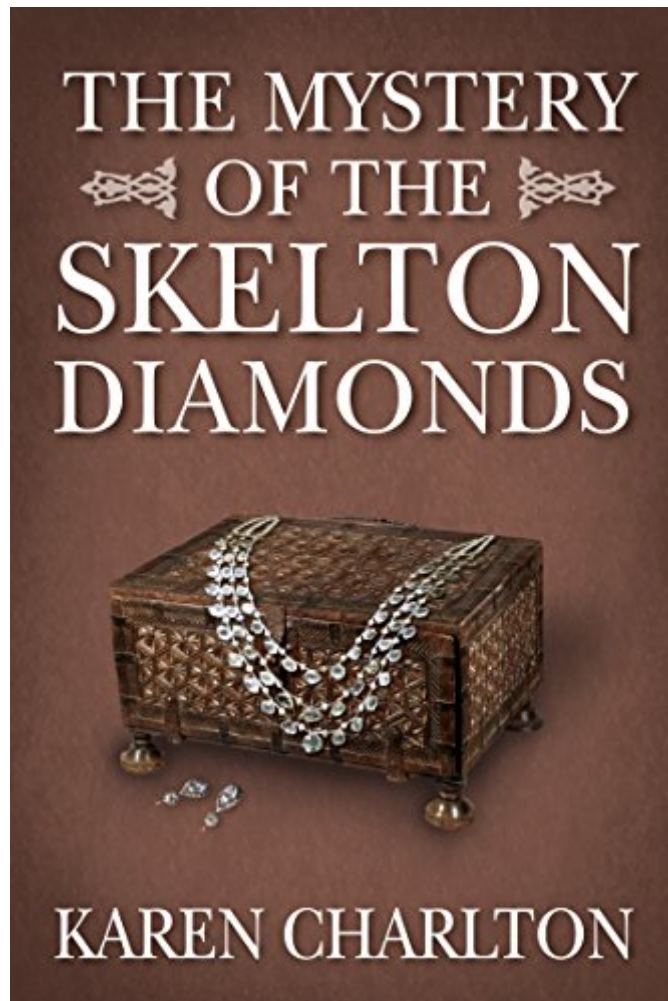


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# The Mystery Of The Skelton Diamonds: A Detective Lavender Short Story



## Synopsis

London 1808: The famous Skelton Diamonds have disappeared, and Detective Stephen Lavender is asked to investigate the crime. But why should he feel so uneasy, so reluctant to accept this case? Can he trust the wealthy, powerful politician who's summoned him? In this short story, Lavender and his loyal assistant, Constable Woods, plunge into the seedy backstreets of Regency London and steer a tricky path through the opulent drawing rooms of aristocratic suspects in pursuit of the missing diamonds. Welcome to the world of Stephen Lavender, a Principal Officer with the Bow Street Runners, whose further adventures can be followed in 'The Heiress of Linn Hagh.'

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Karen Charlton is one of my favorite authors. Her characters are true-to-life, edgy, giving a humorous nudge at society's classes. The setting will appeal to all Historical Fiction lovers and her fresh style and great dialogue only adds to the enjoyment. The Mystery of the Skelton Diamonds is full of twists and turns, and I felt my emotions rising like a canoe ride through the rapids. Woods, with his solid common sense, makes for a mischievous character I can resonate with. I want to root

for him, especially after knowing he never misses a trick. Lavender is well equipped, discerning and reserved, and he has a reputation for solving difficult crimes. Can't be too difficult to solve this one. But something about this case doesn't sit right. And as I read on, I get the sense that it doesn't sit right with Lavender either. Looking forward to more books by this author. Fascinating and enticing read.

I read this in one sitting - couldn't put it down. Charlton takes you straight into the characters' lives and, as in all good mysteries, she presents a variety of possible outcomes. A tale skilfully told by an author who understands people's weaknesses, prejudices and foibles very well.

I decided to read this as an inexpensive introduction to the Lavender series, and was so happy that I intend to press on. Lavender, as Charlton explains in an author's note, was a real person -- I wondered how she came up with that name. At this point in his career he is a member of the Bow Street Runners, and working with Constable Woods, he is assigned, by request of the victim's son, to solve the mysterious disappearance of a valuable set of diamonds, seemingly from a locked box. I was happy with Charlton's characters, liking the good ones and disliking the bad ones, and the story always held my interest. The first novel in the series is *The Heiress of Linn Hagh*.

This is a very short story and you know just where it is going from the first time you meet the Earl. But it still has a way of bringing forth the era it was written about. The filth of a large city, the poor and unfortunate and how things were changing in England because the poor were so taken advantage of by the wealthy who thought that was their right. However the way the story turns out ended up surprising me a bit. It was a good read.

This is a great cosy quick read to get a taster of Detective Lavender of the Bowstreet Runners and his sidekick Woods. Set in Regency England, the story poses an Agatha Christie like mystery of family diamonds that have mysteriously disappeared. This is the time when detection and formal policing was in its infancy and Charlton gives us a real insight into its workings with a lovely bit of tension and whodunnit to go with it. Family intrigue, rich local colour all go into it all to make a great read

English mysteries are just so, well, English! Detective Lavender is charming with his insightful observations and clever deductions. Politics win the day, of course, but the truth is evident to the

Detective and his loyal sidekick, Woods. Fun read.

A nice change of pace to read a book that is not chockful of sex and violence. Instead, the plot moves forward with what Edgar Allen Poe called ratiocination. All the clues requisite for solving the mystery are there from the beginning, as I detected during my second reading, but they are cleverly woven into the plot so as not to be obvious. I enjoyed solving the case along with the detective. Charlton's work is similar in style to the writing of Sheri Cobb South, another good mystery writer. Cobb also adds a budding romance, as I have a feeling Charlton will start to do. In a subsequent Detective Lavender mystery, we find the good detective unable to get a certain lady off his mind, to the point where he contrives an excuse to visit her after the case is over. I would recommend Karen Charlton if you like light reading and solving puzzles.

The Mystery of the Skelton Diamonds was a pleasant, quick read, but suffered from being all too short. It is its shortness that really made the plot line somewhat flimsy - it was too easy to deduce who had stolen the diamonds based on too many indicators as the story unfolded. However, it was a well written story in as much Karen Charlton, in a few short words, enabled the reader to capture a glimpse and differences in reality for the different social classes of Britain in the early 1800s. I found her characters, particularly Detective Lavender and Constable Woods to be well drawn and I liked them. Overall, despite the mystery being obvious, I enjoyed my time slueing alongside Lavender and Woods.

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