

TERENCE KENT, age 56, born [Redacted] 1944, Civil Servant, business Police Scientific Development Branch, Woodcock Hill, Sandridge, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL49HQ tel

[Redacted]

States:

I am employed by the Police Scientific Development Branch of the Home Office as Head of the Crime Investigation Sector and IT. The major part of the Crime Investigation Sector is the Fingerprint Research Group which has been responsible for research into fingerprint detection techniques and advising UK Forces on methods of developing and enhancing latent fingerprints for over 20 years. I attach my curriculum vitae.

On 16th March, 1998 (16/03/1998), I received a package containing a section of white painted wood which I understood to be a door stop - labelled "Door Standard right-hand side downstairs bathroom, 43 Irvine Road, Kilmarnock".

I unpacked, examined and photographed the exhibit on Tuesday, 17th March, 1998 (17/03/1998).

It is my understanding from statements of officers attending the scene of crime that the door stop has been powdered with aluminium powder and subsequently with black powder and then parts of the lower portion treated with amido black formulation in attempt to enhance any blood which might have been present.

My initial remit in being asked to examine the crime scene mark was to give an opinion on whether it was a forged or planted print. My analysis showed that in my expert opinion the mark was genuine and was not a forgery.

Having examined the mark I have come to the following points -

There is little sign of aluminium powder on the piece of wood, I would conclude from this that either the application was extremely light, there was little present on the door stop for it

to adhere to, or that brushing with black powder either displaced or obscured most of the aluminium deposit.

In my experience aluminium flake powder is very sensitive, sometimes too sensitive. In most cases I believe that if there is sufficient fingerprint deposits for black powder to adhere, there would be development by aluminium powder.

From the above it would seem likely that the fingerprint was deposited after any application of aluminium powder, or that any development of aluminium powder may have been missed by the examining officers.

It may be that further examination of the crime scene mark using an electron microscope with an x-ray mapping system would show the distribution of any aluminium powder and indicate the presence of any developed fingerprint in aluminium prior to the black powder.

So far as the fingermark in black powder Y7, is concerned I can see nothing unusual in its appearance in relation to it being a forgery. I have not examined the mark fully as to whether it is identifiable, or compared it with the print, as this is not my field. However when I initially viewed the mark the top half appeared darker than the bottom half and I had a suspicion that the mark may be more than one impression or have movement. I never took this any further at the time as it did not appear relevant. Following the trial of Shirley McKie where the defence indicated that the mark was one print and that the ridge flow could be followed through from the lower half to the upper half, I re-examined my photograph and despite the fact that I am not a fingerprint examiner I still have reservations about the mark in particular in relation to continuity of the ridge detail in the central areas.

I have no comment to make regarding the mark being a left or right thumb as it is not my field of expertise.

All of the clear areas on the mark are positive ie dark ridges and this by definition indicates it is not a reverse print.

Statement noted by Detective Sergeant 9103 Gary Brown at 1030 hours on 09/08/2000 at the Police Scientific Development Branch, Woodcock Hill, St Albans and is corroborated by Detective Constable 7658 Donald Menzies.