

Episcopal Clergy as Amateur Sleuths

Winter is just over the horizon and one's thoughts turn to the choice of books to read. I've found mysteries are just great since dozing off is not such a profound problem with who-done-its. I've compiled a list of Episcopal clergy who are amateur sleuths and would like to share these books with you.

The Rev. Cesare Paul Randollph. A one-time pro-football quarterback nicknamed "Con" who is now the Rector of the wealthy Church of the Good Shepherd in Chicago. Author: Charles Merrill Smith, a Methodist cleric in Chicago. These books are not easy to find but can be discovered on used book sites. Well written and interesting. His first book was *How to Become a Bishop Without Being Religious*.

- ∞ Reverend Randollph and the Holy Terror (1980)
- ∞ Reverend Randollph and the Avenging Angel
- ∞ Reverend Randollph and the Fall From Grace
- ∞ Reverend Randollph and the Wages of Sin (1974)
- ∞ Reverend Randollph and the Unholy Bible
- ∞ Reverend Randollph and the Splendid Samaritan (finished by his son)

The Rev. Lucas Holt. An ex-prison chaplain who became rector of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in downtown Austin, Texas. Part of his ministry is the rehab of convicts, his God Squad. Author: Charles Meyer. As of this writing I have found no bio of Meyer and only two books with Holt.

- ∞ The Saints of God Murders
- ∞ Blessed are the Merciless

The Rev. Clare Ferguson. A former Army helicopter pilot and now rector of St. Alban's Episcopal Church, Miller's Kill, in the Adirondacks of New York State. Police Chief Russ Van Alstyne is her long-suffering ally. I love these books! Author: Julia Spencer-Fleming, a one-time resident of the Adirondack Piedmont, is a former lawyer, a communicant of the Episcopal Church, a former military brat, and her life creeps into her mysteries.

- ∞ In the Bleak Midwinter
- ∞ A Fountain Filled With Blood
- ∞ Out of the Deep I Cry
- ∞ To Darkness and to Death

The Reverend Claire Aldington. Claire is the rector of St. Anselm's, Manhattan, New York. Author: Isabelle Holland (1920-2002) was a native of Basel, Switzerland, who moved to America in 1940. A graduate of Tulane she held various publishing positions in New York. Her novel, *The Man Without a Face* was the basis of the Mel Gibson film of the same name.

- ∞ A Death at St. Anselm's (1984)
- ∞ Flight of the Archangel (1985)

- ∞ A Lover Scorned (1986)
- ∞ A Fatal Advent (1989)
- ∞ The Long Search (1990)

Mother Lavinia Grey. Vicar of St. Bede's Episcopal Church, Fisherville, New Jersey. Accomplished on the 'cello she is also a practicing therapist. Author: Kate Gallison was raised in Illinois and New Jersey and presently lives in Lambertville, New Jersey.

- ∞ Bury the Bishop (1995)
- ∞ The Devil's Workshop (1996)
- ∞ Unholy Angels (1996)
- ∞ Hasty Retreat (1997)
- ∞ Grave Misgivings (1998)

The Rev. Lily Connor. A Texan born and bred but now in Boston, Lily chafes at the attitudes of the Church and is often in trouble. Author: Michelle Blake, attended E.D.S. and then, years later, graduated from the Harvard Divinity School. An excellent series.

- ∞ The Tentmaker (1999)
- ∞ Earth Has No Sorrow (2001)
- ∞ The Book of Light (2003)

The Rev. Martin Buell. An Episcopal rector in Farmington, Montana. The titles are intriguing! Author: Margaret Scherf "attended public schools in New Jersey, Wyoming, and Montana and then studied at Antioch College from 1925-1928 then moved to New York, working as a secretary to the editor at Robert McBride & Company for a year. After leaving McBride, she worked for a few years for the Camp Fire Girls national magazine, leaving in 1934 to work as a secretary and copywriter for Wise Book Company, a job she kept until 1939. From 1939, Scherf was a self-employed writer except for serving as Secretary to the Naval Inspector at the Bethlehem Steel Shipyard in Brooklyn during World War II. Her first novel, *The Corpse Grows a Beard*, was published by Putnam in 1940 and she continued to publish regularly for the next 30 years. She served a year (1965) as a member of the Montana House of Representatives. She died on May 12, 1979." (Information from the West Virginia Wesleyan College Pfeiffer Library website.)

- ∞ Always Murder a Friend (1948)
- ∞ Gilbert's Last Toothache (For the Love of Murder) 1949
- ∞ The Curious Custard Pie (Devine and Deadly) 1950
- ∞ The Elk and the Evidence (1952)
- ∞ The Cautious Overshoes (1956)
- ∞ Never Turn Your Back (1959)
- ∞ The Corpse in the Flannel Nightgown

Brother Cadfael. A twelfth-century monk of Shrewsbury, England. Yes, I *know* he wasn't Episcopalian, but indulge me! Author: Ellis Peters, the pen name of

Edith Pargeter, was a Czech scholar whose Brother Cadfael series is widely known and enjoyed. Frankly, I believe they should be read in order.

- ∞ A Morbid Taste for Bones (1977)
- ∞ One Corpse Too Many (1979)
- ∞ Monk's Hood (1980)
- ∞ St. Peter's Fair (1981)
- ∞ The Leper of St. Giles (1981)
- ∞ The Virgin in the Ice (1982)
- ∞ The Sanctuary Sparrow (1983)
- ∞ The Devil's Novice (1983)
- ∞ The Dead Man's Ransom (1984)
- ∞ The Pilgrim of Hate (1984)
- ∞ An Excellent Mystery (1985)
- ∞ The Raven in the Foregate (1986)
- ∞ The Rose Rent (1986)
- ∞ The Hermit of Eyton Forest (1987)
- ∞ The Confession of Brother Haluin (1988)
- ∞ A Rare Benedictine (1988)
- ∞ The Heretic's Apprentice (1989)
- ∞ The Potter's Field (1989)
- ∞ Summer of the Danes (1991)
- ∞ The Holy Thief (1992)
- ∞ Brother Cadfael's Penance (1994)

"Fr. Tim". The village rector of Mitford. Not mysteries, but fun enough to include. Author: Jan Karon lives in Blowing Rock, North Carolina. The last listed book in this series is the final one.

- ∞ At Home in Mitford.
- ∞ A Light in the Window.
- ∞ In These High, Green Hills.
- ∞ Out to Canaan.
- ∞ A New Song.
- ∞ A Common Life
- ∞ In This Mountain
- ∞ Shepherds abiding
- ∞ Light From Heaven

Happy reading!

The Rev. Canon Laurence D. Fish
Historiographer
 2005