

interviews with vehicle owners. I will refer to this topic again under the heading "Lessons to be Learned" but for the purposes of this part of the report conclude that at the commencement of a large scale vehicle inquiry, senior officers of the West Yorkshire force did not go far enough in their attempts to limit its scope neither did they provide the scale of manpower resources which would have enabled the inquiry to be completed quickly and effectively. Failure to calculate and provide proper manpower resources was an even more significant failure by the time the ill-founded "Farina" inquiry came to be mounted.

**(iv) Description of Suspects, Photofits and Other Assaults**

170. In a cosmopolitan metropolitan area like West Yorkshire serious crime occurs all the time and murder and assault are relatively commonplace. During the years 1975 to 1980 inclusive, for instance, 190 homicides (murder, manslaughter and infanticide) and 1,722 woundings or other acts endangering life occurred within the force area. Included within these totals were sexually motivated assaults on women and attacks on prostitutes other than those committed by Sutcliffe. One of the problems which senior detectives in West Yorkshire faced throughout the period 1975-1980 was that of deciding which of the murders and more particularly of the assaults which occurred should be regarded as part of the Ripper series. The danger of including a crime which was not part of the series was that information in relation to it might be wrongly used to eliminate a suspect, whilst the danger of not including a crime which was actually in the series was that valuable evidence might be disregarded as a result. This was particularly true in assault cases where there was a survivor who had seen her assailant. Once the existence of a series had been recognised and the murderer had acquired his distinctive title there was, as is mentioned elsewhere in the report, a very strong motive for not attributing to him more crimes than were strictly necessary because of inevitable press and news media pressure which would follow.

171. In the introduction to my report I mentioned that I had concluded that it was not part of my responsibilities to identify additional crimes which Sutcliffe might have committed. In spite of that, a review of the investigation of the series of crimes is impossible unless potential additional offences are taken into account. I must, therefore, make it clear at the outset that although there are not strong grounds (without interviewing Sutcliffe on these matters) for supporting the contention that other murders (in the West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester Police areas) were committed by him, I have come to the conclusion that a series of other assaults on women in the West Yorkshire area and elsewhere could be attributed to him. These outstanding crimes are certainly worth being part of the interrogating officers' brief when Sutcliffe is interviewed again as soon as his appeal has been finished.

172. The commencement of the series of crimes was not recognised until the murder of Emily Jackson occurred less than three months after the murder of Wilma McCann. Both of these crimes were committed in Leeds, both involved prostitutes and in both cases the victims had suffered severe head injuries followed by exposure of the body and repeated stabbing. They were thus regarded as having a common author as were the murders of Irene Richardson and Patricia Atkinson which occurred in Leeds and Bradford respectively after a twelve month interval.

173. At this stage the criteria for inclusion of crimes in the series were:

- (a) That the victim should be a prostitute
- (b) That she should have been hit over the head with a hammer
- (c) That her clothing should have been disarranged to expose her body
- (d) That stab and/or slash wounds should have been inflicted to the body

174. The unofficial criteria were extended to include Jayne MacDonald who was seen as the first non-prostitute victim, but not immediately to include the assaults on Claxton, Long and Moore which did not involve stabbing and slashing injuries. Equally, in January 1978 the murder of Yvonne Pearson was not linked because her head injuries were not consistent with hammer blows (although it is now known that they were inflicted with what is known as a lump hammer) and because the injuries to her body were caused by her being jumped on rather than stabbed.

175. Shortly after the discovery of Pearson's body on the 26th March 1978 the internal review team under Detective Chief Superintendent Domaille was appointed. Included in the very wide terms of reference given to the team was the task, "To examine all reported attacks on women in general and prostitutes in particular and endeavour to find any common link or pattern to

formulate any new and profitable line of inquiry". In connection with this task members of the review team sent telex messages to the various divisions of the West Yorkshire Metropolitan Force and to other Northern forces asking for details of relevant offences which might be considered, in an effort to establish the scope of the series.

176. The crime files from relevant cases were acquired and read by members of the team who also interviewed victims, witnesses and investigating officers in some cases. The results of this research were displayed on a very large wall chart and at the conclusion of the investigation conferences were held to assess and sift the information. The selected offences were then discussed with Assistant Chief Constable Oldfield and other senior detectives. Finally a criminal intelligence "Special Notice" and wall chart were produced and circulated to all police forces in the country.

177. Although evidence of this original research is no longer available, the officers who conducted it recall that a large number of possible offences was first reduced to twenty one and finally to fourteen, the details of which were included in the "Special Notice" of June 1978. The crimes included at this stage were those on Rogulsky, Smelt, (both linked for the first time) McCann, Harrison, (probably linked because of the claim in the first "Sunderland" letter which had then been received) Jackson, Richardson, Atkinson, MacDonald, Long, Jordan, Moore, Pearson, Rytka and Millward. Of these 14 crimes, 10 were printed in red on the "Special Notice" whilst the remaining 4 were printed in black — to signify that they were included with less confidence and should not be used for elimination. The four were:

Harrison, Long, Moore and Pearson

178. This effort on the part of the review team was a valuable one but its members applied the criteria narrowly so that a number of similar assaults where good descriptions or photofit pictures of the suspect were available were not included.

179. The review team's criteria were:

- (a) Wounds to the head caused by hammer blows
- (b) Wounds to the body and abdomen (scratch or stab wounds) caused by knife and/or star-shaped instrument.

180. There was also an inference that the attack should have been committed against a prostitute or in a prostitute area.

181. It is unfortunate that this review exercise was not repeated later in the series since there were subsequently further assaults on record in the West Yorkshire area where women had been attacked, in several cases with a hammer, by a man whose description included the fact that he had a dark beard and/or moustache. The assaults on [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were clearly within this category, as was the attack on Marcella Claxton which Sutcliffe has since admitted.

182. In his appraisal report dated 10th December 1980 Superintendent Charlesworth identified the criteria which had later been established to assess whether or not to include a murder or attack in the Ripper series as:

- “(a) Blows the the head with a hammer of diameter 1.2 to 1.1 inches (plus or minus 5%)
- (b) Attack on the body with some other stabbing/mutilating instrument
- (c) Displacement of the brassiere to give access to breasts
- (d) Lowering of knickers/tights to pubic hair level (in many instances vulva remains covered by crotch of garment precluding penetration).
- (e) Movement of the body after the initial attack, before the infliction of further injuries— frequently to the trunk
- (f) The reluctance of the assailant to stab through clothing
- (g) Assailant's return to the body to inflict further injuries or secrete it.”

183. It is now apparent that these very restrictive criteria were in fact used on attacks which



occurred after the murder of Millward in Manchester so that those on [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were all excluded. The [REDACTED] case provides a good illustration of unwillingness to include additional cases in the series. It was excluded because the injuries indicated a hammer of a different size to that required by the criteria. In two of these cases in particular the victims were able to provide good descriptions of the assailant, including that he had a mandarin or "Jason King" moustache and in one case, a goatee beard. In the [REDACTED] case, of course, as has already been referred to (see para 144) the victim said that she had seen her assailant sitting in a Sunbeam Rapier motor car before the attack.

184. Also excluded, because they did not match the criteria, were the murder of Walls and the attack on Bandara. Although both of these cases involved head injuries, they introduced the apparently novel element of strangulation so that there was perhaps slightly more justification for believing that they had a separate author.

185. What is now very clearly established is that had senior detectives of the West Yorkshire Police assembled the photofit impressions from the surviving victims of all hammer assaults or assaults involving serious head injuries on unaccompanied women they would have been left with an inescapable conclusion that the man involved was dark haired with a beard and moustache. They would also have learned from Olive Smelt [REDACTED] and Marilyn Moore, all of whom had spoken to him, that he had a local accent and was certainly not noticeably a "Geordie". The full impact of the available information can be seen in the composite schedule at Fig.10. In this photofit impressions provided by some of the victims of the 7 assaults which Sutcliffe has admitted and 13 others for which he is believed to have been responsible are interspersed with police and private photographs of Sutcliffe. It must be appreciated that these impressions came to the police as crimes were committed over an eight year period and were not all available as they are shown until the end of 1980. Even so the schedule, which was prepared in a way which did not depend on the advantage of hindsight, provides a very strong pointer to a man responsible for attacks on unaccompanied women from 1976 onwards. The circumstances of each one of the additional 13 crimes is described more fully in the table at Fig.11

186. It is, of course, true to contend that now that we know what he looks like we can go back through the descriptions provided by all assault victims during the relevant period and find similarities between the description of the assailant and Sutcliffe. Whilst the series was actually in progress it was less easy to do this bearing in mind that between the 29th December 1972 (the date of the attack on [REDACTED]) and the 2nd January 1981, 96 photofit pictures were compiled in relation to murders, attempted murders and serious assaults which were believed to be within the system. The photofit pictures were compiled by three types of witnesses.

- (a) Surviving victims of assault
- (b) Witnesses identifying persons in the area where a crime was committed.
- (c) Members of the public who reported suspicious persons not connected specifically with any scene of crime in the series.

187. There were no witnesses to an actual murder as a result of which no descriptions or photofits were available in those cases. Many of the descriptions and photofit impressions provided by witnesses, particularly by those of classes (b) or (c) were not of the attacker but of other people. They inevitably showed the widest possible variation which served to confuse rather than simplify the issue.

188. In spite of the proliferation of photofit pictures and descriptions, and of the advantages of hindsight, it would have been possible for West Yorkshire detectives to have improved their knowledge of their suspect by collating (as the Domaille review team did) the evidence and photofit pictures provided by women who had survived hammer or head injury attacks in West Yorkshire. The criteria which could usefully have been applied was:

- (a) That the victims were unaccompanied women but were not always prostitutes.
- (b) That the lead up to the attack was:
  - (i) by following on foot (stalking), as for example in [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Leach, Walls and Hill;
  - (ii) by walking and talking to the victim, as in [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Smelt and Whitaker;

REDACTED

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REDACTED



REDACTED

REDACTED



- (iii) by pickup in a car as in Long, Moore, Rytka and by implication the other prostitute victims.
  - (c) The attack itself was always from the rear. In the case of (b)(ii) above by dropping behind the victim, and in (b)(iii) above by persuading the victim to get out of the car.
189. Had these criteria been applied to the list of undetected assaults on women the over-riding conclusion would have been that the suspect:
- (a) was a local man;
  - (b) had hair on his face;
  - (c) was not coloured;
  - (d) was between 20-35 years of age.

190. In the light of this information there is no reason why Sutcliffe should not have been identified as "similar":

- (a) At the interviews on the 2nd and 8th November 1977 when the photofits provided by [REDACTED], Smelt, [REDACTED] and Claxton were available.
- (b) At the interviews on the 13th August and 23rd November 1978 when the photofit provided by Moore was also available.  
(Detective Constable [REDACTED] remarked on the similarity between Sutcliffe and the Moore photofit. Had that photofit — which was to some extent discredited by the attitude of senior detectives — been supported by those provided by the earlier assault victims, Constable [REDACTED] would have had much greater grounds for suspicion and Sutcliffe could hardly have avoided being arrested.)
- (c) At the interviews on the 29th July, 23rd October 1979 and on the 13th, 30th January and 7th February 1980 when the additional photofits by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were available.

191. It should be borne in mind that the "Sunderland" letters and tape were not used for the purpose of elimination of suspects until after the murder of Whitaker in April 1979. They could not, therefore, have affected the interviews with Sutcliffe in 1977 and 1978 when the descriptions and photofits from five separate assaults were available.

192. The information from the survivors of assaults would have been equally effective in:

- (a) Dispelling the theory that MacDonald was the first non-prostitute victim.
- (b) Disproving the "Geordie" connection since [REDACTED], Smelt and Moore all had conversation with their assailant and could say that he did not have a North Eastern accent.
- (c) Showing the letters and tape to be the hoax which they subsequently proved to be because these assault cases had not been mentioned in major newspaper reports and were thus unknown to the author.

193. Sadly, of course, it must also be concluded that one of the reasons why some assaults were not regarded as part of the series was that they did not fit the numbering of the crimes claimed by the letter writer.

194. In fairness to West Yorkshire Police it must be said that they were not alone in their reluctance to credit the Ripper with more crimes than they were forced to. In connection with the attack on [REDACTED] for instance, the North Yorkshire Police did not record this incident as a crime and ultimately concluded that the victim had fallen over on an icy pavement and injured herself. Although Professor Gee (the Pathologist who examined the majority of Sutcliffe's murder and assault victims) studied the X Ray photographs of [REDACTED] skull and said that the injuries were not consistent with a hammer attack, she had 3 clearly visible semi-circular injuries to her scalp which even to the layman were not consistent with an accidental fall.