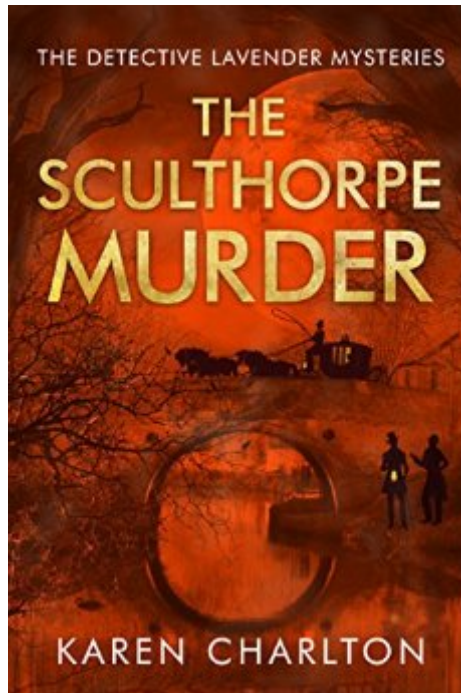


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The Sculthorpe Murder (The Detective Lavender Mysteries Book 3)



Synopsis

Northamptonshire, 1810: As a new canal network snakes across the landscape, a vicious mob stakes its claim to the county. Every local constable is out on the hunt for the ruthless Panther Gang. When an elderly man is robbed and murdered in sleepy Middleton, the beleaguered magistrates send for help from London's Bow Street Police Office. Detective Stephen Lavender and Constable Ned Woods soon discover there's more to William Sculthorpe's demise than meets the eye. Mystery surrounds the old man and his family, and the stench of revenge hangs heavy in the air. Are the Panther Gang really responsible or is something more sinister afoot? As Lavender delves further into long-hidden secrets, Woods has demons of his own to contend with: ghosts from his past that stalk him through the investigation. Uncovering decades of simmering hatred and deceit, Lavender and Woods must use all their wit and cunning to solve this evil crime.

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Customer Reviews

What an excellent thriller! This series is actually based on a real person and his cases during his career at Bow Street. Yes, there is some poetic license taken, but the bones of the case, the

methods used, etc. are true to the actual cases. This specific case is loosely based on a case in 1818 when a gang of robbers burst into the home of elderly William Sculthorpe and robbed and viciously assaulted him and his son. The real Stephen Lavender was called to investigate the attack. You won't believe how many scallywags there are in this one small little town -- including the victim himself! There are lots of twists and turns and red herrings thrown at you, but if you pay attention as you read, you can figure out who the bad guys are, but it is always interesting to see how Lavender catches them. His moral dilemmas at the end are interesting. Lavender is a bit of a nerd -- very cerebral and doesn't interact really well with people, so you could see him going either way on those. You're pretty sure which way he'll end up going, but -- well -- it could be either way. I like the Lavender/Woods relationship. Woods is a very affable, good natured man and makes Lavender a little more human. Anyway -- they are good books and I'm looking forward to the next one. BTW -- I got this one for my e-reader and got the Whispersync to go with it -- so, I could read when I wanted and listen when I wanted. I really like that technology!

I have enjoyed all of Karen Charlton's books and her character development is second to none. Detective Lavender is truly one of my favorites. I appreciate historical novels that transport me to a different time and this one certainly did. The pacing is perfect and the story was captivating. I only wish there was no wait for the next book!! I received an ARC in exchange for my honest review.

Another great mystery with Lavender and his partner, Woods. The author has done more than enough research into the social expectations and restrictions of the times where the novel takes place. Due to the author's creativity, you are amazed at the deductions of Lavender, but will be surprised at "who done it" at the end. Reoccurring characters in the author's books add to the appeal of the series.

Charlton's historical mystery series featuring Detective Lavender and Constable Woods is set in the early 1800s in England and is a very good addition to the genre. Lavender and Woods are both interesting characters and work together well to solve the mysteries they investigate. In this novel, they are called to a small village to look into the murder of an 86 year old man, who lived alone with his son. Billy, the son, has what we know today as Down's Syndrome, but in the period the book takes place, is viewed much differently. The local constables blame a notorious gang of five thugs, who have been terrorizing the area, but Lavender is not so sure. What they discover about the victim and a number of people who live in the village is disturbing, shocking. Charlton does a great

deal of research for her books and provides plenty of accurate details. She based the plot loosely on an actual incident she read about in the papers of the era. Woods faces an interesting and emotional personal discovery that affects the nightmares from which he suffers, and Lavender makes decisions based upon what he feels is the right thing to do, even considering his devotion to the law. Good writing, a carefully developed plot that touches on issues that are pertinent in the present, surprising developments, and fascinating historical detail make this a fine edition to the series and well worth reading.

I have always loved historical mysteries and so I was curious and hopeful when I requested to read this book even though it is third in a series. The setting is Northamptonshire in 1810 when two Bow Street policemen, Detective Lavender and Constable Woods are sent from London to Middleton to investigate a very grisly and violent murder. There are so many red herrings, multiple plots, and colorful characters in this book. Karen Charlton has a gift for describing the scene and atmosphere so well that I really felt as if I was there and when I "returned" to modern times that I had taken away some knowledge about this time period. I was very impressed with the end of the story where Ms. Carlton talks about how she came up with the idea for the book and I was very impressed with the amount of research she did. She includes some actual historical figures as characters, and crimes that really did happen. This is a tiny bit of reference to people and happenings that occur in the first two books but it does not detract from the book in any way. I absolutely loved this book. I love this time period with the beginnings of modern police. I remember reading Bruce Alexander's Sir John Fielding mysteries and was so sad when he passed away as I really enjoyed that mystery series. I am just so thrilled to have found another author who writes this kind of book with such accuracy and talent. I will definitely be reading the first two books in this series to catch up and waiting for the next one. I received a copy from the publishers for free in exchange for an honest review.

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