



**HENNEPIN COUNTY  
MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE  
AUTOPSY REPORT**



**ME NO.:** 15-0368

**CASE TITLE:** GUNSHOT WOUND OF THE HEAD

**DECEASED:** Raniya Crowley                      **SEX:** F                      **AGE:** 5

**DATE AND HOUR OF DEATH:** Found 1-17-15; 12:56 p.m.

**DATE AND HOUR OF AUTOPSY:** 1-18-15; 8:20 a.m.

**PATHOLOGIST:** Jessica S. Lelinski, M.D.    **STAFF:** Mitchel K. Morey, M.D.

**FINAL DIAGNOSES:**

5-year-old female was shot in the head and found partially decomposed in her family's residence (related cases: 2015-0366 and 2015-0367).

- I. Perforating gunshot wound of the head, indeterminate range
  - A. Entrance: right parietal scalp
  - B. Path: right parietal bone (with internal beveling and fractures), dura, brain, dura, left temporal bone (with fractures)
  - C. Exit: left postauricular scalp
  - D. Associated injuries: calvarium and basilar skull fractures
  - E. Recovery: projectile fragments from left temporal skull
  - F. Trajectory: leftward, downward, and backward
- II. No evidence of natural disease
- III. Moderate decomposition and evidence of postmortem animal scavenging
- IV. Toxicology
  - A. Spleen volatile screen: ethanol 0.060 g/dL with N-propanol and decomposition peaks present

B. Liver drug screen: immunoassay negative; no basic or neutral drugs present on chromatography

JL/MR: 2/6/15

3/16/2015

X *Jessica Lelinski*

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Jessica S. Lelinski, M.D.  
Deputy Medical Examiner  
Signed by: JLeinski

3/16/2015

X *Mitchel Morey*

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Mitchel K. Morey, M.D.  
Assistant Medical Examiner  
Signed by: Mitchel Morey MD

3/16/2015

X *Lorren W. Jackson*

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Lorren W. Jackson, M.D.  
Reviewing Pathologist  
Signed by: Lorren W. Jackson

**ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL PRESENT AT AUTOPSY:**

The autopsy is conducted in the presence of officers Sean McKnight, Brian Bone, Jim Gummert, and Tommie Booth of the Apple Valley Police Department.

**IDENTIFICATION:**

A Medical Examiner's identification tag is attached to the body bag and is labeled with appropriate case identifying information and recorded physical features. Positive identification is made by circumstantial information. The body bag is sealed with a yellow locking zip tag bearing the following handwritten information: "15-0368 1/18/15 0050 JSL CSO".

**EXTERNAL EXAMINATION:**

The body is that of a well-developed, well-nourished appearing, 43 inches long, 25 pounds female child whose appearance is consistent with the reported age of 5 years. Livor and rigor mortis are absent. The body is cool (refrigerated). Early to moderate decomposition is evidenced by skin discoloration, marbling, blistering, slippage, and partial mummification of the face, left hand, and feet. Apparent canine scavenging is evidenced by absence of the right arm. Gunshot wounds and injuries of the head are described in a separate section below.

The scalp is partially covered by long wavy brown hair. The color of the irides is indiscernible due to decomposition. Examination of the right sclera and conjunctivae is limited by mummification of the right orbit. The left sclera is white and the conjunctivae show no petechiae. The ears are unremarkable beyond decomposition. The nose and maxillae are palpably stable. The nares are collapsed due to mummification. The lips are dried and retracted, revealing natural teeth in good condition with pink discoloration.

The neck is straight. The chest is symmetric. The abdomen is flat. The genitalia are those of a normal female child, without evidence of injury. The back, buttocks, and anus are unremarkable beyond decomposition.

The left upper extremity is intact and the left hand is initially sealed in an evidentiary paper bag. The fingernails are short and well-maintained. The right arm is absent. A 10 x 8 cm skin and soft tissue defect with jagged and tattered edges overlies the exposed glenoid fossa and lateral right 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> ribs. The lateral right 3<sup>rd</sup> rib is fractured. The lower extremities

are symmetric and without absence of digits. The toenails are short and well-maintained.

**CLOTHING AND PERSONAL EFFECTS:**

Present on the body at the time of autopsy is one "Genuine Kids OshKosh" brand navy with white dots sleeveless shirt, size 4T, torn on both sleeves and along the bottom left edge, and one pair of "Land's End Kids" brand gray sweatpants, size 5-6 years. Both are stained with green to red fluid, and focal soft white material is adherent to the back of the shirt. Numerous short white hairs are adherent to the pants.

**RADIOGRAPHS:**

Postmortem anterior-posterior and lateral radiographs of the head demonstrate several small radiopaque projectile fragments in the left basilar skull. A circular defect is in the right side of the skull and multiple linear skull fractures are present.

**GUNSHOT WOUND OF THE HEAD:**

**ENTRANCE:** On the right parietal scalp, centered approximately 2½ inches below the top of the head, 3¼ inches right of the anterior midline, and 2¾ inches from the right external auditory meatus is a gunshot wound consisting of a 0.9 x 0.7 cm round defect. The wound is surrounded by an approximately 0.5 cm wide faint circular impression. No evidence of soot, stippling, or unburned gunpowder particles is on the skin or bone surrounding the wound.

**PATH:** The wound track sequentially perforates the right parietal bone (with internal beveling and radiating linear fractures), dura, brain, dura, and left temporal bone (with comminuted and radiating linear fractures).

**EXIT:** On the left postauricular scalp, centered approximately 5¼ inches below the top of the head, 6½ inches left of the anterior midline, and 1¼ inches from the left external auditory meatus is a gunshot wound consisting of a vertical 1.5 x 0.5 cm slit-like defect.

**ASSOCIATED INJURY:** The soft tissue of the scalp and subgaleal tissue surrounding the entrance wound show green-brown-red discoloration, suggestive of hemorrhage or possible soot deposition. Radiating linear fractures involve the superior and posterior calvarium. The basilar skull shows comminuted

fractures of the right middle cranial fossa and hinge fractures along the anterior and posterior aspects of the petrous ridges.

**RECOVERY:** Recovered from the left temporal skull are three 0.2 to 0.8 cm maximum dimension gray-colored metal projectile fragments.

**TRAJECTORY:** The wound direction is leftward, downward, and backward.

**INTERNAL EXAMINATION:**

**HEAD:** The soft tissues of the scalp, skull, and underlying dura matter show previously described injuries. The 718 g brain is liquefied. The atlanto-occipital joint is stable.

**NECK:** The anterior strap muscles of the neck are red-brown and without hemorrhage. The thyroid cartilage and hyoid are intact. The larynx is lined by tan-red mucosa. The thyroid is red-brown and soft, without discrete masses. The tongue is free of bite marks, hemorrhage, or other injuries.

**MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM:** The skeletal muscle is pink and softened, but of appropriate bulk for body habitus. The bony skeleton is intact and normal apart from previously described skull fracture, absence of the right arm, and lateral right 3<sup>rd</sup> rib fracture. The vertebral bodies are visibly and palpably intact.

**BODY CAVITIES:** Decomposition fluid is in the pleural, pericardial, and peritoneal cavities. The organs occupy the usual anatomic positions.

**RESPIRATORY SYSTEM:** The right and left lungs weigh 67 and 56 g, respectively. The external surfaces are green to purple. The pulmonary parenchyma is red-purple and softened. Sectioning reveals no mass lesions. The tracheobronchial tree and pulmonary vasculature are unobstructed.

**CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM:** The 51 g heart is contained in an intact pericardial sac. The epicardial surface is smooth. The coronary arterial distribution is normal and right-dominant. Cross sections of the vessels show no significant atherosclerosis. The myocardium is red-brown and softened. The valve leaflets are thin and mobile. The atrial and ventricular septa are intact. The foramen ovale is sealed. The aorta shows no significant atherosclerosis and gives rise to three intact and patent arch vessels.

**LIVER AND BILIARY SYSTEM:** The 190 g liver has an intact, smooth capsule with postmortem mold-like growth. The parenchyma is tan-brown and soft. Sectioning reveals no mass lesions or other abnormalities. The gallbladder contains a minute amount of bile and no stones. The mucosal surface is green and velvety.

**SPLEEN AND HEMATOPOIETIC SYSTEM:** The 32 g spleen has a smooth and intact capsule with focal postmortem mold growth. The parenchyma is pink to dark purple and soft. The exposed bone marrow is unremarkable.

**PANCREAS:** The pancreas is autolyzed and yellow with the usual lobular architecture. No mass lesions or other abnormalities are seen.

**ADRENALS:** The right and left adrenal glands are symmetric with bright yellow cortices and autolyzed brown medullae. No masses or areas of hemorrhage are identified.

**GENITOURINARY SYSTEM:** The right and left kidneys weigh 34 and 26 g, respectively. The external surfaces are intact and smooth. The cut surfaces are red-brown, with indistinct corticomedullary junctions. The pelves are unremarkable and the ureters are normal in course and caliber. White bladder mucosa overlies an intact bladder wall. The bladder contains no urine. The immature uterus and cervix, fallopian tubes, ovaries, and vaginal vault are without injury or other abnormalities.

**GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT:** The esophagus is intact and lined by gray-white partially autolyzed mucosa. The stomach contains approximately 80 mL of thick tan material with partially digested food fragments. No medications are discerned. The gastric wall is intact. The duodenum, loops of small bowel, and colon are unremarkable. The appendix is present.

**ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES:**

- Documentary photographs are taken.
- Specimens retained for toxicologic testing are: liver, gastric contents, spleen, and muscle.
- Representative tissue biopsies are submitted in cassettes for microscopic examination; additional biopsies are retained in formalin for potential microscopic evaluation.
- All recovered projectile fragments are photographed and placed in separate labeled, sealed envelopes.
- Fingernail clippings from the left hand and pulled head hairs are placed in separate labeled, sealed envelopes.

**MICROSCOPIC EXAMINATION:**

Sections of heart, liver, and kidney (1) show autolysis and postmortem bacterial growth; no significant pathologic abnormalities are identified. A section of soft tissue surrounding the entrance gunshot wound of the head (2) shows blood, fragments of gray matter, white polarizable material and granular brown material.

JL/MR: 1/22/15