

Baker Street *Elementary*

PRESENTS
"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"



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THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON
078 -- "THE INTERCONTINENTAL REACH OF THE LAW" -- FEBRUARY, 2022





WELCOME TO TOPIC # 078... TODAY, WATSON AND I WILL LOOK AT THE PINKERTON AGENCY DURING THE VICTORIAN PERIOD.





IN TWO OF MY CASES, I WILL MEET PINKERTON AGENTS: EDWARDS IN THE VALLEY OF FEAR AND LEVERTON, WHO TRAILED GIUSEPPE GORGIANO FROM AMERICA IN 'THE ADVENTURE OF THE RED CIRCLE.'



BY 1888, DURING THE FIRST ENCOUNTER, THE REPUTATION OF THE PINKERTON AGENCY HAD BEEN FIRMLY ESTABLISHED FOR ALMOST 50 YEARS AND HAD ALREADY LOST ITS FOUNDER, ALLAN PINKERTON.

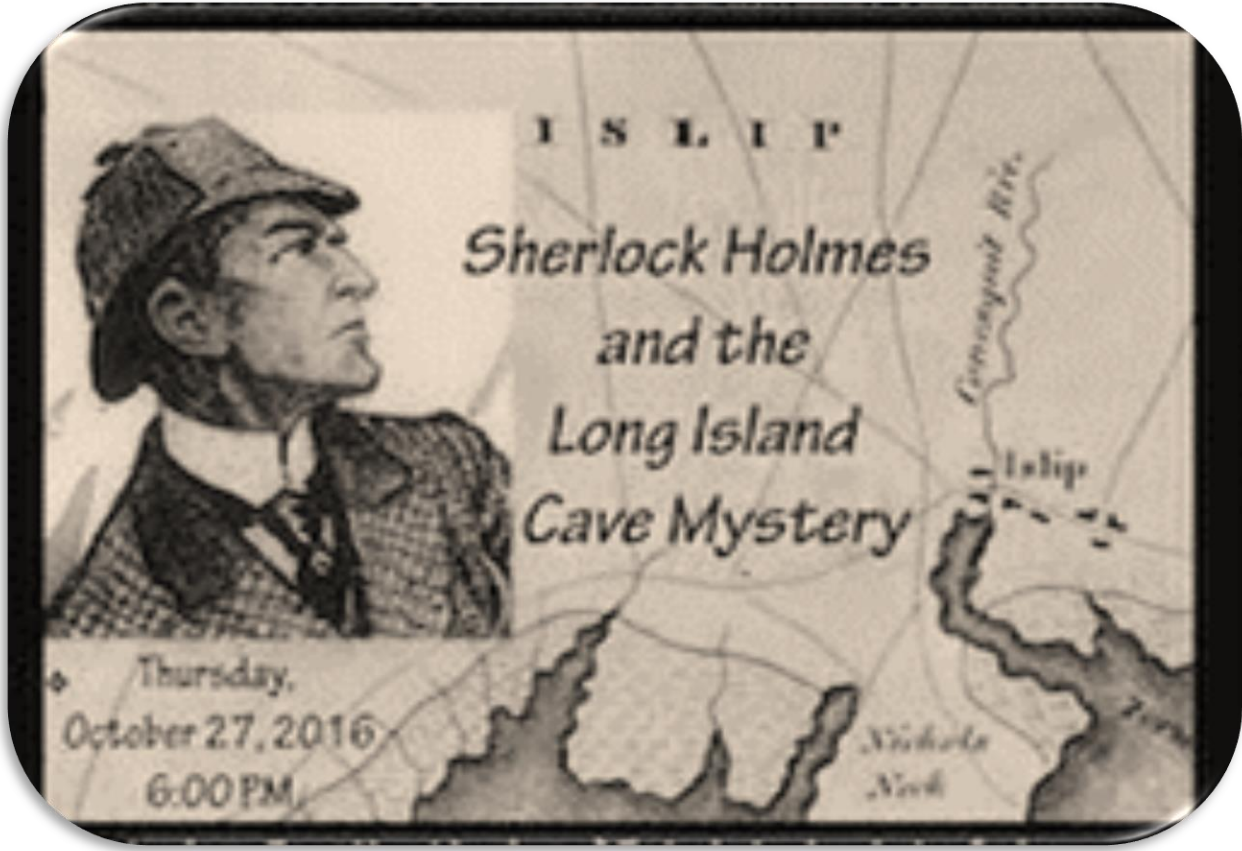




THE EDWARDS CHARACTER IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN BASED ON JAMES MCPARLAND, WHO HAD GARNERED FAME IN THE 1870s FOR INFILTRATING AND TESTIFYING AGAINST THE MOLLY MAGUIRES, A SECRET IRISH MINING SOCIETY.



LEVERTON'S FAME ALSO PRECEDED HIM AS 'THE HERO OF THE LONG ISLAND CAVE MYSTERY.'



*ALLAN PINKERTON WAS BORN IN GLASGOW,
SCOTLAND IN 1819 AND WORKED AS A BARREL MAKER
THERE UNTIL IMMIGRATING TO THE US IN 1842.*



HE SETTLED OUTSIDE OF CHICAGO AND CONTINUED HIS TRADE... IN 1847, HE FELL INTO HIS NEW PROFESSION WHEN HE WAS OUT COLLECTING MATERIALS FOR HIS BARRELS.

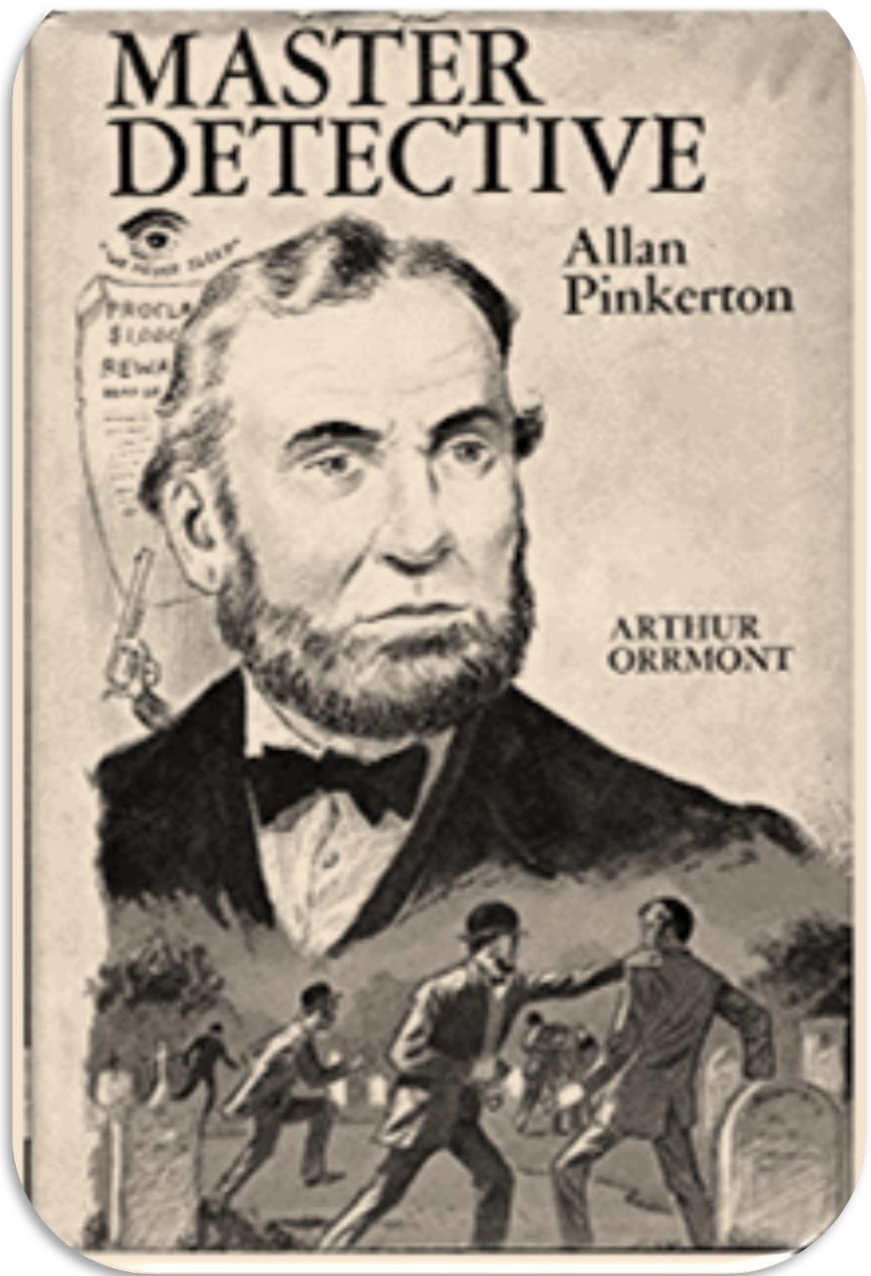


A PARTICULAR ISLAND NOT FAR FROM WHERE HE LIVED HAD A PLENTIFUL SUPPLY OF POLES, AND WHILE GATHERING THEM ONE SUMMER DAY, HE CAME ACROSS EVIDENCE OF SOMEONE ELSE USING THE ISLAND.



HE INFORMED THE SHERIFF, AND THE OFFICER INVESTIGATED, CAPTURING A LARGE GANG OF COUNTERFEITERS... LATER, LOCAL SHOPKEEPERS ASKED PINKERTON TO HELP CAPTURE YET ANOTHER COUNTERFEITER.





BASED ON THESE EFFORTS, HE WAS APPOINTED AS CHICAGO'S FIRST — AND, AT THE BEGINNING, ONLY — POLICE DETECTIVE... SHORTLY, HE HAD FIVE DETECTIVES WORKING UNDER HIM, AND HIS REPUTATION CONTINUED TO GROW.





BEYOND HIS DETECTIVE WORK, HE WAS ALSO AN
ABOLITIONIST... HE HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN
RADICAL POLITICS IN SCOTLAND, WHICH WAS
WHY HE WAS FORCED TO EMIGRATE.



HIS SHOP SERVED AS A STATION ALONG THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD, AND HE RAISED FUNDS TO HELP TRANSPORT ELEVEN SLAVES FREED BY JOHN BROWN.



IN 1850 HE LEFT PUBLIC SERVICES TO FORM HIS OWN AGENCY. PINKERTON'S NATIONAL DETECTIVE AGENCY ADVERTISED 'WE NEVER SLEEP' WITH AN UNBLINKING EYE AS ITS LOGO.



THIS IMAGE LIES BEHIND THE TERM 'PRIVATE EYE.' THE COMPANY INCLUDED ALLAN'S BROTHER ROBERT, WHO WAS A RAILROAD CONTRACTOR... THE ORGANIZATION SPECIALIZED IN THE CAPTURE OF COUNTERFEITERS AND TRAIN ROBBERS, BUT ALSO PROVIDED PRIVATE MILITARY CONTRACTORS AND SECURITY GUARDS.





BY 1853, PINKERTON AGENCIES EXISTED IN ALL THE MAJOR UNION CITIES... THE COMPANY HIRED THE FIRST FEMALE DETECTIVE (KATE WARNE) IN 1856, AND DURING AN INVESTIGATION OF A RAILWAY CASE...





**...UNCOVERED A PLOT TO ASSASSINATE
PRESIDENT-ELECT ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN 1861.**



WARNED OF THE THREAT, LINCOLN CHANGED HIS ITINERARY AND, UNDER A DISGUISE, PASSED THROUGH THE AREA AT NIGHT UNHARMED.



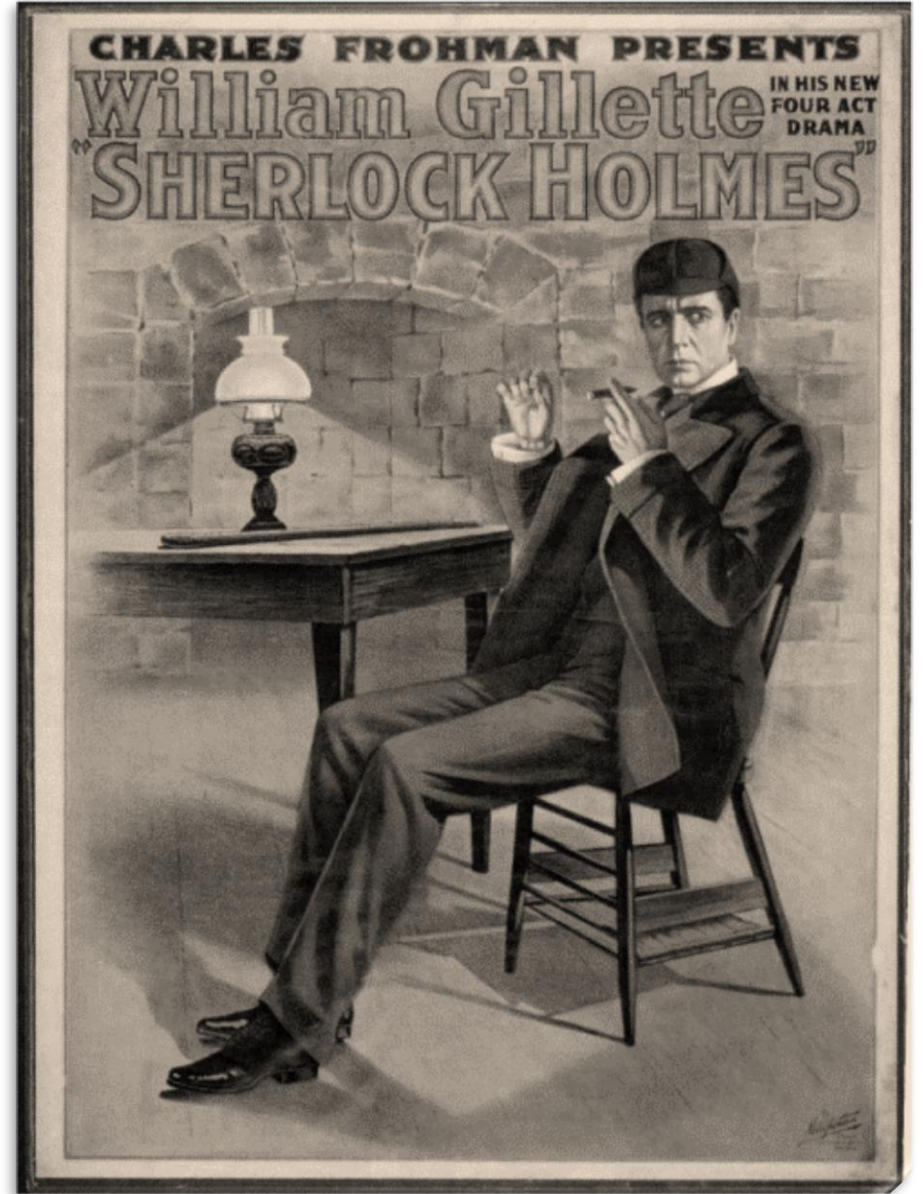
WHEN THE CIVIL WAR BROKE OUT, LINCOLN
BROUGHT PINKERTON TO WASHINGTON TO HEAD
THE FIRST NATIONAL POLICE FORCE — A SECRET
SERVICE DIVISION OF THE ARMY.



PINKERTON AGENTS PROVIDED INFORMATION REGARDING THE CONFEDERACY'S MILITARY PLANS.



SUCH FEATS WERE DRAMATIZED BY WILLIAM GILLETTE, FAMOUS FOR HIS PORTRAYAL OF YOU...



...IN A PLAY HE WROTE AND STARRED IN AS A UNION SPY SENT SOUTH AS CAPTAIN THORNE TO SEND FALSE INFORMATION TO THE CONFEDERATE ARMY, ALLOWING UNION TROOPS...



...TO BREAK THROUGH THEIR LINES. SECRET SERVICE DEBUTED IN 1896, AND GILLETTE REPRISED HIS ROLE AS CAPTAIN THORNE ALMOST 1,800 TIMES.





**WHEN GENERAL MCCLELLAN WAS REPLACED BY
GENERAL GRANT, PINKERTON RETURNED TO CHICAGO,
WHERE HE FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON BANK ROBBERS.**



THE AGENCY INTRODUCED A NUMBER OF INNOVATIONS, INCLUDING PHOTOGRAPHING CRIMINALS AFTER ARREST AND INCORPORATING NEWSPAPER STORIES ABOUT THEM AND THEIR CRIMES IN THEIR FILES.



AS A RESULT, BY THE 1870s, THEY HAD THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST CRIMINAL DATABASE AND WERE OFTEN CONSULTED BY LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT FOR DESCRIPTIONS OF POSSIBLE SUSPECTS.



UNFORTUNATELY, MOST OF THESE WERE DESTROYED DURING THE 1871 CHICAGO FIRE — ALONG WITH THEIR OFFICES... THE AGENTS THEMSELVES, HOWEVER, WERE HIRED TO SERVE AS GUARDS AND PREVENT LOOTING IN THE FIRE'S AFTERMATH.



FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF ALLAN PINKERTON IN 1884, HIS SONS TOOK CONTROL OF THE COMPANY, AND BUSINESSES HIRED THE AGENCY TO INFILTRATE UNIONS TO PREVENT STRIKES AND FACTORY SHUTDOWNS.



SUCH 'UNION BUSTING' EFFORTS LED TO A DECLINE IN THE AGENCY'S REPUTATION, WHICH SANK EVEN LOWER WHEN ELEVEN PEOPLE, INCLUDING THREE PINKERTON AGENTS, WERE KILLED DURING THE HOMESTEAD STRIKE OF 1892.



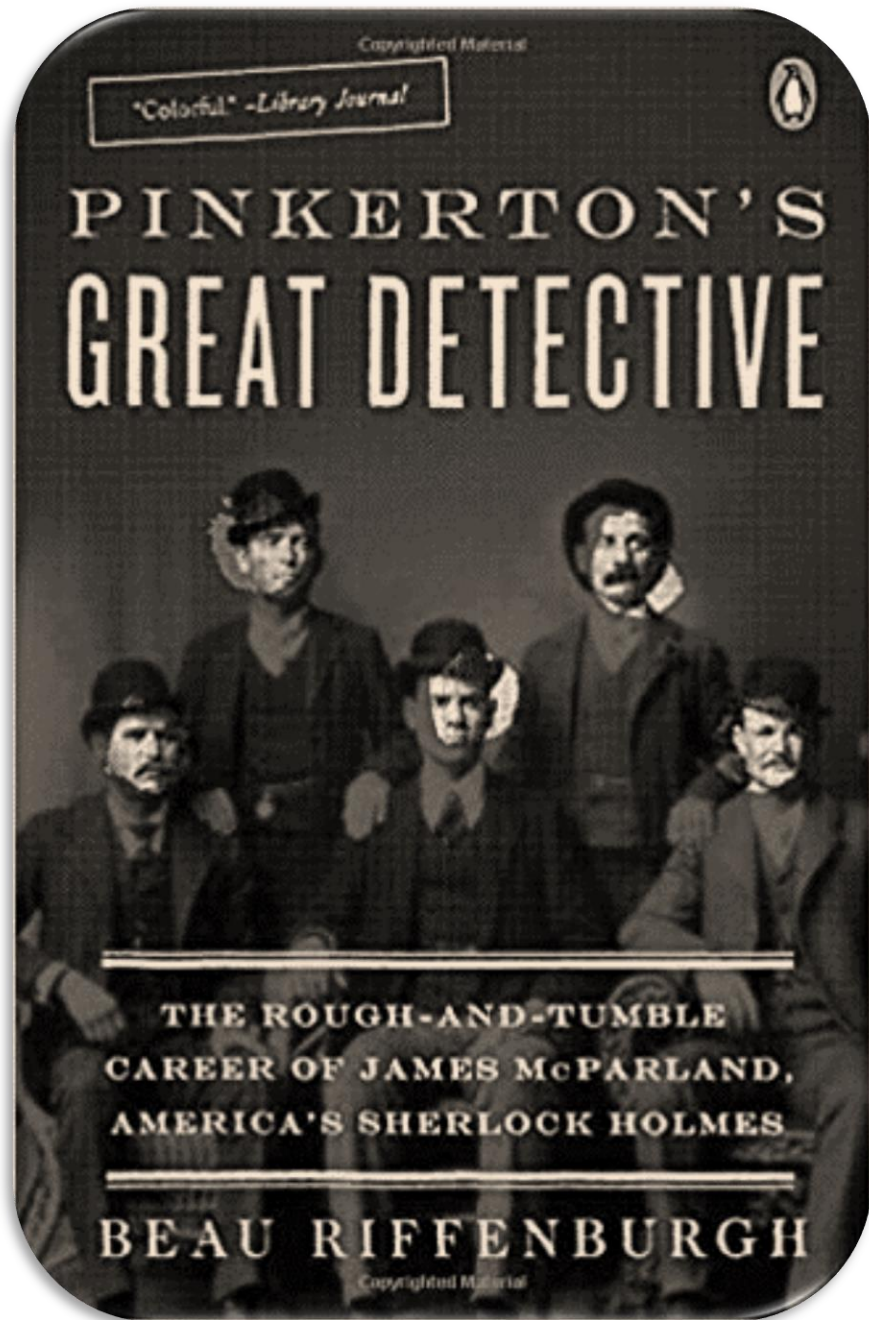


**DESPITE SEVERAL HIGHLY PUBLICIZED INCIDENTS
(SUCH AS FIREBOMBING JESSE JAMES' MOTHER'S
HOME) THE AGENCY ENDURED AND HAS GROWN TO
A \$1.5 BILLION ORGANIZATION.**



ITS WEBSITE BOASTS OF OPERATIONS IN 100 COUNTRIES AND OFFERS SUCH SERVICES AS SECURITY MANAGEMENT, CORPORATE INVESTIGATIONS, AND INTELLIGENCE PROTECTION.





AT THE TIME OF MY ADVENTURES WITH THESE AGENTS, THE PINKERTONS' REPUTATION STILL NETTED MY RESPECT, AND HAD THEY BEEN GIVEN A CHANCE TO REVIEW MY OWN SCRAPBOOK COLLECTION OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY, WE WOULD HAVE FOUND A KINDRED SPIRIT IN THE OTHER.



SO, WE HAVE COMPLETED TOPIC # 078 IN OUR SERIES...

IN TOPIC # 079, WE WILL BE LOOKING AT TATTOOs DURING THE VICTORIAN PERIOD.



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"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"

IS CREATED THROUGH THE INGENUITY & HARD WORK OF:

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&
STEVE MASON

