UPDATED: Former Illinois Congressman Aaron Schock To Join Downton Abbey Cast Next Season As Barmy American Cousin

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Mistakes were made.[/caption]

2016 UPDATE, November 10, 2016: Former Illinois congressman Aaron Schock received an "RSVP" from the federal government today for a federal criminal proceeding relating to a variety of accusations. The best known of these is his congressional office makeover where he is alleged to have misused funds and influence to recast his drab DC HQ into a Downton Abbey clone.

Our exclusively-reported and sourced article below of March 2015 chronicled the odd aftermath of Mr. Schock's political misstep that caused an end to one career while at the same time appearing to offer a fresh start on a new one.

Original 2015 article:

Michael John Matheron, March 22, 2015

Just days ago, Illinois Congressman Aaron Schock's political career ended, at least temporarily, with his hasty retirement amidst growing controversy about his use of campaign and taxpayer funds. The tip-top of the iceberg, Schick's $40,000 redesign of his congressional office to mirror *Downton Abbey*'s lush interiors, was both suspiciously financed and utterly counter-intuitive for a member, not of *Parliament*, but of the *Congress of the United States.* Yet, upset as Americans were about it, they simultaneously felt *relieved* that Schock hadn't taken a liking to *Orange is the New Black*, *Black Adder*, or *The Walking Dead.* Office décor-wise, the results might have been significantly worse.

The Wages of Sin Yet, as trouble swept over Mr. Schock, the still youthful and once promising Republican middle-of-the-right-side-of-the-road congressman, he quickly earned an apparent payoff for his infatuation with British aristocracy. Soon after his retirement, *Downton Abbey* producers offered the super fan a role in season six, expected to air on PBS in early 2016. With speed that would impress a cougar, he accepted. Within hours, he and his Anglophilic Edwardian office mementos were aboard the first available Southampton-bound cruise ship. Presently in transit, he'll soon arrive at southern England's Hampshire county to transition from legislator to actor, which transition, for an ex-politician, will be as simple as when he turned out the lights as he exited forever his congressional office.

Cheaper Than Gingrich. Since season six filming is already underway, when Schock arrives on March 24 he will, *post haste,* visit a *circa* 1925 Downton Abbey set. Series creator Julian Fellowes admitted that revising next season's themes to accommodate Downton's newest addition will cause mild scheduling delays, as certain scenes must be restaged. Nevertheless, he observed,

> "Quite worth the trouble. The former congressman has - je ne sais quoi? - a comfort with rather lighthearted and light-headed disregard for the conventional moral behaviors that his constituents generally condoned. In that trait, he ought to fit well within an aristocratic household. Will his presence at the Abbey please our audience? *Je ne sais pas.* But, *tally ho*; he came cheap. Contrast Mr. Schock with Newt Gingrich who demanded a Prime Ministership; Her Majesty demurred."

Next, Rebecca Eaton one of the series executive producers brought us in on the "arc de Schock,"

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Your smoking cap looks rather familiar, my dear cousin. May I inquire where did you acquire it? [Picture courtesy of Downton Abbey publicists][/caption]

"Mr. Schock will join the Downton extended family in episode one as *Osgood Crawley Cheeksmithers*, an adorable, yet obviously loopy American. He's the Crawley family's fifth cousin eleven times removed, often for non-payment of rent and civil judgments. He also collects criminal indictments like a squirrel collects acorns.

Thus far, on the few occasions he's been apprehended by authorities, his *pro se* defense based upon various forms of insanity were so wildly successful that the Cheeksmithers Defense now is codified in seventy-seven countries' criminal procedure codes. So, as you can see, former congressman Schock's congressional record clearly signals that next season's Cheeksmithers will fit him as comfortably as a banana within a banana peel."

Warning: Meaningless Spoilers. As season six will play out, Schock's Mr. Cheeksmithers will initially arrive, unannounced, in Southampton, England, from Port Elizabeth, South Africa, aboard a Union Castle Line cruise ship. A year lying low in South Africa exclusively to avoid extradition by various nations went bust, as explained *infra*. Out of the question was a return to his native United States given that state and federal arrest warrants abounded, each embossed "Osgood Crawley Cheeksmithers." All avenues blocked, he sought respite, succor, and secrecy at "Chez Downton," among his relations, eleven times removed though they are.

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Osgood Crawley Cheeksmithers, Masseuse-In-Chief for the 1924 Port Elizabeth Cricket Club, poses (center front) in clever disguise. [Picture courtesy of Downton Abbey publicists][/caption]Osgood's South African cock-up transpired while posing as team masseuse for the Port Elizabeth Cricketeers during the 1924 season. He managed to spoil his comfortable extradition-free existence by running seriously afoul of higher-ups at St. George's Park's Mother Club of Bowls for violating dining club rule DCR 363.01(a)(1) during the annual Curry Cup gala:

> During the annual Curry Cup Gala Dinner no American citizen or citizens may provide a full body massage to any guest or guests of said dinner while such guest or guests are still engaged in consuming his or their dinner, including desert, tea, coffee, alcohol, and/or brandy. Violation of this rule will result in quite bad consequences indeed, *i.e.* immediate expulsion from South Africa for eighteen months. DCR Annotated (1901, 1924 Supplement).

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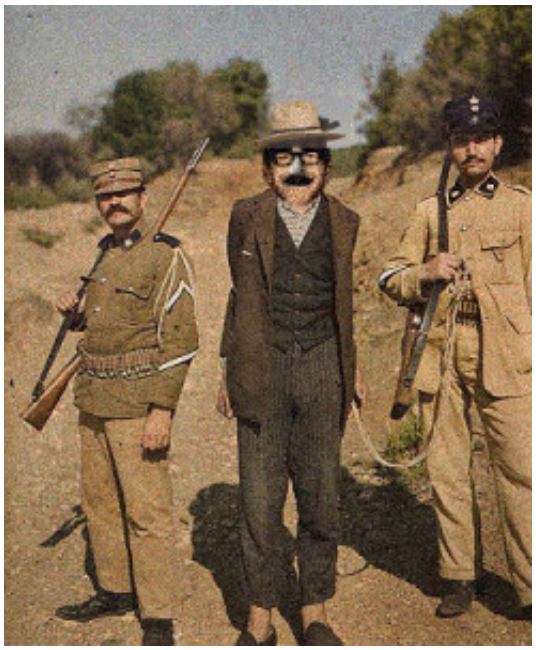

Osgood Crawley Cheeksmithers in custody of Club Dining Room Severe Punishment Board police (1924). [Picture courtesy of Downton Abbey publicists][/caption]Discovered, as our Mr. Cheeksmithers was, in *massage delicto* during the club's Curry Cup Gala Dinner, the Club Dining Room Severe Punishment Board acted with an admirable swiftness that it is still recalled today in-country. Within moments, the club Sergeant-At-Arms, assisted by numerous men, women, children, and particularly aggressive house cats strong-armed our Osgood from a gala dinner to the steerage section of the Southampton-bound *Arundel Castle*, then boarding passengers at Port Elizabeth.

Once again involuntarily disembarked from a sovereign state, he was nevertheless delighted to return to "Chez Downton." Thus, for the Crawley family's undisputed black sheep American cousin, it was *excelsior* Britannia, there to seek shelter among relatives who, though they loved him dearly, had remained understandably well-armed during his previous defensive visits to Downton Abbey.

Downton series principals revealed no other titillating tidbits about Mr. Cheeksmithers' ensconcement at the Abbey mansion, although rumor has it that Violet Crawley will grow rather fond of her quite distant American cousin, exclusively due to his "delightfully deranged American extravagance and extraordinarily robust criminal record, and still so young!"

The Nutter Who Would Be King. Most importantly, though, his *claim to the British throne* will substantially enhance his allure among the nervous Crawley family, whose belief in Oscar, as noted, remains solid despite his more than thirty-three international indictments during his scant thirty-four years.

"Oscar Cheeksmithers," producers hinted,

> "may or may not prove delusional, or simply aristocratically eccentric, depending upon mid-season focus group results. In all, we're excited!"

Thus, a possible "King Oscar" season six finale will reside in the hands of thus far capable focus groupers. This optimistic reporter suspects Buckingham Castle will eventually discover a Crawley installed therein, and an America to boot! He will reign as the Crown's first masseuse with multiple international criminal indictments to His name (which surely will muddy foreign relations).

Am I alone in my desire that producers consider a season seven, or eight, or nine? Long live the King Cheeksmithers! Long live *Downton Abbey*!