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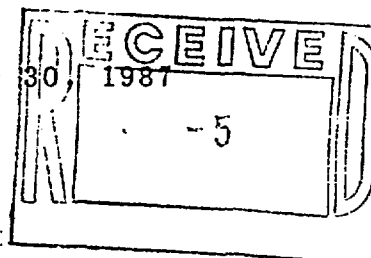
Joseph H. Embry, M.D.  
State Medical Examiner

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Laboratory Director

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Crime Scene Investigation

December 30, 1987



Honorable J. Michael Campbell  
District Attorney  
Courthouse  
Columbiana, Alabama 35051

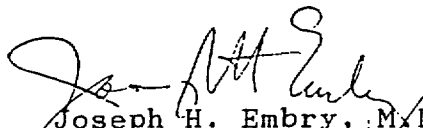
Re: Case 01(A)-88-25862  
Ronnie L. Pate, subject  
Ronald P. Swiney, suspect

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is a Report of Autopsy report citing this Department's findings on examinations conducted at your request regarding the above styled case. Further laboratory analyses are being conducted and additional memoranda will be sent to you when they are completed.

If we may be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

  
Joseph H. Embry, M.D., J.D.  
State Medical Examiner

JHE/dm

Enclosure

cc: Coroner Billy Thompson  
Investigator M. R. Smitherman, Shelby County Sheriff's Office  
Sergeant Jim Walters, Shelby County Sheriff's Office  
Sergeant Tom Smitherman, Shelby County Sheriff's Office

AUTOPSY NO. 88-25862

ALABAMA  
DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCES  
BIRMINGHAM DIVISION

DAY/DATE Friday, 12/11/87

1001 South 13th Street  
Birmingham, Alabama 35205-3498  
(205) 933-6621

TIME 0830 hours

COUNTY Shelby

REPORT OF AUTOPSY

DECEDENT Ronnie L. Pate  
FIRST MIDDLE LAST

AUTOPSY AUTHORIZED BY: District Attorney, Section 36-18-2 Code of Alabama, 1975 REQUESTED BY: Coroner Thompson

PERSONS PRESENT AT AUTOPSY: Medical Examiner Investigators White and Brand

RIGOR: COMPLETE X JAW \_\_\_\_\_ NECK \_\_\_\_\_ ARMS \_\_\_\_\_ LEGS \_\_\_\_\_ PASSED \_\_\_\_\_

LIVOR: COLOR red-purple DISTRIBUTION: posterior

AGE 33 RACE W SEX M LENGTH 69-1/2 in. WEIGHT 176 lbs. EYES brown PUPILS: R 0.5 cm L 0.5 cm

HAIR brown MUSTACHE brown BEARD brown CIRCUMCISED no BODY HEAT cool

The teeth are natural and in good repair.

EXTERNAL EXAMINATION AND WOUND TRACKS

The subject is received wrapped in a white sheet which is taped closed. A yellow tag is taped on the outside of the sheet in the chest area with the inscription "RONNIE L. PATE 12/10/87 Billy C. Thompson Bolton Brown Service 669-3179". The subject is received dressed in a three-quarter length sleeve white with red sleeves and red collar trim pullover jersey with the inscription in red on the chest "ANO PRIDE 1-R7", jeans, brown belt, blue with white trim brief-styled underwear and white socks. A one dollar bill and thirty-six cents in change is in the left front pocket of the jeans. A gold-colored metal necklace is in place. Apparent blood stains are present in the shirt, primarily in the upper back. A white identification tag with the inscription "State 12/11/87 Ronnie L. Pate 32 yr W/M State Coroner Ray White" is attached to the left great toe. A yellow tag with the subject's name and the inscription "12/10/87 Billy C. Thompson Bolton Brown Service 669-3179" is attached to the right ankle.

The body is that of a well-developed, well-nourished, medium build male, consistent with the reported age of 33 years. The head is normocephalic. Swelling is present in the right temple 3-1/2 inches in diameter due to a gunshot wound, described below. The hair measures up to approximately 4 inches with receding frontal hairline and thinning in the occipital area. A gunshot wound is present in the left temple, described below. The sclerae are white. The corneae are clear. The conjunctivae reveal no hemorrhages. Subcutaneous periorbital hemorrhage is present, more prominent around the right eye. Blood extends from the nares onto the cheeks. Blood is present in the mouth. No intraoral trauma is present. The neck reveals a gunshot wound, described below. It is otherwise unremarkable. The chest is symmetrical. Disposable EKG electrodes are on the chest (two) and left lower abdomen (one). The abdomen is flat. The external genitalia are unremarkable. The extremities are symmetrical. Four rounded brown contusions are present in the anterior aspect of the right thigh, proximally, from 1/2 to 3/4 inch in diameter. A 1 by 1/8 inch red-purple contusion is present in the anterolateral aspect of the right thigh in the midportion. A 4-1/2 by 4-1/2 inches professional tattoo of hearts, flowers, and cupid with the inscription below "BETTY" is present in the lateral aspect of the left upper arm. An apparent blood smear is present on the dorsal aspect of the left hand. No trauma is present to the hands other than a 1/4 by 1/8 inch healing abrasion in the dorsal aspect of the right thumb. The fingernails measure approximately 1/16 inch and are slightly soiled. Examination of the back reveals no abnormalities.

Gunshot Wound A: The round 1/8 inch gunshot entrance wound is located in the left temple 4-3/8 inches below the level of the vertex of the scalp, 4-5/8 inches to the left of the anterior midline and 1 inch anterior to the anterior-superior attachment of the left ear. A 1/16 inch marginal abrasion is present. Unburned gunpowder is present on the skin around the wound up to 4 inches from the gunshot entrance wound. A 1/16 inch gunpowder stipple is present beneath an unburned gunpowder particle just lateral to the left eye, 1-7/8 inch from the gunshot entrance wound. The gunshot wound track is through the skin and subcutaneous tissue, through the remainder of the scalp, through the left temporal bone, through the inferior aspect of the left temporal lobe of the cerebrum by a gutter wound, through the right temporal lobe, through the right temporal bone and into the subcutaneous tissue of the right temporal scalp at a point 1-1/2 inches superomedial to the anterior-superior attachment of the right ear, approximately 1 inch above the level of the gunshot entrance wound. The bullet is recovered with gloved fingers. The gunshot wound track is from the subject's left to his right, slightly from below upward with no significant deviation forward or backward.

Gunshot Wound B: The irregularly rounded 1/4 inch gunshot entrance wound is located in the posterior aspect of the neck, 3/4 inch to the right of the posterior midline and 8 inches below the level of the vertex of the scalp. One-eighth inch marginal abrasion is present. No gunpowder stippling or soot is present. The gunshot wound track is through the skin and subcutaneous tissue, through the musculature of the neck, and through the fourth cervical vertebra with transection of the spinal cord. The bullet is recovered at the end of the track in the left lateral aspect of the spinal canal with rubber-tipped forceps. The direction of the gunshot wound track is from the subject's back to his front, from his right to his left with no significant deviation up or down.

PLEURA: No abnormalities are seen.

PERITONEUM: No abnormalities are seen.

PERICARDIUM: No abnormalities are seen.

HEART: The heart is smooth and glistening externally. The coronary arteries reveal normal origin and distribution. Slight atherosclerosis is present. The myocardium has the usual red color and rubbery consistency. The endocardium is smooth and glistening. The valves are delicate and pliable. The foramen ovale is closed. Microscopic examination reveals no abnormalities (2 sections).  
390 g.

AORTA: No abnormalities are seen.

LUNGS: The lungs are smooth and glistening externally. Moderate anthracotic pigmentation is present. Vascular congestion is present. Cut sectioning also reveals focal aspiration of blood. Blood is present in the trachea and bronchi. The vessels reveal no thrombi or emboli. A 0.5 centimeter calcified lymph node is in the right hilus. Microscopic examination reveals no other abnormalities (5).  
 R. 510 g.  
 L. 500 g.

LIVER: The liver has the usual reddish-brown color and on serial cut sectioning reveals no focal abnormalities. Microscopic examination reveals very slight large droplet fatty metamorphosis (2).  
2040 g.

GALL BLADDER: No abnormalities are seen.

230 g. SPLEEN: No abnormalities are seen on serial cut sectioning.

PANCREAS: No abnormalities are seen on serial cut sectioning. Microscopic examination reveals no abnormalities (1).

ADRENAL GLANDS: No abnormalities are seen on serial cut sectioning.

G. I. TRACT: The tongue and esophagus are unremarkable. The stomach contains approximately 40 grams of thick, yellowish-brown mucoid fluid. The mucosa of the stomach and proximal duodenum reveal no ulcerations or other abnormalities. The duodenum contains bile-stained chyme. The intestines are unremarkable. The vermiform appendix is unremarkable.

KIDNEYS: The kidneys are smooth and on serial cut sectioning reveal no focal abnormalities. Microscopic examination reveals no abnormalities (2). The collecting systems are unremarkable. The ureters are patent.  
 R. 170 g.  
 L. 190 g.

BLADDER: The urinary bladder contains approximately 220 cc's of urine. No abnormalities are seen.

INTERNAL GENITALIA: The prostate gland is unremarkable.

NECK ORGANS: The strap muscles reveal no hemorrhage or other abnormalities. The hyoid bone and larynx reveal no fractures. The thyroid gland is symmetrical and on serial cut sectioning reveals no focal abnormalities.

BRAIN AND MENINGES: The meninges reveal perforation and hemorrhage in relation to the gunshot wound, described above. Marked hemorrhage is present at the base of the brain. The brain reveals perforation, as described above. Serial cut sectioning reveals slight contusion in the right temporal cerebral cortex. No other abnormalities are seen other than the gunshot wound track. The ventricular system is symmetrical. Blood is present in the lateral ventricles. Microscopic examination reveals no other abnormalities (3 sections).  
1430 g.

SKULL: Numerous fractures are present around the gunshot entrance and exit wounds in the temporal bones extending into the floor of the anterior and middle fossae. The posterior portion of the sella turcica is fractured and the pituitary gland is absent.

VERTEBRAE: The fourth cervical vertebra is penetrated as described above.

RIBS: No abnormalities are seen.

PELVIS: No abnormalities are seen.

VITREOUS CHEMISTRIES \_\_\_\_\_ TOXICOLOGY X SEROLOGY X HAIR X FINGERNAILS \_\_\_\_\_ RAPE KIT \_\_\_\_\_ PALMPRINTS X  
 PRIMER RESIDUE KIT \_\_\_\_\_ HISTOLOGY X CLOTHES X X-RAY X BACTERIOLOGY \_\_\_\_\_ PHOTOS X FINGERPRINTS X

Blood, urine, vitreous humor, bile and gastric contents	Dr. Pirl, 12/14/87	Shirt, bullets, gunpowder from face and hair around gunshot entrance wound	Mr. Higgins, 12/18/87
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FINAL ANATOMICAL DIAGNOSES

- I. Gunshot wound to head, penetrating with perforation of brain (bullet recovered from scalp).
  - A. Aspiration of blood.
- II. Gunshot wound to neck, penetrating with perforation of spinal cord (bullet recovered from cervical spine).
- III. Pulmonary vascular congestion and edema.
- IV. Fatty metamorphosis, liver.

SUMMARY

The cause of death of Ronnie L. Pate is gunshot wounds to the head and neck. The autopsy reveals a gunshot wound to the head resulting in perforation of the brain and a gunshot wound to the neck resulting in perforation of the spinal cord. Basal skull fractures are present and aspiration of blood is noted. No other injuries and no natural disease processes are found which contributed to death. The related circumstances indicate the manner of death is homicide.

December 30, 1987      Cooper Green Hospital Autopsy Facility      Joseph H. Embry  


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 DATE SIGNED                                      PLACE OF AUTOPSY                                      JOSEPH H. EMBRY, M.D., STATE MEDICAL EXAMINER