

AUTOPSY REPORT

Case No: LA 187-07

Date of Examination: March 26, 2007

Name: WOODS, Donzelharris

Age: 16 years

Race: Black

Sex: Male

Investigating Agency: Union Parish Coroner's Office

FINDINGS:

- i. Stab wound to neck and chest.
 - A. Location – immediately above right clavicle.
 - B. Injury to skin, subcutaneous tissues, right inferior carotid artery and jugular vein, upper lobe of right lung.
 - C. Direction of wound path – front towards the back and downward.
 - D. Estimated depth of penetration – 4-5 inches.
- ii. Superficial cutting wound of left side of chest.
- iii. No defense-type wounds present on extremities.

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CAUSE OF DEATH: Stab Wound to Neck and Chest.

OPINION:

This 16-year-old black male, Donzelharris Woods, died of a stab wound to the neck and chest. Investigation of the circumstances of death revealed that the decedent was reportedly stabbed and transported to Tri-Ward Hospital in Union Parish, where he was pronounced dead.

Autopsy demonstrated a single stab wound situated above the right clavicle. The wound involved the right carotid artery and jugular vein and entered into the right side of the chest to involve the right lung which resulted in internal bleeding. In addition, there was a small superficial cutting wound present on the left side of the chest. No defense wounds were present on the upper extremities.


Frank J. Peretti, M.D.
Forensic Pathologist

4-3-07/cak

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EXTERNAL EXAMINATION

Received was the body of a well developed, well nourished, black male, clad in two markedly blood soiled shirts, blood soiled T-shirt, jeans with a belt, black shoes and socks. Received separately with the body in an unlabeled, non-sealed bag was a small denim child's jacket. The body weighed 210 pounds, was 72 inches in height and appeared compatible with the stated age of 16 years. The body was cold. Rigor mortis was present and fixed to an equal degree in all extremities. Lividity was present and fixed on the posterior surface of the body except in areas exposed to pressure. The scalp hair was brown. The irides were brown. The comeae were cloudy. The sclerae and conjunctivae were pale. The external nares and oral cavity contained a slight amount of blood. An earring was present in the right ear which was left on the body. The teeth were natural and in good condition. Injuries of the neck are described further below in detail. The chest was unremarkable except for the injuries to be described. The abdomen was flat with a 4 inch surgical scar in the left upper quadrant. The external genitalia were that of a normal adolescent male. The lower extremities showed a few old scars. The ankles and feet were clean. No tattoos, needle tracks or wrist scars were noted. No defense-type wounds were present on the upper extremities. The posterior surface of the body was unremarkable.

EVIDENCE OF MEDICAL ATTENTION:

An endotracheal tube was in place.

EKG electrodes were present on the front of the chest.

EVIDENCE OF INJURY:

Situated above the left nipple was a 1/2 inch superficial cutting wound.

Situated above the right clavicle was a horizontally oriented stab wound. The superior margin of the wound measured 1 inch. At the medial margin of the wound was an extension cutting wound measuring 1/2 inch with a 1/4 inch trailing abrasion at its inferior margin. The margins of the stab wound were irregularly jagged. Subsequent

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autopsy demonstrated the wound track extended from front to back and downward passing under the right clavicle to involve the inferior portions of the right carotid artery and jugular vein and entered into the chest cavity where it nicked the superior aspect of the upper lobe of the right lung. Associated with this injury was 1500 ml of blood in the right pleural cavity and diffuse visceral pallor. Direction of wound path was front towards the back and downward. The estimated depth of penetration was 4-5 inches.

INTERNAL EXAMINATION

The following observations are unrelated to the injuries described above.

The subcutaneous fat layer measured up to 1 1/2 inches. No adhesions were present in the body cavities. Petechiae were not present on the thoracic organs. All body organs were present in normal anatomic position and showed pallor.

CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM:

The pericardial surfaces were smooth, glistening and unremarkable. The pericardial sac contained a few ml of clear serous fluid and there were no adhesions. The heart was normal in size, shape and configuration. The coronary arteries arose normally, followed the usual distribution and were widely patent, without evidence of significant atherosclerosis or thrombosis. The chambers and valves exhibited the usual size-position relationship and were unremarkable. The myocardium was dark red-brown, firm and unremarkable. The atrial and ventricular septa were intact. The aorta and its major branches arose normally, followed the usual course and were widely patent, free of significant atherosclerosis and other abnormality. The vena cava and its major tributaries returned to the heart in the usual distribution and were free of thrombi. The heart weighed 400 grams.

RESPIRATORY SYSTEM:

The pleural surfaces were smooth and glistening. The pulmonary arteries were normally developed, patent and without thrombus or embolus. The upper and lower airways were clear of debris and foreign material. The mucosal surfaces were smooth.

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normal coloration and unremarkable. The pulmonary parenchyma was gray-purple. No nontraumatic lesions were noted. The right lung weighed 350 grams; the left 620 grams.

NECK:

Examination of the soft tissues of the neck, including strap muscles, thyroid gland and large vessels, revealed no abnormalities or hemorrhage. The hyoid bone and larynx were intact. The epiglottis and vocal cords were unremarkable.

ALIMENTARY TRACT;

The tongue, esophagus, stomach, small and large bowel, rectum and anus showed no lesions or abnormalities. The stomach was contracted and empty. The appendix was present.

LIVER AND BILIARY SYSTEM:

The hepatic parenchyma was pale maroon with no focal lesions noted. The gallbladder contained 5 ml of serous/mucoid bile. The mucosa was unremarkable. The extrahepatic biliary tree was patent, without evidence of calculi. The liver weighed 1910 grams.

GENITOURINARY SYSTEM:

The cortical surfaces were red-brown and smooth. The cortex was pale. The calyces, pelves and ureters were unremarkable. The urinary bladder contained no urine. The mucosa was gray-tan and smooth. Prostate and testes were unremarkable. The right kidney weighed 130 grams; the left 140 grams.

RETICULOENDOTHELIAL SYSTEM;

The spleen had a smooth, intact capsule covering red-purple, moderately firm parenchyma. The regional lymph nodes were not enlarged and appeared normal. The spleen weighed 220 grams.

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ENDOCRINE AND EXOCRINE SYSTEMS:

The pituitary, thyroid, adrenal glands and pancreas were free of obvious disease.

MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM:

Muscles were red-brown and within normal development. No bone or joint abnormalities were noted. The cervical, thoracic, and lumbar spine showed no obvious old fractures or other abnormalities.

CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM:

The scalp showed no edema or hemorrhage. The calvarium and base of the skull showed no fractures. The dura and falx cerebri were intact. There was no epidural, subdural or subarachnoid hemorrhage present. The leptomeninges were clear. The cerebral hemispheres were symmetric and pale. The cranial nerves were intact. The circle of Willis and related blood vessels were normal in caliber and distribution. Sections through the cerebral hemispheres, brain stem and cerebellum revealed no focal lesions or herniation. The spinal cord was not examined. The brain weighed 1420 grams.