

Whitechapel's Wax Chamber of Horrors, 1888

By MIKE HAWLEY

A waxwork 'chamber of horrors'¹ museum exhibiting 'vilely executed waxen figures'² of the most notorious homicides of Victorian times operated in 1888 at just a few minutes' walking distance from the location of the Mary Ann Nichols murder scene. The museum's main attraction were images of the Ripper victims which were added to the display *as they were murdered!*

By February 1889, the museum displayed a total of six images of the murdered women,³ beginning with the unfortunate Martha Tabram, who had met her death on 7 August 1888. In his 1892 memoirs, Worship Street Police Court Magistrate Montague Williams recalled his walk through this chamber of horrors in early September 1888:

There lay a horrible presentment in wax of Matilda Turner [Martha Tabram], the first victim, as well as one of Mary Ann Nichols, whose body was found in Buck's Row. The heads were represented as being nearly severed from the bodies, and in each case there were shown, in red paint, three terrible gashes reaching from the abdomen to the ribs.⁴

Not only did the proprietor of the waxwork museum operate a chamber of horrors, but he also offered live entertainment nightly in the adjacent building.⁵ Ever cognizant of the money-making formula consisting of, first, satisfying the public's desire for vice - in this case violence against women - and, secondly, adding a pinch of sex, the proprietor had as the main attraction of the show a tough young lady named Miss Juanita. Dressed only in 'fleshings', a close fitting skin-coloured garment intended to give the appearance of nudity, Miss Juanita engaged in daily boxing bouts with any man weighing less than ten stone.⁶ Williams stated that '*pugilism was high in favour with the management, for the audience was*'. As a result, an additional boxing match ensued between 'Daniel the Dutchman' and the 'Welshman'.

In *The True History of the Elephant Man: The Definitive Account of the Tragic and Extraordinary Life of Joseph Carey Merrick* (2010), Peter Ford and Michael Howell remarked:

A waxworks museum certainly flourished opposite the London Hospital, for in September 1888, in the midst of the Whitechapel murders committed by 'Jack the Ripper', a correspondent called John Law was writing in the columns of the Pall Mall Gazette: 'There is at present almost opposite the London Hospital a ghastly display of the unfortunate women murdered... An old man exhibits these things...'⁷



The London Hospital and the Whitechapel Road in 1896

1 *Echo*, London, UK, 13 September 1888, *Waxworks*.

2 *Daily Telegraph*, London, UK, 29 November 1888.

3 *Era*, London, UK, 9 February 1889, *A Penny Show*.

4 Williams, Montagu, *Round London* (1892), Charles Dickens and Evans, Crystal Palace Press.

5 *Echo*, 13 September 1888; *Era*, 9 February 1889; Williams, Montagu, *op. cit.*

6 Williams, Montagu, *op. cit.*

7 Ford, Peter, and Howell, Michael, *The True History of the Elephant Man: The Definitive Account of the Tragic and Extraordinary Life of Joseph Carey Merrick* (2010), Skyhorse Publishing, Inc.

The reason why Ford and Howell wrote about the waxworks museum is because they believed it occupied the same building at 123 Whitechapel Road (259 Whitechapel Road since 1910) where the Elephant Man was put on display for three weeks in 1884 by his manager, Tom Norman. Ford and Howell quoted Norman:

The premises used for the exhibition of Meyrick [sic] had for several years previously been a waxworks museum, owned by a man named Cotton. I came to London and rented it from him, and removed Meyrick thereto...⁸

But Ford and Howell had mistaken Cotton's pre-1884 wax museum for the museum that exhibited waxen images of the Ripper victims in 1888.

An article titled *A Penny Show* in the *Era* of 9 February 1889 reported on the waxwork museum displaying the Ripper victims and the adjoining live entertainment shows: *'There was a waxworks inside, and boxing and other performances went on.'*⁹ The article added that the penny show occupied two buildings at 106 and 107 Whitechapel Road (Now 223 & 225 Whitechapel Road; the former now being occupied by a McDonald's) at the corner of Thomas Street. It even named the proprietor: Thomas Barry. It underlined that 106 Whitechapel Road was the wax museum, which even had pictures of the Ripper victim exhibit in the front window, and added: *"One picture showed six women lying down injured and covered in blood, and with their clothes disturbed."*¹⁰

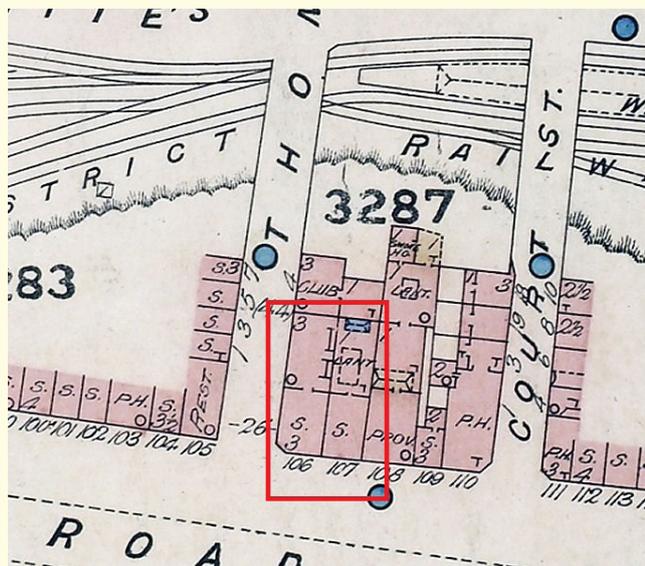
In an editorial in the *Echo* of 11 September 1888, the pseudonymous 'East-Ender' discussed the show, which he considered as an evil business:

*I refer to several low penny shows at the corner of Thomas's-street, Whitechapel-road, nearly facing the London Hospital. These sinks of iniquity are at the present time doing a roaring trade by exhibiting horrible pictures representing the poor victims who have been so brutally murdered of late.*¹¹

On the same day, the *Irish Times* had something to add:

SCENE AT A WAXWORKS

*There is a waxworks show to which admission can be obtained for one penny, in the Whitechapel road, near the Working Lad's Institute. During the past few days a highly-coloured representation of the George Yard and Buck's Row murders - painted on canvas - have been hung in front of the building, in addition to which there were placards notifying that life size wax models of the murdered women could be seen within. The pictures have caused large crowds to assemble on the pavement in front of the shop. This morning, however, another picture was added to the rest. It was a representation of the murder in Hanbury street. The prominent feature of the picture was that they were plentifully besmeared with red paint - this of course representing wounds and blood. Notices were also posted up that a life-size waxwork figure of Annie "Sivens" [sic] could be seen within. After the inquest at the Working Lad's Institute had been adjourned a large crowd seized them and tore them down. Considerable confusion followed, and order was only restored by the appearance of an inspector of police and two constables. A man attired in workman's clothes and who appeared to be somewhat the worse for drink then addressed the crowd. He said - "I suppose you are all Englishmen and women here; then do you think it right that that picture (continued the orator, pointing to the one representing the murder in Hanbury street) should be exhibited in the public streets before the poor woman's body is hardly cold." Cries of "No, no, we don't" greeted this remark, and another scene of excitement followed. The crowd, however, was quickly dispersed by the police before the showman's property was further damaged.*¹²



The location of the waxwork museum shown on an 1890 Goad map

8 Ford, Peter, and Howell, Michael, *op. cit.*

9 *Era*, 9 February 1889.

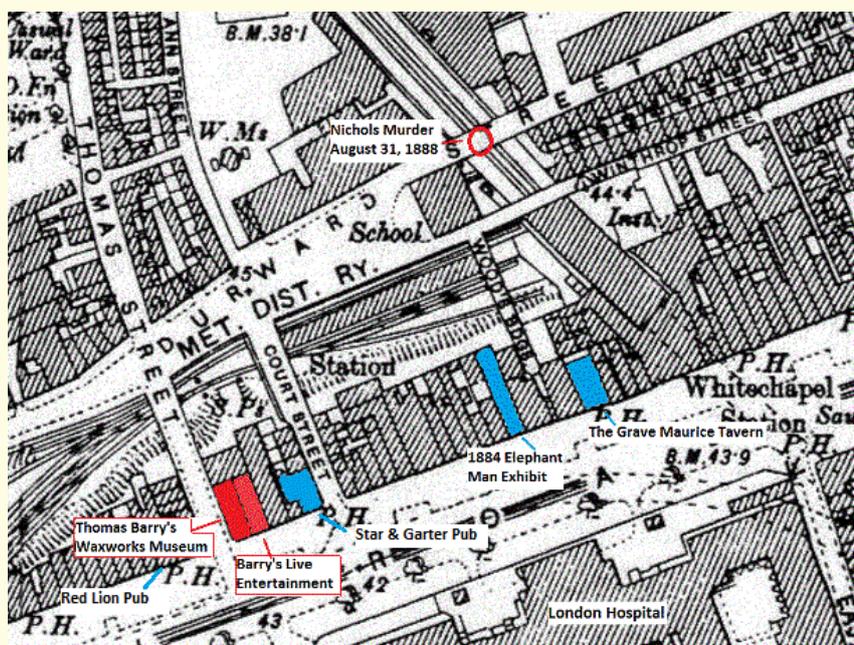
10 *Era*, 9 February 1889.

11 *Echo*, 11 September 1888, *A Disgraceful Scene.*

12 *Echo*, 13 September 1888.

The *East London Observer* was lighter in tone:

*The vendors of a doggerel ditty meant at first to describe the details of the Buck's-row tragedy, but slightly and ingeniously altered in order to include that of Hanbury-street, reaped a rich harvest of coppers, but by no means so large as that obtained by the proprietor of a small waxworks concern in the Whitechapel-road, who, by daubing a few streaks of red paint over three sadly mutilated figures that have done duty on many previous occasions, and by exhibiting three horrible-looking pictures outside his establishment, contrived to induce several hundreds of the gullible public to pay their pennies and witness the "George-yard, Buck's-row and 'Anbury-street wictims." But his triumph was short-lived, for a police-inspector, with some respect for decency, had the pictures hauled down, and left the waxworks proprietor using the whole of his h-less (?) and ungrammatical, if strong, vocabulary against the police in general, and that police inspector in particular.*¹³



In the meantime, Thomas Barry's solicitors, Abbott, Earle and Ogle of 11 Worship Street, had come to the assistance of their client in an editorial published in the *Echo* on 13 September 1888 stating:

*There are only two houses [operated by Thomas Barry and his daughter] at the corner of Thomas Street, Whitechapel, and they are next door to one another... There are wax figures of celebrated persons, a chamber of horrors, an exhibition...*¹⁴

On 6 February 1889, *The Times* returned to the subject:

*At the corner of Thomas-street was No. 106, Whitechapel-road, and next door was 107. Up till November, 1887, shows were carried on at the two houses, pictures and placards being exhibited... In the autumn of last year waxwork effigies of the women who were murdered in Whitechapel were included in the show, and a picture on the subject was exhibited. This picture was, however, considered by the public to be too strong, and the people threatened to tear it down. [Thomas Barry] took the picture away. A wax effigy of 'Jack the Ripper' was added to the exhibition.*¹⁵

An editorial in *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, 10 February 1889, not only commented on the proprietor operating out of two locations but it also described the public's reaction to the Ripper display:

*[Thomas Barry] was the occupier of two houses in the Whitechapel-road... finding his ordinary attractions had entirely failed to arouse public interest he took advantage of the excitement which had been caused by the murders in Whitechapel to exhibit ghastly and disgusting representations of the victims. It was stated that the public exhibited disgust at this feature of the exhibition, and that it was modified to some extent, but the horrible crimes that had taken place in the neighbourhood were still sought to be made objects of attraction to the public.*¹⁶

In their 13 September 1888 editorial in the *Echo*, Thomas Barry's solicitors referred to the wax museum as a chamber of horrors. Why did they so describe it? There are actually two answers to this question. The first is, simply, because of its contents.

12 *Irish Times*, Dublin, Ireland, 11 September 1888, *Scene at a Waxworks*.

13 *East London Observer*, London, 15 September 1888.

14 *Echo*, 13 September 1888.

15 *The Times*, London, UK, 6 February 1889, *Central Criminal Court*, Feb. 5.

A reporter from the *Daily Telegraph* named William Beatty-Kingston visited the museum in November 1888.¹⁷ In the 29 November 1888 edition of the newspaper, he noted that the museum was filled with all the most notorious homicides of the day:

Another establishment, bearing some distant relation to one of the plastic arts, is situated at a street corner nearly opposite the democratic picture-shop, within a vigorous stone's-throw of the London Hospital. It is no exaggeration to say that the most remarkable waxworks of this or any other age are now on view in a western section of the Whitechapel-road... The show itself, however, despite its many repulsive characteristics, could not possibly lower their moral tone; and yet it is unquestionably a "penny dreadful" of the most blood-curdling description, mainly consisting of long rows of vilely executed waxen figures and plaster busts, propped up, some upright, some askew, against either wall of the showroom, rigged out in the refuse of a Petticoat-lane old clothes shop, and professing (according to the halfpenny catalogue) to be striking likenesses of all the most notorious homicides of modern times. From Palmer to Pranzini the collection claims to be complete, and its serried ranks, whatever their artistic shortcomings may be - and in this respect we believe them to be unrivalled...¹⁸

Beatty-Kingston then commented upon the Ripper victim display:

The chief attraction of the show, as might have been expected, considering its locality, is a blood-boltered display of revolting figures, purporting to represent the victims of the Whitechapel murders, laid out on the floor, side by side, at the farther end of a darksome cellar, connected with the ground-floor room by a rickety corkscrew staircase. These horrible objects are like nothing that ever lived or died. They can only be compared to the visionary offspring of an uncommonly severe nightmare - unearthly combinations of hideous waxen masks and shapeless bundles of rags. One of them is tightly swathed in a cerement of bright blue glazed calico, scored and blotched with dabs of red ocre, indicative of the unknown assassin's butcherly handiwork. The others are somewhat less grotesquely arrayed in dark wrappers profusely stained with mimic gore...¹⁹

Besides the horrific and gory display of current murder scenes of the Whitechapel murder victims, the wax museum was said to have the most complete wax collection of murderers, mostly in the act of being executed. Beatty-Kingston mentioned a display of the execution of Henri Pranzini, the 'Rue Montaigne assassin'. Pranzini's execution was by decapitation with the guillotine, which clearly made for an entertaining and gory display. He had been convicted of a triple homicide in Paris. A woman called Marie Regnault, her maid Annette and the maid's daughter Marie were found in March 1887 with their throats cut. Mme Regnault's body was also mutilated. An article in the *New York Times* of 31 August 1887 reported:

The triple murder in the Rue Montaigne, for the commission of which Henri Pranzini has just surrendered his head to the guillotine, was one of the most sensational tragedies which even Paris has furnished to the criminal records of the world... Marie Regnault, who was also known as Madame de Montille, was found on the floor of her chamber dead, her throat cut and her body terribly mutilated. Lying near the door leading from the chamber to the drawing room was the dead body of Annette, whose throat had also been cut, and in her bed in another apartment was little Marie Gremeret, her head almost severed from her body by the murderer's knife.²⁰ [Emphasis added].



Henri Pranzini

16 *Lloyd's Weekly*, London, UK, 10 February 1889, *Whitechapel Nuisances*.

17 Beatty-Kingston, William, *A Journalist's Jottings* (1890), London: Chapman and Hall.

18 *Daily Telegraph*, 29 November 1888; Beatty-Kingston, William, *op. cit.*

19 *Daily Telegraph*, 29 November 1888; Beatty-Kingston, William, *op. cit.*

20 *New York Times*, New York, NY, USA, 31 August 1887, Execution of Pranzini.

HORRIBLE TRIPLE MURDER IN PARIS—PORTRAITS OF THE THREE WOMEN (from Photos)



MARIE GREMERET, aged 12.



MARIE REGNAULT, aged 40.



ANNETTE GREMERET, aged 33.

Henri Pranzini was born to Italian parents in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1856. He was handsome, charismatic, and fluent in many languages. After being fired from the Egyptian post office for theft at a young age, he began a lucrative career as an interpreter. He was hired in this capacity by the English army in the Sudan, and had worked in countries such as Burma and Afghanistan. Pranzini was also hired by the Russian army during the Russo-Turkish war. Curiously, during Pranzini's short service with the Russians a few years prior to the Paris murders, he was employed by General Skobeleff. Soon afterwards, the general's mother was robbed of her money and brutally murdered. Pranzini mysteriously left the service of the Russian army just after the crime and the case went unsolved. By 1886, he made his way to Paris, jobless and in need of money. In order to satisfy his affluent lifestyle, he began to exploit wealthy single women, such as Madame Regnault, by charming them, gaining their trust, and then spending their money. It was later discovered that just prior to the murder of Regnault, Pranzini was in correspondence with another wealthy woman who lived in the United States. Apparently Pranzini had murdered the three women at Regnault's home in order to steal her jewellery so as to finance his journey to the United States.²¹

At the end of his article in the *Daily Telegraph*, immediately after his vivid account of the Ripper victim display, Beatty-Kingston stated:

*To what extent it may influence the East-enders deleteriously, by fostering a morbid interest in crime and criminals, can of course only be a matter of conjecture; but it seems a pity that such a debasing exhibition should constitute one of the principal amusements available to the population of a poverty-stricken neighbourhood.*²²

The details of Pranzini's preferred method of murder certainly do sound eerily familiar; the Ripper victims were also murdered with their throats being cut deeply and their bodies mutilated. Compounded with the murders being 'immortalized' in the museum at the same time as the unfortunates were being killed, this certainly makes for an intriguing theory for a possible motive. It is worth noting in this respect that a wax museum might have provided an incentive for the murder spree of Peter Sutcliffe, the Yorkshire Ripper. The crime historian and author Elisabeth Wetsch wrote:

*The roots of Sutcliffe's homicidal rage are difficult to trace. His family appears to have been torn by dark suspicions, on his father's part, of infidelity by Peter's mother, and the boy's opinion of all women may have suffered in an atmosphere of brooding doubt. As a young man, he found employment with a local mortuary, and was prone to "borrow" jewelry from the corpses; in his comments, easily dismissed as "jokes" by his co-workers at the time, there is a hint of budding necrophilia, more disturbing than the strain of larceny. A favorite outing for the would-be ripper was a local wax museum, where he lingered by the hour over torsos that depicted the results of gross venereal disease.*²³

21 *Te Aroha News*, Te Aroha, New Zealand, Volume V, Issue 25, 22 October 1887.

22 *Daily Telegraph*, 29 November 1888; Beatty-Kingston, William, *op. cit.*

23 Wetsch, Elisabeth, *Yorkshire Ripper*, 2005, www.crimezzz.net.

How intriguing it is that the very first of the Ripper's canonical victims, Mary Ann Nichols, whose body was found less than one hundred metres from the wax effigy of Pranzini's execution, was murdered on 31 August 1888, the first anniversary of Pranzini's execution! This suggests the possibility that the Ripper was retaliating against the female gender for causing the ruination of men, specifically Henri Pranzini, and honouring him by killing them in a similar fashion.



The Florentine 'Anatomical' Venus

The second reason for the Whitechapel Road wax museum being called a chamber of horrors seems to have been of a legal nature. In 1857, the Obscene Publications Act had been passed in Britain. The Act was, in part, a response to public anatomical museums which, under the guise of medical professional education, displayed graphic and sexually explicit models and sold supporting pamphlets and literature to the public.²⁴ One of the most popular wax displays in these anatomical museums was the Florentine 'Anatomical' Venus, a lifelike image of an attractive woman lying down in a seductive position. Both her sexual and her internal organs were fully exposed. In 1873, Dr Joseph Kahn's Anatomical and Pathological Museum was successfully prosecuted under the Obscene Publications Act, which set a precedent for the bringing of lawsuits against other anatomical museums and led many of them to close their doors. In his article *Dr Kahn's Museum: Obscene Anatomy in Victorian London*, Dr A W Bates of the Department of Histopathology at the Royal Free Hospital, London, stated:

The prosecution of Kahn's museum in 1873 effectively ended public anatomy museums as an arena for medical education in England. The Jordans [a family of museum operators] shipped Kahn's collection to America, where it competed with increasingly sensational dime museums in the Bowery. The Liverpool Anatomy Museum, successor of the Manchester Museum, closed and specimens were sold to Louis Tussaud's waxwork show ('true-to-life representations of prominent people').²⁵

Interestingly, Kahn's museum was closed down alongside three other New York anatomical museums in January 1888, the very year of the Ripper murders. The police acted in cooperation with Anthony Comstock, a United States Postal Inspector and crusader against gambling, prostitution and obscenity. An article in the *New York Sun* of 10 January 1888 titled *Raiding the Museums* read:

Kahn's Museum, the most pretentious of those raided, has been in existence for 26 years. Its manager threatens to make it warm for Comstock, who in turn threatens to make it too warm for their waxworks.²⁶

One London wax museum avoided this prosecution: Madame Tussauds. According to Pamela Pilbeam of the University of London, not only did Tussauds cater to a higher-end audience but also focused upon wax representations of well-known historical personalities, especially contemporary figures, and eschewed the less savoury popular anatomical museum approach. In her dissertation, *Madame Tussaud and the Business of Wax: Marketing to the Middle Classes*, Pilbeam states:

Much of the Tussaud's wax fare was similar to that in other shows, the royals, assorted witches, and aspects of history, but her models were better made and far more luxuriously dressed and housed than in the average waxworks... There was never a risk that Tussaud would fall foul of the Obscene Publications Act of 1857. They were careful to avoid anatomical models, some of which were sexually explicit, without having any real scientific or medical rationale.²⁷



24 Bates, A.W., "Indecent and Demoralising Representations": Public Anatomy Museums in Mid-Victorian England, *Medical History*, V. 52 (1): 1-22, Jan 1, 2008.

25 Bates, A.W., *Dr Kahn's Museum: Obscene Anatomy in Victorian London*, *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, V. 99 (12): 618-624, December 2006.

26 *Sun*, New York, 10 January 1888, *Raiding the Museums*.

27 Pilbeam, Pamela, *Madame Tussaud and the Business of Wax: Marketing to the Middle Classes*.

Even though Tussauds shied away from sexually explicit models, it did realize that much of its business came from its waxworks of celebrated villains and murderers and decided to separate these into a 'side gallery' in order to detach them from the waxen representations of prominent figures in history. This allowed Tussauds to boast that its main emphasis was still on respectable waxworks.

Tussaud's primary galleries exhibited exquisite effigies of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, Czar Alexander II of Russia, Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, Garibaldi, Bismarck and Presidents Lincoln and Johnson. They also had historical and literary figures, such as other Kings and Queens of England, Voltaire, Lord Byron and Sir Walter Scott, and even King Louis-Philippe of France. There were many others. By separating waxworks into galleries, Tussauds could also name them, and named officially its villain and murderer gallery the 'Chamber of Horrors'.²⁸

The stage was now set for 'penny show' waxwork museums, such as the Whitechapel Road wax museum, to offer a gory and brutally explicit chamber of horrors show without fear of legal repercussions from the Obscene Publications Act of 1857. Note how Thomas Barry's solicitors' editorial in the *Echo* on 13 September 1888 compared his establishment to Tussauds. They were responding to a previous editorial in the 11 September edition which complained about how disgraceful Barry's low penny shows were, especially the Ripper murder victim display and its pictures:

Sir, Referring to your letter under the above heading in your last night's issue, we beg to be permitted to place the real facts before you. There are only two houses at the corner of Thomas street, Whitechapel, and they are next door to one another. The one belongs to Mr. Barry, who holds a lease of the premises, and this has for seven years been carried on by him as a waxwork show. The other premises are leased to his daughter, Mrs. Roberts, and here she has, in conjunction with her husband, carried on a similar show to that of Mr. Barry for the last twelve months. These places, we are informed by the proprietors, so far from being "sinks of iniquity," as alleged by your Correspondent, simply serve at the East, at the cheap rate of one penny for admission, the highly useful purpose that the deservedly well patronized exhibition of Madam Tussaud serves at the west [emphasis added]. There are wax figures of celebrated persons, a chamber of horrors, and exhibition of ghosts (according to the plan of Professor Pepper). As regards the pictures at which your Correspondent is so horrified, we are informed there are only two, the one single and the other double in the events depicted, and that their character has been greatly exaggerated. Trusting you will find space for this explanation in the next issue of your valuable paper. We are, Sir, yours faithfully,

*Abbott, Earle, and Ogle, Solicitors for Mr. Barry and Mrs. Roberts. 11 Worship street, Sept. 12*²⁹

Another connection between the Whitechapel Road's wax museum and Madame Tussauds chamber of horrors is that both had the murderer Henri Pranzini on display. The *Otago Witness* of 18 November 1887 stated:

*The murderer Pranzini has been added to Madame Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors. The artist has obtained a realistic effect by placing his model murderer near the guillotine, an exact facsimile of the one used in the Place de la Roquette on the morning of Pranzini's execution.*³⁰

The Pranzini display at Tussauds was seen by multitudes of people even in the spring of 1888. In *Jack the Ripper and the London Press*, L Perry Curtis comments:

*The popularity of Madame Tussaud's museum may be gauged by the fact that on a single day in the spring of 1888 some twenty-eight thousand visitors passed through the turnstiles to see royal personages and political heroes on display as well as such 'foreign-born' murderers as Lipski and the Parisian triple-murderer Pranzini.*³¹

"The popularity of Madame Tussaud's museum may be gauged by the fact that on a single day in the spring of 1888 some twenty-eight thousand visitors passed through the turnstiles to see royal personages and political heroes on display as well as such 'foreign-born' murderers as Lipski and the Parisian triple-murderer Pranzini."

28 Church, Roy, and Godley, Andrew, *The Emergence of Modern Marketing* (2003), Routledge.

29 *Echo*, 13 September 1888.

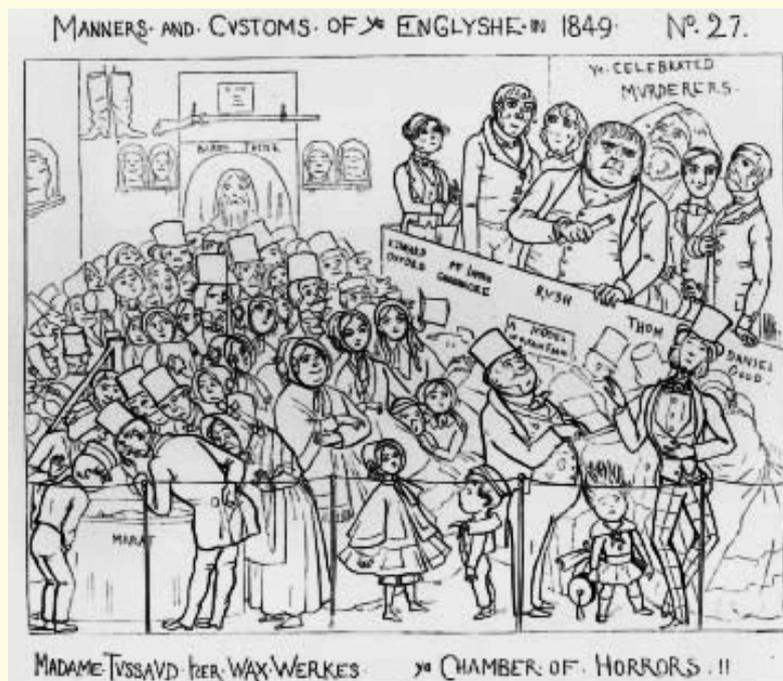
30 *Otago Witness*, Dunedin, New Zealand, 18 November 1887, *Theatrical*.

31 Curtis, L Perry, *Jack the Ripper and the London Press* (2001), Yale University Press.

Thomas Barry was finally convicted in Central Criminal Court. His crime had not been violating the Obscene Publications Act but being a nuisance in Whitechapel Road. The live entertainment had spread on to the street and tradesmen and the administrators of the London Hospital finally got together and successfully prosecuted Barry. The *Era* of 9 February 1889 reported:

*Thomas Barry, a showman, was indicted at the Central Criminal Court, on Tuesday, before the Recorder, upon the charge of creating a nuisance and exhibiting figures illustrating a show, and thereby causing idle people to assemble and remain in the Queen's highway... After a long consideration, the jury returned a verdict of guilty...The only object of the prosecution was to stop a nuisance [to the satisfaction of the inhabitants of the locality]. The Recorder adopted this course and the defendants were discharged on entering into their own recognisances in the sum of £100 each to come up for judgment if called upon.*³²

When Martha Tabram's life was literally cut short on 7 August 1888, a chamber of horrors wax museum located in the very same East End community was already well-established, visited nightly by huge crowds large enough to cause a nuisance to nearby businesses and the neighbouring London Hospital. Even though shady anatomical wax museums had been forced to close their doors years before the Ripper killings, this shady museum was allowed to continue because it imitated the business practices of the famous Madame Tussauds Chamber of Horrors on the West End of London. The ground floor had multitudes of waxen exhibits of executions of recent convicted murderers; in other words, government-sponsored killings and mutilations of human beings presented to the public - among whom there might have been possible serial killers - to gaze upon. The proprietor of the Whitechapel Road centre of attraction had recently put on display a recreation of the execution of Pranzini, a notorious murderer, by the severing of his head with a guillotine. Pranzini claimed the life of three Parisian women in the spring of 1887 by cutting their throats, Ripper-style - although, since the French murders occurred first, it would be more appropriate to say that Jack the Ripper murdered the five canonical victims *Pranzini-style*, with the first of these murders curiously occurring on the anniversary of Pranzini's execution.



The Chamber of Horrors at Madame Tussaud's Waxworks in 1849

As Jack the Ripper added to his list of victims during the late summer and autumn of 1888, the chamber of horrors proprietor followed suit by adding a waxen figure of each victim immediately after her murder, thus immortalizing the Ripper's handiwork. If the Whitechapel fiend did visit the chamber of horrors at any time during his murder spree, he would have had the opportunity to re-live his ghastly passion over and over again in the company of an audience eager to see the horrific display. He might even have experienced a perverted feeling of power and exhilaration by watching his craft recreated and observing the reactions of the many visitors. The authorities finally brought the proprietor of this chamber of horrors wax museum to court, and even got a guilty verdict against him, but had to accomplish it indirectly through a charge of creating a nuisance.

³² *Era*, 9 February 1889.



Michael Hawley holds a master's degree in science (invertebrate paleontology) and secondary science education at State University of New York, College of Buffalo, and has published research in fossil faunal distribution, microstratigraphy, and rock correlation. He has been involved in genealogical research since 1992, which ultimately led to his interest in Ripperology research. He just retired as commander and naval aviator in the US Navy, and is currently enjoying a career as a secondary earth science and chemistry teacher. He resides with his wife and six children in Greater Buffalo, New York.