

The Journal of Jack the Ripper, East End and Victorian Studies

# Ripperologist

No. 139

August 2014

## Identifying William Bury as Jack the Ripper

By STEVE EARP

DECLARATION

THAT THE

SENTENCE OF DEATH

PASSED ON

WILLIAM HENRY BURY

By the Right Honourable LORD YOUNG, one of the LORDS COMMISSIONERS of JUSTICIARY, at DUNDEE, on the 28th day of March 1889.

Was carried into effect within the Walls of the Prison  
of Dundee, between the Hours of Eight and Nine  
o'clock a.m., on the 24th day of April 1889.



John Young

**MIKE HAWLEY**  
on the reporting of  
Tumblety as a suspect

**PAUL WILLIAMS**  
reveals a marriage between  
Marae Kelly and John Davies

**JAN BONDESON** reopens  
his Murder House Casebook



## QUOTE FOR THE MONTH

“UNLESS YOU’RE JACK THE RIPPER, THE LAUNCH OF ONE’S BIOGRAPHY SHOULD BE SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE.”

*Christian Kerr reports on the possible embarrassment caused by the timing of Australian MP Joe Hockey’s book release at a time when he is in the news for insensitive comments.*

*A Treasurer’s Tale, The Australian, 25 July 2014*

# RIPPEROLOGIST 139

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# Tumblety 'Over the Wire'

By MIKE HAWLEY

The very first time Francis Tumblety was reported to have been implicated in the Whitechapel murders was from a *New York World* news cable dispatch dated 17 November 1888, printed in numerous US daily city newspapers on 18 November 1888, such as the following *San Francisco Chronicle* article:

## GOSSIP OF LONDON.

A Heavy Swell Arrested in Whitechapel.

A Score of Prisoners, but No Clew.

Rothschild Offers a Reward for the Murderer

[THE NEW YORK WORLD CABLE SERVICE; COPYRIGHTED, 1888 - SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE]

LONDON, November 17.--Just to think of one of the Prince of Wales' own exclusive set, a member of the household cavalry, and one of the best known of the many swells about town, who glory in the glamour of the Guelph going into custody on suspicion of being the Whitechapel murderer. It is the talk of clubdom tonight. Just now it is a fashionable fad to "slum it" in Whitechapel. Every night scores of young men, who never have been in the East End before in their lives, prowl around the neighborhood of the murders, talking with frightened women and pushing their way into overcrowded lodging-houses. So long as two men keep together and do not make nuisances of themselves the police do not interfere with them, but if a man goes alone and tries to lure a woman of the street into a secluded street to talk to her, he is pretty sure to get into trouble.

That was the case with Sir George Arthur of the Prince of Wales set. He put on an old shooting coat and a slouch hat and went to Whitechapel for a little fun. He got it. It occurred to two policemen that Sir George answered very much to the popular description of Jack the Ripper. They watched him, and when they saw him talking with a woman they collared him. He protested, expostulated and threatened them with the royal wrath, but in vain. Finally a chance was given him to send to a fashionable West End club to prove his identity, and he was released with profuse apologies for the mistake. The affair was kept out of the newspapers, but the jolly young Baronets at Brookes Club consider the joke too good to keep quiet.

Sir George is quite a figure in London. He is a son of the late Sir Frederick N Arthur, who was an influential man in his day. Sir George was conspicuous on the turf a few years ago and intimately associated with the Duchess of Montrose. Then he turned his attention to the theaters, and when Bancroft produced "Theodora" he let Sir George appear as the corpse. The report is to-night that he is going to Monte Carlo for a few weeks.

Another arrest was a man who gave the name of Dr. Kumblety of New York. The police could not hold him on suspicion of the Whitechapel crimes, but he will be committed for trial at the Central Criminal Court under the special law passed soon after the Modern Babylon exposures. The police say this is the man's right name, as proved by letters in his possession; that he is from New York, and that he has been in the habit of crossing the ocean twice a year for several years. [author emphasis]

A score of other men have been arrested by the police this week on suspicion of being the murderer, but the right man still roams at large. Everybody is momentarily expecting to hear of another victim. The large sums offered as private rewards have induced hundreds of amateur detectives to take a hand in the chase, but to no avail. Leon Rothschild has offered an income of £2 a week for life to the man who gives information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the assassin.

As evidenced by the following newspaper reports of 19 November 1888, all of the major US newspaper organizations were in agreement with the interpretation of the 17 November cable dispatch; Francis Tumblety was FIRST arrested on suspicion of the Whitechapel murders and not for gross indecency and indecent assault. Only later did they commit him for trial for these charges in order to 'hold him' for the Whitechapel murders. Note in the *New York Herald* and the *New York World*:

*New York Herald*,  
19 November 1888

#### **Dr Tumblety's Queer antics in this City - Known to the Police**

*An odd character is the New Yorker Dr Francis Tumblety, who, according to a cable dispatch, was arrested in London on suspicion of being concerned in the Whitechapel murders and held on another charge for trial under the special law passed after the "Modern Babylon" exposures...*

*New York World*,  
19 November 1888

#### **HE IS "ECCENTRIC" DR. TWOMBLETY The Amercian Suspected of the Whitechapel Crimes Well Known Here.**

*A special London despatch to THE WORLD yesterday morning announced the arrest of a man in connection with the Whitechapel crimes, who gave his name as Dr Kumblety, of New York. He could not be held on suspicion, but the police succeeded in getting him held under the special law passed soon after the "Modern Babylon" exposures. [author emphasis]*

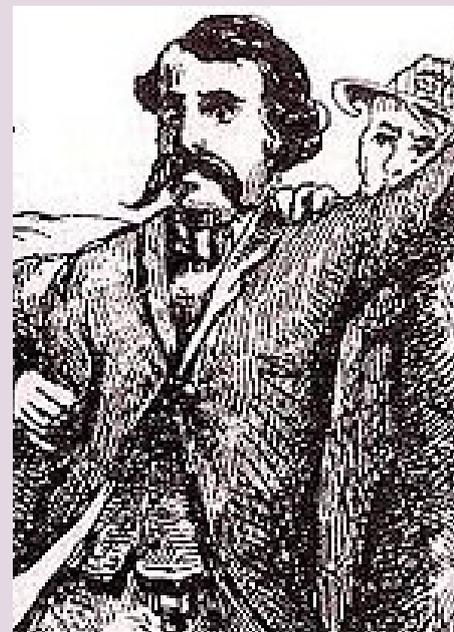
*Dr Kumblety is well known in this city. His name however is Twomblety, not Kumblety. Twenty-four years ago he made his advent in this city and was since then known only as "Dr Twomblety" a most eccentric character. He formerly resided in Nova Scotia, where he practiced medicine under the name of Dr Sullivan. About the time of his appearance in this city he was a fugitive from justice, having fled his Nova Scotian home to escape punishment for malpractice.*

The fact that the *New York World* repeated the spelling as 'Kumblety', then explained the correct spelling to be 'Twomblety', demonstrates that the 'K' was not the product of a transmission mistake. Tumblety seems to have given his name as 'Kumblety', and he certainly had given out fake names prior to and after this.

Some have suggested that the reports are wrong, that Francis Tumblety was never arrested on suspicion of the Whitechapel crimes, but only for gross indecency and indecent assault. Further, this fictional story was most likely created by the owner of the 17 November news cable dispatch, the *New York World*, and the rest of the US newspaper organizations merely repeated this popular story without corroborating it. Why would they haphazardly promote an inaccurate story? To take advantage of the popularity of such an infamous New Yorker and sell papers. Since Scotland Yard never acknowledged Tumblety as a suspect and British papers were quite silent on Tumblety, one suggestion is that the story may have been crafted in a New York City newspaper office after receiving the report of Francis Tumblety's indecent assault and gross indecency arrest. The story then went viral. Still others have suggested that the story of Tumblety being arrested on suspicion for the Whitechapel crimes was crafted by none other than Francis Tumblety himself in order to, either, exploit the Ripper case fame and gain publicity, or, to create a smoke screen for an embarrassing arrest of gross indecency and indecent assault. The intention of this article is to offer the reader a window into how late nineteenth century international news was gathered and disseminated by the news industry, specifically from London, England, to the United States. A greater understanding of the backdrop behind the Tumblety/Whitechapel news cable reports should not only allow for a better evaluation of the available facts but also dispel misconception.

In the nineteenth century, the United States and much of Canada was wired by the telegraph industry sufficiently enough that cable communications transmitted, via Morse code, became the most cost effective and timely method of long distance information communication.<sup>1</sup> In 1851, Western Union was created by the merger of smaller telegraph companies, and Western Union telegrams soon became commonplace all across the continent. Thanks in large part to the Civil War in the United States in the 1860s and the public's hunger for timely news on the war, the newspaper industry wholeheartedly embraced this new technology.<sup>2</sup> This completely transformed how the newspaper industry collected and transmitted national and international news. In 1868, Western Union stated the following:

*By a system of co-operation among the newspapers of the United States and the Western Union Telegraph Company, the news of the world is daily furnished to the people of every portion of this country... 294,503,630 words are annually furnished to the newspapers of the United States... The report is compiled... and it is then handed to the telegrapher, who with the manipulation of the magic key transmits it simultaneously to Poughkeepsie, Hudson, Albany, Troy, Utica, Syracuse, Auburn, Elmira, Binghamton, Owego, Rome, Oswego, Rochester, and Buffalo, New York, to Rutland and Burlington, Vermont, and to Scranton, Pennsylvania. ...This is accomplished by a combination of circuits through an instrument called a repeater, by which the intelligence can be transmitted to a thousand offices as easily as to one.*<sup>3</sup>



For travelling-advertising Indian Herb Doctor Francis Tumblety, a man who preferred to control information disseminated to a potential customer base through aggressive newspaper advertising, transcontinental news 'over the wire' was not necessarily a good thing. Officials and residents in other cities he intended to operate out of in the near future were now privy to potentially damaging news about him before he arrived. By early 1870s, his poor reputation was beginning to precede him. In 1873, he moved to Liverpool, England, where he advertised and operated his business to a public quite unaware of his troubles in North America.<sup>4</sup> He even changed his title to, 'The Great American Doctor.' Since the British had only limited interest in US affairs in the nineteenth century, Tumblety had little fear of his past life affecting his business.<sup>5</sup>

In order to keep news cable transmission costs down, the major New York daily newspapers banded together in the mid nineteenth century and began the New York Associated Press, a nonpartisan newsgathering organization that operated independently of each individual member. This cooperative association even had its own army of news correspondents, gathering news and transmitting it entirely through news cable dispatches. This became so effective that press associations in other geographic regions formed and signed contracts with the New York Associated Press, creating a loose cooperative known as the 'Associated Press':

*The New York Associated Press is a partnership in which the Tribune, Times, Herald, World, Sun, Express, and the Journal of Commerce are partners. They were organized primarily to cheapen the cost of the news which they desired to publish. ...The "Associated Press," in its inception, was an organization having its headquarters in the city of New York, and composed of representatives of the then principal newspapers of that city, for the purpose of combining their respective energies and diverse facilities for the collection of news. This was many years ago, and in the days of the infancy of the telegraph. Subsequently, as railroad and telegraph facilities extended, and as the benefit of co-operation became clearly apparent, a series of similar organizations were formed - East, South, West, and on the Pacific - each one independent, but co-operating in the collecting, exchanging, and selling of news.*<sup>6</sup>

1 Western Union Holdings, Inc. *Our Rich History*. 2014. [corporate.westernunion.com/History.html](http://corporate.westernunion.com/History.html).

2 Aeragon. *The US Civil War, the First Modern War*. 2009. [www.aeragon.com/03](http://www.aeragon.com/03).

3 Western Union Telegraph Company. *Postal Telegraph Pamphlets*, 1868.

4 Riordan, T B. *Prince of Quacks: The Notorious Life of Dr. Francis Tumblety, charlatan and Jack the Ripper suspect*. McFarland & Co. 2009.

5 Crawford, T C. *English Life*. Lovell & Co. 1889.

6 Western Union Telegraph Company. *Postal Telegraph Pamphlets*, 1868.

Overseas European news was still weeks old before it reached the eyes of an American reader due to the slower postal ship service, which took weeks to cross the Atlantic.<sup>7</sup> In order to improve timeliness, Western Union began international cable communications, transmitted through submarine cables by 1873, and in 1882, it signed a major contract with the owner of the transatlantic cable, the American Telegraph and Cable Company. This agreement allowed for a greater volume of news transmission. By 1888, US households were reading timely international news. One possibility as to why the Whitechapel murders gripped the world so intensely where earlier, equally horrific, murderer sprees did not is that transoceanic news dispatches kept international readers informed as the gruesome murders were occurring. They were now experiencing the fears of East London residents along with them.

In 1888, the large New York newspapers, the *New York World*, the *New York Herald*, the *New York Times*, the *New York Tribune*, and the *New York Sun*, and even the *Boston Herald* certainly did receive international news through the Associated Press network, but in order to outcompete the other New York City daily papers, they decided to create better, more in-depth, European stories through operating their own London offices filled with their own foreign correspondents.<sup>8</sup> At the end of 1888, the *New York World's* chief foreign correspondent was Tracy Greaves, the *New York Herald's* correspondent was Oakey Hall, the *New York Times's* was Harold Frederick, the *New York Tribune's* was George W Smalley, the *New York Sun's* was Frank White, and the *Boston Herald's* was Arthur Warren.<sup>9</sup> These correspondents transmitted news cable dispatches directly to their respective newspapers at a cost of 10 cents a word, yet still sent large, in-depth articles too expensive to be telegraphed, through the transatlantic ship postal service.<sup>10</sup>

As the cable news dispatches reached the US, other North American newspapers, in turn, paid these large newspapers for their cable news dispatches, even though they were simultaneously receiving news from the larger Associated Press cooperative network.<sup>11</sup> Telegraphers merely sent dispatches off to dozens of papers simultaneously through repeater stations. This was exactly the case with the above *San Francisco Chronicle* article that broke 'Kumbelty' story. Note the copyright statement, *THE NEW YORK WORLD CABLE SERVICE; COPYRIGHTED, 1888 - SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE*. The *San Francisco Chronicle* was not the only daily newspaper to receive this cable dispatch over the wire and print it on 18 November 1888. The *Boston Globe* and the *Chicago Daily Tribune* also reported the *New York World* cable dispatch:

*Boston Globe*,  
18 November 1888

*London, Nov. 17-*

*...This was the case of Sir George Arthur of Prince Wales set. He put on an old coat and slouch hat and went to Whitechapel for a little fun. He got it. It occurred to two policemen that Sir George answered very much to the description of Jack The Ripper and they watched him and when they saw him talking with a woman they collared him...*

***Another arrest was a man who gave the name of Dr Kumbelty of New York... [author emphasis]***

*A score of men have been arrested by the police this week on suspicion, but the right man still roams at large and everybody is momentarily expecting to hear of another victim...*

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7 FTL Design. *The Atlantic Cable*, 2014. [www.atlantic-cable.com](http://www.atlantic-cable.com).

8 Hamilton, J M. *Journalism's Roving Eye: A History of American Foreign Reporting*. LSU Press. 2009; *New York Times*. The Reminiscences of a Colleague. 23 October 1898.

9 Ibid.

10 Crawford, T C. *English Life*. Lovell & Co. 1889.

11 FTL Design. *The Atlantic Cable*, 2014. [www.atlantic-cable.com](http://www.atlantic-cable.com).

Chicago Daily Tribune,  
18 November 1888

GOSSIP SENT BY CABLE.  
A BARONET GOES ON A LARK THAT GETS HIM IN TROUBLE.

*Slumming in the Whitechapel District, Once of the Prince of Wales' set Is Arrested on Suspicion of Being "Jack the Ripper" - French Hunting Parties Meeting with great Success - Gossip of the Parisian Capital - Dramatic notes - The Movements of Americans.*

SPECIAL CABLE DISPATCH TO THE TRIBUNE.

[Copyright, 1888, by the Press Pub. Co., N.Y. World.]

LONDON, Nov. 17. - Just think of it. One of the Prince of Wales' own exclusive set, a member of the Household Cavalry, and one of the best known of the many swells about...

*Another arrest was a man who gave the name "Dr. Kumbletty of New York." The police could not hold him on suspicion of the Whitechapel crimes, but he has been committed for trial in the Central Criminal Court under a special law passed soon after the Modern Babylonian exposures. The police say this is the man's right name, as proved by letters in his possession from New York, and that he has been in the habit of crossing the ocean twice a year for several years. [author emphasis]*

*A score of other men have been arrested by the police this week on suspicion of being the murder (sic), but the right man still roams at large and...*

The *Chicago Daily Tribune* identified the owner of the cable dispatch in a copyright statement as the 'Press Pub. Co., N.Y. World', which was the parent company of the *New York World* in 1888.<sup>12</sup>

The *New York World* opted not to print the 'Kumblety' story on 18 November 1888. So, why would they not want to print a story they themselves broke? The *New York World* actually did print this particular news cable dispatch immediately, but decided to take out the subordinate 'Kumblety' story:

New York World,  
18 November 1888

SPECIAL CABLE DESPATCH TO THE WORLD.

*London, Nov. 17. - The most intense amusement has been caused among all classes of the London world by the arrest last week of little Sir George Arthur on suspicion of being the Whitechapel murderer. Sir George is a young Baronet holding a captaincy in the regiment of Royal horse Guards, and is a member of the most leading clubs in town. He is also a well-known amateur actor, and was a great friend of the late Prince Leopold Duke of Albany...*

*The affair was kept out of the newspapers. But the jolly young Baronet's friends at Brook's Club considered the joke too good to be kept quiet.*

They certainly did break the headline story of Sir George Arthur. The *New York World* finally did report on Tumblety's arrest, but not until the next day. The *World* investigated and reported locally on a New Yorker, Francis Tumblety, before publishing. It is apparent that they sacrificed breaking the subordinate Kumblety story in order to create a more in-depth story.

Local member city newspapers often printed the phrase, 'Special to the \_\_\_\_\_', which indicated to the reader the source of the story was generally not from their own reporters or from their home office. Note this phrase in the above *Chicago Daily Tribune* article of 18 November 1888, 'SPECIAL CABLE DISPATCH TO THE TRIBUNE'.

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12 Edwards, R. 1896: *Journals & Newspapers in the Campaign*. Vassar College. 2000. [projects.vassar.edu/1896/journals.html](http://projects.vassar.edu/1896/journals.html).

Do we have evidence that the *New York World* news cable dispatch of 17 November 1888, came from the *World's* London correspondent out of London, as opposed to their New York office? First, notice that the date line states where the stories in the dispatch originated: *London*, and since the story had a *New York World* copyright, it indicates a *New York World* reporter operating out of London. On 21 November 1888, the *Ottawa Free Press* actually confirms this. They also printed this particular news cable dispatch, and they reported WHO sent it - the *World's* London correspondent:

*The Ottawa Free Press (Canada),*  
21 November 1888

**EXCITEMENT IN LONDON**  
**Report of Another Murder in Whitechapel**  
**THE ASSASSIN FAILS THIS TIME**  
**He Flies in Terror and is Hotly Pursued--His Capture is Certain.**

*London, Nov. 21--Great excitement was occasioned this morning when it was reported that another woman had been murdered and mutilated in Whitechapel. The police immediately formed a cordon around the premises and an enormous crowd gathered.*

*ONLY AN ATTEMPT - An investigation of the reported murder reveals the fact that the woman was only wounded in the throat. She stated to the police that a man visited her lodgings and suddenly attacked her with a knife. She struggled and screamed and the man becoming alarmed fled. The would be murderer was chased fully 300 yards, but succeeded in eluding his pursuers. The woman states that she will be fully able to identify her assailant. His arrested is hourly expected.*

*A BARONET ARRESTED -New York, Nov. 21.--The World's London correspondent says:--The most intense amusement has been caused among all classes of the London world by the arrest of Sir George Arthur... [author emphasis]*

*The affair was kept out of the newspapers, but the jolly young baronet's friend at Brook's Club considered the joke too good to be kept quiet. Sir George is quite a figure in his way in London. He is a son of the late Sir Frederick Arthur.*

*A score of other men have been arrested by the police on suspicion of being the murderer, but the right man still roams at large. The large sums offered for the capture of the fiend have induced hundreds of amateur detectives to take a hand in the chase, but all of no avail.*

It should now be clear that the origin of the Tumblety/Whitechapel murder case story was out of London, England, and not in the *New York World* office in New York City. The *Ottawa Free Press* also did not print the 'Kumblety' story, but they did opt to keep the third 'score of other men' story in.

Although we do not have the actual 17 November 1888, news cable dispatch, we can determine its content by comparing the information reported by all five papers, the *New York World*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, and the *Ottawa Free Press* who published it the following day. All three US articles, which reported on Kumblety are very consistent and show a London date line with a date of 17 November 1888, they begin with the headline story of Sir George Arthur being arrested on the streets of Whitechapel on suspicion of the Whitechapel crimes, followed by the second shorter 'Kumblety' story that did not even get a headline, further followed by a third story about other men being arrested on suspicion and Leon Rothschild offering a reward. Note how similar the 'Kumblety' story is between all these articles. Even though the *San Francisco Chronicle* stated Tumblety will be committed for trial in Central Criminal Court, the other two stated he 'has been', suggesting this to be the correct version.

Once the Tumblety story broke in the US and became a big story, the other large city newspapers - with their own London correspondents - also began to print the story about Tumblety in connection with the Whitechapel murders, but did they merely receive their information strictly from the original *New York World* dispatch, or did they utilize their own London correspondents and dig deeper? Note in the case with the *Boston Herald* who had their own London correspondent, Arthur Warren. The following is an excerpt from an article in the 25 November 1888 edition of the *Boston Herald*:

*The Boston Herald,*  
25 November 1888

#### A WHITECHAPEL SUSPECT.

##### Dr Tumblety, Once a Banisher of Pimples in Boston.

*One of the Whitechapel murder suspects is a curious character known as Dr Tumblety, who 15 years or more ago was considered an eccentric person of Boston. He was seen quite frequently on the streets and never without attracting attention. He did not live here permanently for any great length of time, but was a frequent sojourner, and subsequently took up his residence in New York. When the London police arrested him the other day on suspicion of being the murderer he said that he belonged in New York. The police found that they could not get enough evidence against him to hold him for trial, but they succeeded getting some sort of a charge sufficient to hold him under one of the special laws passed after the "modern Babylon" exposures, which created so much excitement a couple of years ago. **The doctor's identity was for a time concealed after his arrest, but the police, who took the liberty of hunting up his lodgings and ransacking his private effects, discovered easily who he was, and they say that he has been in the habit of making two trips yearly to this side of the water.** [author emphasis]*

*...A few years ago the doctor transferred his pimple banishing enterprise to London, where he appears always to have had plenty of money, though the source of supply is a mystery to Scotland Yard.*

The information about Tumblety's identity concealed and the police ransacking his London lodging was never reported in any New York papers AND could only have come from a London-based source. The *Boston Herald* certainly printed information in this article on Tumblety found locally in Boston, but the London information - at least in part - must have come out of London. Note the phrase, 'to this side of the water'; clearly written by a reporter from 'this side of the water', ie, London. Note the London information not found in the 17 November 1888 *New York World* news cable reporting the police finding and ransacking Tumblety's lodgings. Where did this London-based information come from? Other than claiming that the *Boston Herald* made it up, the simplest explanation is that it came from the *Boston Herald* London correspondent, Arthur Warren.<sup>13</sup>

The *New York Sun* was also paying a high price for having a foreign correspondent, specifically Frank White, to live and operate out of London. In the 25 November 1888 edition of the *Sun*, they printed an extensive article on the Whitechapel murder mystery, titled *Astounding Murders*, which was six full-length columns that took up nearly the entire page. It is written from the perspective of the author reporting from London. It begins with, "The people of London flocked to see Mr Mansfield's impersonation of Mr Hyde largely with the belief that..." and at another location, it states, "They have been mysteriously murdered in this city..." Frank White would have been the ideal author, especially since they were paying him a significant salary for this kind of service. One particular sub-story in the large article reports on Tumblety in connection with the Whitechapel murders:

*...London is as much excited as one would imagine. Scores of arrests have been made and hundreds of theories formed. An American doctor named Twombly is now being held because he is an erratic character, and because one theory is that some American medical institution wants specimens of the female uterus, which it happens that Jack the Ripper often takes from the bodies of his victims.* [author emphasis]

This is the very first time a reason for Tumblety being 'held' had been reported, which is different than why he was initially arrested. The simplest explanation for who crafted this extensive London story is the *Sun's* London correspondent, Frank White.

Joe Chetcuti and Roger Palmer each independently identified the man who interviewed Francis Tumblety in late January 1889 as Frank White's younger brother, Isaac D White. *Ripperologist* issue 110 printed an article on the career of Isaac White. The article revealed that Isaac had been the top crime reporter for the *New York World*.

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13 *New York Times*. The Reminiscences of a Colleague. 23 October 1898.

Joe points out that a portion of Tumblety's interview with Isaac White was not printed in the *New York World*, but instead was sent to Florida. Chris Scott discovered it three years ago in the 31 January 1889 *Pensacola Daily Commercial*. In that *Pensacola* article Tumblety was quoted:

*In company with thousands of others, I inspected Whitechapel. The London police, who, it might be incidentally remarked, are uniformed jackasses, think that all Americans wear slouch hats, and because I happened to wear one and was an American and because some unknown American doctor was suspected, I was arrested, and for no other reason. [author emphasis]*

It seems to all come together. Frank White of the *New York Sun* implied that Tumblety's arrest was in accord with Coroner Baxter's comment of an American wanting to purchase uterus specimens. This topic was further pursued by Frank White's younger brother Isaac White of the *New York World*, who was able to draw out a direct response from Tumblety during a private interview. Tumblety blamed the story of the "unknown American doctor" as having been one of the causes of his arrest.

The largest late nineteenth century US-based newsgathering entity with its own London correspondents was the Associated Press.<sup>14</sup> News across the transatlantic cable from Europe to the US was dominated by the *Associated Press* in the late nineteenth century. Blondheim, in *News Over the Wires*, states:

*The Associated Press monopolized telegraphic news gathering and news distribution in America in the second half of the nineteenth century.*<sup>15</sup>

In *McBride's Magazine*, an article titled "The Foreign Correspondent" states:

*The bearing on the American press and American correspondents abroad of what has just been said will be more clearly seen when I describe somewhat in detail the work of a leading agency for the transmission of news to the United States. I refer to the whilom New York Associated Press, and particularly to its head office in Europe at London. In Effingham House, Arundel Street, just off the busy Strand and in the midst of the newspaper world of the English capital, the news of the whole Eastern hemisphere was concentrated and such portions of it forwarded to America as were thought of interest. The daily average of words thus supplied to the London office exceeded twenty-five thousand. ...Besides this news furnished through the regular channels, various editions of the London papers - over forty in number - were carefully read the moment they appeared, and any "special" information of importance found in their columns was extracted and cabled. While exercising a rigid economy of condensing news, the Associated Press, in spite of high cable rates, telegraphed important events from London to New York as fully as it would have done from Washington to New York. ...The Associated Press leased a special wire from the British government giving it direct communication with the cable companies, so that a message was flashed across the Atlantic almost as each word was written.*<sup>16</sup>

Their news was far from being sensationalized. Blondheim states, "Reporters for the wire service were instructed to send 'bare matter of fact.' No coloring, no personal references or opinions were permitted. And the concise, matter-of-fact language of the regional agents was hardly altered in the editing process..."<sup>17</sup> The Associated Press made it a point not to promote itself. Blondheim states, "...until Daniel Craig retired from the management of the New York Associated Press after some twenty years of service, Americans had no inkling that an 'American Reuter' had ever existed." The London chief correspondent for the *Associated Press* in 1888 was James Maclean, or McLean.<sup>18</sup> He had specialized in sending news through the wire to the US since 1869, and became the *New York Associated Press* London correspondent in 1877.<sup>19</sup> He held this position until 1891.<sup>20</sup>

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14 Blondheim, M. *News Over the Wires*. Harvard College. 1994.

15 Ibid.

16 *McBride's Magazine*, The Foreign Correspondent. Volume 51. 1893.

17 Blondheim, M. *News Over the Wires*. Harvard College. 1994.

18 *New York Times*. The Reminiscences of a Colleague. 23 October 1898.

19 Roberts, S. *Distant Writing: The Companies' Foreign Operations*. 2012. [distantwriting.co.uk/companiesforeignoperations.html](http://distantwriting.co.uk/companiesforeignoperations.html).

20 *New York Times*. 15 February 1891.

Note how the *Associated Press* reported on the Whitechapel murders. The following Associated Press dispatch was in the *Alexandria Gazette*, 17 July 1889, reporting the Alice McKenzie murder. Even though the Associated Press did not promote itself, the *Alexandria Gazette* identified it as the source under a column titled, *Postscript - Associated Press Dispatches*:

#### The Last Whitechapel Horror.

*LONDON, July 17 - The woman whose body was found in Castle alley in the Whitechapel district last night was a middle-aged prostitute. Her throat had been cut to the spine. When the body was found it was lying on its back. The abdomen had been gashed in a horrible manner in several places, though the intestines were not exposed. No part of the body was missing. Warm blood was flowing from the wounds when the body was discovered. A policeman, who, with the watchman of an adjacent...*

This same “bare matter of fact”, Associated Press cable dispatch made its way into the *Fort Worth Daily Gazette* (18 July 1889), *Sacramento Daily Record-Union* (18 July 1889), *Hawaiian Gazette* (20 August 1889), *Wichita Eagle* (18 July 1889) and *Pittsburg Dispatch* (18 July 1889), and probably made it into many others. James Maclean, or a subordinate in his office under his approving authority, was most likely the source of this London dispatch.

Do we have evidence that Maclean and the Associated Press ever reported on Francis Tumblety in connection with the Whitechapel murders? Given that the Associated Press was the largest newsgathering organization in 1888, it would be a surprise if they did not, especially since the story made so many papers in November and December of 1888. When Francis Tumblety finally arrived in New York City on 2 December 1888, over a dozen of the following US city newspapers reported it, and it was entirely bare matter of fact information AND none of the papers promoted a source, indicating it was an Associated Press news cable dispatch. *The Evening World* (3 December), the *Evening Star* (3 December), the *Los Angeles Daily Herald* (4 December), *St Paul Daily Globe* (4 December), the *New York Sun* (4 December), *Sacramento Daily Record-Union* (4 December), *New York Herald* (4 December), *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (4 December), *Frederick News* (4 December) all reported Francis Tumblety’s arrival to New York from Le Havre, France, in the same manner. It was in the *Alexandria Gazette*, under *Associated Press Dispatches*.

The following is that bare matter of fact article:

#### “Dr.” Tumblety.

*New York, Dec. 3. - “Doctor” Tumblety, suspected of being connected in some way with the Whitechapel murders in London, arrived in this city yesterday on board the steamer La Bretagne. Police Inspector Byrnes said this morning that although Tumblety was a fugitive from justice and under \$1,500 bail for a nominal offence in England, he could not be arrested here. The Inspector added that in case Tumblety was wanted, he knew where to lay his hand upon him.*

Was the Associated Press merely working off of the original 7 November *New York World* dispatch and connecting Tumblety’s escape with his alleged link with the Whitechapel crimes? Tumblety escaping England and making it on board the steamer *La Bretagne* was an event that occurred a full week after the original dispatch, so this is conceivable. The interview of New York Police Inspector Byrnes and the ‘New York’ dateline on the above Associated Press dispatch shows the subsequent investigation did indeed occur in New York, but the New York police and reporters had knowledge of Tumblety’s escape and possibly being a passenger onboard the *La Bretagne* prior to his arrival in New York. The *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, in a report two days later, identifies the origin of this source, as evidenced by its reference to Tumblety sailing from Le Havre for New York. It reports the source as a cable originating out of Europe:

*In Boston, says the American correspondent of the Daily Telegraph... It is reported by cable from Europe that a certain person, whose name is known, has sailed from Le Havre for New York, who is famous for his hatred of women, and who has repeatedly made threats against females of dissolute character. Whether this will throw any light on the Whitechapel tragedies I must leave the London detectives to decide.<sup>21</sup> [author emphasis]*

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21 *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 5 December 1888.

If there was a connection to Tumblety specific to the Whitechapel murders investigation and his escape, it happened in Europe and not New York. Who sent this cable? Notice an article published in the *New York World* on 2 December 1888:

#### TUMBLETY IS MISSING

The American Charlatan Suspected of the Whitechapel Murders Skips from London

#### HE WAS LAST SEEN AT LE HAVRE

Is He On His Way Home Over the Ocean to New York?

#### HE HAD A BITTER HATRED OF WOMEN

*London, Dec. 1. The last seen of Dr Tumblety was at Le Havre, and it is taken for granted that he has sailed for New York. It will be remembered that the doctor, who is known in this country for his eccentricities, was arrested some time ago in London on suspicion of being concerned in the perpetration of the Whitechapel murders. The police, being unable to procure the necessary evidence against him in connection therewith decided to hold him for trial for another offense against a statute which was passed shortly after the publication in the Pall Mall Gazette of "The Maiden Tribute," and as a direct consequence thereof Dr Tumblety was committed for trial and liberated on bail, two gentlemen coming forward to act as bondsmen in the amount of \$1,500. On being hunted by the police today, they asserted that they had only known the doctor for a few days previous to his arrest. [author emphasis]*

Even though it was printed in the *New York World*, they did not do the usual self-promotion line stating, *SPECIAL CABLE DESPATCH TO THE WORLD*, as they did when they published the 18 November 1888 article written by their own London correspondent. Also, as evidenced by their later 3 December 1888 article, they were still referring to Tumblety as 'Twomblety'. This, along with the fact that there is no self-promotion, indicates that the source was the *Associated Press*, the news organization with which the *New York World* had a partnership. Coming out of Europe, this would suggest their foreign correspondent, James Maclean, based in London, was the source.

Those who suggest that Francis Tumblety was the sole source for his connection to the Whitechapel crimes, specifically for publicity reasons, also suggest Tumblety himself was the origin of the above 2 December 1888 London cable informing the world of his escape. This argument states that prior to escaping England, he cabled - to the US papers - that he was embarking on the *La Bretagne* in Le Havre, France, which was leaving for New York on 24 November 1888. A significant problem with this scenario is that Tumblety could only have cabled on, or prior to, 24 November, yet his escape was not reported in the papers until a week later. The New York newspapers who promoted the story that Tumblety was a Ripper suspect would not have sat on a story for a full week about an American Whitechapel murder suspect escaping the grips of Scotland Yard *on his way to their own city!* That's a week's worth of lost revenue between New York papers competing with each other for readers... and no one broke the story? They clearly were not aware of his escape until early December.

According to the *New York Sun*, even though the press was not aware of his escape around 24 November 1888 Inspector Byrnes was:

*The Sun*,  
4 December 1888

#### TWOMBLETY ARRIVES.

Came Away from London in a Hurry Without His Luggage.

*"Dr" Francis Tumblety or Twomblety, who was arrested in London on suspicion of knowing something about the horrible Whitechapel murders, but against whom no direct proof could be found and who was held in \$1,500 bail on a charge of dealing in gross literature, arrived in this city on Sunday on the French line steamer La Bretagne. He disappeared from London shortly after his release on bail and nothing more was heard of him until news arrived from Le Havre that he had sailed from there for this country. Inspector Byrnes said yesterday that he knew of Tumblety's expected arrival in this city a week ago and had determined to make sure that his information was correct by having men who knew him on the wharf when the steamer arrived. Tumblety was short enough of luggage to make it appear that his departure from the other side [of*

*the Atlantic] was hurried. He was among the first to leave the steamer, and he went direct to a house in Tenth street just west of Third avenue, where furnished rooms are let. He will probably be an object of curiosity to the police for some time, but Inspector Byrnes said that no one has any right to bother him for what occurred across the ocean, unless the Government becomes interested and issues a warrant for his detention. He is a tall fellow, with a sweeping dark moustache, and used to sell salve, and parade on Broadway with a valet and two greyhounds. [author emphasis]*

The reporter claims the Byrnes himself stated he knew of Tumblety's escape and upcoming arrival. For Tumblety to cable the police and not the press does not make sense if one was doing it for publicity reasons. Also, recall that Scotland Yard Assistant Commissioner Anderson, the man in charge of the Whitechapel investigation, cabled US chiefs of police on Ripper suspect Francis Tumblety just a few days prior to this. These facts certainly suggest that Scotland Yard cabled Inspector Byrnes about his Tumblety's escape.

Aside from his jumping bail, this is the very first report of Francis Tumblety even posting \$1,500 bail, which occurred a full two weeks prior on 16 November 1888. Why the delay? There certainly were newspaper reports on Tumblety into late November 1888 but these focused upon Francis Tumblety's earlier antics in North America. The answer may be because his case was heard in private session. Interestingly, Tumblety's case heard in front of Magistrate Hannay at Marlborough Street Police Court cannot be found in the British press, but it should have been. *New York World* correspondent, T C Crawford, in his autobiography *English Life* states:

*The police courts all over the city are reported at great length, the unimportant reports being given just as much space as the most important.*<sup>22</sup>

Researcher Trevor Marriott points this out in his article *Doctor at Sea* in *Ripperologist* 127. He states on page 39:

*We must now ask ourselves why Tumblety's police court hearings were not reported in the British press. In cases which fell outside of a magistrate's summary jurisdiction, that is to say, cases upon which he could not pass sentence, 'The room in which the examination is held is not to be deemed an open court; and the magistrate may exclude any person if he thinks fit.' [11 & 12 Vict. C. 42, s. 19, Indictable Offences act, 1848]. ...It follows that if the magistrate took such decision in Tumblety's case the press would have had no access to the hearings and consequently nothing to report.*<sup>23</sup>

If so, the London correspondents may not have known that he was on bail until one of them became privy to his escape to Le Havre. The above articles suggest that the *Associated Press* most likely broke the posting bail/jumping bail story.

How did the London correspondents of US newsgathering organizations and the *Associated Press* gather British news of interest for American readers? We have an inside window as to how US foreign correspondents based in London operated. T C Crawford was the chief London correspondent for the *New York World* up until August 1888, the same year as the Whitechapel murders, being replaced by his subordinate and fellow London correspondent Tracy Greaves.<sup>24</sup> Note what Crawford stated in his memoirs:

*The American journalist sent to a European capital to collect news for his paper at home is soon made painfully aware of the lack of certain important sources of information, of which he has been accustomed to make free use, without in the least appreciating his advantages. For the first time he begins to understand clearly the large value of the service to the American press of the **always accessible police station "blotter," the communicative sergeant behind the tall desk; the open register of guests' names in every American hotel office, and the much-abused hotel clerk who tells all he knows, freely, and is always ready to put a newspaper man in the way of getting information.** There comes to the newly exiled American reporter, no matter how well he may be placed in London or Paris, comparatively speaking, a belated appreciation of the usefulness to the newsgetter of **publicly filed papers in the law courts, and the general willingness of court clerks and officers to help him in his calling.***<sup>25</sup> [author emphasis]

22 Crawford, T C. *English Life*. Lovell & Co. 1889.

23 Marriott, T. *Doctor at Sea*. *Ripperologist* 127, August 2012. pp.34-45.

24 Crawford, T C. *English Life*. Lovell & Co. 1889; *New York Times*. The Reminiscences of a Colleague. 23 October 1898.

25 Crawford, T C. *English Life*. Lovell & Co. 1889.

This gives us a small insight into how the *New York World* broke the initial story of Tumblety being implicated in the Whitechapel murders. Tracy Greaves joined the London team for the *New York World* in the beginning of 1888 and learned the ropes from his seasoned boss, soon to leave in August 1888.<sup>26</sup> He also worked hand in hand with the experienced foreign reporter James Tuohy.<sup>15</sup> Greaves would have known first hand Crawford's newsgathering tricks. Since the 'Kumblety' story reports on Tumblety being officially committed to Central Criminal Court trial, which occurred on 14 November 1888, he must have broken the story between 14 November and 17 November, the date of the news dispatch.<sup>27</sup> If Greaves and company went to Central Criminal Court and received the information from court papers, they would have known the correct spelling of Tumblety's name, yet this did not happen. Given that the contents of the cable suggest that he spoke directly to police, chances are he visited the police station and saw his arrest in the accessible police blotter and/or he spoke to the sergeant behind the tall desk, just as Crawford explained.

Specific to the breaking story of Tumblety leaving the country and making his way back to the US from Le Havre, the Associated Press reporter could only have received the information once the police were convinced he was out of the country and in France. Because the first newspaper report of him jumping bail was on 1 December 1888 and his Central Criminal Court date was not until December,<sup>28</sup> the only way they would have known he actually left the country (and not just hiding in London) was witnessing him out of the country. This is corroborated by the following *St Louis Republic* article dated 5 December 1888:

#### AN OBJECT OF CURIOSITY.

##### Tumblety, Arrested in London for the Whitechapel Murder, in New York.

*Special to the Republic.*

*New York, Dec. 4 - "Dr" Francis Tumblety or Twombly, who was arrested in London on suspicion of knowing something about the horrible Whitechapel murders, but... arrived in this city on Sunday on the French line steamer La Bretagne.*

*He disappeared from London shortly after his release on bail, and **nothing more was heard of him until news arrived from Le Havre that he had sailed from there for this country...** [author emphasis]*

The fact that he left for the US from Le Havre as the newspaper articles report is exactly what occurred, reinforcing its veracity, especially when you take into account that his normal port of entry and exit was Liverpool.<sup>29</sup> Further confirmation that Tumblety was spotted outside England and in France, on his way to the United States, is from Chief Inspector John G Littlechild, Head of Special Irish Branch in 1888. He stated in a private letter decades later:

*...Tumblety was arrested at the time of the murders in connection with unnatural offences and charged at Marlborough Street, remanded on bail, jumped his bail, and got away to Boulogne. He shortly left Boulogne and was never heard of afterwards. It was believed he committed suicide but certain it is that from this time the 'Ripper' murders came to an end.<sup>30</sup> [author emphasis]*

If correct, this letter reveals some inside communications within the walls of Scotland Yard at the peak of the murders about Ripper suspect Francis Tumblety, suggesting that the Associated Press reporter who wrote the 1 December 1888 dispatch may have received his information from the police. Some have argued that Littlechild's memory is untrustworthy, because he referred to Boulogne, France, and not Le Havre. When Tumblety sneaked out of England, the safest route would have been from Folkestone harbour, England, across the channel to Boulogne, France, as evidenced by this being the track taken by Irish sympathizers sneaking out of England<sup>31</sup>. Considering that Littlechild headed the branch in Scotland Yard dealing with Irish sympathizers, he would have known this. As early as 1880, the French channel ports, which included Boulogne, were manned by Scotland Yard Special Branch men under the authority of Littlechild.<sup>32</sup> If Tumblety was indeed spotted in Boulogne, it would have been one of his men, so it is not a surprise that

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26 Crawford, T C. *English Life*. Lovell & Co. 1889; *New York Times*. The Reminiscences of a Colleague. 23 October 1898.

27 Central Criminal Court Calendars, November and December 1888.

28 *Editor & Publisher*. 19 October 1918.

29 Central Criminal Court Calendars, November and December 1888.

30 Littlechild Letter, dated 23 September 1913. Sent privately to George R Sims.

31 *The Times*, 9 March 1867.

32 Cook, A. M: *MI5's First Spymaster*. History Press. 2011.

Littlechild would have remembered this. Keep in mind, Boulogne is France, so Scotland Yard detectives would have had no authority in arresting anyone. Notice what Littlechild then states, “*He shortly left Boulogne*”, which is exactly what he would have to do to get to Le Havre, France, for his transatlantic trip back to New York.

With a more accurate understanding of how European news flowed over the wire to the United States, ultimately making its way into the hands of a reader, and how news was acquired by London correspondents, the actions of Assistant Commissioner of Scotland Yard, Robert Anderson, now becomes clearer. Just days after the 17 November 1888 *New York World* cable dispatch, Assistant Commissioner Anderson sent a private cable dispatch to US Chiefs of Police and solicited information on Francis Tumblety in the context of him being a suspect in the Whitechapel murder investigation:

*The Brooklyn Citizen*,  
23 November 1888

**“Is He The Ripper?” A Brooklynite Charged With the Whitechapel Murders.  
Superintendent Campbell Asked by the London Police to Hunt Up the Record of Francis Tumblety**

*Captain Eason supplies the information and it is interesting Police Superintendent Campbell received a cable dispatch yesterday from Mr Anderson, the deputy chief of the London Police, asking him to make some inquiries about Francis Tumblety, who is under arrest in England on the charge of indecent assault. Tumblety is referred to in the dispatch in the following manner: “He says he is known to you, Chief, as Brooklyn’s Beauty.” Tumblety was arrested in London some weeks ago as the supposed Whitechapel murderer. Since his incarceration in prison he has boasted of how he had succeeded in baffling the police. He also claimed that he was a resident of Brooklyn, and this was what caused the Deputy Chief of Police to communicate with Superintendent Campbell. The superintendent gave the dispatch immediate attention, and through Captain Eason... [author emphasis]*

This seems to conflict with the suggestion that Francis Tumblety created the story that he was arrested on suspicion for the Whitechapel crimes, then gave the story to the reporters, who then ran with it without the corroboration of the police. Why would Anderson, a man convinced enough of Tumblety being a Ripper suspect that he sent the cable dispatch just days later, have even gotten involved if the story was just an invention of Tumblety? If Anderson did indeed first hear of Tumblety being suspected in the Whitechapel crimes from US newspapers, would he not have corroborated the story with his subordinates before wasting his time at the peak of the investigation?

Incidentally, the above *Brooklyn Citizen* article revealing Campbell’s receipt of a private cable on Ripper suspect Francis Tumblety by Assistant Commissioner Anderson did not come from a *Brooklyn Citizen* reporter. The *New Ulm Weekly Review* published the same article on a later date and mentioned the source of the story... none other than the *Associated Press*, a newsgathering entity directed to transmit only factual information to its member news organizations.

What conforms perfectly to Anderson’s actions is exactly what the *New York World* London correspondent reported in the dispatch. Tumblety was first arrested by the police on suspicion for the Whitechapel crimes. Only after this arrest, and once they identified him and realized who they had, was he charged with indecent assault and gross indecency for the sole purpose of holding him for the Whitechapel investigation. This was an unusual response to a minor suspect being released once they identified him. In the now lost Scotland Yard suspect file, BBC reporter Paul Bonner read them in the early 1970s and reported the common practice of releasing suspects once identified:

*NOTES ON THE SCOTLAND YARD SUSPECTS FILE - Memo 3/141 - These are reports that seem to have been called for by Scotland Yard in January 1889. They include a range of colourful suspects (mostly from outside Whitechapel). ...Many men (at least 100 in the file) were taken to police stations just for carrying black bags, having foreign accents, accosting women, or talking about the Ripper in pubs, but then released on being able to prove their identity.<sup>33</sup>*

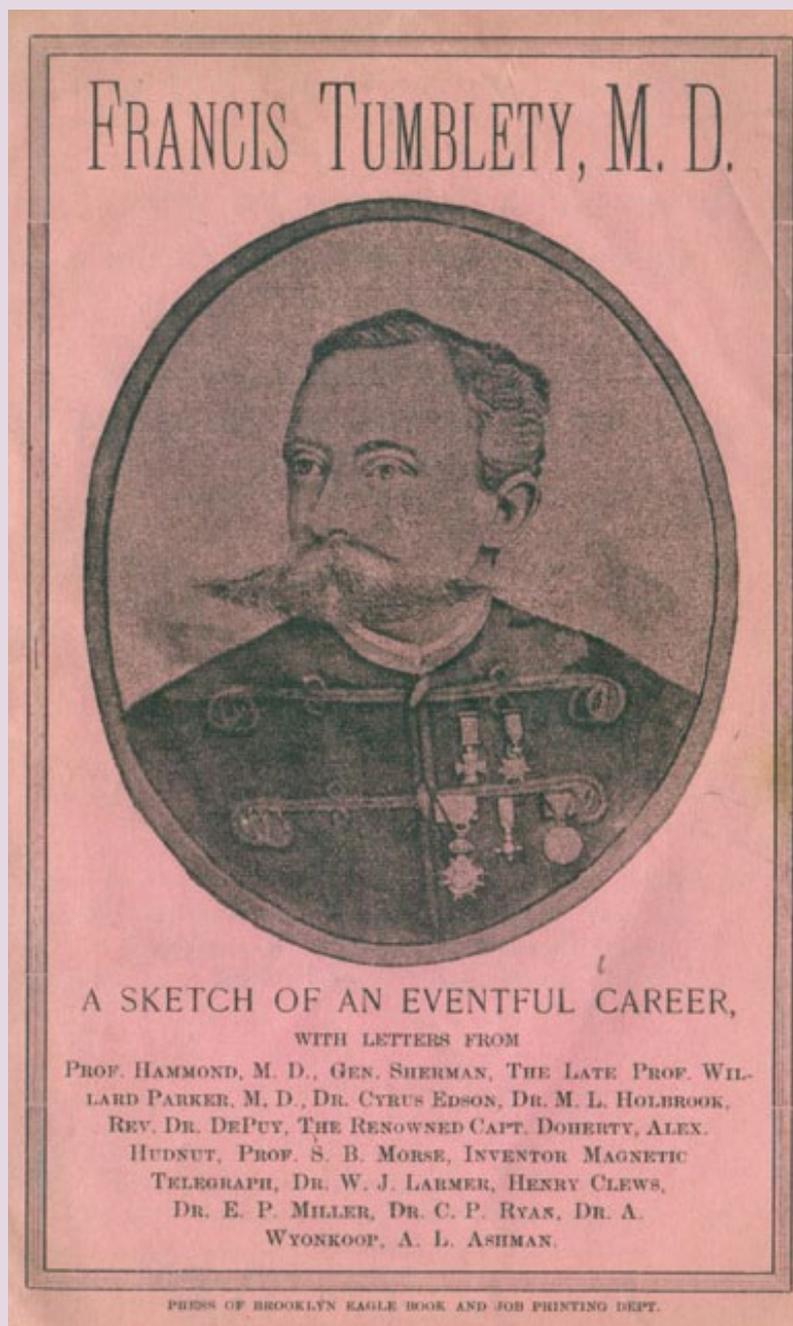
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33 Copy of a detailed survey of Scotland Yard files in the personal library of Stewart Evans.

Tumblety was treated differently. Being a significant suspect at that moment, the local police would have immediately informed Scotland Yard. Anderson would have heard about it through these police channels, then assisted the investigation by requesting information from US chiefs of police.

Even if the London correspondents corroborated Tumblety's story by asking the local police, it is highly unlikely that Tumblety's lie would have convinced the police enough to contact the Assistant Commissioner himself and tell him he's a true suspect. On the other hand, if the police were the source for Tumblety being arrested on suspicion, then Anderson getting involved makes sense, especially if he was a serious suspect. This is also supported by the reporter's claim, "The police say this is the man's right name..."

The method of news reporting over the wire, and across the Atlantic, at the time of the Whitechapel murders confirms that the source of the Tumblety/Whitechapel murders story came out of London, as opposed to New York. The *Ottawa Free Press* confirmed that the author of the 17 November 1888 news cable dispatch reporting the story was the London correspondent for the *New York World*. The second phase of the Tumblety/Whitechapel murders story of Tumblety's escape from England came from a different newsgathering entity, the Associated Press, a fact-finding organization with no interest in self-promotion. This makes the possibility that the story only coming from the *New York World* implausible. It also conflicts with the suggestion that Francis Tumblety himself was the source of the story, since the evidence demonstrates that the Associated Press received the story from the police. This is reinforced by the fact that Head of Special Branch, Chief Inspector Littlechild, confirmed this chain of events in a private letter. Lastly, Assistant Commissioner Anderson's request for additional evidence on Ripper suspect Francis Tumblety by US chiefs of police just days later, makes no sense except if the original *New York World* dispatch got its facts right, that Tumblety was first arrested on suspicion of the Whitechapel crimes.



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