

R. Michael Gordon Responds to ‘Jack the Ripper At Last?’

Even though this writer is no longer on the trial of Jack the Ripper, having full confidence in the guilt of serial killer Severin A. Klosowski holding the mantle of Jack the Ripper, it is recognized that a response to Ms. Wojtczak’s *Jack the Ripper At Last?* is well in order. After all, the case is officially still open and one does enjoy a challenge.

Focusing on the Ripper murders themselves one might expect that a work with the rather large full face booking photo of Klosowski/Chapman/‘Jack’, and the title *Jack the Ripper At Last?*, the reader could well expect to find quite a few pages devoted to the crimes of this cowardly murderer during the “Ripper period”. Alas, there are scant few pages on old Jack and his bloody work. For the most part one will not find details of his ripping; however one will discover a good deal of apologetic verbiage about Severin Klosowski and how perhaps he has been misjudged by those who have become familiar with the “Autumn of Terror.” Perhaps he was simply a misunderstood fine fellow after all?

The reader is essentially informed that just about everything known, or suspected about this brutal serial killer called Severino Klosowski is wrong, from his name, his occupation, his medical skills and training; even the way he interacted with the women he came across is said to be misinformation. Could history be so wrong about his activities or his series of poison murders as well?

As for serial killers in general, it does appear however, that there are some individuals who latch on to serial killers and believe they are wrongly accused or at least attempt to excuse their murderous behavior. The number of women who write love letters to convicted serial killers on death row comes to mind.

In a free and open society where debate and intellectual intercourse are cherished and encouraged, different opinions are always welcome. However, it is always important to remember, when debating an issue whether large or small to stay within the boundaries of supportable theory and proven facts and to steer away as much as possible from unfounded conjecture or incorrect quotes as we all at times have done. In that light of seeking the truth about serial killer Severin Klosowski, alias Jack the Ripper, this author feels that a response to some of the claims about Klosowski presented in *Jack the Ripper At Last?*, and the writings of R. Michael Gordon are required. Some have already been fully addressed in the body of my latest work being offered for publication, but others have been left for the appendix so as to avoid overwhelming the future reader’s view of these historic criminal events.

Needless to say all errors and all assumptions in *Jack the Ripper At Last?* cannot be addresses as there are far too many, and including all of them would take up far too much time and far too much written space. But let us begin to unfold at least a few disputed events which have emerged from the fog covered streets of the East End of London so long ago, and yet not so very far in time and space to have been forgotten. And let us also not forget that these were very real victims who crossed the path of this demented serial killer, and recognize what unnecessary brutal terror they were put through.

We may begin with an agreement. Helena Wojtczak writes “1. He was a convicted murderer: About this point there can be no mistake. He was hanged for killing Maud Marsh...” This writer agrees,

...and now the rest of the story.

KLOSOWSKI’S VIOLENCE

In Jack the Ripper At Last? we read, “Gordon’s assertion that he [Klosowski] threatened many women with violence is misleading.” Ms. Wojtczak’s excuse – “Wife-beating was commonplace

amongst the working classes in those days..." "Chapman wasn't consciously, but sporadically [violent]..."

R. M. Gordon: It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that no one is "consciously violent" all the time; even a serial killer needs to relax long enough to hide in plain sight, but more to the point, as mentioned in the body of my work, are we to forget the very slow painful poisoning torture of three women to death? Serial killer Klosowski murdered at the very least three women – most intelligent individuals would call that violent!

VIOLENCE ON THE POISON VICTIMS AND BEYOND

Doctor Thomas Stevenson: "I came to the conclusion that **death was caused by poisoning** with antimony in a soluble form - tartar-emetic or metallic antimony." (October 30-31, 1902 post-mortem on Maude Elizabeth Marsh, murdered by Severin Klosowski)

Hargrave L. Adam: "More than this, except in the presence of the woman's friends, and until her fatal illness began Chapman treated her [Maud Marsh] brutally." (From *Trial of George Chapman*)

Doctor Thomas Stevenson: "I formed the opinion that she **died from gastro-enteritis, which was due to some irritant poison.**" (November 22, 1902 post-mortem on Elizabeth 'Bessie' Taylor, murdered by Severin Klosowski)

Doctor Thomas Stevenson: "I came to the conclusion that the **cause of death was poisoning** by antimony, and I attribute the preservation of the body to the antimony." (December 9, 1902 post-mortem on Mary Isabella Spink, murdered by Severin Klosowski)

Mrs. Annie Helsdown: "I heard her cry out once or twice, and I went to her next morning and she showed me **a mark on her throat.**" (From *Trial of George Chapman*)

Mrs. Martha Doubleday: "I saw Mrs. Chapman's body [Mary Spink] after she was dead. It was in a very shocking condition; it was **very much bruised.**" (From *Trial of George Chapman*)

Mrs. Elizabeth Painter: "The accused [Klosowski] was very unkind to her when she came back [from the hospital]; he carried on at her all the afternoon, and in the evening he **frightened her with a revolver...**" (From *Trial of George Chapman*) "He 'carried on' and threw things at her she made complaints to witness whenever witness visited her at the *Monument.*" (*The Southwark and Bermonsey Recorder and South London Gazette* January 31, 1903)

Mrs. Louisa Sarah Morris: "In reply to the questions, she [Maud] added that the accused [Klosowski] **had beaten her more than once, taking hold of her hair and banging her head.**" (From *Trial of George Chapman*)

Florence Rayner: "What happened when you went to the accused to get a reference?" Rayner stated, "When I went to get a reference **he took me by the throat** and threw me out." (From *Trial of George Chapman*)

Lucy Baderski: "The woman chanced to see a handle protruding from underneath the pillow. She found, to her horror, that it was a sharp and formidable knife, which she promptly hid. Later, Klosowski deliberately told her that he **meant to have cut her head off**, and pointed to a place in the room where he meant to have buried her. She said, 'But the neighbors would have asked where I had gone to.' 'Oh, retorted Klosowski, calmly, 'I should simply have told them that you had gone back to New York.'" (*London Daily Chronicle*, March 23, 1903)

And then there was the brutal violence committed during the Ripper, American, and Torso murders, which constituted just about as much violence as could possibly be committed on innocence victims by a vicious serial killer like Klosowski.

SOME VIOLENCE EXAMPLES OF THE RIPPER



Annie Chapman, Catherine Eddowes and Mary Kelly

Post-mortem on Annie Chapman on September 8, 1888, by Dr. George Bagster Phillips (1834-1897): “There was a bruise over the right temple. On the upper eyelid there was a bruise, and there were two distinct bruises, each the size of a man’s thumb, on the forepart of a bruise over the middle part of the bone on the right hand.”

Post-mortem on Catherine Eddowes on September 29, 1888, by Dr. Frederick Gordon Brown (1843-1928): “The face was very much mutilated. There was a cut about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch through the lower left eyelid dividing the structures completely through. The upper eyelid on that side, there was a scratch through the skin on the left upper eyelid near to the angle of the nose. The right eyelid was cut through to about $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch. There was a deep cut over the bridge of the nose extending from the left border of the nasal bone down near to the angle of the jaw on the right side across the cheek. This cut went into the bone and divided all the structure of the cheek except the mucous membrane of the mouth. The tip of the nose was quite detached from the nose by an oblique cut from the bottom of the nasal bone to where the wings of the nose join on to the face. A cut from this divided the upper lip and extended through the substance of the gum over the right upper lateral incisor tooth. About $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch from the top of the nose was another oblique cut. There was a cut on the right angle of the mouth, as if by the cut of a point of a knife. The cut extended an inch and a half parallel with lower lip. There was on each side of cheek a cut which peeled up the skin forming a triangular flap about an inch and a half. On the left cheek there were two abrasions of the epithelium under the left ear.”

Post-mortem on Mary Kelly on November 16, 1888, by Dr. Thomas Bond (1841-1901): “The face was gashed in all directions, the nose cheeks, eyebrows and ears being partly removed. The lips were blanched and cut by several incisions running obliquely down to the chin. There were also numerous cuts extending irregularly across all the features. The neck was cut through the skin and other tissues right down to the vertebrae the 5th and 6th being deeply notched. The skin cuts in the front of the neck showed distinct ecchymosis. The air passage was cut at the lower part of the larynx through the cricoid cartilage. Both breasts were removed by more or less circular incisions, the muscles down to the ribs being attached to the breasts. The intercostals between the 4th, 5th and 6th ribs were cut and the contents of the thorax visible through the openings. The skin and tissues of the abdomen from the costal arch to the pubes were removed in three large flaps. The right thigh was denuded in front to the bone, the flap of skin, including the external organs of generation and part of the right buttock. The left thigh was stripped of skin, fascia and muscles as far as the knee. The left calf showed a long gash through skin and tissues to the deep muscles and reaching from the knee to 5 inches above the ankle. Both arms and forearms had extensive and jagged wounds. The right thumb showed a small superficial incision about one inch, with extravasation of blood in the skin and there were several abrasions on the back of the hand and forearm showing the same condition.”

Post-mortem on Pinchin Street victim during September 1888, by Mr. Percy John Clark, assistant to Dr. Phillips: “On the back were four bruises, all caused before death... About the middle of the back also, over the spine, was a bruise about the size of half a crown [a coin a little smaller than a 50 cent piece]. On a level with the top of the hip bone, and three inches to the left of the spine, was a bruise two and a half inches in diameter, such as might be caused by a fall or a kick... On the right arm there were eight distinct bruises, and seven on the left, all caused before death and of recent date... The bruises on the right arm were such as would have been caused by the arm having been tightly grasped.”

VIOLENCE ON THE AMERICAN VICTIMS

Carrie Brown, April 24, 1891: “She was naked from her armpits down and was disemboweled. Her head and face were tightly enveloped in portions of her clothing. There were marks about her throat to indicate that the woman had been choked or strangled before the mutilation was performed. The woman was lying on her right side with her face to the wall, and her arm was twisted under her back. There was a gash extending from the base of the spine around the abdomen to the front of the body. The incision was begun near the base of the spine and carried from below upward in an oblique direction to a point halfway up on the right side. On the back was a mark like an “X” made by drawing the knife lightly across the skin...”



Carrie Brown

Hannah Robinson report, August 2, 1891: Dr. Vincent E. Judson reported that the young woman “died of asphyxiation.” “...there was not the slightest doubt the woman had been choked to death.”

Elizabeth Senior report, January 31, 1892: “The body lay at full length on the floor. The throat was cut, there were eleven stab wounds in the breast, and both arms were frightfully gashed.”

Mary Anderson report, June 8, 1892: “Her right arm was bruised as though her murderer had gripped with all his force. Her back was also badly bruised showing conclusively that she had been dragged from the spot where her throat was cut...” “...taken her by the chin and cut her throat to make certain the job had been done. It was a very even and smooth cut performed by an individual with a bit of skill.” It was also shown that Mary had been shot in the back with a 32-caliber pistol by her cowardly killer.

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “...when sufficiently angry, Chapman was capable of making empty verbal threats.”

R. M. Gordon: Wow! Where does one begin? Forget about the fact that he bragged about being able to murder people and did indeed **become a serial killer**; it should be difficult for anyone to categorize those actions as “empty verbal threats”. These were not “empty verbal threats,” they were

future plans made by a violent serial killer. An empty verbal threat may be defined as a threat with no follow up – Klosowski most definitely followed up his threats with murder on more than one occasion.

Severin Klosowski: “I could give her a bit like that (snapping his fingers) and fifty doctors could not find out.” (From *Trial of George Chapman*)

Mrs. Louisa Sarah Morris, sister to Maud Marsh: “She (Louisa) remembered an occasion when she and her sister and the accused (Klosowski) had tea together at the *Crown*. Her sister said, ‘What do you think? George (Klosowski) says I won’t live to be twenty-eight, or see twenty-eight.’ I said ‘How does he know?’ The accused replied. ‘No more you won’t.’” (Coroner’s Inquest, November 18, 1902) No need to remind the reader that Klosowski murdered Maud soon after that conversation!

In *Jack the Ripper At Last? we read*, “The tale of the threat to kill [Lucy with a knife in America] may even have been fabricated by Lucy.”

R. M. Gordon: So... we are now to shift the blame and accuse Lucy of lying? Do we now blame the Ripper, American, Torso and poison murders on the victims themselves? Reader’s choice on that one.

MAUD PREGNANT

In *Jack the Ripper At Last? we read*, “The same month as they moved to the *Crown*, Chapman made Maud pregnant.”

Dr. Thomas Stevenson: “I examined the womb and ovaries. They were perfectly normal. She had never apparently borne a child, nor were there any signs that she had been far advanced in pregnancy.” (From *Trial of George Chapman*)

Dr. James M. Stoker: “The deceased was not pregnant. There were no traces of pregnancy or any affection of the womb.” (From *Trial of George Chapman*)

R. M. Gordon: I think we can go with the doctors on this one.



Maud Marsh

KLOSOWSKI NOT QUALIFIED JUNIOR SURGEON

“As we discovered, Chapman had been a surgeon in Poland...”
Police Superintendent Arthur Fowler Neil

In *Jack the Ripper At Last? we read*, “As explained in Part One, the incorrect notion that Chapman had been trained to cut into bodies originates from a mistranslation of the Russian word *feldsher* as ‘surgeon’, a mistake that arose because the interpreter, a Pole called *Petrykowski*, did not know an English word that conveyed the meaning of the word *feldsher*.”

R. M. Gordon: Even though this issue has been well put to rest in several of my books it is important enough to understanding the background of serial killer Severin Klosowski to highlight a point or two. **1.** Not Ms. Wojtczak, nor anyone else, could possibly know if Mr. *Petrykowski* knew a

particular English word or not. **2.** The original documents no longer exist so Wojtczak could not possibly know if they were properly translated or not. **3.** There are several authenticated documents that prove he was a qualified Junior Surgeon “with full knowledge of the subject.” **4.** At Praga Hospital he studied anatomy and would have been required to perform dissections. **5.** British courts accepted that he was in fact qualified to cut up a body. **6.** A search of the records in Poland going back some 40 years of the list of feldshers proves that he was not on that list and therefore shows conclusively that he was not a feldsher. **7.** He did not fail to qualify, in fact the Ministry of Interior, Medical Administration of Warsaw on December 5, 1886 reported by certification that, “they do not see any reason to oppose his receiving the degree of a Junior Surgeon.” He did not need any further examination – he was fully qualified. **8.** And this is the bottom line: serial killer Severin Antonovich Klosowski knew how to use a knife on a human body and so did ‘Jack’, PERIOD!

In *Jack the Ripper At Last? we read*, “Perhaps he [translator Mr. Petrykowski] was nothing more than a drinking pal of Godley’s...”

R. M. Gordon: “Perhaps...”? Clearly this is an attempt to degrade the abilities and background of Mr. Petrykowski and discount his translation work. There is absolutely zero evidence of Godley and Petrykowski knowing each other before Klosowski’s murder trial – zero. He was described in newspaper reports as “Joseph Petrykowski, an interpreter, living at Kennington...” This is simply an attack on the credibility of both men, is not based on any evidence what so ever, and it is completely unwarranted.

KLOSOWSKI’S DOCUMENTED SURGICAL SKILLS

In *Jack the Ripper At Last? we read*, “Gordon feels the need to repeatedly remind his readers that Klosowski was trained to cut up bodies. In [*The*] *Poison Murders [of Jack the Ripper]*, he claims that ‘History records that Severin had learned to use a knife with great skill’ but the only ‘historical record’ of this comes from his own previous books.”

R. M. Gordon: This is perhaps the easiest situation to document. The required reason to “repeatedly remind his readers that Klosowski was trained to cut up bodies” is because of ill-informed statements such as above made by individuals who don’t seem to understand that qualified simply means qualified! It appears to be a very desperate attempt to downgrade the surgical skills of this brutal serial killer, and that will not happen as long as these documents exist and writers can remind their readers that “Klosowski was indeed trained to cut up bodies.” See below for the documented ‘historic record’.

“Certificate issued to the surgical apprentice, Severin Antonio Klosowski, to the effect that he, Severin Klosowski, was in my surgery for the purpose of studying surgery from December 1, 1880, till June 1, 1885, and during the whole of the time he, Severin Klosowski, discharged accurately all his duties. He was diligent, of exemplary conduct, and studied with zeal the science of surgery.” June 1, 1885

“Certificate issued to Severin Klosowski, resident in the village of Tyminitsa, county of Nodga, district of Iltetsk, Government of Radom, to the effect that he was employed for a period of four-and-a-half years by the local surgeon, Moshko Rappaport, in the capacity of a practicing surgery pupil, and under the doctor’s instructions rendered very skilful assistance to patients – i.e., in cupping by means of glasses, leeches, and other assistance comprised in the science of surgery. October 10-22, 1885

The Radom Surgical Society, of the town of Radom, hereby certifies that the surgical pupil, Severin Klosowski, was entered at the registry of surgical pupils by the Senior Surgeon, Moshko Rappaport, in the town of Radom, November 22 – December 3, 1882. October 23 – November 4, 1885.

“This is given to Severin Klosowski, surgery pupil, to the effect that from October 1, 1885, till January 1, 1886, he received instructions in practical surgery at the Hospital of Praga, Warsaw, and his general conduct was good. (signed) Krynick, Senior Surgeon

“This is to certify that Severin Klosowski has been employed by me as surgeon assistant from January 20, 1886, up to the present time, and during the whole of that period he performed his surgical functions with a full knowledge of the subject, and his conduct was good.” November 15, 1886.

Hargrave L. Adam wrote: “There were other certificates to the effect that Severin Klosowski had been employed as a surgeon-assistant, that he had fulfilled his duties with zeal, that he had been of good behaviour, and that he had performed his surgical functions with a full knowledge of the subject.” (From *Trial of George Chapman*)

R. M. Gordon: These documented reports completely put to rest any question as to serial killer Klosowski’s surgical training and skills documented in “his own previous books”. They also seriously call into question the value of *Jack the Ripper At Last?* now proven to be completely inaccurate on a very critical historic point. “Klosowski was trained to cut up bodies.”

R. M. Gordon: As for the work of the Ripper, we may turn to a report on the injuries of Annie Chapman by Coroner Wynne E. Baxter. “The body had not been dissected, but the injuries had been made by someone who had considerable anatomical skill and knowledge. There were no meaningless cuts. The organ had been taken by one who knew where to find it, what difficulties he would have to contend against, and how he should use his knife so as to abstract the organ without injury to it. No unskilled person could have known where to find it or have recognized it when it was found.”

Surgeon Dr. Frederick Gordon Brown (1843-1928) and Dr. George Bagster Phillips (1834-1897) made this comment about the injuries of Catherine Eddowes. “On the other hand as in the Metropolitan Police cases, the medical evidence showed that the murder could have been committed by a person who had been a hunter, a butcher, a slaughterman, as well as a student or properly qualified surgeon.”

THE AMERICAN ARRIVAL

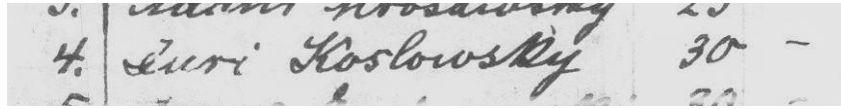
In *Jack the Ripper At Last? we read*, “Gordon searched ship’s records and reported in 2003 that he had found a ‘Sveri’ or ‘Sverni Koslowsky on board the *S.S. Waesland*, which sailed from Hamburg on 13th April and arrived in New York on 23rd, just hours before the murder. Wolf Vanderlinden later pointed out that Gordon had made a mistake: the man was Yuri Koslowsky, and the ship was the *S.S. Wieland*, which arrived in New York on 22nd April. Gordon accepted the correction.”

R. M. Gordon: Just a few points here for the record; it was R. M. Gordon who made the ship arrival correction during an interview with Casebook.com on the podcast, “The Chapman-Ripper Theory;” (the reader may wish to listen to the interview for themselves) earlier he had informed the publishers of same. The ship was in fact “the *S.S. Wieland*, which arrived in New York on 22nd April,” which of course gives Klosowski an additional 24 hours to commit his murder.

In *Jack the Ripper At Last? we read*, “Ships’ passenger lists were hastily scribbled and are difficult to decipher...”

R. M. Gordon: This is true, as far as it goes.

R. M. Gordon: As for the name on the passenger list R. M. Gordon still maintains that it was a badly written rendition of “Sveri” or “Sverni Koslowsky” on board the *S.S. Wieland*, and he has never wavered. So... Gordon does not accept the ‘correction’. And while we are on the subject; who’s to say they spelled the last name correctly? And while we are on the subject; this writer checked the passenger lists of ships into New York for a period of 6 months and no other ship’s records have Klosowski’s name on its passenger list. And it is an historic fact that he did in fact arrive in New York City in 1891.



ELLIS ISLAND NEW YORK

In *Jack the Ripper At Last? we read*, “In the spring or summer of 1891, the Koslowskis sailed to the United States. According to Lucy’s sister Stanislaw, they left around Whitsuntide, which was in mid-May, but extensive searches of ships’ passenger lists and Ellis Island immigration records for that month drew a blank.”

R. M. Gordon: This is an easy one beyond the pure speculation that he sailed in “mid-May”. From *The Encyclopedia Americana International Edition*, 1973 we learn, “Ellis Island in Upper New York Bay was the principle immigration reception center in the United States from **1892 to 1943.**” How can we explain “extensive searches of ships’ passenger lists and Ellis Island immigration records...” when “Ellis Island immigration records” do not exist from 1891, since Ellis Island was not in operation until 1892? In addition does Ms. Wojtczak have the mistaken belief that Klosowski was never in American even after it was proven by London detectives?

LIVING IN NEW JERSEY

*“...the fact that he should have attempted, in such a cold-blooded manner,
to murder his first wife with a knife in New Jersey...”*

Retired Chief Inspector Frederick George Abberline, 1903

In *Jack the Ripper At Last? we read*, “Enquiries made in 1903 by reporters working for various newspapers found no evidence that Chapman and Lucy had lived in New Jersey.”

R. M. Gordon: This is not too surprising since Klosowski was still using his real name in New Jersey, Severin Antonovich Klosowski, not George Chapman.

Lucy ‘Baderski’ Klosowski: “Oh, Severino, don’t say that. **You remember the time you nearly killed me in Jersey City.**” It would appear that “various newspapers” did not look hard enough.

Retired Chief Inspector Frederick George Abberline: “A man who could watch his wives being slowly tortured to death by poison, as he did, was capable of anything; and the fact that he should have attempted, in such a cold-blooded manner, **to murder his first wife with a knife in New Jersey...**”

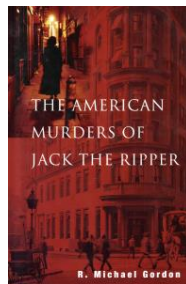


Chief Inspector Frederick George Abberline

DISCOUNTING AMERICAN RIPPER MURDERS

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “Women were murdered in the U.S. before Chapman [Klosowski] arrived, while he was there, and after he left.”

R. M. Gordon: OK. It sounds a bit silly, but let’s try this; “Women were murdered in Whitechapel before Jack the Ripper arrived, while Jack the Ripper was there, and after he left.” How does that excuse the murders of Jack the Ripper and more to the point how does the above statement by Wojtczak remove Klosowski from any possible murder in America? Surely one must do much better than that. A very weak argument to be sure.



EMPHATIC ASSERTIONS

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “Worse, he [Gordon] makes numerous emphatic assertions that he cannot substantiate; for example, he claims that Chapman ‘threatened to murder women several times...’”

Severin Klosowski: “I could give her a bit like that (snapping his fingers) and fifty doctors could not find out.” (As above from *Trial of George Chapman*)

Florence Rayner: “When he asked me to go to America with him I said, ‘You have got your wife downstairs; you don’t want me!’ He said, ‘If I gave her that (snapping his fingers) she would be no more Mrs. Chapman.’” (From *Trial of George Chapman*)

Severin Klosowski: As stated above he told Lucy that he meant to cut off her head. “Oh, ‘I should simply have told them that you had gone back to New York.’” (*London Daily Chronicle*, March 23, 1903)

Mrs. Elizabeth Painter: “...in the evening he frightened her with a revolver...” (As above from *Trial of George Chapman*)

Mr. Paget of Bethoral Green: “If you have no respect for your wife, and want to kill her, I have respect for my wife, and you can’t kill her.” (*The Southwark and Bermonsey Recorder and South London Gazette* in 1903)

Severin Klosowski: Robert Marsh told Klosowski, “I think my daughter will pull through now George.” Klosowski replied, “She will never get up no more.” (From *Trial of George Chapman*)

And not to be forgotten, Severin Klosowski alias Jack the Ripper: “I send you half the Kidne I took from one woman prasarved it for you t other piece I fried and ate it was very nise I may send you the bloody knif that took it out if you only wate a whil longer.” (Letter from Hell)

R. M. Gordon: Clearly the record and Klosowski’s blade, and bottle of poison speak for themselves as to the matter of threats by this proven serial killer.

WHAT’S IN A NAME - SEVERINO AND EMBELLISHMENT

“The accused is a Russian Pole, and his name is Severin Klosowski.”

Solicitor-General Sir Edward Carson, K.C.

In Jack the Ripper At Last? we read, “Severino’ was a corruption created by the rendition of ‘Seweryn’, firstly into Russian Cyrillic script and then into English.”

R. M. Gordon: Klosowski’s wife, born in the same small Polish village as Klosowski’s mother, referred to Klosowski when she confronted him after he was arrested for murder. “Oh, Severino, don’t say that. You remember the time you nearly killed me in Jersey City.” It is hardly worth mentioning that Klosowski’s Polish wife would not have made a “corruption” error when addressing her husband. I don’t think it is too hard a stretch to believe that she would have understood not only what her husband’s name was, but also how to pronounce it.

In Jack the Ripper At Last? we read, “Inspector Godley did not mention this [above] incident when he gave evidence, indicating that Neil (that would be Police Superintendent Arthur Fowler Neil) made it up.”

R. M. Gordon: Despite the fact that there is no evidence of Neil lying about this exchange, nor any reason for him lying about it, it is clear that Inspector Godley testified about a good deal of evidence. Not mentioning this one comment is meaningless, and in the end it becomes just one more miss-direction away from the brutality of Severino Klosowski.

In Jack the Ripper At Last? we read, “Nevertheless, several decades later R. M. Gordon embellished the story: ‘This was the first time the police had heard of his attack on his wife...’”

R. M. Gordon: If the Lucy statement about the attack in New Jersey is true, then at the time of the upcoming trial it would have been “the first time the police had heard of his attack on his wife” and if Police Superintendent Arthur Fowler Neil later made it up, once again it would have been “the first time the police had heard of his attack on his wife”. So... which way would Ms. Wojtczak like it? – reader’s choice on that one. Either way, R. M. Gordon did not need to “embellish” the story. The evidence stands well enough by itself.

ALIAS UPON ALIAS FOR KLOSOWSKI

When Norma Biddle correctly observed, “The history of Chapman/Klosowski’s life, was one of constant upheaval with multiple wives, multiple jobs, multiple names and addresses – why not more than one modus operandi?” Ms. Wojtczak objected.

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “This all sounds highly suspicious – until we look more closely. Chapman did not have multiple names; he changed his only once (though he did at one point tell Miss Penfold that his name was Smith).”

R. M. Gordon: Just for the record by this writer’s count that would be three names Klosowski, Chapman and Smith. So... let’s “look more closely.”

Alfred Wicken: “We used to call him ‘**Schloski**.’ He worked there for about nine or twelve months with me...” “Have you ever heard the accused called Ludwig Schloski or Severin Klosowski? – No.” (*Trial of George Chapman*)

“Here Klosowski was known among his fellow English assistants as ‘**Schloski**’...” (*Trial of George Chapman*)

Levisohn: “He said he came from Warsaw. I knew him as **Ludwig Zagowski**.” (Wojtczak spells it Ludwik for some reason.) (*Trial of George Chapman*)

“For some reason or other not explained he was known here as ‘**Ludwig**’ **Klosowski**.” (*Trial of George Chapman*)

“He adopted the surname of the woman with whom he had been cohabiting, calling himself **George Chapman**.” (*Trial of George Chapman*)

“A note she (Alice Penfold) received from him (Klosowski) at Hastings was signed ‘**Smith**’...”

R. M. Gordon: So.....Severin Klosowski becomes Schloski, Ludwig Zagowski, Ludwig Klosowski, Smith, and finally George Chapman. It looks like “multiple names” to this writer, which means Ms. Biddle was correct. One may only wonder what other alias he may have used that has yet to come to light. Perhaps Ms. Wojtczak would be kind enough to locate them for us.

A WIFE’S STATEMENT

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “...she [Lucy Baderski] could contribute nothing in respect to the three poisonings. She apparently made a written statement to the police about her association with Chapman, but as **his file has since been lost or destroyed we do not know what she told them.**”

R. M. Gordon: So, if the document no longer exists, how can anyone know that she “could contribute nothing in respect to the three poisonings”? Is that an embellishment? To be certain any background information about the life of any serial killer contributes greatly to understanding the whole, remembering that Lucy was living with Klosowski during the time several women were brutally murdered and that Klosowski is a very good suspect in several of them. She also lived very near where he operated two public houses and could very well have been in contact with him during at least two of his poison murders.

Chief Inspector Frederick George Abberline: “Chief Inspector Abberline, who had charge of the investigations into the East End murders, thought that Chapman and Jack-the-Ripper were one and the same person. He closely questioned the Polish woman, Lucy Baderski, about Chapman’s nightly habits at the time of the murders. She said that he was often out until three or four o’clock in the morning, but she could throw little light upon these absences.” (*Trial of George Chapman*)

R. M. Gordon: What is being reported here is that Chief Inspector Abberline questioned Lucy, not in 1888, but in 1902/3 after he was retired. Remember *Trial of George Chapman* was published in April 1930.



Lucy Baderski

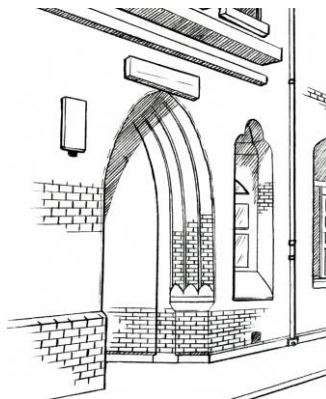
GEORGE YARD BUILDINGS

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “There is no evidence that Klosowski ever lodged in George Yard Buildings.”

R. M. Gordon: For those who try desperately to remove Klosowski from the mantle of Jack the Ripper it is critical to remove him from living in the building where the first Ripper murder occurred. Perhaps a closer look is in order.

London *Daily Chronicle*: “The police [Inspector Godley] have found that at the time of the first two [Ripper] murders [Tabrum, Nichols] Klosowski was **undoubtedly occupying a lodging in George Yard**, Whitechapel Road, where the first murder was committed [that of Martha Tabrum].” (London *Daily Chronicle*, March 23, 1903)

R. M. Gordon: It was this finding that Klosowski had lived in the George Yard Buildings that caused the London police to speculate that Klosowski may have in fact been Jack the Ripper.



George Yard Buildings

Police Superintendent Arthur Fowler Neil: “Klosowski... got a job at a barber’s shop in High Street, Whitechapel. He was right on the scene of these atrocities [the Ripper and Torso murders] during the whole period.” (*Forty Years of Man-Hunting*) “That barber shop lies in the geographic ‘dead center’ of the Ripper killing grounds. During the extended Ripper murder period from 1888 to 1891 Klosowski seemed to be always on the move living for a time at the George Yard Buildings...”

Chief Inspector Frederick George Abberline: “The fact that Klosowski when he came to reside in this country **occupied a lodging in George Yard**, Whitechapel Road, where the first murder was committed, is very curious...” (Primary detective on the Ripper murders)

Detective Sergeant Leeson: “Chapman lived in Whitechapel, where he carried on a hairdresser’s business in a sort of ‘dive’ under a public-house **at the corner of George Yard** and Whitechapel High Street.” (*Lost London*)

Richard Altick: “[Chapman] for a time... a floating barber in the East End and elsewhere in London.” (*Victorian Studies in Scarlet*)

Martin Fido: “...Severin Klosowski was working as a hairdresser’s assistant in or around the White Hart [public house], Whitechapel High Street, right in the Ripper territory throughout 1888.” (*Murder Guide to London*)

Donald McCormick: “[Klosowski] had a barber’s shop **in the basement of George Yard Buildings** at the time...”

KLOSOWSKI INTERVIEWED

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “There is not a shred of evidence that Klosowski was investigated or questioned even once, nor that he was suspected of the Whitechapel or Ripper murders at the time they happened...”

R. M. Gordon: How about after they happened? Actually, by his location/residence Klosowski, along with every other male resident in George Yard Buildings, and all residents near Pinchin Street, including Klosowski at 213 Cable Street, were in fact questioned by police “at the time they happened.” These reports of police investigations are just a bit more than “a shred of evidence;” they are historic proof that he and others were in fact questioned. We may stand with the historic reports on this one.

As noted above, Chief Inspector Frederick George Abberline remarked: “The fact that Klosowski when he came to reside in this country **occupied a lodging in George Yard, Whitechapel Road, where the first murder was committed**, is very curious...” (Primary detective on the Ripper murders)

Times: “**All persons living in Pinchin Street area have been closely questioned**, but these deny all knowledge of having seen anything unusual in the street on the previous night, or, in fact, at any time.” (*Times of London*, September 11, 1889)

BLACK MUSEUM AND CHAPMAN

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “Scotland Yard’s famous archive, previously called the Black Museum, currently holds nothing related to Chapman except police mugshots of him and sketches of witnesses and others present at his trial.”



Image page on left is from the ‘George Chapman File’ in Scotland Yard’s Black Museum

R. M. Gordon: We are reminded that in 1902 Scotland Yard detectives searched the business of Klosowski and located, among other items, “4 bottles, 2 syringes - green, poison label, an American revolver in case...”

R. M. Gordon: During 1999, when John Ross was the curator of the Black Museum, researchers contacted Mr. Ross about what if anything the museum held in respect to the poison murders committed by Klosowski. Ross made it clear at that time the museum held not only the above mentioned items by Wojtczak, but also "...the poison bottles and the syringe..." Klosowski used to murder three women. There is a very good chance that the museum holds a good deal more than they are willing to report.

R. M. Gordon: As for the name 'Black Museum', it was never officially called the Black Museum. The name was coined by a reporter from *The Observer* newspaper in 1877 when he was denied a tour by then Inspector Neame. The in house collection properly the 'Crime Museum' is housed in Room 101 at New Scotland Yard Headquarters, London SW1H 0BG, and consists of two sections and is still not generally open to the public. One may well suspect that the poison bottle and syringe are still holding their places in the Black Museum.

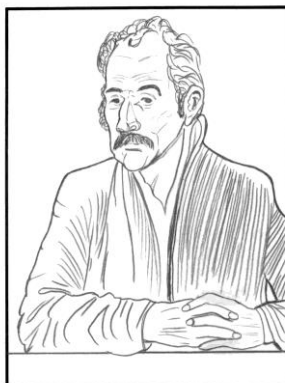
LEVISOHN ON POISON

In Jack the Ripper At Last? we read, "Levisohn's deposition at the police court two months previously had been long-winded and he repeated it, although nothing he said had the slightest bearing on who poisoned Maud Marsh."

R. M. Gordon: Actually, any evidence showing Klosowski attempting to acquire poison has a direct bearing on the poison murder of Maud Marsh as well as the other two, especially during the Ripper period when Levisohn had contact with Klosowski.

Wolff Levisohn: "I talked to the accused [Klosowski] about medicines, and he asked me if I could get him a certain medicine, but I said no, I did not want to get twelve years." (*Trial of George Chapman*)

Robert Nash: "[Klosowski] was secretly trying to obtain poison from under-world sources in Whitechapel at the very time of the Ripper murders." (*Almanac of World Crime*)



Wolff Levisohn

LEVISOHN IDENTIFIES KLOSOWSKI

In Jack the Ripper At Last? we read, "Levisohn was a witness at both the police court and the Old Bailey. His purpose was to identify Chapman as Klosowski (which he failed to do)."

R. M. Gordon: Actually what was requested was to have Levisohn identify the accused as the man he had met in Whitechapel in 1888 and that his name was not Chapman, which he did.

Wolff Levisohn: At Klosowski's hearing in 1903 Levisohn spotted Klosowski and stated; "There he sits! That is his description. He has not altered from the day he came to England; he has not even a gray hair. Always the same – same la-di-da, 'igh 'at and umbrella. Two wives he had while at Tottenham – one English, one foreign." "...the moment I see the name Chapman I knew this is the man..." (*Trial of George Chapman*) And again as above, "I talked to the accused [Klosowski] about medicines, and he asked me if I could get him a certain medicine, but I said no, I did not want to get twelve years." (*Trial of George Chapman*)

Wolff Levisohn: "I have known the accused since 1888 [during the ongoing Ripper murders – 1888-1891], when I met him in a hairdresser's shop in Whitechapel. I spoke to him in Yiddish. He said he came from Warsaw." (March 16, 1903; the first day of Klosowski's murder trial.) (*Trial of George Chapman*)

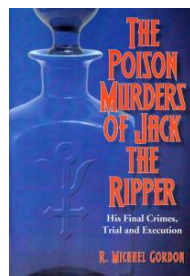
Wolff Levisohn: "The witness, [Levisohn], proceeding, said that at that time the accused was living by himself, but after a time he was joined by a wife and two children. He did not support them, and now and again the witness and another man gave the woman coppers. He ceased to see the accused from 1890 until 1894, when he saw him as an assistant at 5 West Green Road, South Tottenham. The wife and two children were not with him then, but another woman." (Police Court Proceedings held on January 7, 1903)

LEVISOHN MEETS KLOSOWSKI IN POLAND

In *Jack the Ripper At Last? we read*, "H. L. Adam, Gordon and others have claimed that he (Levisohn) and Klosowski knew one another in Poland."

R. M. Gordon: The error comes from a line or two in *Trial of George Chapman*. Adam writes, "In Warsaw he (Klosowski) met a man named Levisohn, a hairdresser's traveller, who again saw and recognized Klosowski in this country (England) about 1888 or 1889."

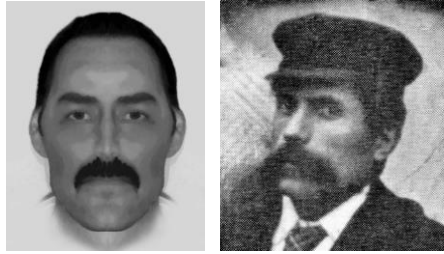
Actually one must take the testimony of Levisohn himself to correct the error, even though it is possible that he had made an error: "I have known the accused since 1888, when I met him in a hairdresser's shop in Whitechapel." (*Trial of George Chapman*)



WITNESS DESCRIPTIONS OF THE RIPPER

In *Jack the Ripper At Last? we read*, "In 1932 Arthur Fowler Neil wrote that 'the only living description' of the Ripper 'tallied exactly with Chapman, even to height, **deep sunk black eyes, sallow complexion and thick, black mustache.**' Several others have made similar claims, but in fact at least twelve people gave descriptions and none fits Chapman exactly, although parts of some do."

R. M. Gordon: On this one it is best to let the readers decide for themselves. See below.



Scotland Yard 2006 E-fit identification computer composite of Jack the Ripper – Severin Klosowski

OF RATS AND FILTH

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “In his own retelling, in 2000, R. M. Gordon added rodents and material inadequacy to give the story additional melodrama: ‘Chapman showed his contempt for her son by having him sleep in a **cellar below** his barbershop, in the company of rats and filth.’” “...no corroborative evidence that... Willie slept in the cellar.”

Hargrave L. Adam: “[the child] sometimes slept in the shop and quite **frequently in a foul cellar** below the premises.” “In any event, it seems that the boy led a most unhappy and neglected life.” (*Trial of George Chapman*)

Hargrave L. Adam: “He [Klosowski] wished to be thought a keen sportsman, often boasting to his customers about his big-game exploits. These stories were without foundation, unless, of course, his jungle was the **cellar beneath** the *Crown* and his game **the rats, which, trapped therein**, he was accustomed to shoot with a revolver.” (*Trial of George Chapman*)

R. M. Gordon: R. M. Gordon will stand by his “retelling” having not needed to add “rodents and material inadequacy to give the story additional melodrama”. Klosowski had already taken care of that.

PHOTO’S OF MURDER VICTIMS

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “According to R. M. Gordon, there was also ‘a series of photos Chapman had taken of Maud Marsh, which had documented her slow decline and death.’ However, he is the sole source of this story and did not cite its provenance.”

R. M. Gordon: It should be noted that the images taken by Klosowski of these women were taken while he was slowly actively poisoning them! Klosowski was very active in his photographic hobby doing much of the developing and printing himself. Hargrave Adam in *Trial of George Chapman* would note: “Going in **extensively** for photography; **he photographed the women whom he afterwards murdered.**”



SOME MORE MYTHS AND SOME ANSWERS

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “Both R. M. Gordon and Debra Gosling assert that in 1888 Godley and Abberline knew Chapman, suspected him of being the Ripper and interviewed him...”

R. M. Gordon: This author cannot speak for Ms. Gosling, or anyone else for that matter, but I can state for the record that R. M. Gordon has never believed that “in 1888 Godley and Abberline knew Chapman, suspected him of being the Ripper and interviewed him...” That is just silliness. In 1888 Klosowski was not on anyone’s suspect list, at least not in England, but as above, he was questioned along with many others at the time. The police did not know they were questioning Jack the Ripper!

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “He [Klosowski] described the publications as ‘doctors’ books’ collected during his previous career as a medic on board ships. Is this a clue that he had been a feldsher in the Russian Navy?”

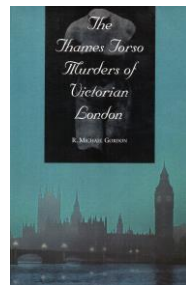
R. M. Gordon: There is absolutely zero evidence of naval service or for that matter occupation as a feldsher – none. To write that would be giving “the story additional melodrama.”

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “Lastly, Inspector Godley found a revolver at the *Crown* and presented it in court. In contrast, no witness mentioned Chapman either possessing or using a knife.”

R. M. Gordon: This one is far too easy. One may logically expect that almost every single adult living in England owns a knife of some sort, and that would include Klosowski. So seriously, would anyone truly believe that Klosowski did not own a knife?

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “...eight years later (1901) he performed illegal abortions...”

R. M. Gordon: There is no evidence that Klosowski ever “performed illegal abortions” unless Ms. Wojtczak wants to attach Klosowski’s name to any number of the Thames Torso Murders, some of which could very well have started off as botched abortions! In that case I humbly direct the reader and Ms. Wojtczak to *The Thames Torso Murders of Victorian London* by this humble author.



In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “Gordon and [Peter] Thurgood incorrectly refer to him [Klosowski] as ‘a known mass murderer’, but that is defined as killing four or more people at the same time and place.”

R. M. Gordon: This author cannot speak for Mr. Thurgood, being unfamiliar with his work, but Klosowski has always been a serial killer and never a “mass murderer”, at least as far as the record shows, and this writer has no idea where that mass murderer idea came from. Perhaps some future investigation will add a group of murders to Klosowski’s count.

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “Some writers have assumed that Klosowski persuaded the women to indulge in three-in-a-bed frolics. This is an absurd suggestion, given the moral code of the era.”

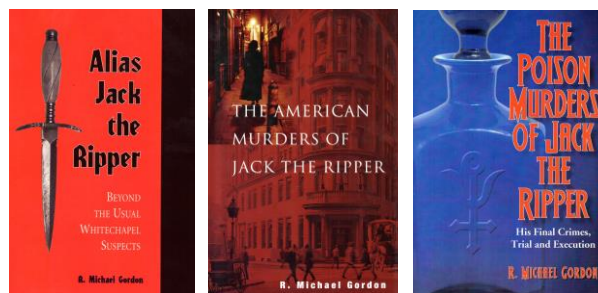
R. M. Gordon: Are we to ascribe a “Moral code” to a brutal sexual serial killer? Wow! Where does one begin? As for “the era” there were hundreds of prostitutes in the East End (a count of some 1,200 in 1888 is mentioned); not to mention throughout most of the rest of London, including the infamous sodomite den of iniquity on Cleveland Street, Whitechapel. What did Jack London call the “semi-criminal” East End – The Abyss?

We are reminded of the words of Mr. Justice Grantham as he made his final judgments and passed the death penalty on Klosowski. “...It is not necessary for me to go through the harrowing details of the case, or refer again to the frightful cruelty you have been guilty of in murdering year by year **women on whom you have gratified your vile lust.**” The record clearly shows that on more than one occasion Klosowski attempted and succeeded in having two women at a time living with him as wife or otherwise and no one, including Ms. Wojtczak can know that it was not for any “three-in-a-bed frolics” no one; but the evidence does suggest...

In *Jack the Ripper At Last?* we read, “According to Philip Sugden, Godley was ‘struck by the similarities between Chapman and the Ripper...’ Sugden gave no source for this information. R. M. Gordon claims that it was Godley who leaked the information to the press.”

R. M. Gordon: Steady now; for the record, R. M. Gordon does not claim that Godley was the source for the leak. And also for the record, Inspector George Godley was the only police officer to have worked on the Ripper, Torso and Borough Poisoner cases. Godley was a fine officer to be sure and leaking information to the Press does not seem to fit his demeanor.

R. M. Gordon: In conclusion, it must be stated that despite the grand effort, and it was a grand effort, to misdirect, excuse at least some of the brutal actions of this serial killer and propagandize the life and times of Severin Antonovich Klosowski, late of the City of London, he still fully remains alias Jack the Ripper, and there is **nothing** in *Jack the Ripper At Last?*, in this writer’s humble opinion that changes that final conclusion. But do not take this writer’s word for it. Read *Jack the Ripper At Last?*, and have a good read of R. Michael Gordon’s books on the subject and make up your own mind, but don’t wait too long. With Scotland Yard still hot on the case it may not be too long before they finally come to the conclusion that indeed Severin Antonovich Klosowski was in fact alias Jack the Ripper.



As for the ladies of Whitechapel: Sleep well, the darkness is over.

R. Michael Gordon.

