

FAQ 69

(3/29/2008)

69.1

Mrs. X's—1945 Letters from the Grave

On the back of the thick brown envelope the handwritten note read, **"NOT TO BE TAMPERED WITH OR OPENED BY ANYONE EXCEPT -----."**

The writer, a young married woman, distraught with hands shaking, had sealed the packet in March, 1945. She left instructions that it was not to be opened until after her death. Sixty years later the personal and highly confidential contents of this package would find its way to me, to help establish, at least in part, the probable motive for my father's murder of his personal secretary, Ruth Spaulding.

We recall the specifics. Ruth Spaulding was George Hodel's secretary at the *First Street Clinic*. She died of an overdose of barbiturates on May 9, 1945. The facts were suspicious and LAPD investigated George Hodel as her possible killer. LAPD learned that they were having an affair and that George had recently broken up with Ruth. As a woman scorned, Ruth had written detailed information about George Hodel's activities and was about to reveal them. My father in a late night telephone call from Ruth's apartment summoned my mother to the residence and gave her Ruth's writings, ordering her, "to burn them." LAPD investigated, but the evidence was insufficient to charge him with the crime. Five years later [Feb.1950] in a confidential conversation with "Baron Herringer",

captured on the DA surveillance recordings, George Hodel would admit the Spaulding murder. "They thought there was something fishy. Anyway, now they may have figured it out. Killed her. Maybe I did kill my secretary..."

Part of the Spaulding puzzle has been previously examined and discussed. We know that had Ruth survived the forced overdose, she could and in 1950, would have linked George Hodel to dating and possibly treating Elizabeth Short as his patient, at the *First Street Clinic*. Hence his 1950 surveillance recorded statement, "Supposin' I did kill the Black Dahlia, they couldn't prove it now. They can't talk to my Secretary anymore, because she's dead." But, those statements, made by my father, were long *after the fact*. They did not provide the motive for Ruth's 1945 murder. We know that my father killed Ruth to keep her silent, but about what?

Based on the recent receipt of copies of these sixty-year-old, private letters and documents—I believe we may now have the answer!

It appears that Ruth Spaulding was about to expose and make public the fact that Dr. George Hill Hodel, Head Venereal Disease Control Officer for the Los Angeles County Health Department, and Chief-of-Staff, of his privately-owned, *First Street Clinic*--was *fraudulently and intentionally misdiagnosing patients, then billing them for unwarranted laboratory tests, prescriptions, and medical treatment!* Imagine the headlines and scandal that would have resulted from Ruth Spaulding's revelations:

"HEAD OF COUNTY HEALTH CHARGED WITH MALPRACTICE"

Here is the back-story and documentation.

In 1945, Mrs. X, a married woman, met and fell in love with a dashing young Naval officer. They had a brief affair. Mrs. X became concerned she may have contracted a venereal disease and, her lover to reassure her, suggested she go to see Dr. George Hodel at his *First Street Clinic*. Dr. Hodel examined the young woman, and ordered lab tests.¹ Shortly thereafter, she was informed by Dr. Hodel that "she has contracted Gonorrhea" and he treated her accordingly. Mrs. X was billed and paid \$75.00 in services. (Approximately \$750.00 in today's dollars.) Upon returning to her home state, the distraught woman obtained a second opinion, and was advised she never had a Gonorrhea infection. Mrs. X contacted Dr. Hodel's clinic secretary, *Ruth Spaulding* and verified the lab reports "were negative" and *she had never contracted a venereal disease*.

Ruth Spaulding sent Mrs. X the laboratory reports signing the letter with, "cordial personal regards". [NB: This is hardly a business salutation and to my thinking is suggestive that the two women could well have had additional correspondence or personal contacts of which we are unaware.] My father's secretary further personalizes her letter by adding an apologetic, "P.S., I am required to send the enclosed bill."

¹ Dr. Hodel owned and supervised his own private serology laboratory for blood work and also likely had his own in-house technicians perform the slide analysis for detecting Gonorrhea.

Exhibit A

SCANNED COPY OF MRS. X 1945 TYPED/SIGNED LETTER WITH INSTRUCTIONS
TO BE OPENED ONLY AFTER HER DEATH

(I have redacted personal names and identifying information)

████████████████████
Wednesday, June 27th, 1945.

I, ██████████, being of sound mind and memory hereby testify and certify that I never had a Gonococcus infection (Gonorrhoea) despite the alleged findings of laboratory worker ██████████ who was employed by Dr. C. Hill Hodel and that the said ██████████ findings were true and incorrect and that Dr. Hodel guided himself by these erroneous reports. It is quite possible the said ██████████ falsified the report and then again it is probable he made an honest mistake.

The above statement can be verified and proved by contacting ██████████
████████████████████

It is true I had and have ██████████ which was my only condition when I first called and Dr. Hodel and which was my only condition during the horrible period when I was told of the venereal disease I was alleged to have.

This horrible time cost me dearly in nervous strain, mental anguish and monetary expenditures.

I make this statement so that in the event of my death I am leaving an honest and true picture of the occurrence.

When I arrived in ██████████ on March 9th and then learned that it was utterly impossible for me to have contacted in any form or manner such an infection, that this was definitely and satisfactorily proven to me, I wanted to take up the matter then and there with Dr. Hodel and Staff, but because of the embarrassment involved and the ^{my} still shaky condition/of ^{because} my natural reluctance to go thru any more upheavals I did not press the matter.

If it weren't for my friend ██████████ of Los Angeles I doubt if I could have so bravely faced the then (alleged and supposed) situation.

I hereunto set my signature and verify and swear that all the above is true.

████████████████████

Exhibit B

COPY OF 1945 LETTER RUTH SPAULDING MAILED TO MRS. X

(Dated and signed just sixty-days prior to her death by "barbiturate overdose")

FIRST STREET CLINIC
G. HILL HODEL, M.D. AND STAFF
369 EAST FIRST STREET
LOS ANGELES 12
24-HOUR TELEPHONE: MICHIGAN 2897

March 9, 1945

[REDACTED]
Dear Mrs. [REDACTED]:

The following are the reports which you requested.

3/5/45 Urethral & cervical smears:
Moderate amount of pus cells.
Moderate amount of gram negative diplococci,
extracellular, and diplo bacillus.
No gram negative diplococci seen which are
typical of *N. gonococcus*.
Smears are negative for gonorrhoea.
The culture was grown under reduced oxygen tension.
The oxydase reaction was negative.
The culture was negative for gonorrhoea.

3/6/45 Urethral and cervical smears:
Few pus cells seen.
Many gram positive rods.
No gram negative diplococci seen.
Smears are negative for gonorrhoea.
The culture was grown under reduced oxygen tension.
The oxydase reaction was negative.
The culture was negative for gonorrhoea.

Cordial personal regards!

Sincerely,

Ruth Spaulding
Clinic secretary

P.S. I am required to send the enclosed bill.

Exhibit C

Mrs. X's 1945 First Street Clinic, billing receipt

FIRST STREET CLINIC
G. HILL HODEL, M. D., AND STAFF
369 EAST FIRST STREET
LOS ANGELES 12
24-HOUR TELEPHONE: MICHIGAN 2697

TO [REDACTED]

FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES 8/1/45

Consultation, examination,
and medication

Paid in full

PAID
75.00

Exhibit D

Mrs. X's Public Health V.D. prevention pamphlet provided by George Hodel

VD Bulletin No. 95
FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY
UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

☆ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1942 10-26865-2

Price 5 cents

a booklet on the

**prevention
of syphilis
and gonorrhoea**

for distribution in clinics
and by private physicians

In addition to Ruth Spaulding's knowledge of the above malpractice, I can now add a second, equally compelling reason, why my father would have wanted his personal secretary--dead.

In her secret writings and intended expose of my father, it is likely that Ruth had also included , her direct first hand knowledge of the fact that her boyfriend/employer, was *regularly performing illegal abortions at his downtown-First Street Clinic.*

How do we know this? It comes directly from my father's own mouth. His own recorded statements and admissions. Overlooked in 2005, I found them during a careful review of the District Attorney's 1950 Hodel Surveillance Transcripts.

The date is March 19, 1950. (The thirty-first day of electronic surveillance at the Franklin House.) As we know, the detectives were recording and monitoring the conversations two-miles away, in the basement of LAPD's Hollywood Police Station. Below is a scanned copy of page 133 (my numbering). Between 2:00 and 2:30 p.m., George Hodel and "a colored woman" are at the Franklin House, discussing the possibility of the woman being provided a room in exchange for her maid service. Father tells her he is a doctor. They discuss medicine, and she mentions having had a "currettement"² (abortion) in 1944. Father informs her that he owns the *First Street Clinic*, located downtown, at First and Central, and incredibly,

² The transcript shows the word as "currettement" This is the shortened term for a 1940s abortion procedure known as a D&C, or Dilation and Curettage. The patient was first administered an anesthetic and then the physician performed a surgical abortion where after dilating the cervix, used a curette (sharp metal instrument) to scrape the uterus. In modern times this scraping has been replaced with a suction technique, to reduce the chances of heavy bleeding and infection. Tamar's 1949 abortion by Dr. Ballard was a "D&C" and according to my sister, "resulted in a large amount of blood loss."

goes on to tell her, "He has done lots of them."
(Abortions)

Exhibit E

Dr. Hodel 1950 Electronic Surveillance Transcript page 133

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HODEL FILE - 114 / 33

1:45P Hodel answers door bell, lets in woman - he talks to her about renting her a room in return he will knock off the rent - any work she does for him such as cleaning and taking care of his quarters. Negro woman has her minor daughter with her.

1:50P Phone rings - Hodel says "Mrs Hodel is out - I can take message. He said he is going down to the beach about 4 PM today - talks about renting room.

2:00P Hodel again talking to negro woman. Hodel asks her daughter where she goes to school - the girl says-a catholic school.

2:10P Colored woman and child leaving. woman is going to think it over - about renting room. Woman then starts talking about Doctor's-Hodel tells her about his clinic at 1st and Central Woman said she had a ~~curettemst~~ (curettement ?) in 1944. Hodel said he has done lots of them. Hodel and woman continue to talk about doctors, sickness, and other medical subjects. (Hodel seems to be acting overly nice to this woman He must be trying to talk her into renting the room, or ?) Hodel tells her that Dr. Hill, a colored doctor, lives next door.

2:30P Woman leaves

2:50P Phone rings 2 times, must have been answered in another room. Hodel moving about desk.

3:15P Hodel leaves room - all quiet.

3:45P All quiet.

SPOOL 4:00P Hronek, D.A.'s office, on duty.
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Prior to the discovery of these statements, I had speculated that at least part of my father's source of power and influence came from the information he had locked in his *First Street Clinic* V.D. files. Highly sensitive medical charts listing the identity and specific medical treatment of connected police and politicians documenting their sexual and moral indiscretions. Now, with absolute certainty, we can add to it, their criminal actions. In 1950, abortion was a felony, punishable by state imprisonment. Anyone (including a police officer or deputy mayor, or film director) that brought his pregnant girlfriend or mistress in for a *quick cure* was guilty as an accessory or accomplice. Once *the procedure* had been performed that person would be beholden to and at the mercy of the man he had entrusted. From 1938 through March, 1950, at least at the *First Street Clinic*—that go to man was—Dr. George Hill Hodel.

In 2003, LAPD reluctantly confirmed that George Hodel was a suspect in his secretary's overdose. In 1949 the LAPD detectives interviewing my sister Tamar at Juvenile Detention, informed her of their suspicions:

We found her death [Ruth Spaulding] suspicious, and suspected George Hodel was involved in her death, but we couldn't prove anything.

In May, 1945, secretary/girlfriend, Ruth Spaulding's secret writings, about to reveal George Hodel's malpractice and criminality—cost her, her life. Five

years later, in January, 1950, Lillian Lenorak made similar threats to George Hodel. She was "going to the DA and inform him of her 1949 perjured testimony and that, "she witnessed Tamar's abortion performed by Dr. Ballard and his assistant, Charles Smith." This almost cost Lillian her life. She "got off lucky" and escaped George Hodel's wrath with only an assault, drugging, and his staged "attempted suicide" [using a scalpel to inflict superficial cuts to her wrists while she lay unconscious.] Father's actions were apparently effective enough to at least temporarily discredit her as "a mental case." These latest posthumous revelations from Mrs. X, supported by her original 1945 letters, along with my father's admissions that he "had done lots of abortions at his V.D. clinic," establish powerful motives for the Spaulding overdose-murder and reinforce what my investigation has demonstrated time and time again—in 1950 Los Angeles-- George Hodel was- UNTOUCHABLE.