

0. A MAN WITH A DOUBLE LIFE? - Story Preface

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The International Cotton Association provides information (and this image) about the relationship between Liverpool and cotton. "The first recorded cotton dealing in Liverpool was a newspaper advertisement for an auction of 28 bags of Jamaican cotton in 1759. Over the next seven decades a series of technological and industrial developments revolutionized cotton production. Liverpool enjoyed a physical proximity to the world center of the industry—the Lancashire cotton towns. It also had well established trading links with the new powerhouse of raw cotton—the USA. As imports soared to the million-bale mark, Liverpool overtook London as the country's leading cotton importer."

Behind his gentlemanly facade, James Maybrick lived a double life.

Florie *thought* she had fallen in love with a successful cotton merchant who lived in Liverpool but also spent much of each year in Norfolk, Virginia. *But:*

- Unknown to Florie, Maybrick had an English mistress with whom he had several children.
- Unknown to Florie, Maybrick had a bad drug habit. He was hooked on arsenic and strychnine.

People with double lives are often very good at keeping personal secrets. James Maybrick was one of those secret-keeping people.

In the summer of 1881, when Florie married Maybrick at St. James Church in London's Picadilly, she *did* know her husband had contracted malaria during one of his trips to Norfolk. (Malaria had spread in epidemic proportions during the Civil War.)

While Maybrick had recovered from the disease itself, he had *not* recovered from the treatment (Fowler's Medicine). For the rest of his life, he would remain addicted to the ingredients of Fowler's Medicine (arsenic and strychnine).

A chemical element, arsenic was a component of other interesting products during the late 19th century. Women (including Florie Maybrick) sometimes used it as a cosmetics base and chemists used it in flypaper (among other things). Even Queen Elizabeth I had used arsenic as part of the preparation which made her face appear white.

It wasn't until Florie found "white powder," stashed in various places around her house, that she knew her husband had a drug habit. But ... that was several years after her wedding. And ... it was well after Florence had two children: James Chandler (called "Bobo"), born in 1882, and Gladys Evelyn, born in 1885.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/A-MAN-WITH-A-DOUBLE-LIFE-Florence-Maybrick-Death-Sentence-Commuted>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/A-MAN-WITH-A-DOUBLE-LIFE-Florence-Maybrick-Death-Sentence-Commuted>

Media Stream



James Maybrick - Man with a Double Life

Image, described above, online courtesy Murderpedia.

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Florence Chandler Maybrick

Image, described above, was published in *The Graphic* during 1889. Online, via Murderpedia.

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Norfolk, Virginia

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Piccadilly Circus

Image online, courtesy the londoniscool.com website.

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