

# Gabriel Weston Has Murder In Mind

By **Alexander Baron** - Jul 5, 2015

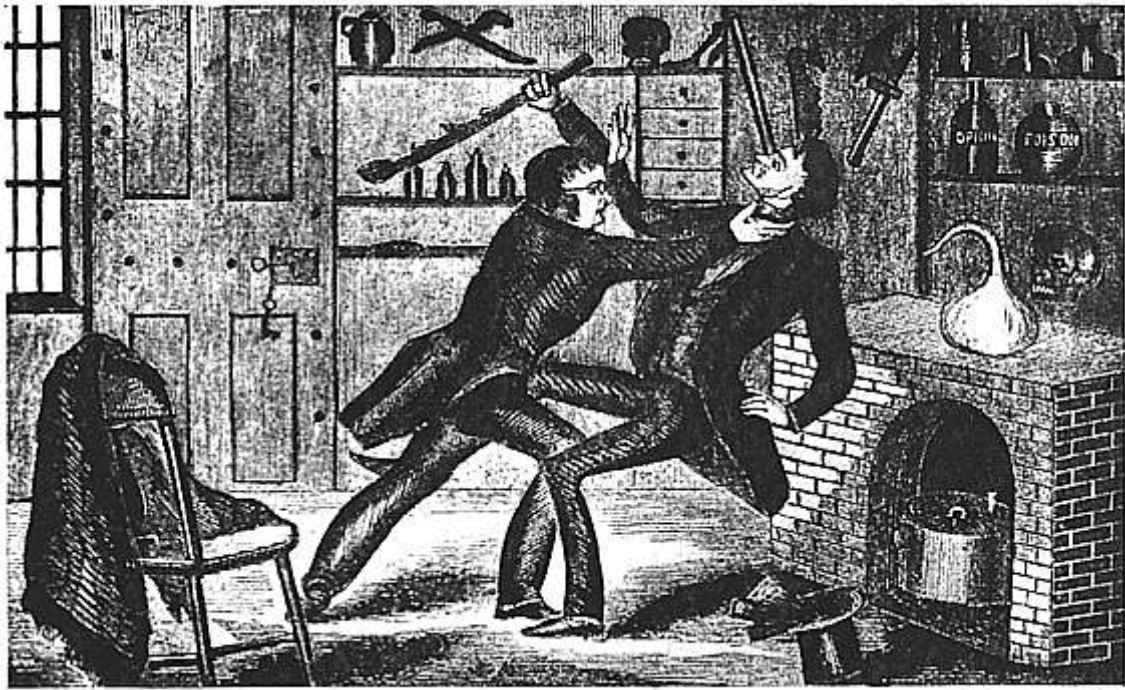
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*Gabriel Weston (BBC)*

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Beauty and brains is a fatal combination in any woman, none more so than here, although if you are of a sensitive disposition you might like to give the lovely Dr Weston a miss on this occasion, because in this 3 part BBC series *Catching The Criminals* she explores the forensics used to track down murderers, and some of those forensic are, well, how do you fancy seeing maggots grown in a pig's head stuffed in a suitcase? In the first episode she examines four historical murder cases, one of them not so historical.



[Contemporary Print.]

*Contemporary print reproduced in the Trial of Professor John White Webster, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), p. 32.*

George Parkman was murdered in 1849 by John White Webster at Harvard Medical College where Webster was a lecturer. Webster appears to have killed Parkman with a single blow of a blunt instrument in an argument over a debt. Had he come clean he might have escaped with a manslaughter conviction. Instead, his unsuccessful attempt to dispose of the body led to his being tried for murder and hanged. This was the case that gave birth to forensic dentistry.



*Buck Ruxton*

Next up is the double murder committed by Dr Buck Ruxton in 1935 followed by serial killer John George Haigh. Haigh's case is notorious, and for those who like crime non-fiction *par excellence*, check out [the biography](#) by the historian and archivist Jonathan Oates. Haigh tried to dodge the hangman by claiming to have been a vampire, but the jury didn't buy his madman act, and in any case if sane killers are executed, why not mad ones as well as morons?



*John George Haigh also known as the "The Acid Bath Murderer"*

By the time Colin Pitchfork raped and murdered two teenage girls, capital punishment had been abolished in the UK, but DNA profiling was in its infancy, and Pitchfork became the first murderer to be convicted by dint of it. Dr Weston meets the man who invented it, and is shown the profiles that led to the conviction of Pitchfork. There is a lot more in this programme, and in the series, and it is not just for true crime buffs.



*Colin Pitchfork*