National Records of Scotland

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Our ref: FoI/18/02057

Mr Kevin Heath
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17 August 2018

Dear Mr Heath

Request under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA)

Thank you for your request of 30 July 2018 which we are handling under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA).

Your request
You asked for: confirmation of the date of death of the German prisoner Kuno Eversberg who was shot on board H.M.S. Resolution in June 1919.

This record is held by us under reference numbers: JC26/1920/102 and AD15/20/4.

Response to your request
Please find below a transcript taken from the Precognition (NRS ref. AD15/20/4) from a witness statement which confirms the time and date of death of Kuno Eversberg. This information has been made available to you as the person of interest and the accused are now deceased, and the witness is giving his evidence in a professional capacity.

The transcript of Surgeon Commander Frank Elliot Bolton has been carefully and accurately produced in full:

Precognition against James Woolley
1920 High Court Edinburgh, February.

Pages 50-51
Edinburgh 17th December 1919 [date statement taken]
Frank Elliot Bolton. M.R.C.S, B.R.C.P.E.,
Surgeon Commander, Royal Navy, presently on board the Hospital Ship "Agadir", age 41.
Declares,
The Hospital-ship "Agadir" was lying at Longhope, Scarpa Flow in June 1919. I was Surgeon Commander on board. An injured German-prisoner names Kuno Eversberg

was brought to the Hospital-ship from H.M.S. "Resolution" on 24th June 1919 at 3 a.m. He was suffering from gunshot wound through the lower abdomen on the left side. The wound of entrance was on the left sacral region. The exit was in the left iliac region. He was immediately operated upon. He was found to have two double perforations of the bowel, one was found to have two double perforations of the bowel, one in the descending colon and one through the ilium. The same bullet had caused both perforations. The bowel was badly perforated. The peritoneal cavity was full of blood and faeces. The gut was stitched up. No other bleeding points were found. No other organs were perforated so far as could be made out. The entrance and exit wounds were not interfered with beyond being sterilized with tincture of iodine. Peritoneal toilet was performed & the wounds were closed. Two drainage-tubes were put in one to the right kidney pouch & one to the pelvis. He was then taken to bed. Proper treatment was continued. From the first I took a very serious view of the case. The patient's recovery was very doubtful owing to the extensive infection. For a time he did far better than I expected He was perfectly conscious & at one time was bright. He asked for food. Vomiting was a troublesome symptom. On the evening of 26 June a faecal-smelling discharge from the sacral wound was noticed. Eventually a faecal fistula formed. The abdominal wound remained perfectly clean & there was no discharge from it. The fistula was treated in the usual way. Peritonitis supervened. The patient took a turn for the worse & died on 29th June 1919 at 9-40 a.m. From a medical point of view the cause of death was peritonitis supervening upon a perforating gunshot wound of the abdomen. Temporary Surgeon Pollock & I were present when he died.

I know German & I spoke with the patient repeatedly. He told me that while going to the Heads on board the "Resolution" he had been shot in the back. He told me that he had a sentry on each side of him. He did not say whether one of them fired the shot or not, but gathered from him that it was not one of the Sentries. The deceased's clothing had to be cut off him. It was soaked in blood. It was eventually sent with his body to the Floating-mortuary at Lyness Scarpa flow. There was no evidence to be obtained from his clothing & it was buried with the body. Deceased was buried in Lyness Cemetery.

Deceased was attended by two Surgeons as well as myself, - Temporary-surgeon Pollock & Temporary-surgeon Watson. They are both demobilized. Mr Pollock is now Internal House Physician at Glasgow Infirmary. I do not know where Mr Watson is.

The death was reported at the time to the Admiralty, London, The Senior Naval-Officer afloat and the Rear-Admiral Commanding Orkney & Shetland. I expect to be sent on foreign service about the end of January 1920.

All which is truth.

End of transcript.

Your right to request a review

If you are unhappy with this response to your FOI request, you may ask us to carry out an internal review of the response, by writing to:

Information Governance Team
National Records of Scotland
Ladywell House
Ladywell Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7TF
Email: foi@nrscotland.gov.uk

Your review request should explain why you are dissatisfied with this response, and should be made within 40 working days from the date when you received this letter. We will complete the review and tell you the result, within 20 working days from the date when we receive your review request.

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner. More detailed information on your rights is available on the Commissioner's website at: http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal.

Yours sincerely,

John Simmons
Head of Information Governance