



The Cornish Coast Murder

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'Never, even in his most optimistic moments, had he visualised a scene of this nature —himself in one arm-chair, a police officer in another, and between them . . . a mystery.'

The Reverend Dodd, vicar of the quiet Cornish village of Boscawen, spends his evenings reading detective stories by the fireside - but heaven forbid that the shadow of any real crime should ever fall across his seaside parish.

But the vicar's peace is shattered one stormy night when Julius Tregarthan, a secretive and ill-tempered magistrate, is found at his house in Boscawen with a bullet through his head.

The local police inspector is baffled by the complete absence of clues. Luckily for Inspector Bigswell, the Reverend Dodd is on hand, and ready to put his keen understanding of the criminal mind to the test.

This classic mystery of the golden age of the golden age of British crime is set against the vividly described backdrop of a fishing village on Cornwall's Atlantic coast. It is now republished for the first time since the 1930s with an introduction by the award-winning crime writer Martin Edwards.

The Cornish Coast Murder Details

Date : Published April 15th 2014 by The British Library (first published 1935)

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Author : John Bude

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From Reader Review The Cornish Coast Murder for online ebook

Ali says

The Cornish Coast Murder was Bude's first novel – and while it certainly doesn't have the complexity and ingenuity of Christie, Marsh, Sayers et al – but there is still much to recommend it, it is an engagingly readable example of golden age crime, with a rather adorable pair of amateur detectives. This is a novel very much in the cosy tradition – it is pure escapism. Much of Bude's focus in this novel is character and setting, there is not much in the way of investigative high jinks. In fact the arm chair sleuth may feel slightly cheated not having enough information to solve the mystery themselves.

Set along the atmospheric Cornish coast of the title, the novel opens on an appropriately stormy evening in Boscawen. The Cornish coast, a good setting for a murder, makes for a rather nice change from the Greater London, or Home Counties settings of so many other novels of this period.

Full review: <https://heavenali.wordpress.com/2015/...>

MrsER says

Not very impressed with this story. The author writes very well--which was probably the reason it kept me going--but the constant retelling of the clues, suspicions and semi-conclusions drove me to skipping sometimes whole pages. From the very beginning I concluded that there was only one way someone could have committed the crime; it surprised me nobody saw it, so I thought there was another solution, since it seemed too easy to me. Nope, I was right, which was disappointing. I like books that keep you guessing and are not obvious as was this one. I never really suspected anyone in particular. With Agatha Christie, for example, almost all the characters seem to have a reason to have committed the crime, or act suspiciously. Not here! There seemed to me that, somewhere, there was a good explanation for the behavior of the few suspected characters. And, again, I was right. The end was also a bit anti-climatic and the reason for the crime seemed to me quite weak. A two and a half stars and getting three for the quality of the writing--that lacks so much in modern literature imho. It is very unlikely that I will read anything else by John Bude.

FEMINIST ALERT: To the, oh, so sensitive feminist who gets the vapors when she finds what she deems to be "sexism" in a book, a word of caution! Avoid anything like this book, that was written prior to the 80's, when the PC Police and Thought Police were not yet operating worldwide. Take heed of this well-intended warning, or you will need lots of smelling salts to recover from the shock/s!

Theresa says

This is one of a collection of British Library Crime Classics of books that were popular in their own time and have since been forgotten. If this example is representative of the collection then it is easy to see why they are no longer read.

This novel is set in Cornwall and if you are hoping for the county to be important to the story such as by Daphne du Maurier then you'll be disappointed. The setting is the village of Boscawen, which is the surname of Cornwall's prominent aristocrats family: Lord and Lady Falmouth. That is as far as Cornwall features.

The plot is simple and long winded and characterisation sketchy. A man in a remote country house is shot dead and the list of suspects is surprisingly short. It will not satisfy today's crime reader.

Buchdokter says

In einem kleinen Küstenort in Cornwall treffen sich in den 30ern des vorigen Jahrhunderts zwei alleinstehende mittelalte Herren, der Arzt Dr. Pendrill und der Ortspfarrer, Reverend Dodd. Die Herrschaften zelebrieren regelmäßig einen exklusiven kleinen Leseclub. Sie bestellen alle 14 Tage ein paar sorgfältig ausgewählte Krimis in der Bücherei von Greystoke, die sie gemeinsam auspacken und nacheinander lesen. Die Gemeinde kennt das Laster der Herren, das auch die Freude am Miträtseln umfasst, wer der Täter sein könnte. Zur seit Jahren unveränderten Routine gehört ebenfalls ein freundschaftliches Frotzeln darüber, dass der Pfarrer noch nie in der Sprechstunde des Doktors war und der Doktor als überzeugter Agnostiker noch nie an einem Gottesdienst des Reverend teilgenommen hat. Im Dorf ist noch nie Außergewöhnlicheres als alle paar Jahre eine Zwillingengeburt passiert. Dass nun ein Autor unter ihnen lebt, der einen Kriegsroman schreiben soll, sorgt deshalb für Aufregung unter den Bewohnern. In diese kleine Idylle platzt die Nachricht, dass Herr Tregarthen erschossen in seinem Haus direkt am Küstenpfad aufgefunden wurde. Cobb brennt sofort vor Neugier und der Ortspolizist wirkt vom ersten Mord seiner Dienstzeit leicht überfordert. In Tregarthens Haushalt lebte seine erwachsene Nichte Ruth, die sich schon bald verdächtig verhält. Wer wem welche Tat zutrauen würde, scheint anfangs stärker im Mittelpunkt zu stehen als das Sichern von Spuren und Befragen von Zeugen. Beim Auseinanderdröseln, wer ein Motiv und wer Gelegenheit zur Tat gehabt hat, mischt Dr. Cobb mit seiner Erfahrung aus jahrelanger Krimilektüre fleißig mit und wird vom Ortspolizisten sogar zum Austausch über dessen Notizen aufgefordert. Wie systematisch Cobb an den Fall herangeht, hat ihm vermutlich kaum jemand zugetraut. Die Lösung wird ähnlich wie ihn Agatha Christies Krimis am Ende hervorgezaubert. Ohne Cobbs Hilfe hätte Ortspolizist Grouch den Fall vermutlich an eine übergeordnete Dienststelle abtreten müssen ...

Außer einem komplexen, klassischen Kriminalfall an idyllischem Ort bietet das Nachwort von Budes Erstling Einblick in die Blütezeit des Genres Kriminalroman zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen. Dass Bude unter seinem Realnamen später Fantasy schrieb und dass er früh erkannte, welche Schauplätze Krimileser gern beschrieben haben möchten, fand ich als Krimifan ebenso interessant wie den Roman selbst, der 1935 nur in einer kleinen Auflage erschien.

Damaskcat says

If you like traditional murder mysteries then this will be a book you will enjoy. A man is shot dead in his cliff top home and the circumstances surrounding the shooting puzzle the vicar and the local doctor as well as the police. One of the prime suspects has disappeared and another is definitely lying but may not be lying about anything to do with the murder.

Amateur and professional detectives working together and some atmospheric scenery as well as interesting characters are the main ingredients for this classic crime story. It is well written with plenty of clues and red herrings to keep the reader guessing until close to the end of the book. I didn't guess the murderer and at first when the solution was revealed I felt a little bit cheated as I couldn't see where the clues were. But a few minutes thought revealed that the clues were there I had merely not given them the importance they deserved.

My advice to anyone reading this book is to keep their eyes open and their wits about them whilst reading

and then you might do better than I did. It is good to see the British Museum Library releasing new editions of these classic mysteries so that modern readers can enjoy them.

Sandy *The world could end while I was reading and I would never notice* says

'...the mystery of Tregarthan's death was rather like the encroaching night. Here and there little gleams of light still shone out weakly, but even as one looked at them they slowly vanished, and the obscurity thickened until the landscape was of a uniform blackness.'

3 1/2 stars for this classic English Murder Mystery that kept me guessing to the end.

Reverend Dodd—vicar of the quiet Cornish village of Boscawen is an avid reader of detective novels. Never does he expect to be involved in the actual solving of a crime.....and yet this is exactly what happens.

On a dark and stormy night Julius Tregarthan is found shot through the head at his house. And there is no shortage of suspects; from the dead man's niece who quarrelled with him immediately prior to the shooting, to a poacher heard volubly declaring his intention to get his revenge, to an author who disappears immediately after the murder.

There is a multitude of red herrings to wade through. I kept thinking I knew who the murderer was, but one by one my theories were shot down in flames.

The Cornish Coast Murder is a delightful and enjoyable foray into the world of the classic English Murder Mystery.

I have known John Bude's name from somewhere, and yet I have not read any of his other books. I have added his name to my "author's I want to read more of" list.

Cathleen says

This mystery was, in its way, refreshing. It was written in the mid-1930s, when the accepted view was that one's guilt and conscience would make one--eventually--want to confess, shoulder responsibility for the crime, and accept the consequences. No loose ends and no moral ambiguity.

In that way, this mystery was pure escapist entertainment for me. John Bude describes the Cornish coast in such detail, I feel as though I've been there; I really enjoyed all of the descriptions of the surroundings. The two main characters, the vicar and the inspector, reminded me of Chesterton's Fr. Brown characters. They were both earnest, intelligent, dogged, humble: the inspector driven by a need for justice, the vicar, for mercy.

The mystery is a quintessential police procedural. The novel goes through, step by step, dead-end by dead-end, how the mystery is eventually solved. For some, the plotting and pacing may be too slow, but I was as caught up in the characters' hopes and intentions as I was in finding out "whodunit."

Very enjoyable, late summertime reading, for sure.

Ivonne Rovira says

In this Golden Age mystery, Reverend Dodd spends his evenings devouring detective novels but never imagines he'll ever encounter a real-life crime more shocking than a penny-ante burglary in his quiet Cornish village of Boscawen. But when the village's irascible magistrate is found shot to death, Dodd puts his mental cache of detective fiction at the disposal of Inspector Bigswell, a local plod who quickly realizes he's out of his league with this murder. The vicar and the policeman join forces to reveal the canny murderer.

I fell in love with John Bude and his Inspector William Meredith from the very first novel of his that I read, *The Lake District Murder*. *The Cornish Coast Murder* was Bude's first mystery novel, and while both novels were first published in 1935, *The Lake District Murder* and its dogged Inspector Meredith remain much more charming and entertaining 80 years later. Bude himself must have thought so too, as he never wrote another novel featuring vicar Dodd.

Even so, thanks again to British Library Publishing, for re-releasing John Bude's wonderful cozies so that a new generation can enjoy them.

For those fortunate enough to listen to this novel on Audible, you're in for a treat. Narrator Ben Allen does a splendid job.

Cathy Ryan says

Reverend Dodd, vicar of St Michael's-on-the-Cliff, enjoys his Monday evening dinner engagements with Doctor Pendrill. Boscawen is a small isolated fishing village on the Cornish coast and both the vicar and the doctor look forward to their weekly meetings. Over an after dinner coffee they open the crate of library books each takes a turn in choosing, most commonly crime stories which they're both addicted to, and are discussed in detail. Reverend Dodds has become quite good at solving mysteries by recalling previous twists, traps and detection methods, whereas they are proving a little more difficult for the doctor.

One stormy Monday evening there's an urgent phone call to the vicarage from Ruth Tregarthan, looking for the doctor. Her uncle has been shot at his house. For all the enjoyment he has reading about it, Reverend Dodds never imagined there could ever be such a crime as murder committed in this quiet little village. Julius Tregarthan wasn't an easy man to like but what could have made someone shoot him? Inspector Bigswell is the investigating officer but Reverend Dobbs can't help but put his amateur detecting skills to the test, giving the inspector valuable help along the way.

'Never, even in his most optimistic moments, had he visualised a scene of this nature — himself in one arm-chair, a police officer in another, and between them . . . a mystery.'

I've been meaning to delve into the British Library Crime Classics for a while. *The Cornish Coast Murder* is Ernest Carpenter Elmore's debut novel written, under his pen name of John Bude, in the mid 1930s. The setting of this one appealed to me initially and, although the pace is quite slow after the atmospheric opening scenes, it does pick up.

There are several suspects, including Ruth Tregarthan and her friend, local author, Ronald Hardy. Ruth has been acting strangely and Ronald suffers from shell shock and has disappeared. Inspector Bigswell finds

various contradicting clues and follows the trails, each one leading to a dead end. The reader has no prior knowledge of events, only privy to what is apparent to the police and the vicar, so working out who the culprit is was impossible – for me, anyway. Well before the advent of forensics, data collection and the more modern methods of policing we're used to, the investigation comes down to good old fashioned police work, following the convoluted clues one step at a time. An entertaining story written in the style of the time, giving a glimpse into pre war rural life and good enough to make me want to read more.

Phryne says

First published in 1935 in easier times, when solving crime was done a la Agatha Christie with suspects and clues and basically no forensics. The local police ride bicycles and most people don't have a phone at all let alone a mobile.

My attention was caught by the setting - I will read almost anything with the words Cornwall or Cornish in the title! And then there is that eye catching cover which is reminiscent of the beautiful holiday posters they used to use to advertise holidays in England. I subscribe to the view that sometimes you really can judge a book by its cover and in this case it was true.

The crime is murder when the local magistrate is found, on a dark and stormy night, shot through the head in his own home. The little seaside town of Boscawen supports a police inspector, a doctor and a vicar and these three come together to discover the murderer. It is all very intriguing and entertaining in the manner of a Christie novel and I enjoyed it very much.

A gentle book which you will enjoy if you like your mysteries on the cosy side.

Ann says

An enjoyable read very much in the golden age tradition. Should appeal to Christie fans. Written in 1935 it doesn't seem dated. I liked the interaction between the amateur sleuths and the police and the Cornish setting is a plus.

Susan says

This is a charming mystery, first published in 1935, and was the crime writing debut of Ernest Carpenter Elmore (who chose 'John Bude' as his pseudonym). The book begins with two friends; the Reverend Dodd, Vicar of St Michael's-on-the-Cliff and Dr Pendrill. The two meet up weekly for dinner and to share their love of detective fiction, both enjoy attempting to solve the fictional mysteries they read. However, on a stormy night, their evening is interrupted by Ruth Tregarthan, who calls to say that someone has shot and killed her uncle, Julius.

Murder is unheard of in this tiny, coastal retreat of scattered cottages and the two men are astonished. Yet, Julius Tregarthan lies shot dead in his study and Ruth is acting oddly. She has been very friendly with an author named Ronald Hardy. Known to be shell shocked in the last war, his behaviour was strained when Reverend Dodd last met him and now he has disappeared. Despite his misgivings, it is soon apparent that the Reverend cannot resist the chance to try to solve a real life puzzle.

For Inspector Bigswell, the murder case is a chance to make his mark and he sets to work enthusiastically, before the 'experts' are called in. He finds himself with several suspects and much conflicting evidence. The Reverend Dodd is, though, not convinced by Inspector Bigswell's line of enquiry and favoured suspects and sets out to solve the case himself. This is a delightful, Golden Age mystery, although the ending is a little weak. Still, the setting and characters made this an enjoyable read and I would certainly read more books by John Bude.

Rated 3.5

Judy says

I've been meaning to read some of the British Library Crime Classics series. This 1930s book is the first one I've tried, and it was an enjoyable read, with an atmospheric Cornish setting. The mix of amateur and professional detectives also worked well. I didn't feel the mystery element was quite up there with the best of the genre, because the solution partly depends on information which the reader hasn't been given.

Moonlight Reader says

Taking more than a few cues from *Murder at the Vicarage*, published in 1930, Bude's 1935 mystery is quite entertaining if a bit derivative.

I love books set on the coast of Cornwall - and this one is also set in March, so it has all of the blustery, windswept charm that we might expect. The vicar and the doctor in the village of Boscawen spend their evenings reading detective novels by the fireside. When real murder intrudes, the Vicar is delighted with the opportunity to exercise his skills in assisting the local Inspector in his investigation.

I've now read several from the *British Library Crime Classics series*, and I've found Bude to be among the best of the writers. I also enjoyed his *Death on the Riviera*, and thought that this one had an even stronger mystery. I will admit, however, that none of the books, so far, have even approached Christie's mastery. The writing in them tends to be workmanlike at best, and at times positively awkward. No one manages pacing as well as she did, and her ability to describe a character using ten words is unparalleled.

I keep hoping to find another Agatha Christie, but I'm compelled, at this point, to admit that perhaps she was, in fact, the unassailable Queen, sharing her title with no one. This one is enjoyable, but it's no Poirot.

Susan says

The local vicar, Mr. Dodd, and his friend the doctor meet regularly to discuss the mystery stories they love to read. Then, in the midst of one of their evenings, the phone rings. It's the mansion across the road, calling for the doctor--the bad-tempered magistrate who lives there has been shot. As Mr. Dodd pries around the edges of the police investigation, Inspector Bigswell investigates intelligently (but not very imaginatively). In the

battle between intuition and procedure, who is going to arrive at the correct solution? We have much to thank the British Library Crime Classics for, and this long-hidden gem is certainly one of the books most deserving a reprint.
