

## Was Elizabeth Stride a Victim of Jack the Ripper?

In 1888, the most infamous murders of all time took place in London's East End. Five prostitutes, destitute women who knew of no other way to survive, were slaughtered and mutilated by a supposedly unknown killer who bears the nickname Jack the Ripper.

The victims are listed below:

Mary Ann Nichols, Friday 31st August  
 Annie Chapman, Saturday 8th September  
 Elizabeth Stride, Sunday 30 September  
 Catherine Eddowes, Sunday 30 September  
 Mary Jane Kelly, Friday 9th November

This is the accepted list and we will go with it for this article. They were attacked from the front and strangled and lowered gently to the ground. The killer never cut their throats or mutilated them from their left.

The canonically third Ripper victim Elizabeth Stride met her violent death at the hands of the Ripper on 30th September, a Sunday.

Some believe she was killed by Aaron Kosminksi and this would have almost been at his own doorstep so they think as a decoy he dashed off to kill Catherine Eddowes and plant evidence of his presence in Goulston Street. His brother Woolfe lived in Berner Street where Elizabeth was murdered.

Stride had worked in the Jewish community and had learned Yiddish which would have given her common ground with one suspect.

At 12.45 am, Elizabeth was seen being attacked by a man, not necessarily her killer, on Berner Street. He was seen trying to pull her away from the yard where she died. Nobody knows why she had to be pulled away or who went with her into the yard later. A witness was scared off by the second man and cannot help with that.

Chief Inspector Swanson later revealed that the "second man" had been traced and cleared him of any involvement in Elizabeth Stride's murder. Jack the Ripper almost certainly worked alone.

Fifteen minutes later she was discovered just inside Dutfield's yard along the same street with her throat cut. Stride's left cheek was only a few inches from a wall. No mutilations had taken place. She was seen talking to a man at 12.45 am by James Brown who heard her refuse the man by saying, "Not tonight, some other night". It looks like she had a date with the Ripper and turned this man down. The Ripper may have needed to make dates with these women for the important thing for him was getting them to suitable killing sites.

Many Ripperologists contend that Elizabeth Stride was not a Ripper Victim. It is nearly impossible to believe that the Ripper who was out on his killing spree that night and killed another woman shortly after was not responsible.

The fact remains that both her and the woman killed later that night Catherine Eddowes carried the same throat wounds (page 14, Jack the Ripper Whitechapel Map Booklet 1888). The Ripper victims had their throats cut from left to right and Dr Bond stated that Stride's was cut from right to left. Dr Blackwell examined the neck and decided that the throat was indeed cut from left to right as the others had been and that Dr Bond was led astray by the thought that the killer didn't use as much force when he cut Stride's throat as he had done with the others.

Fanny Mortimer told the Evening News, that Stride lay "with her throat cut across till her head seemed to be hanging by a bit of skin. Her legs were drawn up under her." She was in the Ripper pose and no ordinary killer had ripped her throat.

Another Mortimer quote, "The body was lying slightly on one side, with the legs a little drawn up as if in pain, the clothes being slightly disarranged, so that the legs were partly visible." Did the killer reach for her clothes to lift them for performing the mutilations and not get the chance?

She said she saw grapes but it is now known that there were no grapes and what she saw were spots of blood that looked like grapes in the poor lighting.

Diemsschutz saw the violence of her wound. He described her throat as being gaped by two inches. That is significant. The Ripper always used excessive force.

Suppose he had cut from right to left. He was in a confined space. In fact the differences, minor, could be put down to him being more used to cutting left to right. The fact that it would not have been easy shows this was indeed a Ripper murder for the effort was unnecessary.

Stride didn't need to be knifed for all the killer had to do was pull her scarf tight to kill her and it was already very tight. The Ripper was not going to change his throat cutting enterprises.

The killer took her hand and thrust it into the wound for desecration. Like with Eddowes, there was no spurting on the wall and no struggle. Like Eddowes she was on her back when cut.

The Ripper did seem to take steps to avoid being saturated with blood. The killer of Stride would easily have avoided blood marks. He made sure the blood spurt was away from him. She was attacked from the right side like the rest except Kelly.

One marker was the killing was characterised by the quietness of the other murders where people should have heard things but heard nothing important if anything. It was remarked now out it would be "if a man had come out of the yard - [and] without the stewards wife hearing a noise for she was sitting in the kitchen." Again we have the uncanny silence surrounding the other murders.

She carried a packet in her hand. She would have dropped the packet in her hand if she felt endangered by the attacker which shows this was not a crime of passion and she was got unaware like the others. The notion that the murderer put it in her hand after it was dropped is rubbish.

Her legs were drawn up which was the Ripper's main calling card. With Stride especially, the legs had to be arranged in that position!!

With Eddowes, the Ripper tidied her hat. It was put by her side. She was posed. The same hat signature was done with Nichols and Stride.

Why was she on her side unlike the others? Perhaps the issue with Stride is that she was a tall woman. Smaller men should think twice! If there are differences with the other murders is that the reason? The Ripper must have been stressed trying to manage her!

The body was placed on its side while with the other murders the victims were laid on their backs. It may be the killer never intended to mutilate her though he would have liked to. He knew the woman had been attacked minutes before just a few feet away and seen so it was too dangerous to spend time mutilating her. There is no reason to believe the killer was disturbed though it is possible. Catherine Eddowes however was put on her side first by the Ripper for she had mud on one side of her face off the ground. The Ripper then put her on her back. When the Ripper puts two women on their sides in the one night it shows they must have had the same killer. The Ripper strangled Eddowes as she stood up. Why did he place her on her side after? He may have done this to have a look in case policemen were hovering about and then he put her on her back to continue with his evil task.

It is not certain that Stride was not strangled. Marks were found on her chest and shoulders consistent with somebody kneeling on her to do it. Some say that unlike the Ripper victims Stride was not rendered unconscious by throttling first. Stride was strangled to death like the previous Ripper victims (page 59, Jack the Ripper's Black Magic Rituals). This was why there wasn't much blood. Only the Ripper would have cut the throat of a woman already dead. This was his only mutilation of her.

It has been claimed that she bled slowly to death for about ten minutes and thus the killer had time to mutilate. That supposes too much. Dr Blackwell said, "She would have bled to death comparatively slowly on account of some vessels on one side only of the neck being cut and the artery not completely severed." There had been a violent incident involving Stride on the street shortly before so there would have been too much attention around. The Ripper could only kill and make a hasty retreat.

The Ripper maybe didn't intend to kill at that particular moment in time. He was always prepared to kill but he didn't expect the opportunity to present itself. But it did and he availed of it. If so, that was why he didn't indulge himself in mutilating Stride. And that was why he needed a piece of Eddowes' apron to wrap Eddowes' organs in later on. In the other killings he already had something with him to contain the organs. That both killings looked like a wonderful surprise for the Ripper shows that both were the Ripper's work. The closeness in time and place of the two killings strongly indicates the work of the one man.

Very near Berner Street where Stride was murdered a man apparently in his early thirties boasted in a pub called the Red Lion Public House that he knew the murderer and that they would hear about the murderer in the morning and then the man disappeared. Just a few hours later Stride was found murdered. Stride was a Ripper victim.

## Stride and the Knife

The main reason why some hold that Stride was not murdered by the Ripper is that she was not killed with the same knife used on Catherine Eddowes later that night. The knife was possibly Stride's own knife which many prostitutes had taken to carrying for protection or perhaps the Ripper had two knives and on this occasion didn't employ his usual knife. Because she had been attacked just minutes before her murder but not by the killer she may have retained her knife in her hand. Did she attack the killer with it and did he disarm her? Not likely – there are indications that she trusted her killer. She may have put the knife away and then he struck when it was safely in her pocket. She was rendered unconscious. Then he reached for her knife and used it.

If the killer used Stride's knife then the killer didn't use his usual knife for two reasons. One was for speed. He had no intention of spending a second longer by going to the trouble of getting his own knife out with this woman for it risked capture. This would indicate that she withdrew her knife when the other man attacked her and she then let the Ripper hold her knife for her because she trusted him and he was comforting her. The second was because he knew it could be told what kind of knife was used. He didn't want the police to think that anybody other than the man who assaulted her earlier was the killer. Both of these would indicate that the Ripper had been seen by Schwartz. Who knows. Maybe the man who attacked Stride had a knife that he dropped and which the killer used for speed. The killer would have carried a knife for self-defence and another one for butchering any prostitutes if the opportunity arose.

The knife used on Stride had been sharpened for it made a clean cut, and it had no point on it but was rounded (page 61, 62 Jack the Ripper Black Magic Rituals). The killer didn't just happen to be carrying such a sharp knife and kill her on impulse. The man carrying the knife intended to kill and was experienced enough to know that he didn't need a pointed knife. Perhaps the Ripper carried this knife and used it just because he got the opportunity. And having got the bloodlust maybe he returned to his lair to get his favourite knife and then he set out with it in search of a prostitute to kill with it. Later that night Catherine Eddowes was found murdered.

There is no reason to hold that the Ripper used only one knife when he was mutilating. The fact that the knife used on Chapman could have passed for a butcher's knife or an amputating knife may mean more than one was used. Perhaps he used a different knife when he knew the knife would be seen as it was by Schwartz. He knew that the police were into trying to find out what kind of knife he used on his victims.

The Ripper may have carried two knives in case the opportunity to commit more than one murder would arise. Maybe he was afraid of losing a knife.

It happened in a Jewish social site

The Ripper wrote a message in Goulston Street after killing Catherine Eddowes that night implicating the Jews as the men who will not be blamed for nothing. A piece of her apron was found dumped there.

A man was indeed called a murdering Jew who was in Stride's presence that night.

The killer was seen by Jews with Eddowes.

This makes sense if he had been seen at the scene of the killing of Stride and been called a Lipski or murdering Jew and when Stride died at a spot frequented by Jews socialising. Blaming the men seems to imply that he blamed the Jews at the club. The yard where she was killed was the property of Jewish Socialists and there were complaints of men with poor character frequenting it.

It has a context therefore it is really the Ripper's work.

The graffiti commands the reader not to blame and is defiant as if the killer is supremely confident. Serial killers are famous for commanding and being arrogant. The message rings authentic.

It is possible the Ripper feared that the Stride murder would not be linked to him as he only got cutting her throat and needed to assert in some way that he did it. He was a Jew and was not innocent of the crime so he was not to blame for nothing. The apron piece and the message were then about linking the two murders together.

## Conclusions

Stride was a Ripper victim for the following reasons:

Jack was out and about at the time.

Like all the victims she was killed after the pubs had closed.

The knife was not a common knife.

The Ripper was a Jew and a man at the scene was called a murdering Jew.

The man scared a witness out of the way.

The killer intended to mutilate but didn't get the chance. He was interrupted.

The killer cut her in the expert way the Ripper did.

Stride was the kind of victim the Ripper went for.

She was cut by a man who knelt at her right side the same as the other victims.

Ripper signature where the woman's throat is cut when she is lowered on the ground was followed. Another killer just had to choke her with the scarf or cut her standing up.

Dr Phillips was convinced that the killer of Eddowes and Stride was not the same man but did he think of the bigger context and not just wounds and the lack of mutilation? No.

She had the Ripper's signature which was how the legs were always put up in a sexual way.

Stride looked at peace and did not struggle as if she trusted the killer - pointing to him being cold-blooded as Jack uniquely was. She was calm when killed so the killer was as well and then he struck. It was so unnecessary except for the Ripper. Nobody was going to murder her when there was a Ripper hunt going on unless he was the Ripper. He knew he could be changed himself for being the Ripper. And there was more to worry about than legal justice - the mobs!

We have an explanation for why Stride was not mutilated - the cart drawing into the yard interrupted the killer.

The location of Stride' murder was every bit as risky as most of the the other murder sites. That somebody took that risk during the height of the Ripper craze shows this was no ordinary murder.

The Ripper had to kill her differently from the others for her tight scarf around her neck proved a nuisance. He had to cut around it and it is clear the knife was sharp. The best interpretation of the facts is that the killer grabbed Stride by the scarf to choke her into silence and unconsciousness and then cut her throat.

The Ripper according to Mrs Long who saw him with Chapman said he was wearing a deerstalker hat. A man seen in around near the time Stride died so savagely was also wearing one. And later on that evening the killer was seen with Eddowes. Again he was wearing a deerstalker hat. This was not that usual. Wearing the hat of a hunter and been seen with lone woman should have been a warning bell. He must have been taking the hat off after the killings as there are no accounts of anybody like that getting attention.

Stride died at the hands of the Ripper.