

## **SERIES IDEAS: LITTLE DEATHS**

**THE CRIMEAN WAR (1854-1856):** This book is chronologically the first in the series, which introduces Simon Wise as a callow nineteen year old demonstrating that one can be Jewish and still serve his country. The Crimean War, and all its attendant horrors and foolish heroism, would provide the backdrop. Simon would participate with his superior officer, Sergeant-Major Matthew Turner, in identifying and solving a crime involving the ostensible death of a young officer in an army hospital, which turns out to be murder by a jealous younger brother. Another point of view that might be brought into play is that of either a soldier's or officer's wife. Another sub-theme of the book would be corruption and mismanagement in the army, and official efforts at a cover-up. There would be more about Simon's family of origin, and some mention of Rachel. Simon would be introduced to sex through a Zouave camp follower. Florence Nightingale would appear in this book, as would William Howard Russell, the *Times* correspondent who brought the war, in all its horror, back to London.

**THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR (1864?):** This book would examine the relationship between England and the cotton South just prior to and during the Civil War. Wise would be a sergeant in the Metropolitan Police Force. The case might focus on an escaped slave who is accused of a brutal murder in London. A colony of former slaves living on the banks of the Thames would be explored. Another possibility might be illegal arms trade. The issue to be dealt with would be race relations. This book would show a happier time in the Wise family, and explore more of the relationship between Simon and Rachel.

**THE OPIUM WARS:** This book would occur around the same time as the Civil War book. The issue to be examined would be addiction, and crime surrounding the opium dens.

**THE REFORM PARTY AND HYDE PARK (1867):** The theme of this book would be extending the franchise, class conflict, and Wise caught in the middle.

**THE FENIAN ATTACK ON CLERKENWELL PRISON (1868):** Two interrelated plot lines would be developed. The first would have to do with the bombing itself, and Wise's discovery that a distinguished Orange Irish police inspector was really a co-conspirator with the Fenians (in the cause of Irish liberty) and provided the inside information necessary to carry off the bombing. Yet, although Wise discovers it, the man is a great friend of Mayne's and cannot be brought to justice. Perhaps he ends up committing suicide. A secondary plot has to do with a string of assassinations, culminating in an attempt on the life of the Queen, ostensibly the work of Fenian thugs, but really planned by English politicians to stir up public sentiment against the Irish. Wise stumbles on this conspiracy as well. Through his former Irish comrades in the army from his Crimean days, he is able to penetrate the poverty-stricken Irish ghetto in London to obtain information. Possibly he meets and has an affair with a pretty Irish girl. Naomi would be born during this year. Simon's father might die.

**JEWISH IMMIGRATION:** This book would be set in the early 1880s, and examine the strong anti-immigration and anti-Semitic feelings that arose in this time period. The case would revolve

around the murder of an important political figure, with blame falling on a Jewish immigrant, a political radical.

**JACK THE RIPPER:** Around 1891. Wise would be a Superintendent by now. At 56, he would try his hand at solving the Ripper murders. In fact, he would discover the identity of the murderer, but for political reasons, would be unable to divulge it. This book would show Wise as a grandfather, his family mostly grown up. It might also explore the marriages and lives of at least some of the grown children (Rebecca would be a matronly 34, Naomi 23). Emily might die.

**SHERLOCK HOLMES:** Around 1890s. Superintendent Wise would attempt to mentor Holmes, and the two would work on a case together. Might be a reworking of one of Holmes' cases, or something new.