

Launching a new book: Skulduggery

The word 'gong' is derived from the old English, gang, which means 'to go' and seems to have been used to describe a privy or latrine since the 11th century

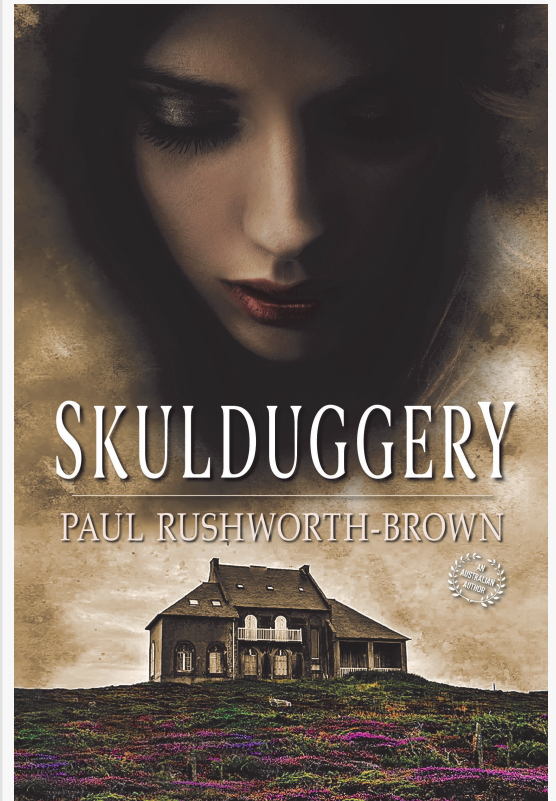
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, November 11, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The word 'gong' is derived from the old English, gang, which means 'to go' and seems to have been used to describe a privy or latrine in the early 11th century.

The 'gong farmer' was someone who dug out and removed human excrement from privies and cesspits in 14th to 17th century England. Gong farmers were only allowed to work between 9 pm and 5 am as members of the public did not want to see them at work digging and collecting the 'night soil'.

Night soil is a historically used euphemism for human excreta collected from cesspools, privies, pail closets, pit latrines, privy middens, septic tanks, etc. This material was removed from the immediate area and often transported out of towns and sold on as a fertilizer. The modern term is faecal sludge.

Cesspits were made from brick chambers about six feet deep and four feet wide. They were placed as far away from the house as possible, but sometimes they were installed in the basement and were often placed under cellar floors or in the yard of a house. Some had wooden chutes to carry excrement from the upper floors to the cesspit, sometimes flushed by rainwater. Cesspits were not watertight, allowing the liquid waste to drain away leaving only the solids to be collected. After being dug out, the solid waste was removed in large barrels, which were loaded onto a horse-drawn cart.

A foul odour from cesspits was a continual problem, and the accumulation of solid waste meant that they had to be cleaned out every two years or so. In the late 15th century, they charged two shillings per ton of waste removed.



Nominated for Best Indie Book Award

The working life of a gong farmer was spent up to his knees, waist, even neck in human excrement. It was also an extremely dangerous job, as gong farmers often dug into pockets of deadly poisonous gas and of course risked disease. Sometimes the gong farmer would be overcome by asphyxiation from the noxious fumes produced by the human excrement.

A gang of four men (exclusive of those who have the care of the horses, and who drove the night-carts to and from the scenes of the men's labours at the cesspools) were set to work. The labour of the gang was divided, though not with any individual or especial strictness, as follows: The holeman, who went into the cesspool and filled the tub, the ropeman, who raised the tub when filled and the tub men (of whom there are two), who carried away the tub when raised and emptied it into the cart.

“

The history of these people is rarely thought of and even less rarely written about. There is much written about the nobles of the time but what about the common people? Now let their story begin...”

Paul Rushworth-Brown

From the early 17th century onwards the larger towns and cities began to employ scavengers, as they became known, to remove waste from the streets. Much of this effluent came from overflowing privies and dunghills, or from chamber pots emptied into the streets from upstairs windows.

Paul Rushworth-Brown is the author of three novels available in [paperback](#), [ebook](#) or [KOBO](#)

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Paul Rushworth-Brown's Novel Skulduggery Brings 17th Century Yorkshire to Life

Step Back in time in this Historically Accurate Mysterious, Romantic, Whodunnit. The style of writing is very descriptive and actually places you in the story.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, October 10, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ – [Witty Writers Show: Interview](#) with Paul Rushworth-Brown Author of *Skulduggery* and Soon to be Released *Red Winter Journey*

Paul's Bio:

Paul Rushworth-Brown was born in Maidstone, Kent, England in 1962. He spent time in a foster home in Manchester before emigrating to Canada with his mother in 1972. He spent his teenage years living and going to school in Toronto, Ontario where he also played professional soccer in the Canadian National Soccer League. In 1982, he emigrated to Australia to spend time with his father, Jimmy Brown who had moved there from Yorkshire in the mid-fifties.

Paul was educated at Charles Sturt University in New South Wales, Australia. He became a writer in 2015 when he embarked on a six-month project to produce a written family history for his children, Rachael, Christopher, and Hayley.

Beth: "I'm really excited to be interviewing you Paul because oh my gosh you've had a journey personally and as a writer which I find absolutely fascinating. I just want to give people a bit of a rough idea because you write historical fiction. But you got into it by researching your own family. So let's just go back and find what actually sparked your interest and why you began diving into your family history and then you going on to writing your first novel."

Paul: "My father never knew much about his roots and where he came from. The only thing he knew was that he had some



"We all know how famous the Bronte sisters are but I am sure Paul Rushworth-Brown – the 21st-century author – might soon be joining these literary giants."



The novel has already earned acclaim, with one reviewer describing it as "masterful and thoroughly enjoyable."

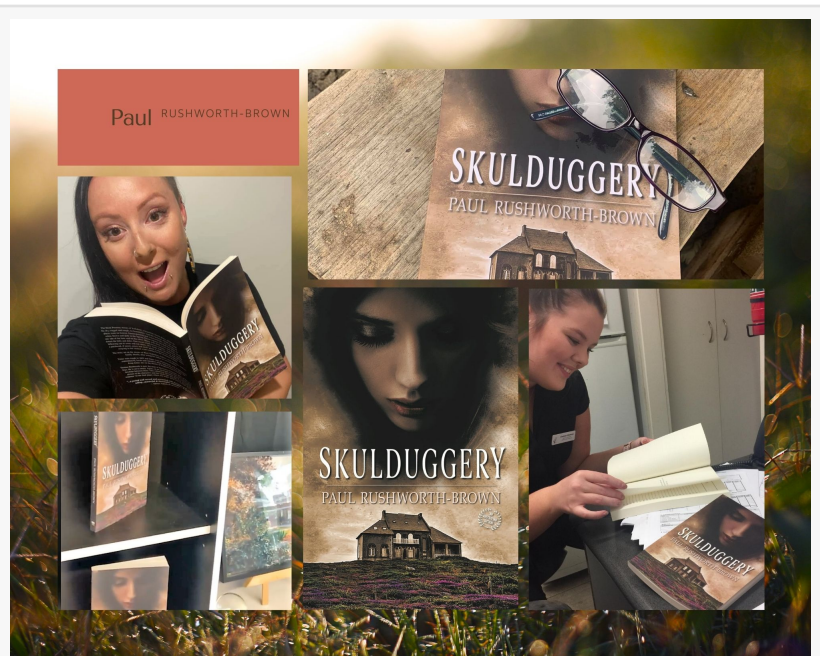
Paul Rushworth-Brown's novel Skulduggery brings 17th century Yorkshire to life

From this, we can see that much of the work was done from a surface level, and though lanterns were used, it was not necessary to enter the dangerous areas with the lanterns due to the build-up of methane gas. The lanterns were placed nearby or suspended over the work area.

Much of what is known about privies during the 17th and 18th centuries comes from witness statements describing what had been discovered among the human excrement, such as the corpses of unwanted infants.

From the early 17th century onwards the larger towns and

Skulduggery- The bleak Pennine moors of Yorkshire; a beautiful, harsh place, close to the sky, rugged and rough, no boundaries except the horizon, which in places, went on forever. Green pastures and wayward hills, the colours of ochre, brown and pink in the Spring. Green squares divided the land on one side of the lane, and on the other; sheep with thick wool and dark snouts dotted the hills and dales. The story, set on the Moors of West Yorkshire, follows wee Thomas and his family shortly after losing his father to consumption. Times were tough in 1603 and there were shenanigans and skulduggery committed by locals and outsiders alike. Queen Bess has died, and King James sits on the throne of England and Scotland. Thomas Rushworth is now the man of the house being the older of two boys. He is set to wed Agnes in an arranged marriage, but a true love story develops between them.



The hype around this book has been unquestionable

Great world-building

4 stars. Great world-building, weak romance, but still worth the read. I hesitate to describe this book as a 'romance' novel simply because the book spent little time actually exploring the romance between Agnes and Thomas. Sure, there is a romance in this novel. Sprinkled throughout the book are a few scenes where Agnes and Thomas meet, chat, flirt and sleep together, have a misunderstanding, then profess their undying love. The meat of this book is far more focused on the story of the plight of Thomas and his brother William and the family living on the moors of Yorkshire in the 17th century. I really enjoyed it. I think the book is historically accurate based on what I have read of the time. I absolutely plan to stick with this author as I enjoyed the descriptive prose, loved the Yorkshire setting, and was intrigued by all of the secondary characters. If you enjoy a solid background story with some dark moments and twists and turns you might enjoy it as much as I did.

Historical fiction at its best!

5 stars. The hype around this book has been unquestionable and, admittedly, that made me both eager to get my hands on it and terrified to read it. I mean, what if I was to be the one person that didn't love it as much as others? (That seems silly now because of how truly mesmerizing Skulduggery was in the most heartbreakingly realistic way.) I knew this one was a must-read!

Paul Rushworth-Brown

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