DECEDEENT: Bessie Elizabeth Hedrick

Status of Report: Approved
Report Electronically Approved By: Douglas Smith, MS

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SPECIMENS received from Thomas B. Clark, III on 30-mar-2009

S090007583: 15.0 ml Blood CONDITION: Postmortem
SOURCE: Aorta OBTAINED: 30-mar-2009
Ethanol ---------------- None Detected 04/07/2009

S090007584: 5.0 ml Blood CONDITION: Postmortem
SOURCE: Vena Cava OBTAINED: 30-mar-2009

041309 14:01  * * * END OF REPORT * * * B200901666
REPORT OF AUTOPSY EXAMINATION

DECEDENT

Document Identifier     B200901666
Autopsy Type           ME Autopsy
Name                  Bessie Elizabeth Hedrick
Age                   78 yrs
Race                   White
Sex                    F

AUTHORIZATION

Authorized By          Max H. Muse RN
Received From          Moore

ENVIRONMENT

Date of Exam           03/30/2009
Time of Exam           8:00
Autopsy Facility       Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
Persons Present        Ms. Molly Hupp, Dr. Simmons

CERTIFICATION

Cause of Death         Shotgun wound to the abdomen

The facts stated herein are correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Digitally signed by    Thomas B. Clark, III MD  13 April 2009 13:10

DIAGNOSES

Shotgun wound to the abdomen.

- Perforation of the spleen.
- Perforation of the liver.
- Perforation of the aorta.
- Perforation of the left kidney.
- Perforation of the stomach.
- Perforation of the bowel and mesentery.
- Fractures of left ribs 9-12 posterior.
- Fracture of the third lumbar vertebral body.

Pulmonary emphysema.

Cerebral atrophy.

IDENTIFICATION

Body Identified By     Papers/ID Tag

EXTERNAL DESCRIPTION

Length                66 inches
Weight                168 pounds
Body Condition        Intact
Rigor                 Not detectable
Livor                 Purple, posterior
Hair                  Gray
Eyes                  Brown
Teeth                 Natural

The decedent is received in a body bag which is labeled "Bessie Hedrick, Room 404, Bed 1." The body is that of an adequately nourished female who appears to be her recorded age. She is clothed in a pajama top and bottom, both of which are bloody. The pajama top has pellet holes that correspond to a wound to be described below. She is also
wearing a disposable adult diaper. There is a midline abdominal scar. There is also a right-sided abdominal scar. There is a puncture wound in the right antecubital fossa. It is covered with gauze. Red paint is present on the fingernails. A single shotgun pellet is loose within the body bag.

**INJURIES**

A single shotgun wound is present. It consists of multiple discrete entrance wounds on the right side of the abdomen over an area that measures approximately 7" x 4". It is located 22" from the top of the head and spans the midline. There is neither soot nor powder present in association with this wound. No filler material is present.

The track of this wound passes backward and to the left. There are two perforations of the spleen. There is one perforation of the liver. There are two perforations of the aorta. There are two or three perforations of the left kidney. Three of the pellets pass through the stomach. Pellets also fracture left ribs 9 through 12 on the posterior chest wall. There is a complex fracture of the 3rd lumbar vertebral body. There are multiple perforations of the bowel and mesentery.

A single pellet is removed from the bag. A pellet is removed from the aortic wall. A single pellet is removed from the left kidney. Three pellets are removed from the peritoneal cavity. The remainder of the pellets collected as a representative sample are retrieved from the soft tissue of the left side of the back.

This injury represents a distant range shotgun wound. It causes extensive damage within the abdomen and would have been rapidly fatal.

**DISPOSITION OF CLOTHING AND PERSONAL EFFECTS**

The following items are preserved as evidence

The clothing is preserved as evidence along with a blood card and representative sample of pellets.

**PROCEDURES**

**Radiographs**

A radiograph of the abdomen shows multiple small pellets, predominantly on the left side.

**INTERNAL EXAMINATION**

**Body Cavities**

See description of injuries. There is abundant free blood within the abdominal and pelvic cavities.

**Cardiovascular System**

**Heart Weight** 350 grams

The coronary arteries arise in the usual locations and are widely patent. There is no significant cardiovascular disease.

**Respiratory System**

**Right Lung Weight** 350 grams

**Left Lung Weight** 310 grams

Both lungs have centrilobular emphysema.

**Gastrointestinal System**

See description of injuries. The stomach contains 110 gm of partially digested food.

**Liver**

**Liver Weight** 1040 grams

See description of injuries. The liver is of the usual color and consistency. The extrahepatic biliary system is intact. The gallbladder contains liquid green bile.

**Spleen**

**Spleen Weight** 70 grams

See description of injuries.

**Pancreas**

Unremarkable.

**Urinary**
Right Kidney Weight    70 grams
Left Kidney Weight    60 grams

The kidneys are normally formed and do not have focal lesions.

Reproductive
The uterus and ovaries are not present.

Endocrine
The thyroid gland is of the usual size and configuration.

The adrenal glands are unremarkable.

Neurologic

Brain Weight    1110 grams

There is no significant cerebrovascular disease. Serial sections of brain show atrophy but no other focal lesions.

MICROSCOPIC EXAMINATION

Cardiovascular
There are small foci of fibrosis. There is no evidence of acute infarction.

Respiratory
Emphysematous changes are present.

Genitourinary
Autolyzed; there are frequent collections of chronic inflammation, and occasional sclerotic glomeruli.

Neurologic
No specific abnormalities are noted in a section of frontal cortex stained with H&E. Special stains for dementia are not performed.

SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION

This woman was one of eight victims shot in a nursing facility.

Autopsy examination shows a single shotgun wound to the abdomen that causes extensive damage to abdominal organs and vascular structures, including the aorta, liver, spleen, bowel, left kidney, and stomach. Natural anatomic findings include cerebral atrophy and pulmonary emphysema. A postmortem alcohol determination is negative.

Death is due to a shotgun wound to the abdomen.

DIAGRAMS

1. Adult (front/back)