



## Murder in the Workhouse Script: Chapters 7 & 8

If you wish to follow the script along with the film, tracking times (approx every 30 seconds) are counted down from >09:50< to >00:00< in **red**.

When there are sound effects, these are highlighted in **green**. Images are noted in **blue**.

>09:50< Start of the film

[music throughout] [opening titles & image of Gressenhall Workhouse]

*Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse*

*Murder in the Workhouse*

*Chapters 7 and 8*

***This is the fifth in a series of short films looking at life in the workhouse through a murder mystery.***

*Everything you need to solve the murder is contained in these films. You will need a pen and paper to record your observations.*

*A script is available to download if you wish to follow the dialogue.*

*The characters in this mystery are fictitious, as is the murder. However, all other information about the workhouse is based upon historical events.*

>09:28<

[image of Gressenhall workhouse c.1800]

### **Detective Lightfoot:**

This is Gressenhall workhouse, my name is Detective Lightfoot and I have a murder to investigate. Mr Richard Barker's death has proved most intriguing.

[images of the victim Richard Barker and all suspects: Mr Fuller the workhouse master, Mr Scrivener the schoolmaster, Nancy Flowerdew the female inmate, Ploughwright the male inmate, Mrs Barker the Chairman's wife, Greve the porter, Elizabeth Bacon the cook]

We have interviewed five suspects in our attempt to discover who committed the deed. There are two more we must speak with before we can begin to draw the threads together.

[image of workhouse, Detective's notebook]

As ever, pay close attention and make sure you record anything of interest.

>08:50<

*Chapter 7: Greve, the porter*

[image of Gressenhall workhouse courtyard c.1900] [image of porter's gate]

[sound of footsteps on gravel]

**Detective:**

I crossed the courtyard to the porter's lodge one more time ... I found the door half open and heard sounds of snoring ...

[sounds of snoring]

>08:30<

[image of Greve, porter's lodge and gate]

**Greve:**

Wha? Who are? Oh, it's you Detective ... can't blame me for having a little rest, there have been all sorts of comings and goings and I have to open the blasted gate for all of them.

[image of Mrs Barker on location on workhouse map]

**Detective:**

I asked Greve what he meant by this.

**Greve:**

Well, there was you first thing this morning ... no offence, but things were odd last night. That Mrs Barker, she left at a quarter to nine. Now most of the, ah, fairer sex usually do what they're told, like they should, Detective, but I keep my distance from Mrs Barker. She's not one to cross- and last night- Lord love her! She had a face like thunder! I asked her if Mr Barker would be with her. She replied...

**Mrs Barker:**

My husband will make his own way home, or he may go to the devil.

[image of Mrs Barker and Mr Barker]

>07:40<

**Greve:**

And then on the hour, just as the clock struck nine, Miss Bacon, the cook, upped and left the place too. White as a sheet, she was. Well she is just a little slip of a girl anyway, wouldn't say boo to a goose, but I tell you she said not a word. Looked as though she had seen a ghost.

[image of Miss Bacon the cook on location on map]

And I have to put up with all of my usual duties as well.

[images of bathtub, poor people, workhouse dolls, Mr Barker]

I have to watch the door, make sure the poor people only enter if they have the right pieces of paper, I have to take their filthy clothes when they come in here and give them uniforms so that everyone looks exactly the same. I've also got to make sure that they are bathed and have their filthy hair cut off to stop the nits spreading, and, AND I have to keep order in this place. Ugh! And they blame me ... just cos I have an occasional little drink! But perhaps, I am not the only one to have one drink too many eh?'

>06:30<

**Detective:**

I replied that I thought it must be difficult to keep order with so many poor people in the workhouse.

[image of Greve, Harriet Kettle, Thorpe Asylum, taxpayers, Master]

**Greve:**

You never said a truer word, Detective. Some people in this workhouse should not even be here ... they are not right in the head: Harriet Kettle - she's the worst of them. When she goes mad, she is like a spitting farm cat! She should not be here, she should be in the lunatic asylum in

Thorpe, but oh no, Detective, it costs too much money to send people there ... so here she stays!

[images of workhouse corridor, cell door, Ploughwright]

And my word don't she hate the undermatron ... hides and jumps out on her whenever she can! Old Harriet drives the Master to distraction- I'm not surprised he left the door to the men's ward open -but would you want the likes of Ploughwright wandering about? He don't like Mr Barker and, my! Is he handy with a hammer?!

[image of hammer]

**Detective:**

I re-traced my steps across the courtyard, intending to meet with our last suspect, Elizabeth Bacon, the workhouse cook.

[images of courtyard and Elizabeth Bacon]

*End of Chapter 7*

>05:10<

[Blank screen 30 seconds before titles]

>04:50<

*Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse*

*Murder in the Workhouse*

*Chapter 8:*

*Elizabeth Bacon, the cook*

[image of master's door, kitchens, rolling pin]

**Detective:**

I passed the master's office, and heard the sounds of the kitchen beyond. I also heard voices...

[image of Elizabeth Bacon, the cook]

**Cook:**

Goodbye, Edward, I should-

**Detective:**

The cook saw me.

**Cook:**

Oh! Yes, Mr Scrivener, you need not worry, all will be well, the boys' dinner will be ready as usual.

[image of Mr Scrivener, kitchens and rolling pin]

>04:20<

**Detective:**

Mr Scrivener hurriedly departed towards the boy's schoolroom, and, as she busied herself about the kitchen, I asked the cook what she remembered of last night.

[image of cook and Mr Fuller on locations on workhouse map]

**Cook:**

The Master came by just before half past eight to that check all was well and I had to let him know then that I would be running late and did not think I would leave before 9 o'clock.

[image of Mr Fuller]

**Mr Fuller, the master:**

Ah Miss Bacon, late as usual ... well, do not stay too late will you? Mr Barker is still working in the Boardroom. I will begin to check the men's wards ... good evening to you!

>03:45<

[image of men's wards]

[image of cook]

**Cook:**

You see, Detective, sir, Sundays are very busy days for me. That's because the Guardians come for their weekly meetings and I must provide them with a few refreshments. It is difficult to fit in with preparing three meals a day for all the inmates, sir.

[image of board room, guardians and taxpayers]

So, yesterday evening I was getting something for the Guardians as usual. It mustn't be too fancy of course. They are very careful not to spend the taxpayer's money, sir.

>03:20<

[images of male and female inmates eating in a workhouse]

That was on top of preparing the evening meal for the workhouse inmates, sir - meat pudding and vegetables for over 400 of them. You can imagine how long that takes, sir.

[images of workhouse platters, scales, gruel]

Meat pudding and vegetables for the Workhouse inmates – that may sound a little too grand, sir? But Sunday is the exception, sir. The rest of the week the inmates get bread three times a day. They also have gruel, that's a pint of a thin, watery porridge, with their breakfast and cheese or butter at dinner and supper.

>02:48<

[image of Mr Fuller & workhouse dietary, child inmates]

The Master assures me that this special diet had been developed in London. He said it had been proved that the Workhouse diet is just enough to keep a person alive. It's also cheap, sir, if I may speak plainly, which keeps the taxpayers happy.

[image of workhouse courtyard]

Of course, by the time I finished my duties it was late, sir. The clock struck nine just as I was crossing the courtyard to walk home.

**Detective:**

Had she had seen anything at all unusual?

**Cook:**

When I left, sir? No, sir, nothing unusual. As I left, the porter, Mr. Greve, was at his lodge cursing and stinking to high heaven as usual- if you pardon my boldness, sir.

>02:05<

[images of cook, Greve on map, Mr Fuller, illustration of inmate being whipped]

The master told me that Mister Greve was in front of the Guardians yesterday, sir. One of the poor inmates made a complaint about him- they said Greve had struck him about the face, and last night Mr Barker gave the porter his last and final warning!

[image of Mr Barker]

**Mr Barker:**

One more complaint, one more failure to do your job and you will be out!

**Cook:**

Of course, Detective, when I arrived at the workhouse this morning the first thing that I saw was his sneering face.

[image of workhouse, porter's lodge and Greve]

>01:30<

**Greve:**

Oh dear, oh dear, it grieves me to be the bearer of bad news, but I'm afraid the Chairman's gone and done himself in.

[image of cook]

**Cook:**

Oh, my goodness, sir, this is too awful, where will it all end?!

**Detective:**

I tried to calm Miss Bacon down ... and asked her how long she had been the workhouse cook?

**Cook:**

I have been Cook at the Workhouse these past 6 months, sir. Before that I was staying with my parents in North Elmham and before that I was in service ... first as a kitchen maid and then as an under-cook.

>00:45<

[image of girl pumping water]

[image of workhouse]

**Detective:**

Miss Bacon had work to do and I had heard enough. I sent word to the master to ensure that all the suspects were gathered in the Boardroom on the stroke of six o'clock.

*End of chapter 8*

>00:33<

[music]

>Film ends<

>00:00<