

"In The Interest of Justice", Cont'd from 21st August 2012 -- Pg. 13:

two other occasions had the sheriff department been asked by the Los Angeles city police department to reexamine its ballistic evidence during the tenure of his seventeen years with the Los Angeles county sheriff department.

Accordingly the sheriff testified, that, ". . . . All of the suspect crime scene ballistic evidence had to be cleaned of dried blood . . . pieces of tissue attached to them still . . . , that he was able to establish from the several test fired bullets fired from either of my revolvers was inconclusive and did not match the suspect crime scene evidence bullets or the bullet fragments. 'But, that upon extensive means he was able to establish that three of the crime scene evidence bullets and bullet fragments were fired from the same gun but not defendant Hawkins' [.44 Cal. or the .38/.357] pistols.' "

The several Los Angeles city police experts [Mr. Pau, Mr. Trahin and Mr. Slack] had separately precleaned and examined the same three suspect crime scene evidence bullets and bullet fragments before the sheriff expert's reexamination and had arrived at a contrary negative inconclusive results; because of insufficient stria to make a positive identification.

Evidently detective Leroy Orozco had withheld the said negative inconclusive findings documented by Mr. Trahin (of who the prosecutors' reexamination was based), from the defense and the prosecutors; and, for that reason shielded the truth of the expert Trahin's documented contrary discovery by coaching the so-called crime-scene ballistic evidence, instead, to the Los Angeles county sheriff's expert Lou Barry, so as to officiate a prearranged match that their own departmental experts, Pau, Trahin or Slack could not themselves declare by reason of their own contrary documented inconclusive results to the three-way-match declared by the sheriff expert, Lou Barry. . .

Please review and digest page 14, herewith, one of the numerous scandalous February 6th, 1986 pretrial prosecutor/judge disseminated false gun-to-evidence misinformation; and also page 15, the May 18th, 1989 disseminated publication about the prosecutor's acknowledgment of the Los Angeles Police Department's ". . . , false make . . . " of so-called evidence (long after the hoodwinked Jurors had wrongfully convicted me to serve these unearned judgments of (DEATH in PRISON) life without the possibility of parole. . . .)

See, "In The Interest of Justice", Pgs. 14,15:

Judge Bars Hawkins Publicity Plea

Says He Sees No Sign That Gun Data Precludes Fair Trial

By ROXANE ARNOLD, Times Staff Writer

A Superior Court judge Friday denied a request to bar pretrial publicity in a pending murder case against James Hawkins Jr. despite claims by Hawkins' attorney that the release of court documents linking a gun owned by the defendant to the killings is "highly prejudicial [and] potentially damaging."

Prosecutors claimed in court documents filed Thursday that a handgun seized when Hawkins was captured in Northern California last week has been identified as the same gun used in the execution-style slaying of a narcotics dealer Hawkins is accused of killing.

The motion filed by Deputy Dist. Atty. Harvey Giss said ballistic tests show that a .44-caliber Magnum pistol taken from Hawkins when he was arrested by sheriff's deputies in Contra Costa County was used to kill Roger Grant in mid-1984. The gun was also matched to bullets found in the home of Larry Turner, a second murder victim whom Hawkins is

alleged to have killed the same day.

In requesting a gag order in the case, Barry Levin, the attorney representing Hawkins, told Judge Paul Turner that he was unaware of the revelation regarding the gun until contacted by the media.

"Mr. Hawkins is on trial for his life," Levin said. "This prejudicial, pretrial release . . . is potentially damaging. . . . I think it was highly prejudicial to file it in the court file without even notifying counsel."

Judge Turner, however, ruled that "there's no evidence the data . . . is going to prejudice [a jury against] the defendant in any way." He indicated that the information will not preclude a fair trial.

Prosecutors claim in the court documents that both Larry Turner and Grant were shot by bullets from .44-caliber and .357-caliber weapons.

Although no weapons were recovered after the killings, Hawkins, 41, and a co-defendant, Mar-

shall Bridges, were ordered to stand trial for the murders in August, 1984. If convicted, both could face the death penalty.

Hawkins, the son of Watts grocer James Hawkins Sr., was in the Los Angeles Criminal Courts building for a pre-trial hearing in the case when he escaped from a 14th-floor holding area last November.

His escape came a month after he was sentenced to 28 years in prison in the 1983 shooting death of gang member Antwon Thomas, 19. Thomas' death had sparked violent confrontations between fellow gang members and the Hawkins family.

Hawkins, who was involved in a car chase and gun battle with police before being recaptured, remains in Contra Costa County, where he faces charges of trying to murder a sheriff's deputy. A preliminary hearing date in that case is scheduled to be set Feb. 14.

B18 Los Angeles Herald Examiner, Friday, February 7, 1986

AREA

Gun seized at time of Hawkins' capture was used in slaying

A gun seized from former fugitive James Hawkins Jr. when he was captured in Northern California is the same weapon used to shoot a reputed drug dealer that Hawkins is accused of killing, prosecutors said yesterday.

Deputy District Attorney Harvey Giss revealed in a motion filed in Superior Court that ballistics tests have matched the .44 caliber revolver to the June 18, 1984, execution-style slaying of Roger Grant.

Giss also stated in the papers that the gun has also been matched to a bullet found in the wall of a house where a second reputed drug dealer, Larry Turner, was found dead the same day. Hawkins, 41, is also charged with Turner's murder.

(Page 14.)

Thursday, May 18, 1989, Los Angeles Herald Examiner A3

Local

APD ballistics tests misfired in another

Ancy Hill-Holtzman
Herald Examiner staff writer

The Los Angeles Police Department crime lab, which mis- ballistics tests on the gun of Sheriff's deputy accused of murder, was confronted by the district attorney's office about its

methodology after an error in another major case less than two years ago, prosecutors said yesterday.

Prosecutors were forced to drop murder charges against former sheriff's Deputy Rickey Ross this week when independent ballistics experts contradicted an LAPD lab report that identified

Ross' weapon as the gun that killed three prostitutes.

Deputy District Attorney Harvey Giss said yesterday that the LAPD lab also made a mistake in identifying a gun found in the possession of James Hawkins, son of a prominent Watts grocer, during a 1987 murder case.

To determine if a gun was used

in a crime, experts fire test rounds in the lab and compare them to bullets retrieved from people's bodies or found at the crime scene. The fired bullets become marked by the inside barrel of the gun, markings that are unique to each weapon.

Based on information from the LAPD lab, Giss said he promised

the jury he could prove the gun was a weapon used in a double killing. Later, when retesting in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department showed inconclusive results, Giss had to backpedal.

Nevertheless, Hawkins — better known for another case in which he was hailed as a hero after claiming to have shot a gang

in case

young man — was convicted of both murders.

After the trial, Giss said he took his concerns to superiors, who met with police officials.

"I felt so betrayed by that false make and what it could have done to my case... I decided to do

Gun, A-13

Gun

► From A-3

something about it," Giss said.

Deputy District Attorney Sterling "Ernie" Norris said yesterday he met with representatives of the police department, requesting that they revamp their procedures to include double-checking by a second LAPD expert.

"We thought it was working," he said.

LAPD Cmdr. William Booth said the Ross and Hawkins cases are not analogous because the first was an error and the second a difference of opinion.

Booth also said there was "no

conversation with members of the two agencies to express any concern over the findings of any test lab... as a result of the Hawkins case."

Ironically, it was Norris, who oversees the office's special trials section, who filed murder charges against Ross, based on LAPD ballistics findings that his gun was the weapon used to murder three prostitutes.

The LAPD withdrew its opinion in the face of opposite findings by two other ballistics experts.

Murder charges were dropped and Ross was released from custody Monday, but Norris said the gun issue is not dead and the veteran narcotics officer cannot be excluded as a suspect.

Norris said he was confident of the LAPD's opinion on the Ross gun, because four different LAPD experts "assured us in writing it was a positive make... You certainly can't put him out on the street having that kind of knowledge."

In light of the recent error, Norris said he is preparing new guidelines on how to handle ballistics tests in the future.

LAPD Chief Daryl Gates has ordered an internal investigation to see what went wrong in the Ross case.