



ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
FORENSIC SCIENCES

BIRMINGHAM DIVISION

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Joseph H. Embry, M.D.
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December 31, 1987

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

Re: Case 01(A)-88-25863
Betty S. Swiney, 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. 88-25863

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 1300 hours

COUNTY Shelby

REPORT OF AUTOPSY

DECEDENT Betty S. Swiney
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, Brand and Wright

RIGOR: COMPLETE X JAW _____ NECK _____ ARMS _____ LEGS _____ PASSED _____

LIVOR: COLOR red-purple DISTRIBUTION: posterior

AGE 38 RACE W SEX F LENGTH 68-1/2 in. WEIGHT 140 lbs. EYES blue PUPILS: R 0.5 cm L 0.5 cm

HAIR brown/blond MUSTACHE _____ BEARD _____ CIRCUMCISED _____ 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, dressed in a long-sleeved purple with black horizontal stripes "ERIKA" brand pullover sweater, "JORDACHE" brand jeans, white panties and gray socks with two white stripes at the tops and white toes and heels. The pockets are empty. Holes corresponding in location to wounds to the body are present in the clothes and red stains most consistent with blood are present. The earlobes have been pierced and ear bobs with clear stones are in place. Two gold-colored metal chain necklaces are in place, one with a clear stone pendant and the other with a heart-shaped gold-colored metal pendant. A gold-colored metal ring with multiple clear stone setting is on the left fourth finger. A white tag with the inscription "STATE 12/11/87 Betty S. Sweeney 39 yr W/F State Coroner: Ray White" is attached to the right great toe. A yellow tag with the inscription "BETTY SWEENEY Dec 10, 1987 BILLY C. THOMPSON" is attached to the right leg by a rubber band.

The body is that of a well-developed, well-nourished, medium build female, consistent with the reported age of 38 years. The head is normocephalic. The hair measures up to approximately 9 inches and is in two ponytails held in place with rubber bands posteriorly. The sclerae are white. The corneae are clear. The conjunctivae reveal no hemorrhages. The nares reveal no obstruction. No intraoral trauma is present. Gunshot wounds to the face and trunk are described below. A 4 inch horizontal scar is in the lower anterior neck. The chest is symmetrical. Bilateral 4-1/4 inch scars are present below each breast and silicon implants are in the breasts. A 1-1/4 inch scar is present in the lateral aspect of the right breast and a 2 inch scar is in the lateral aspect of the left breast. A 3/4 inch scar is in the inferior aspect of the right breast below the nipple and a 1/2 inch scar is in the same location in the left breast. The abdomen is flat. The external genitalia are unremarkable. A 1/4 inch round brown contusion is in the left groin. A 1/2 inch round red-purple contusion is in the anterior aspect of the left thigh, proximally. A 3/4 inch round brown contusion is in the anterior aspect of the left thigh, proximally. A 1/2 inch brown round contusion is in the lateral aspect of the right leg at the level of the knee. A rounded 1/2 by 1 inch blue contusion is in the medial aspect of the left calf. Rounded blue contusions are present in the medial aspect of the right calf, 3/8 inch and 1-1/4 inch, 2-1/2 inches apart. Two rounded red-purple contusions are present in the medial aspect of

the left forearm in the midportion, 5/8 inch and 1/2 inch in diameter, 2 inches apart. A rounded 3/8 inch red-purple contusion is present in the dorso-lateral aspect of the right hand, proximally. A 4 by 2 inch yellow and brown contusion is present in the lateral aspect of the right buttock. A 3/8 inch rounded yellowish-brown contusion is present in the infero-medial aspect of the left buttock.

Evidence of Trauma:

A 1/4 inch abrasion is present in the right lateral forehead, 2 inches to the right of the anterior midline just above the lateral aspect of the right eyebrow. Contusion and swelling 1-1/4 inch in diameter surrounds the abrasion. Blood is present on the face. Blood smears are present on the hands.

Gunshot Wound A: The elliptical 1/2 by 1/8 inch gunshot entrance wound is located 1-1/2 inches to the right of the anterior midline of the face, 3/8 inch above and lateral to the right angle of the mouth and 6-1/2 inches below the level of the vertex of the scalp. Subcutaneous hemorrhage is present in the margin. One-sixteenth inch marginal abrasion is present. The gunshot entrance wound is diagonal in orientation with the lateral aspect inferior. No gunpowder stippling or soot is present. The gunshot wound track is through the skin and subcutaneous tissue, through the soft tissue of the face and the 3/8 by 1/8 inch gunshot exit wound is located below and lateral to the entrance wound overlying the angle of the jaw, 3-1/4 inches to the right of the anterior midline and 2-1/4 inches from the gunshot entrance wound. An irregularly rounded apparent re-entry gunshot wound is present just lateral to the base of the neck 3-1/2 inches to the right of the anterior midline and 8-1/2 inches below the level of the vertex of the scalp. One-eighth inch marginal abrasion is present. A 1/8 inch abrasion is present in the lateral aspect of the neck 1 inch above the re-entry wound. The gunshot re-entry wound track is through the skin and subcutaneous tissue, through the musculature of the supraclavicular area, through the right second rib posteriorly, through the right upper lobe of lung, through the right eighth rib posteriorly and through the musculature of the back to the subcutaneous tissue at the level of the ninth rib posteriorly approximately 4 inches to the right of the posterior midline. The bullet is recovered with gloved fingers. The direction of the gunshot wound track is from the subject's front to her back, from her left to her right and from above downward.

Gunshot Wound B: The round 1/8 inch gunshot entrance wound is located in the right back 52 inches above the right heel and 2-1/4 inches to the right of the posterior midline. One-eighth inch marginal abrasion is present superiorly which tapers to 1/32 inch inferiorly. Free gunpowder is present on the skin below the wound. No stippling or soot is present. The gunshot wound track is through the skin and subcutaneous tissue, through the musculature of the back, through the inferior margin of the right sixth rib posteriorly, through the right lower lobe of lung, through the right atrium of the heart at the junction with the inferior vena cava, through the right lateral margin of the right ventricle of the heart, through the right hemidiaphragm and into the anterior abdominal wall to the subcutaneous tissue of the abdomen slightly to the right of the anterior midline approximately 2 inches below the right costal margin. The bullet struck the right seventh rib at the costal margin near the costo-sternal junction and fracture is present at the site. The bullet is recovered with gloved fingers. The gunshot wound track is from the subject's back to her front, from her right to her left and from above downward.

Gunshot Wound C: The round 1/8 inch gunshot entrance wound is located in the right lower chest 47-1/2 inches above the right heel and 2 inches to the right of the anterior midline. A 1/8 inch marginal abrasion in the superomedial aspect tapers to 1/32 inch in the inferolateral aspect. No gunpowder stippling or soot is present on the skin around the wound. The gunshot wound track is through the skin and subcutaneous tissue, through the right seventh rib, through the right lobe of the liver, and through the back just inferior to the right twelfth rib with exit by a 1/2 inch stellate gunshot exit wound located 1-1/8 inch to the right of the posterior midline and 43-3/4 inches above the right heel. The direction of the gunshot wound track is from the subject's front to her back, slightly from her right to her left and from above downward.

Gunshot Wound D: The round 1/8 inch gunshot entrance wound is located in the right abdomen 45 inches above the right heel, 2-1/2 inches above the level of the umbilicus and 1/4 inch to the right of the anterior midline. A 1/16 inch marginal abrasion is present. No gunpowder stippling or soot is present on the skin around the wound. The track of the gunshot wound is through the skin and subcutaneous tissue, through the remainder of the anterior abdominal wall, through the head of the pancreas inferiorly just to the left of the second portion of the duodenum, through the mesentery of the small intestine, through the inferior vena cava, through the body of the third lumbar vertebra and into the spinal canal. The bullet is recovered with gloved fingers at the end of the gunshot wound track. The direction of the gunshot wound track is from the subject's front to her back, very slightly from her right to her left and from above downward.

Gunshot Wound E: The round 1/8 inch gunshot entrance wound is located in the left back 42-1/4 inches above the left heel and 2 inches to the left of the posterior midline. A 1/16 inch marginal abrasion is present. A few gunpowder particles are present on the skin around the wound. No stippling or soot is present on the skin. The gunshot wound track is through the skin and subcutaneous tissue, through the soft tissue of the back, through the left lateral aspect of the sacrum, through the sigmoid colon, and into the pelvic portion of the abdominal cavity. The bullet is recovered with gloved fingers lying free in the pelvic portion of the abdominal cavity. The direction of the gunshot wound track is from the subject's back to her front and from above downward with no significant deviation to the right or left. The angle with the horizontal plane is approximately 50 degrees downward.

Gunshot Wound F: The rounded 1/8 inch gunshot entrance wound is located in the superior aspect of the right buttock 39-1/4 inches above the right heel and 2-3/4 inches to the right of the posterior midline. A 1/16 inch marginal abrasion is present. A few unburned gunpowder particles are on the skin around the wound. No stippling or soot is present on the skin. The gunshot wound track is through the skin and subcutaneous tissue, through the soft tissue of the right buttock with exit by a keyhole-shaped 3/16 by 1/2 inch wound in the medial aspect of the right buttock, 1-1/2 inch to the right of the posterior midline and 35-3/4 inches above the right heel. The direction of the gunshot wound track is from the subject's right to her left and from above downward with no significant deviation to the front or back.

PLEURA: Five hundred fifty (550) cc's of blood is measured in the right pleural space.

PERITONEUM: Blood is present in the peritoneal cavity.

PERICARDIUM: One hundred (100) cc's of blood is measured in the pericardial sac.

HEART: Perforations are present in the heart as described above. It is otherwise 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 (3 sections).

280 g.

AORTA: No abnormalities are seen.

LUNGS: Perforations are present in the right lung as described above. The right lung is partially collapsed. Moderate anthracotic pigmentation is present in the lungs. Blood is present in the trachea and bronchi and aspirated blood is present in the parenchyma. No other focal abnormalities are seen. The vessels reveal no thrombi or emboli. Microscopic examination reveals no other abnormalities (5).

R. 280 g.

L. 270 g.

LIVER: A perforation is present, as described above. The margins of the liver are fairly sharp and the color is the usual purplish-brown. Serial cut sectioning reveals no other focal abnormalities. Microscopic examination reveals moderate large droplet fatty metamorphosis (2).

1450 g.

GALL BLADDER: No abnormalities are seen.

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

PANCREAS: A perforation is present, as described above. No other abnormalities are seen on serial cut sectioning.

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

G. I. TRACT: The tongue and esophagus are unremarkable. The stomach contains approximately 30 grams of tan fluid including a few food particles. The mucosa of the stomach reveals no ulcerations or other abnormalities. Mucosal tears are present in the second portion of the duodenum adjacent to the gunshot wound track through the head of the pancreas, described above. The small intestine is otherwise unremarkable. The colon reveals perforation, as described above. The vermiform appendix is absent.

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

R. 150 g.

L. 130 g.

BLADDER: The urinary bladder contains approximately 150 cc's of urine. No abnormalities are seen.

INTERNAL GENITALIA: The vagina is unremarkable. The uterus is absent. The left ovary contains a 1.8 centimeter cyst. It is otherwise unremarkable. The right ovary 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 cut sectioning reveals no abnormalities.

BRAIN AND MENINGES: The meninges reveal no hemorrhage or other abnormalities. The brain is symmetrical. It is externally unremarkable. The circle of Willis is unremarkable. Serial coronal cut sectioning reveals no focal abnormalities. The ventricular system is symmetrical and unremarkable. Microscopic examination reveals no abnormalities (3 sections).

1290 g.

SKULL: No abnormalities are seen.

VERTEBRAE: Penetration of the third lumbar vertebra is present as described above.

RIBS: Perforations are present as described above.

PELVIS: The sacrum is perforated, as described above.

VITREOUS CHEMISTRIES _____ TOXICOLOGY X SEROLOGY H HAIR H 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

Ms. Tanner, 12/14/87

Subject's sweater, jeans,
panties, four bullets and
gunpowder particles from skin

Mr. Higgins, 12/18/87

FINAL ANATOMICAL DIAGNOSES

- I. Gunshot wound to face, perforating with re-entry, right supraclavicular area, penetrating with perforation of right lung (bullet recovered from back).
 - A. Right hemothorax.
- II. Gunshot wound to back, penetrating with perforation of right lung and heart (bullet recovered from anterior abdominal wall).
 - A. Hemopericardium.
- III. Gunshot wound to chest, perforating with perforation of liver.
 - A. Hemoperitoneum.
- IV. Gunshot wound to abdomen, penetrating with perforation of pancreas and inferior vena cava (bullet recovered from third lumbar vertebra).
 - V. Gunshot wound to back, penetrating with perforation of sacrum and sigmoid colon (bullet recovered from pelvic portion of abdominal cavity).
- VI. Gunshot wound to buttock, perforating.
- VII. Fatty metamorphosis, liver.

SUMMARY

The cause of death of Betty S. Swiney is multiple gunshot wounds. The autopsy reveals gunshot wounds to the chest and abdomen with perforation of the right lung, heart, liver, pancreas, large intestine and inferior vena cava, resulting in massive internal hemorrhage. No injuries other than gunshot wounds and no natural disease processes are found which contributed to death. The manner of death is homicide.

December 30, 1987 Cooper Green Hospital Autopsy Facility
DATE SIGNED PLACE OF AUTOPSY


JOSEPH H. EMBURY, M.D., STATE MEDICAL EXAMINER