HCSO Case No.: 88-019276  
ME Case No.: MEA-220-88  
NCIC No.: U293390463  
NamUs.gov link: https://identifyus.org/en/cases/201  
Year of Death: 1988  
Approximate Age: 30-40 years  
Approximate Years of Birth: ca. 1950-1960s

CASE SYNOPSIS

On March 14, 1988, human skeletal remains were discovered by a citizen walking in a wooded area at Wilderness Park Flatwoods, on the west side of Morris Bridge Road, approximately 1.2 miles north of the Hillsborough River.

Based on the condition of the remains, it is thought that the individual may have been dead for approximately one to three years prior to the discovery. The skull exhibited two bullet holes. The remains are thought to be those of a black male between the ages of 30-40 years. His height was estimated to be between 5 feet 6 inches and 5 feet 8 inches. He had significant untreated dental disease and a slight amount of osteoarthritis in his lower back. He also had a healed nasal fracture that was still in the process of healing when he died and so it likely occurred within a year before his death. Further, his tooth (the canine from the left jaw never erupted. This would show up on radiographs and likely left a small space between his teeth.

Clothing found on the remains were described as:

- A black, medium-sized t-shirt with “Drunken State” on the front.
- Designer jean pants.
- White socks with blue and black trim.
- “Pro-500” high-top sneakers sized 8.5.
- A blue, nylon tri-fold Velcro wallet with a patch that had “merit” inscribed was found nearby.

Isotope data based on rib and tooth samples show the following: Lead (Pb) isotopes in the teeth suggest the victim was born in the USA, but not in FL due to low strontium and oxygen isotopes. One possible place of birth or early childhood is the West Coast, possibly Oregon or along the coast of Washington or Northern California. However, low lead ratios in the rib, although similar to USA, can be a mixing trend with Europe. If we assume that the low Pb is due to time spent outside USA, then low strontium (Sr) with low oxygen (O) suggest two possible locations: 1) Germany or UK, or 2) Japan. Imagine a scenario where he was in the military and spent several years before his death in a base in Germany or UK, then came back to US and was in FL during the years before he was killed. A possible alternative location is Japan – if he spent some time in Japan this would explain the O isotopes, the drop to lower Pb, lower Sr and also lower C. So, a likely scenario is that he was born in the USA and later spent some significant amount of time (several years) living outside USA, but was back in the USA and living in FL a few years before his death.

If anyone has any information, please contact Master Detective Greg Thomas at (813) 247-8678.