

WHY HERE

CSI Meets Photography

By Colleen Fitzpatrick

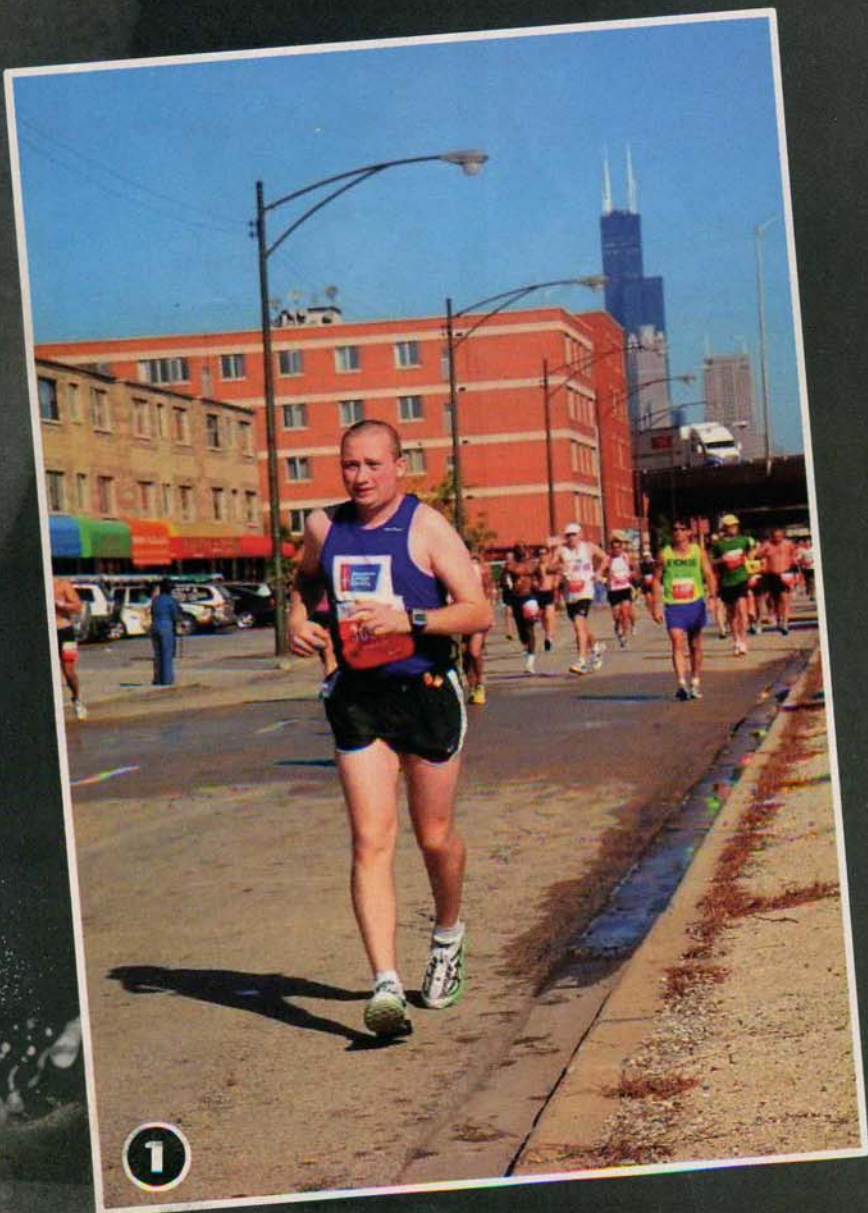
Stop the presses! We just received a call from *Crime Scene Investigation (CSI)* telling us that they have successfully identified the runner in this picture (Photo 1) from DNA extracted from his image. They report to us that his DNA indicates he is on the way to rob a bank, and that he must be stopped. The runners in the background are really undercover detectives who are monitoring his activities from a distance.

If you believe that, I want to mention that because of the recession, I've reduced my price on the Brooklyn Bridge. Interested?

In reality, even the detectives on *CSI*, with all their TV-embellished identification techniques, haven't figured out how to extract DNA from a photographic image. So while the world waits, real photo-detectives must rely on other clues to figure out the *where*, *when*, and *why* of a photograph, hopefully leading to the all-important *who*.

So if you can't use DNA to identify a photo, what can you use?

Since we posted Photoquiz #1 on our *Forensic Genealogy* website (www.forensicgenealogy.info) in April 2005, our readers—or Quizmasters, as we refer to them—have had 200 chances to answer this question. When we celebrated our 200th quiz anniversary in March, we looked back at the many creative methods our readers have devised to solve our photo puzzles. Among our regulars are many deft puzzle-crackers. One effective technique they use (among many) is to contact experts on appropriate subjects. A skyscraper expert, for example, will tell you that the tall building in the distance behind our runner is the Sears Tower in Chicago.



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which shows an angel above the reclining figure of a long-lost soul. Note the sarcophagus in the left foreground with an effigy on the lid.

But there is evidently more to the story. The soldier standing in front of the coffin is wearing one of those distinctive hats commonly associated with the guards at Buckingham Palace. This must be the funeral of someone from England—someone *important* from England.

When I include this picture in my lectures, someone inevitably volunteers that the guard's uniform can be used to date it. While clothing can sometimes be very helpful in dating a photograph, in this case it's not. The uniform has not changed in more than 500 years. The appearance of the room's décor won't help either. Chances are that the people who arranged the furniture this way were wearing an older version of the uniform.

However, there's one item of costumery in the picture that gives it away. The crown on top of the coffin is the Imperial State Crown worn by a British monarch at the end of his coronation, as he departs from Westminster Abbey (Photo 14). (It is not the crown normally used at the actual moment of coronation.) The picture must show the funeral of a British ruler. There have been only four who have died since photography was invented in the early 19th century: Victoria (1901), Edward VII (1910), George V (1936), and George VI (1952). When we posted this quiz a while back, we received each as the possible answer. Whenever a reader got stuck and asked me for a hint, I suggested that he figure out which monarch died closest to the end of the Victorian era.

The funeral of a king or queen is a rare event that is photographed and publicized worldwide. There are

countless pictures of Queen Victoria's funeral ceremonies that can be readily found by searching Google Images on the Internet. Many are very similar to this one taken while Queen Victoria lay in state, guarded by a member of the Grenadier Guards in the Albert Memorial Chapel at the Frogmore Mausoleum, February 2 through 4, 1901. In fact, the effigy on the lid of the sarcophagus is Prince Albert himself.

In a similar way, the photograph of our runner contains one detail that gives away why he is running, and that leads to when. According to the logo on the bib of his T-shirt, he is participating in a race sponsored by the American Cancer Society (Photo 15). It's a high-profile race, with more than 3,000 participants. (I'll let you figure out how I know this.) Google came through again. Searching on the keywords "American Cancer Society" + Race + Chicago, the 2008 Chicago Marathon pops up as the answer. It's easy to confirm that the 2008 marathon route included a jaunt down South Wentworth Avenue.

So let's review the facts we have. The runner is one of more than 3,000 participants in the 2008 Chicago Marathon, which took place on October 12, 2008. He is definitely not on his way to rob a bank. The people behind him are not undercover agents; they are also running in the marathon. Our runner was photographed on South Wentworth Avenue between West 28th Place and West 29th Place

And you think we've come to the end of the story, right? Well, not quite. What about researching the exact time of day the photo was taken and the identity of the runner? You have all the information you need to find the answers, and no, you *won't* need his DNA.

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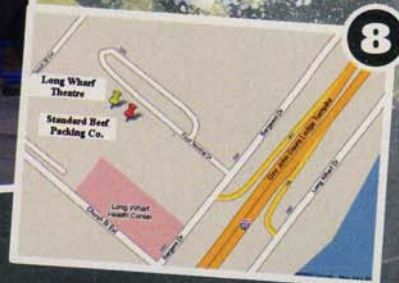
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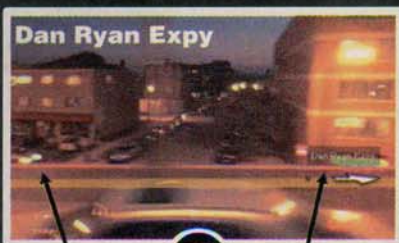
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Dan Ryan Expy



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Getting back to the original question about the runner, Quizmaster Rhonda Hensley e-mailed us a scan of the front of the picture only. Under these circumstances, examining the back proved difficult.

Many of our regulars send us family pictures to challenge their fellow Quizmasters. For example, Joe Ruffner sent a photograph of himself with his daughter Isabel (Photo 6). When the photo was taken, Joe was the manager of the theater in the background. He invited us to identify it.

A good photo-detective realizes the value of any writing that appears in the picture. In our picture, the truck parked behind Joe and his daughter has part of a logo on it that reads ___DARD ___EEF, with smaller words below that presumably give contact information for the company that owns it. If you enlarge the photo and use a healthy dose of imagination, you might be convinced that the words "New Haven" are part of the company's address. You could also make out the last five digits of a telephone number "7-2164" (Photo 7).

Fortunately, there aren't many words in the English language that end in DARD. Puzzlers would probably agree that the most obvious is STANDARD. Even if you tried the trial-and-error approach to figure out the second word, one of your first guesses would probably be BEEF. A Google search will quickly lead you to the Standard Beef Co., 216 Food Terminal Plaza, New Haven, CT 06511. You can verify that you have the right company by looking up its phone number, (203) 787-2164.

We weren't looking for a company that sold beef, however; we were looking for a company that hired hams. By searching Google for a New Haven theater within the same ZIP code, we came up with The Long Wharf Theatre, 222 Sargeant St.,

New Haven, CT 06511. To make sure we had the right place, we checked the location on a map (Image 8). We also searched Google Images and found a photograph of the front of The Long Wharf that matched the quiz photo (except for the baby).

Speaking of maps, we might be able to use one to locate the runner. By now, we know that the picture was taken in Chicago. By the orientation of the Sears Tower, it's not too hard to figure out that the photo was taken south of the Tower facing north. But where?

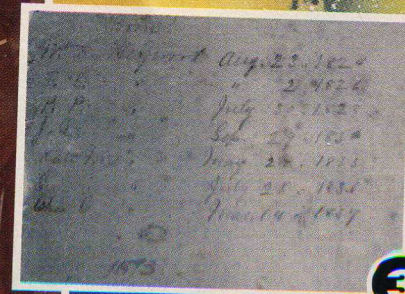
Take a close look at the white truck on the elevated section of the freeway in the background, heading from the northwest toward the southeast (Photo 9).

According to the map in Image 10, the only place there is a freeway heading in this direction is at the intersection of the Dan Ryan Expressway with the Adams Stevenson Expressway. The runner is one block south of this, on South Wentworth Avenue between West 28th Place and West 29th Place (Image 11). This can be verified by matching the buildings he is running past with images from Google Street View. The image on Street View was taken from the Dan Ryan Expressway, which presumably is to the right of the photographer, out of view of the camera (Image 12).

Now why would the man be running down South Wentworth Avenue? Would you dress that way if you were on your way to rob a bank?

The questions *why* and *when* can often be answered together. If a photograph shows an event, it's probably associated with a specific date. Let's digress for a moment to understand how this works.

It's not hard to identify the event in Photo 13 on the next page as a funeral. The sprays of flowers and the draped coffin give that much away. Another element is the picture on the far wall,



John Roberts from Vermont is one of our most dedicated photo-detectives. He explains his interest in old photos:

For the past seven years, my wife and I have purchased old documents, diaries, and especially photographs that may have enough clues in them to identify the author or photo subject. The goal is to find a descendant and return the item to him. Very often, the recipient has no idea he is related to the ancestor in the photo or document. The photos are cheap and the research is fun.

As a consequence, we've acquired a circle of history-loving friends who have been indispensable in some of the searches. Occasionally, we schedule bikes to find and document home sites (mostly cellar holes on abandoned land) [that appear in our photographs]. One woman, the last in her line, brought us old photos from her ancestry and asked that we ... distribute them to other lines. We had to go back three generations to find another branch. She has dubbed our group the "History Posse."

We've worked with John and the Posse on several interesting photos, including this one of the Heywood family of Westminster, MA (Photo 2). John bought the 14" x 19" photo in a Waterbury, Vermont, antique store.

As John knows, the very first thing to do when analyzing an old photo is to look at the back. It can be a great source of information. In this case, the people in the picture were easy to identify as the Heywoods because, unlike with most other old photographs, their names and even their dates of birth were recorded on the back incredible as it may seem (Photo 3).

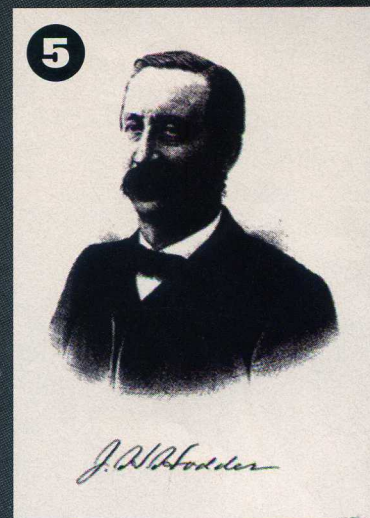
However, the back yielded something

even more interesting—this faded image of a young man (Photo 4).

The original photograph of the man evidently was a platinotype, a kind of photograph with a high platinum content that was commercially available starting in 1881. A platinotype image is very stable itself, but the platinum it contains is a powerful catalyst that can cause deterioration of paper it comes in contact with. Evidently, the back of the picture of the Heywood family had been in contact with the front of the platinotype of the young man for such a long time that his image was branded into the back of the Heywood picture. Not only did John want to locate Heywood descendants and return the family portrait to them, he wondered if he would be able to identify the mysterious man on the back.

Luck can play a large role in the solution of any mystery. John recognized the young man as a silkscreen printer; coincidentally he had worked as a silkscreener himself for more than a decade. The man's profession was an important clue. Further research into the history of the Heywood family showed that Catherine Heywood (the only woman in the photograph) had married John H. Hodder, a printer. Bingo!

When John found a picture of Hodder as an older man in the book *Commemorative Biographical and Historical Record of Kane County, Illinois*, (Photo 5) it was hardly surprising that he bore a striking resemblance to the young man. John was not only able to return the family portrait to the descendants of the Heywoods, but he was also able to give them a picture of young John Hodder, although the photograph itself probably vanished years ago.



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A photograph is always taken at a certain time in a certain place. A photograph captures a moment in the life of someone in front of the camera as well as the photographer behind the camera taking the picture. It's unfortunate that too often a picture's context has been lost forever, but that's not always the

case. Sometimes it's possible to retrieve the year it was taken, sometimes the exact date. In rare cases, an otherwise insignificant detail will allow us to extract the time of day.

Tom Tullis, another longtime reader, submitted this photo of his father holding an issue of the *Commercial Appeal*, a newspaper published in Memphis, Tennessee (Photo 16). In the distance, a tugboat is pushing a barge carrying a large cylindrical object. We figured Tom's dad must be sitting on the bank of the Mississippi River because it passes by Memphis and is one of the few U.S. rivers navigable by barge. The picture was included in a photo puzzle on the cover of the November 2007 issue of GAMES.

The *Commercial Appeal's* headline reads "Soviet Alive, Well in 17th Orbit." The headline refers to cosmonaut Gherman Titov, who made 17 orbits of the earth on August 7, 1961. A comparison of the photo in the newspaper with a picture of Titov confirmed this.

When Tom tipped us off that the barge's cargo was part of the big picture, we discovered that on August 5, 1961, NASA began transport of the booster stage of the Saturn V rocket from Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, in preparation for assembly and test of the first flight vehicle at Cape Canaveral later in the year. Tom explained:

My dad heard that something important related to the U.S. space program was going to be coming down the Mississippi River on a barge on this date. Since he worked at the Medical Center in Memphis not that far away, he went down to the river at lunchtime. While there, he was approached by a photographer for the Commercial Appeal asking if he could take his picture holding the newspaper with the

barge in the background. At the time, I don't think they knew exactly what was on the barge or what it was going to be used for, only that it was related to the U.S. space program.

The photo of Tom's dad was taken on August 7, 1961, as the booster stage of the Saturn V rocket, transported by the barge *Compromise*, was passing Memphis on its way to Cape Canaveral.

But wait, there's more! Tom's picture of his dad is one of those rare examples in which the exact time of day can be determined. The picture was taken at 3:10 p.m. We didn't contact NASA to obtain that information. We looked at Tom's father's watch. He must have taken a late lunch that day (Photo 17).

Returning to the picture of our runner, the time of day could probably be determined from the shadow the runner casts on the pavement, but that's the hard way. The easy way is to check www.chicagomarathon.com for a list of participants, anticipating that if Rhonda Hensley submitted the picture, the runner is a member of her family. In fact, runner #30964 was James Hensley, Rhonda's son. According to the marathon's website, James finished the 26.2 mile race in 3 hours, 30 minutes and 13 seconds, for an average speed of 7.5 miles per hour. When he reached his position in the 2800 block of South Wentworth Avenue, James was located a quarter-mile past the race's 22-mile marker (Image 18). At his average speed, he would have covered this distance in just under three hours. The race started at 8 a.m., so the time the photo was taken was approximately 11 a.m. on October 12, 2008.

In case you're still undecided about the Brooklyn Bridge, let me sweeten the deal with some real estate in Florida. ☑

Colleen Fitzpatrick, Ph.D., is a consultant for the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory who has been recognized in the media for her work on the crash of Northwest Flight 4422. She was also a member of the team that identified the remains of the Unknown Child of the Titanic. She is the author of three bestselling books on forensic genealogy and DNA, and an award-winning author and columnist.

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