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WEST MERCIA
CONSTABULARY
TOGETHER - WORKING FOR SAFETY AND JUSTICE

11th June 2004

Our Ref: Operation ICE

Dear Mr GREEN,

I hope you and Kate are both well.

Thank you for the opportunity to update you both on the current progress of the investigation. Should there be any new developments, I will of course keep you appraised.

You will recall our conversation regarding a possible 'Abuse of Process' hearing to be made by the Defence in the near future. At present, we have had no recent information to indicate whether they propose to pursue this or not. Hopefully we will be in a position to provide you with more information following the next Court hearing.

I can also confirm in writing that despite extensive checks, the Forensic Science Service are unable to locate certain items that were retained for further examination back in 1984. These items are as follows: -

- The body sheet on which the body was lay for transportation from the scene.
- A sample of urine taken during the post mortem examination.
- The contents of the stomach taken during the post mortem examination.
- A sample of bile taken during the post mortem examination.
- The liver.
- The brain.

You will appreciate that we are most disappointed with this and apologise for any distress that this loss may cause. The Defence Solicitor representing the suspect will of course be notified of this loss. However, in my opinion this does not detract from the Prosecution case we have against Andrew GEORGE.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact DC Nick PARTRIDGE or myself on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

M. BRUNGER
Detective Superintendent.

PO Box 8390
Christchurch
New Zealand
Email: rob@disarmsecure.org

Forensic Science Service
Trident Court
2920 Solihull Parkway
Birmingham Business Park
Birmingham
West Midlands B37 7YN
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16 June 2005


To Whom It May Concern

As the nephew and next-of-kin of the late Hilda Murrell, I attended the recent trial at Stafford Crown Court of Andrew George for her 1984 abduction and murder.

During the trial, reference was made by Mr Michael Appleby from the Forensic Science Service to specimens from Hilda's body which were used to obtain her DNA profile. Also, in earlier discussions with the West Mercia Police during their cold case review and investigations in preparation for the trial, they made reference to various body parts and fluid samples which had been retained by the Forensic Science Laboratory. These included her brain, liver, fingernails, and samples of her blood, urine and bile.

In the expectation that, notwithstanding the current appeal by Andrew George, the case will be closed, I am writing to request that in due course all Hilda's body parts and fluid samples be released to her next-of-kin for interment. With this in mind, I would be grateful for a complete list of body parts and fluid samples held, and their location.

Yours sincerely,



(Robert Green)
Commander, Royal Navy (Ret'd)

PO Box 8390
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Dave Parry
Central Enquiry Unit
Forensic Science Service
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Gooch St North
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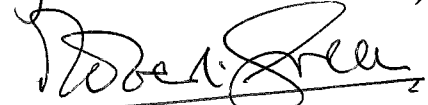
21 April 2006

Dear Mr Parry,

You will recall that on 3 August 2005 you kindly emailed me an interim reply to my letter of 16 June 2005 regarding provision of a complete list of body parts and fluid samples held, with their location, from my late aunt Hilda Murrell. In your message you stated that it was taking longer than anticipated to obtain the necessary information about retained material.

As I will be attending the Appeal Court hearing for Andrew George, which I understand is scheduled for late May/early June in the Royal Courts of Justice in London, I would be grateful if you could update me on the situation before I depart from New Zealand.

Yours sincerely,



(Robert Green)
Commander, Royal Navy (Ret'd)

- Enclosures: 1) Copy of your email dated 3 August 2005
2) Copy of my letter dated 16 June 2005
3) Copy of letter from West Mercia Police dated 11 June 2004



Central Enquiry Unit
Priory House,
Gooch Street North,
BIRMINGHAM
B5 6QQ
United Kingdom

Mr Robert Green
PO Box 8390
Christchurch
New Zealand

03 May 2006

Dear Mr Green,

Please accept my sincere apologies for the delay in providing you with a definitive response to your original request. I hope you will forgive an E-mail response but I thought this would reach you well before your departure for the UK. Please let me know if you require any further information or assistance.

The following list was provided by Dr Colin Dark, the FSS Major Crime Service Specialist Advisor who assisted the West Mercia police officers who re-investigated this case, and who was responsible for locating crucial material that subsequently yielded the mixed DNA profile that played a significant part in the conviction of the accused.

The following intimate and non-intimate items associated with the deceased are retained at the FSS Chepstow location:-

- PA10 – Mouth Swab
- PA11 – Vaginal swab
- PA12 – High Vaginal Swab
- PA13 – Anal External Swab
- PA14 – Anal Internal Swab
- PA16 - Head Hair combed
- PA17 – Head Hair cut
- PA18 – Head Hair plucked
- PA19 – Pubic Hair combed
- PA20 – Pubic Hair cut
- PA21 – Pubic Hair plucked
- PA22 – Fingernails
- PA23 – Fingernails
- PA26 – Blood sample
- MRW1 – Body Taping

Forensic Science Service Ltd.

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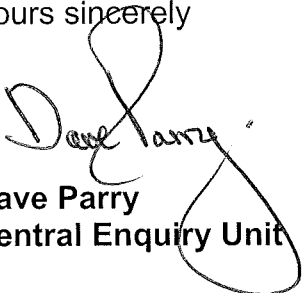




The following items have not been found, despite exhaustive searches at the National Archive, Priory House and Chorley FSS locations: -

- PA3 – The body sheet
- PA24 – Urine
- PA27 – Stomach Contents
- PA28 – Bile
- PA29 – Liver
- PA30 – Brain

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Dave Parry'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping 'D' at the beginning.

Dave Parry
Central Enquiry Unit

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Mr D A Parry
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Forensic Science Service
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4 May 2006

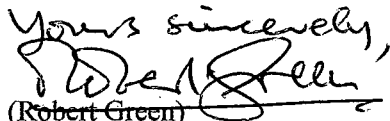
Dear Mr Parry,

Thank you very much for your emailed reply sent today to my faxed letter dated 21 April 2006 informing me of the situation regarding body parts retained and missing of my late aunt Hilda Murrell. As there is time before I leave New Zealand on 5 June, please would you both fax and airmail me a hard copy on headed paper with your signature?

You will not be surprised that I am deeply disturbed by your report. I would be grateful if you would now provide me with the following information:

- 1) The dates when the missing items were last held, and in which locations. To support this information, I would like copies of all relevant documentation faxed and also posted to me.
- 2) Were the missing body parts available when Charles Clarke made a statement in Parliament on 9 April 2001 in response to a question by Tam Dalyell (copy enclosed)?
- 3) Why was it necessary for the pathologist to remove and retain my aunt's brain?
- 4) Why are there 23 fingernails?

Finally, I request an explanation for how such a gross blunder could have occurred. I refuse to accept that the missing body parts have been disposed of, but have been mislaid. I therefore wish that the search for them be continued, in order that one day I may be able to complete Hilda's burial and achieve closure in this respect.

Yours sincerely,


(Robert Green)

Commander, Royal Navy (Ret'd)

Enclosure: Extract from Hansard "Hilda Murrell" para 13, 9 April 2001



Mr Robert Green
PO Box 8390
Christchurch
New Zealand

23 May 2006

Dear Mr Green, thank you for your fax of 04 May 2006 and E-mail of 22 May 2006.

Dealing with the issues you raised in your letter:

1. The dates when the missing items were last held, and in which locations?

Although, Dr Dark was first involved in locating retained material in April 2000, his search was concentrated on items that might yield a DNA profile. The missing items were not found at this time but they were not specifically sought either. I understand that it was at this time that retained items were transferred from this laboratory to our National Archive. The relevant transfer forms did not include any of the missing items.

At a case conference with members of the police investigation team on 04 September 2003, the senior investigating officer requested a toxicological examination of any samples from your aunt. As a result, another search was instigated but this time, specifically for the missing bile, liver, stomach contents and brain samples. Freezers containing frozen retained material from all relevant laboratories were searched as were retention records. Every effort was made to try and locate them before the trial but ultimately without success.

We are currently conducting another search for the missing casework ledgers that should contain the information about the storage of all submitted perishable items in this case. Until these are found, I cannot provide you with a complete answer to this question or provide the supporting documentation.

2. Were the missing body parts available when Charles Clarke made a statement to Parliament on 09 April 2001?

The statement related to the examination of retained material that had the potential to yield a DNA profile. At this time, the status of the missing body parts was not investigated and was therefore, unknown.

3. Why was it necessary for the pathologist to remove and retain my aunt's brain?

It is only the pathologist that can provide you with a specific answer to this question. However, I can say from my own experience that it was common practice at this time to remove the liver and brain in case they were subsequently required for toxicological analysis.

4. Why are there 23 fingernails?

Please accept my apologies for the confusion caused by the wording of my E-mail. I should have written, "PA22 fingernails right hand and PA23-fingernails left hand".

I hope it will help you to understand what has happened in this case if I briefly explain what happened to retained material at the time (twenty two years ago) your aunt's samples were submitted for examination:

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There was no legal requirement for us to retain any material after an investigation was concluded or an individual was convicted. Therefore, in the majority of murder cases, perishable samples were destroyed after the trial. Where a case remained unsolved, samples were usually kept for years and were only destroyed if:

- They had deteriorated and were no longer suitable for analysis.
- No new lines of enquiry had emerged since the original investigation.
- It was unlikely that any re-investigation of the offence would involve toxicological analysis of the retained samples.

It was only in 1998 that an agreement was reached with the Association of Chief Police Officers regarding the future retention of perishable samples and recovered material. It wasn't until 2003, that a further agreement was signed to cover the retrospective application of the agreed retention periods to pre-1998 material. The main impetus for these agreements was the developments in DNA profiling that enabled the re-investigation of a significant number of previously un-solved murder and rape cases, including Operation Ice.

It is only since the Alder-Hey enquiry that attention has focussed on the retention and respectful disposal of organs and tissues removed at post-mortem. Initial work carried out under guidance of the Retained Organs Commission resulted in subsequent legislation (The Human Tissue Act) and the setting up of a regulating authority (the Human Tissue Authority). Previously, there were no regulations governing what material a pathologist could remove from a body at post-mortem or of how that material was treated subsequently.

On behalf of the Forensic Science Service, I offer you a sincere apology for our inability to locate, or inform you of the fate of the missing samples at this time and for any distress that this is causing you.

Yours sincerely



Dave Parry
Central Enquiry Unit



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24 July 2006

Dear Mr Parry,

Thank you very much for your signed letter dated 23 May 2006, which I received from Betty O'Neill on my arrival at the Royal Courts of Justice on 8 June. I would like to place on record how impressed I have been by your conscientious efforts to respond to my requests, on an issue that I realise must be difficult for you to investigate. At a meeting with West Mercia Police on 20 June, I gave DCS Mick Brunger a copy of your letters because he had originally suggested that I should write to you.

I am grateful for your responses to my four questions. I note that you are persisting with your search for the casework ledgers. I am particularly perplexed that the body sheet is missing, which is not perishable and would potentially be very useful now for DNA and toxicology investigation.

I recently re-read some notes by Professor Bernard Knight, after I had taken up Dr Acland's offer for Hilda's family to arrange for another pathologist to discuss his autopsy findings: I enclose a copy of the relevant page. You will see that on 28 March 1985 he "examined various organs preserved in formalin, including **stomach**, **larynx** and **genitalia**. The larynx and **tongue** showed extensive bruising and there were fractures of the hyoid bone." Is there a record of these additional body parts being taken? If so, I would be grateful for details of their whereabouts.

Having re-read Dr Acland's autopsy report, I note that Hilda's heart, spleen and kidneys were weighed like her brain, indicating that they too were removed. Is there any record of whether they were retained or returned to the body?

Yours sincerely,

(Robert Green)
Commander, Royal Navy (Ret'd)
Enclosure: Copy of Comments by Professor Bernard Knight 28 March 1985



Central Enquiry Unit
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Mr Robert Green
PO Box 8390
Christchurch
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04 September 2006

Dear Mr Green,

Thank you for your letter of 24 July 2006.

Dealing with the issues you raised in your letter:

1. The body sheet

The last record we have relating to this item is a record of its presence in a "cold room" (walk-in refrigerator) on 28 March 1984. Unfortunately, extensive re-organisation of this laboratory since that date has resulted in the re-location of stored items on a number of occasions. This item is still missing despite a number of searches at various FSS locations.

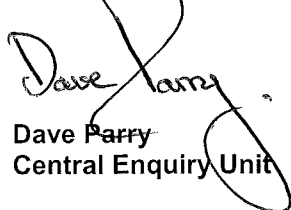
2. Whereabouts of various items preserved in formalin?

I believe that Dr Acland removed these items at the original post-mortem and arranged for their preservation in formalin. I think it likely that he would have retained possession of these items, making them available for the defence examination conducted by Dr Norman Gower and the later examination by Professor Bernard Knight.

3. Fate of other organs removed from the body at post-mortem?

We have no record of submissions that included any of the preserved items, the heart, spleen or kidneys. In my opinion therefore, Dr Acland is best qualified to answer this question and also provide information about the fate of the preserved items.

Yours sincerely



Dave Parry
Central Enquiry Unit

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