist making a mistake, or more likely, cribbing from the Coles’ murder and cunningly bringing it forward two years without being specific enough to give the game away - he hoped? If it is derived from the Coles killing, then either way it pinpoints the diary as a fake. But, we ask ourselves, why would a forger go to the lengths of inventing a murder and a beating and juxtaposing another crime, which happened almost two years after Maybrick's death, into the story?

Perhaps to make us ask that very question, enhance the diary at second sight so to speak. It also has the merit of hiding the fact that without these two pieces of ballast the journal may appear too obviously sired by books on the 'ripper' and the most recent Florence Maybrick inquiry, ‘The Poisoned Life of Mrs Maybrick.’

The diarist gets over the first fence, Polly Nichols's murder, only to be unseated at the second when he repeats the hoary old myth about the two farthings, which 'ripper' legerdemain has the killer leaving at Annie Chapman's feet. This originated in the Evening News of September 8th, 1888, most likely from someone claiming to have seen the body, and down through the years became an article of faith which nobody really questioned until the 1990s when Philip Sugden
nailed it as a myth in his *Complete History of Jack The Ripper* (First Edition - R/B pages 109-11). There were no farthings. If the diary was ‘kosher’ then one would not expect to find any reference to them; the diary has four. We shall see this pattern repeat itself.

It is at this point that the diarist begins to make up little rhymes about the murders, to outdo, he says, his brother Michael, who was a composer. Shirley Harrison's research showed up the fact that Michael actually wrote the music but not the lyrics (First Edition - H/B -page 61). What Shirley did not then do was to see how Bernard Ryan describes Michael in *The Poisoned Life of Mrs Maybrick*. i.e., a composer and author of popular songs (page 20). Based on that depiction a forger would automatically assume that Michael wrote both words and music, I certainly would. What, I suggest, we are seeing here is direct evidence of a mistake arising from a term used in one of the genuine source works on the Maybrick case. It is slips like this which trap a forger.

We move on. There are no problems with *Liz Stride*, but *Catherine Eddowes* is a different matter altogether. Here the diary records some of the contents of her pockets, an empty tin box, boxes containing tea and sugar, and a cigarette case (crossed out in the diary). Meanwhile, Stephen Knight's ‘*Masonic arches*’ become the two halves of the letter ‘M’ for ‘*Maybrick*’ carved on Cathy's cheeks to taunt the police!

Whooer-up! Let’s halt for a minute and stand back and look at this. Here's a man who has just committed a ghastly murder in a public thoroughfare, people still to-ing and fro-ing in the vicinity with the possibility that somebody is going to come into Mitre Square at any moment and he is examining the contents of boxes and carving his initials on the victim's face to mock the police! It all sounds as if an imaginative novel has accidentally wandered into the pages of non-fiction.

Let us break this down into its component parts. When *Leon Beron*, who lived in Stepney, was murdered in 1911 his killer(s) carved ‘S’ shaped cuts in both cheeks. But they took him all the way across London to the wintry depths of Clapham Common at three o'clock in the morning to do so.

James Maybrick was no alienated outsider but a pompous, middle-aged businessman who hoped for a knighthood. Yet we are asked to accept that this demonstrably staid member of the establishment was deliberately taunting the establishment; not psychologically very likely at all.

**Notes:**
1, Barrett subsequently retracted this but then retracted the retraction.
2, Florence called herself ‘Graham’ after being released from prison, seemingly after her mother’s maiden name of ‘*Ingraham*’.
3, See the author’s *Wrongly Hanged*?
4, See the author’s *The Killing of Leon Beron*
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Part Two

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The three boxes and the cigarette case were found not beside the body, but inside Eddowes's deep pockets which the 'ripper' had partially cut through, as with Chapman. So what we are asked to believe is that Maybrick ransacked Cathy's wretched walking home to get at her possessions, removed the boxes, examined them, tasted what two of them contained (which he would have to do in order to determine the contents) and then replaced them in pockets he had cut open in the first place. What on earth for? Why, if he did take them out of the pockets, did he not leave them with the items which were left next to the body! These were three boot buttons, a thimble, and a tin containing pawn tickets. Crucially, the diarist omits all mention of these.

Now the facial cuts. The simple explanation would be that these were part of the 'ripper's' ever deepening cycle of ferocity, which would be taken to extremes with the murder of Mary Kelly when her face was cut to ribbons. The murder of Catherine Eddowes took place in the darkest corner of Mitre Square and the one street lamp was on the other side of the square. This points to the facial injuries being slashes in the dark. Following on, the ripper started to ransack whatever money or valuables she had, then took fright and fled.

The diary's problems with Cathy Eddowes do not end there. 'A kidney for supper' gloats the diarist. We do not know precisely when he was supposed to have written this but the proximity, and his breathless style in describing his alleged close call with Stride, suggest that it was meant to be only hours after the crimes. The remark about the kidney 'for supper', tends to endorse this.

But how did he know it was a kidney? Maybrick had no medical knowledge, that part of the Square was pitch dark and the Eddowes Inquest did not begin until October 4th.

Yet another difficulty arises when we consider the route that the killer took after the murder, i.e., via Goulston Street. If it was Maybrick then he was taking a very circuitous route back to his lodgings in adjacent Middlesex Street. In fact it actually involved passing across the top of Middlesex Street!

This makes no sense whatsoever. Nor am I convinced by Shirley Harrison's theory that he took this route because traders were beginning to set up in Middlesex Street (1)

Let's hear from a market trader, a friend of mine who up to two years ago had a fruit and veg. stall in nearby Leadenhall Market. I asked him what time the traders started to set up. About 5.30 a.m. in general but costers like himself began at 2.30. But he doubted that this would have applied in 1888 because there was not the range of fruit and veg. to be displayed then. Moreover, Warren and Arnold gave as their reason for wiping out the graffiti at 6 a.m. that traders were beginning to set up. This is all verified by Detective Halse. His perambulations took him first to Middlesex Street, then Wentworth Street and back through Goulston Street at 2.20. He encountered only two people, in Wentworth Street.

Even if there had been traders setting up in Middlesex Street, then by taking the longer route he might have run into even more of them when he eventually got back to it. And Goulston Street itself is part of the Sunday Market!

The details of the Eddowes murder have been claimed as a strong card in the diary's pack. When examined the opposite appears to be true, an impression not offset by Mary Kelly's murder.

According to the diary, circa October, Maybrick struck Florence for the first time because she had paid an anxious visit to his Doctor to complain about unprescribed medicines he was taking.
In fact, there is no evidence that Florence ever told her husband of this visit and the Doctor checked surreptitiously during a normal house call and never mentioned anything to Maybrick. All the extant evidence indicates that Maybrick was never violent towards his wife prior to March 29th, 1889.

But this is a vicious little prelude to the Kelly murder. Here the diarist makes an interesting claim; that 'Maybrick' scrawled the letters 'FM', meaning 'Florence Maybrick', on the wall next to Mary Kelly's mutilated corpse. Certainly this is a new point, equally certainly, from the photograph there is what could be an 'FM' on the wall. Whether it is is another matter. The 'letters' might be blood splashes or crevices in an ageing wall. Also, the 'F' could equally well be a 'P' and the 'M' is much bolder, indicating two separate hands. But let us pursue the possibility that it is 'FM'.

It could easily, and more logically, stand for 'Fleming Mary', 'F' for Fleming because Fleming shared a Christian name with Barnett; meaning that Fleming, was back on the scene.

Moving to the murder itself, there are a number of serious flaws which militate against the authenticity of the diary.

First the heart. Dr. Bond records it as being 'absent'. The logical interpretation of this is that it was missing completely. Other organs were also absent from their rightful places, but Bond carefully records where they were found. Not the heart though.

That it was not at Miller's Court is borne out by a book published only six years after the murders, 'A system of Legal Medicine' edited by Allan McLane Hamilton. Discussing the Kelly murder, it states: "...all the organs except the heart were found scattered about the room."

At the time the missing heart was one of the items which the police deliberately held back. Coroner MacDonald told the Inquest: "If we at once made public every fact... the ends of justice might be retarded." Even Bond's involvement did not surface until November 1987 and Bagster-Phillips was permitted to give the cause of death only (technically a breach of the coroner's law).

But according to the diarist he took nothing away from Miller's Court: "Regret I did not take any of it away with me. It is supper time."

In 'The Diary of Jack the Ripper' Shirley Harrison advances the theory that 'Maybrick' forgot about it until later when he wrote: "May God forgive me for the deeds I committed on Kelly, no heart, no heart..."

Unfortunately not. He was very specific about not taking away any of the organs (see above). "No heart, no heart" is common in his phraseology. Previously he had written "no regrets, no regrets". In fact the context in which "no heart" is written is a belated atonement for the murders.

We move on to another glaring error. The first completely new books to feature Bond's report in full were the Jack the Ripper A to Z and Melvin Facilough's, The Ripper and the Royals, both published in 1991. Paul Begg Jack the Ripper: The Uncensored Facts (1988) quotes part of the report, but not that dealing with the mutilations. Martin Fido gives it in full in the 1989 paperback edition of The Crimes, Detection and Death of Jack the Ripper, but paperbacks are a different part of the market and those who have the hardback edition are unlikely to buy the paperback, including libraries.

Prior to the publication of the Bond report it was an article of faith that Mary's breasts had been left on the bedside table. Not so. One was placed under her head, the other at her feet. The diarist however simply repeats the mistaken belief that they were on the table.

Once again, Shirley Harrison strives to answer the point opining that the diarist's remark: "I thought of leaving them by the whore's feet" indicates a measure of uncertainty. In fact it demonstrates the opposite; that he was making a specific choice, borne out by the words that he left them on the table because he; "thought they belonged there".

Flaw No. 3 concerns a new discovery in the case. In the October, 1996 edition of 'Ripperana' its editor, N P Warren, drew attention to the close range photograph of Mary's remains and concluded that her left thigh bone had been split longitudinally from the hip downwards, an injury which could not have been caused by a knife but something like a hatchet. Mr Warren is a
practising surgeon and therefore speaks from considerable experience and expertise. In connection with this, an article in the *Globe* February 16th, 1891, states that on a visit to Scotland Yard the reporter was shown a hatchet (apparently found at No. 13): In connection with this, an article in the *Globe* February 16th, 1891, states that on a visit to Scotland Yard the reporter was shown a hatchet (apparently found at No. 13):

"Used by the Whitechapel murderer to hack and disfigure the poor girl in Dorset Street" (2)

So the ripper used a hatchet at Miller's Court. But the diarist makes no mention of this whatsoever. Had he done so then it would have been a crucial point in the diary's favour. For a forger to have known about it that person would have had to peruse every newspaper report on criminally related topics for a period of over 27 months following the canonical murders. Not impossible, but frankly unlikely. No Ripper researcher seems to have come across it prior to 1996. The absence of the hatchet in the diary does nothing to further its cause. Undoubtedly the hatchet was one of the things deliberately withheld, along with the heart, from the public at the time and for precisely this reason; to test a bogus confession.

Now to the final problem. According to 'Maybrick' he was the client whom Hutchinson saw pick Mary up at 2 a.m. The diarist confirms this with one of his little rhymes: "A handkerchief of red took me to bed."

Not if Mary Kelly died eight hours later it didn't! The diarist seems to have 'forgotten Goschen'(3) as the saying goes, or to be more exact he has overlooked Caroline Maxwell and Maurice Lewis. Their testimony is now supported by modern day forensic pathology and indirectly by Dr. Bond's report although Bond couldn't be expected to know that at the time.

The discrepancies pile up on one another until they are in danger of becoming the whole. Where the diary is accurate about the 'ripper' murders, the material has been in the public domain up to November 1987. The single most disturbing item is where the murderer left Mary Kelly's breasts. The canard that they were on the bedside table was given out to the press on November 9th, 1888 and appeared in the newspapers the following day. All the published works, up to the paperback edition of Martin Fido's book, regurgitated it as an accepted fact. Then along comes the man who should have put us all the right and instead he repeats the same old error.

For the diary to be genuine one would expect it not to be confounded by recent revelations; one would also expect it to instigate research which proved its claims. It fails on both counts.

An example of this is the 'new' 'Jack the ripper' letter, dated September 17th, 1888 which came to light during Paul Feldman's researches. Like the notorious September 25th letter, it begins 'Dear Boss' and is signed 'Jack the ripper'. Both letters are written in the same style, and that style is essentially reproduced by the diarist to peppers his prose with, “ha ha's,” “rip, rip, rip” and phrases like "how can they stop me now". Paul Feldman, not surprisingly, concludes that both letters were sent by the man who wrote the diary (*Jack The Ripper: The Final Chapter*. p.273). But, unfortunately - how much that word abounds in connection with the diary - there are two major problems. There is no similarity in handwriting between the two letters, and neither of them is in James Maybrick's handwriting. If they are disguised then that disguise is deeper than the water the Titanic sank in.

Another red herring trawled by the diary lobby is that Maybrick suffered from Multiple Personality Disorder, and wrote in different hands while in different personas. The obvious objection, that by that advanced stage his illness would have been apparent to everyone, is not addressed. Or perhaps you may prefer John Douglas's caustic one word dismissal; - 'bogus' (*The Cases That Haunt Us*. p.13.)

Another problem which the diary could have done without is its author's claim to have chalked up the infamous 'JUWES' message in Goulston Street by way of leaving the police a
clue. In recent years the Goulston Street 'graffiti' has been strictly the province of those with bizarre theories to peddle.

Rather surprisingly, for she is a good, no-nonsense professional writer, Shirley Harrison allowed herself to be seduced into their ranks in the first edition of *The Diary of Jack the Ripper* opining that the clue was 'JAMES' spelt as 'JUMES' with the 'M' inverted into a W. Maybrick sailing as close as he dared with his clue (H/B p.81). This notion is eliminated in the second edition, Shirley arguing that 'JUWES' echoes the many words misspelt in the diary (P/B p. 122). Unfortunately not where 'Jews' is concerned. This is spelt correctly throughout. Once again, the horse doesn't run. The impression is of a dismounted jockey trying to drag it over the fences.

Our next foray does nothing to contradict this. Here, searching for evidence which might sustain the diary its supporters are reduced to hunting for scraps outside Donald McCormick's poorhouse door - the poem 'Eight Little Whores', purportedly penned by the Ripper in 1888.

The suggestion is that this also echoes the diary. ‘Eight Little Whores’ first saw the light of day in McCormick's 1959 book *The Identity of Jack The Ripper*, The mythologising Dr. Dutton claims it was one of 34 letters and poems he analysed for the police. Yes: just as he didn't assist at the post mortems either.

Nor is McCormick's actual book safe to rely on. At one point he quotes Dr. Killeen to establish that Martha Tabram's killer had anatomical knowledge.4 That quote has since been shown to be fictitious.

There is no evidence of the poem ever having been in the police files and, shades of McCormick's *Ochrana Gazette*, no independent source has ever seen it.

From bad to worse. In the December 1997 edition of 'Ripperana' N P Warren draws attention to a possible comparison between the hoax tape in the Yorkshire Ripper hunt and the contents of the Maybrick journal.

Tape: "I'll keep on going for quite a while yet... Even if you do get near I'll probably top myself first".

'Maybrick' journal "I shall go on until I am caught. Perhaps I should top myself and save the hangman a job".

The hoax tape has of course been in the public domain for many years now. So, if the diary is genuine then it somehow manages to echo a brace of letters Maybrick did not write, a known hoax and a piece of doggerel with a provenance so dubious that it is virtually certain to have been a hoax. The alternative is that the diary itself is a forgery drawing linguistically from the September 25th letter and two hoaxes. Now which of these two solutions do you find the most likely?

The tendency of the diarists to grab at any straw on offer, only to find that it is the short one, is perfectly illustrated by their treatment of Baroness Von Roques's letter of August 4th, 1892, referred to earlier. This, they argue, demonstrates that Maybrick had plenty of opportunity to commit the December 1888 assault/murder in Manchester. But this coin has two sides and the reverse is that Florence's mother was also saying, in effect, that Maybrick did not have the opportunities to carry out the London murders earlier.

When I first read the diary, littered as it is with such deletions, I had the impression that it had started out as notes for a novel. This would explain why it was written in an old photograph album; explain too why 62 pages of the album, some before and some after the text of the diary, are missing.

As to the diarist. How could seemingly ordinary people conceive and execute such a brilliant forgery? But what is brilliant about it? It is no more man a mere 15,000 words in length (probably less), and judged strictly as a forgery, the writer is guilty of slipshod research, both in terms of fact (the 'Poste House', the farthings and Michael Maybrick's skills) and the psychological make up of serial killers. Here we return to John Douglas's earlier point; he has, writes Douglas, never heard of a serial killer so organised in his preparation, but swinging around 180 degrees and committing murders in such disorganised fashion.
Add to this the forger's inability to stay abreast of developments in the 'ripper' case, his lack of consecutive thought (the Middlesex/Goulston Streets fiasco) and the failure to find a viable alternative to Brierley prior to the latter's affair with Florence and you do indeed have a document which could have been drafted by somebody of quite ordinary talents and learning; ie, the sort of person who would spell 'rendezvous' 'rondaveau' - as the diarist does.

Recent history is replete with examples of how people with no special gifts have perpetrated hoaxes which have convinced some, or all, of the experts. The 'Hitler Diaries' fooled Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper, and eminence grise on the subject, and were sold for US $2,000,000. But the forgery was later described by West German archivists as: 'The grotesquely superficial concoction of a copyist endowed with limited intellectual capacity' Sounds very much like our diarist, doesn't it?

Then we have the novelist Clifford Irving who duped publishers and even leading handwriting experts (something beyond the diarist's capacity) with his fake Howard Hughes biography. Irving was academically undistinguished and regarded by his literary contemporaries as having only a slight talent. In the world of palaeontology the Piltdown hoax conned the entire profession for over thirty years. How is difficult to understand, as the hoax was not even elaborate, let alone scientific. Indeed, one candidate mentioned as the perpetrator is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle who lived nearby.

Sir Arthur was himself taken in by the antics of two little girls, aged eight and twelve, who claimed to have photographed fairies up in Yorkshire. Many years later, now elderly ladies, the mischievous duo revealed that it was all just a childhood prank. But a lot of people believed in them at the time, probably due to a desire to escape from the awful realities of the First World War.

Which leads to an important observation. People are fooled because they are receptive to being fooled. In the examples quoted above we have two fascinating individual cases, the much fabled holy grail of palaeontology, the missing link, and the need to get away from what was then unimaginable carnage into the gentle childhood world of make-believe. No subject in criminology has a greater pull on the imagination than the identity of 'Jack the ripper' and here were all the elements which people enjoy in a story, the welding together of two great Victorian causes celebres, sex, violence, and the haunting image of a beautiful young woman imprisoned for something which she may not have done, a great, blood soaked drama reeking with guilt and passion. You don't have to be a master forger to make people believe what they want to believe.

The foremost convert to the belief that the diary is either genuine or the work of some neglected genius is Professor David Canter. This is based on his assessment of the diarist's personality traits. (See Canter's foreword to the 2nd edition of Shirley Harrison's book). This view would, it seems to me, cut little ice with John Douglas, with his vast experience of multicides and the inner workings of their minds. It is clear that Douglas regards the diarist as having only the most superficial likeness to a serial killer. The diary, states Douglas, is significant for what it fails to reveal; he would expect the ripper's whole pathology to be laid out before us, and it isn't. (The Cases that Haunt us. page 74).

What is there left? Very little so it seems to me. The factual framework of the diary can be gleaned from a number of readily-to-hand sources. The Poisoned Life of Mrs. Maybrick for instance. There is no data about Maybrick's life in 1888 which cannot be obtained from this work. The paperback edition was published in 1989, and it is up to and including that year that the forger could have obtained his information on the 'ripper' from published sources, with one exception, the paperback edition of Martin Fido's The Crimes, Detection and Death of Jack the Ripper which I referred to earlier when making that point that if you had the hardback edition then you are unlikely to buy it again when it comes out in paperback (I didn't), and here there is something particularly interesting. In the 1987 hardback edition, Martin lists the items found in Cathy Eddowes's pockets on pages 68-70. But those which were lying next to her are listed much earlier, on pages 46-7, easy for a forger to overlook or forget, as the diarist does, especially one of limited acumen.
We stay with this book for the suggestion that the facial cuts were a sign of some sort. On page 75 Martin writes that the inverted 'V's on Cathy's cheeks point to a killer who was putting his personal mark on his victim's face. He also states that the kidney was removed by someone who knew what he had taken, a judgement echoed at the inquest by Dr. Brown, the City Police Surgeon. Somebody not used to lateral thinking would forget that Fido and Brown’s assessment did not apply to Maybrick. All-in-all, the Eddowes murder, as it appears in the diary, mirrors pages 68-75 of The Crimes, Detection and Death of Jack the Ripper too closely for comfort, like a badly fitted hairpiece, one can see the join.

The last argument which the diarists put up is simply one of desperation. If it is a forgery, then who is the forger?

Nobody has ever found out who the Piltdown hoaxer was either. Nor seemingly does anybody know, or want to know who glued the tail on to the so-called 'flying dinosaur' fossil unearthed in China a couple of years ago (Horizon Feb 21st 2002). Science, it appears, has a greater facility to concentrate on the relevant to the exclusion of the irrelevant than ripperology has.

The final item we need to consider is the watch. Like the diary, it has a somewhat troubled provenance (there's a surprise). The owner Albert Johnson, claims to have bought it from a Wallasey jeweller in 1992. This seems simple enough, especially as the jeweller recalls the scratch marks and says that the watch he sold was originally a family heirloom. He also states that Johnson subsequently pestered him with questions about it. Paul Feldman, however, has developed a theory that Johnson could have been descended from a branch of the Maybrick family, and that the watch might have been handed down to him within the family, the purchased watch being a separate one altogether! Shirley Harrison, rather pointedly, does not endorse this.

Both authors, however, believe that the watch is genuine and point to the fact that it has undergone two tests which do not undermine this belief. The first says that the engravings could date back to the late Victorian era, but not conclusively so. The second is more strongly in favour of the engravings going back at least several decades, but nonetheless recommends a more lengthy examination.

Paul Feldman remarks that the authenticity of the watch stands or falls with the authenticity of the diary. Yes. I know many of the people who believe in the diary and they are neither fools nor hoaxers. Their beliefs are genuine and deserve respect. Whatever else one might say, the diary has been instrumental in sustaining and furthering interest in ripperology.

But with the greatest respect to those who think the diary is authentic, I have to take, on the evidence before us, a diametrically opposite view, it is a fake, and poor, unhappy James Maybrick, who may, or may not, have been a murder victim himself, was most emphatically not 'Jack the ripper'.

REFERENCES:
2, Slightly condensed by the author.
3, This refers to George Joachim Goschen, 1st Viscount Gorschen (1831-1907). With Lord Randolph Churchill’s resignation as Chancellor of the Exchequer from Lord Salisbury’s government in December 1886, he assumed there was no one able enough to fill his shoes. Lord Salisbury appointed the highly able Liberal Unionist George Goschen who was more than capable of being Chancellor. This obvious manoeuvre stunned Churchill who famously admitted that he had “forgotten Goschen.”
4, I was misled by this in the first edition of Jack the Ripper: Anatomy of a Myth.