



Forensic tracking and Dendrochronology

The Charles Lindbergh Jr's kidnapping case of 1932

ESSAY BY KYT LYN WALKEN ALLSOPP AND STACEY ALLSOPP, 2024



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KYT LYN WALKEN ALLSOPP

"I love Kyt's passion for Mantracking. This girl is on fire"
Joel Lambert, 10 year Veteran of U.S. Navy SEAL Teams

Kyt Lyn Walken Allsopp is an authentic enthusiast and trader of the Ancient Art of Human and Animal Tracking. This skill is still very effective nowadays from Search and Rescue, Tactical dimension, Forensic Science until Wildlife Conservation.

She has been granted the title "Official Representative of Hull's Tracking School" in 2018.

Mike Hull continues to be her Mentor.

In the same year she has become a Conservation Ranger after attending a two weeks course in Poland led by C.R.O.W. (Conservation Rangers Operations Worldwide).

Kyt Lyn has also studied "Forensic Photographs on Crime Scene", by U.K. Forensic Advisor and former Royal Marines Commando Robert Kendall.

Currently she runs Man Tracking courses all over Europe, and she is regular writer for some US and UK webzines on Survival and Prepping.

She is author of the Manuals *"The importance of being a Tracker"*, *"The Urban Tracker"* and *"Tracking Compendium"* (with Andy Martin), *"Jungle Warriors - SAS in Malasia and Borneo"*, *"Tracking in the dark"* and several essays like *"Tracking, Anti-Tracking and Counter-Tracking during Colonialism"* (with Professor Timothy J. Stapleton).

www.thewayoftracking.com



STACEY ALLSOPP

"Stacey is embarrassingly loyal, unflinching professional and a great Mentor and Friend.

He achieved all of this effortlessly as compassion, encouragement and selflessness are not merely traits of Stacey, they are his very fiber.

I am a better man for meeting him."
British Army Commando Veteran

"In my opinion Stacey is the real deal when it comes to old things Bushcraft, Survival and Wilderness Living especially in the Foraging and Wild Edibles Department.

A true bushcraft Legend!"
Royal Marines Veteran

Former British Soldier

Bushcraft and Survival skills Instructor and Trainer Mentor

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PREMISE

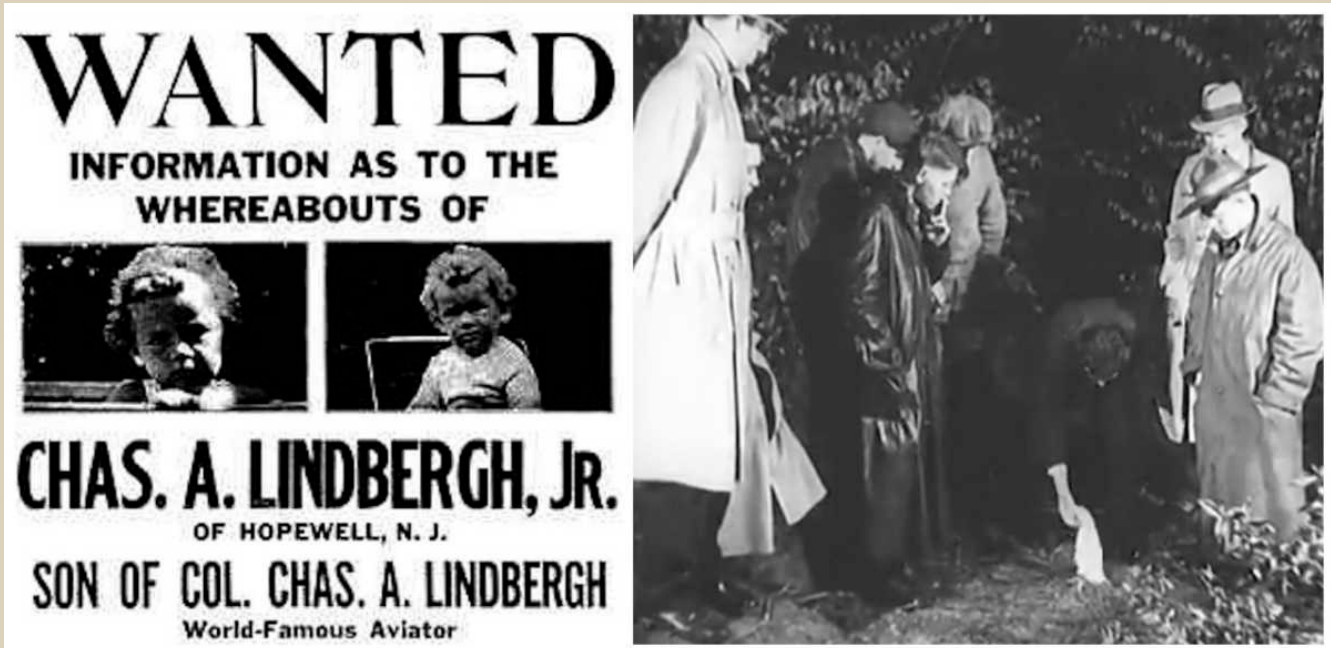
The Lindbergh kidnapping is a famous crime case that occurred in the United States of America in the 1930s. The case involves the kidnapping and killing of a child, Charles Augustus Lindbergh Jr., eldest son of famous aviator Charles Lindbergh and his wife Anne Morrow Lindbergh.

The child, just 20 months old, was kidnapped from his home in East Amwell, New Jersey, late in the evening of March 1, 1932.

More than two months later, (May 12, 1932), his body was found in a wooded area not far from home.

After more than two years of investigations, the German-born carpenter Bruno Richard Hauptmann, who always proclaimed himself innocent, was arrested.

Tried between January 2 and February 13, 1935, he was found guilty of the crime, sentenced to death, and finally executed by electric chair at New Jersey State Prison on April 3, 1936.



FORENSIC BOTANY

“Forensic botany is the application of the plant sciences to legal matters. Most often this means using clues from plants in order to aid in the solution of serious crimes such as murder, kidnapping, and the cause of death of a victim. Many aspects of plant science are employed, including plant anatomy, the study of plants cells; plant taxonomy, which deals with the identification of plants; plant systematics, focusing on plant relationships to other plants; plant ecology, which deals with plants and their environments; and palynology, which is the scientific study of plant pollen and spores.

Plant cells possess cell walls made of cellulose, a complex carbohydrate compound that is virtually indestructible in comparison with most other natural compounds subject to decay. Plant cell walls can remain intact for thousands of years even though the cytoplasm long since has disappeared. The walls around pollen grains and spores also are made of different materials that are also resistant to decay. This allows plant parts to remain identifiable for long periods of time.

The plant foods we consume have distinctive cells within them. The tissues of food plants are made up of cells of distinctive shapes and sizes that are arranged in distinctive patterns. These characteristics are preserved all the way through the human digestive tract and beyond. This also is true for wood. This means it is possible to tell what a person's last meal was long after death. Also, if a person was stuck with a piece of wood, that piece often can be identified to species and/or matched to the larger wood piece from which it was obtained. Sometimes seeds, leaves, and plant fragments are associated with a crime. If the plant can be identified from these clues by a plant taxonomist, they may link the crime to a specific place (for example, one associated with a suspect). Also, taxonomists can be called upon to identify drug plants that are illegal in this country, such as coca.

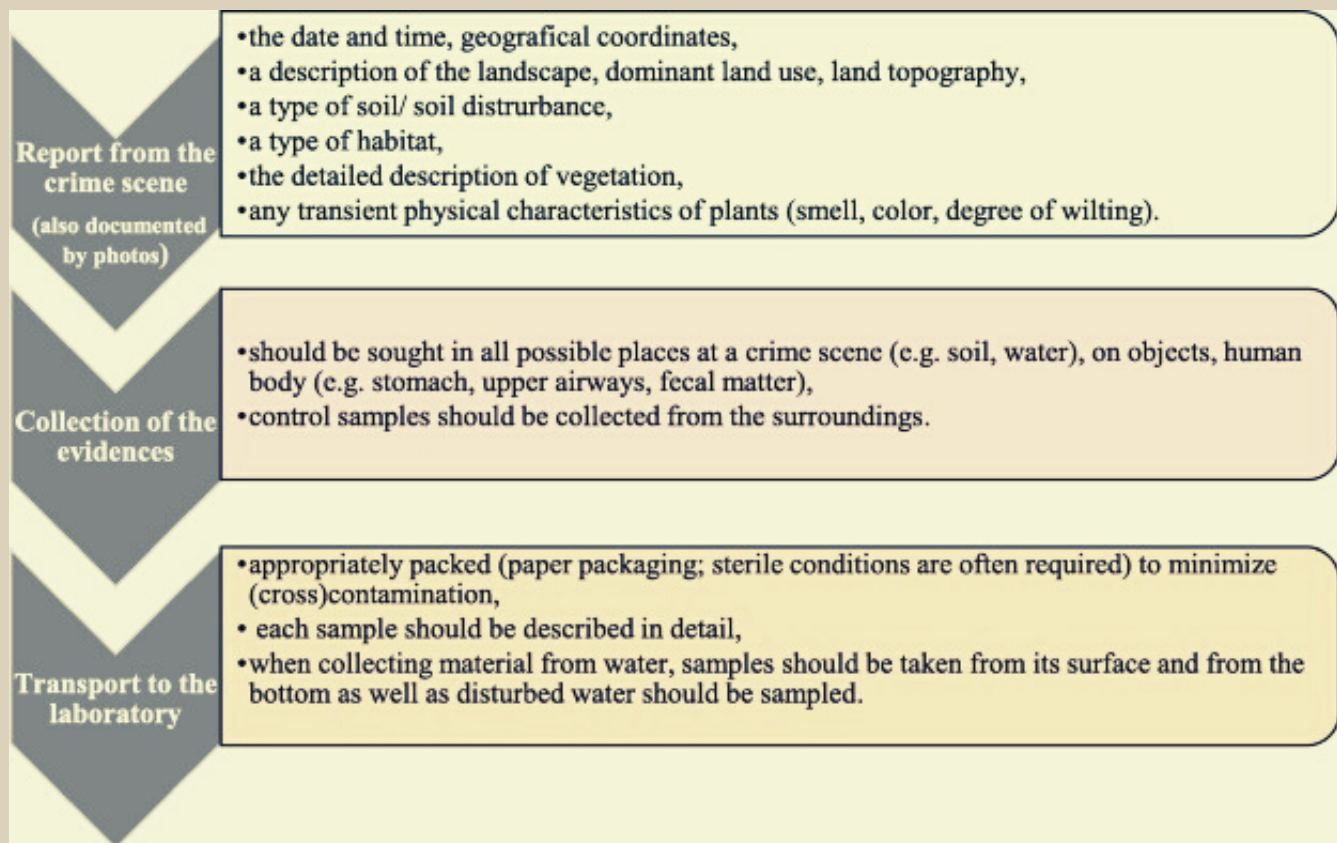
Plant ecology has been found useful in the location of the graves of missing persons. It does not matter whether the grave is deep or shallow or whether the person was clothed, encased in plastic, or naked at the time of burial. The clues for the burial site come from the necessity of disturbing vegetation cover to dig a grave. A knowledge of plant succession patterns in the area is almost impossible to disguise from the eyes of a well-trained plant ecologist. They remain evident for at least a few years, and sometimes for a decade or more.

Palynological evidence can be used to suggest where a person was killed and to link a suspect to a crime scene. It also can be used to identify controlled (illegal) plant substances even if no other plant material is present.

Forensic botany is a new and growing field. Many criminal investigators, medical examiners, and attorneys are unaware of its usefulness because they have had little exposure to botany in their educational experiences. Most forensic botanists act as private consultants in crime matters.

To be accepted to testify in a court case, forensic botanists must demonstrate that they are qualified to be expert witnesses. Their suitability for such testimony is judged by their experiences and educational credentials.”

Source: Encyclopedia



Pic copyright; Science Direct

DENDROCHRONOLOGY

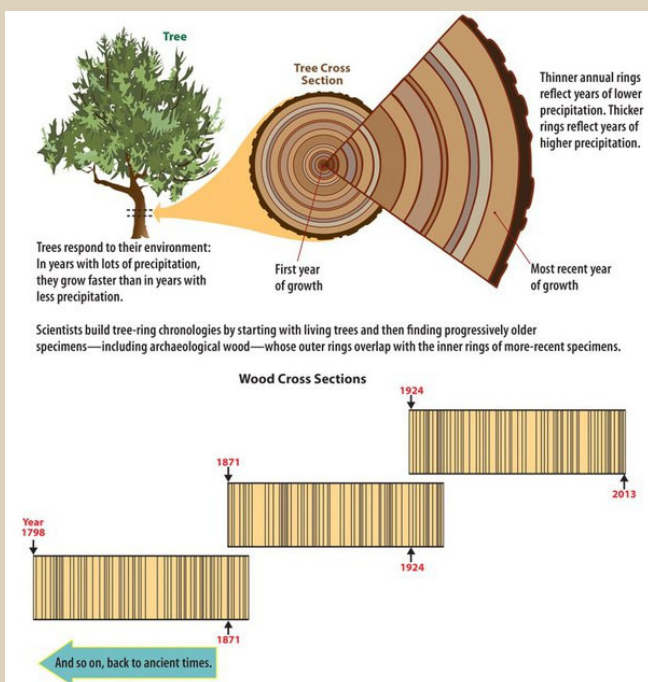
“The science or technique of dating events, environmental change, and archaeological artefacts by using the characteristic patterns of annual growth rings in timber and tree trunks.”

Source: Oxford Dictionary

“Tree-ring analysis or dendrochronology is both an old and a modern science. Just counting tree rings sounds simple, but in the context of forest dynamics tree age is an important and valuable parameter. The pattern of tree-ring width, wood density, element content, and other features store information on past growth conditions. Biomonitoring is the reflection of growth factors by biological organisms and their change in time. Tree-ring analysis extends the monitoring period considerably into the past and could be considered as retrospective biomonitoring.

For a long time dendrochronology (from Greek: dendros, tree; chronos, time, and logos, science) was associated with the dating of old houses, paintings, and archaeological samples. In recent decades however it has become a science with a broad range of applications such as global climate change, canopy process decline, the carbon cycle, and many others. Due to its manifold applications for other branches of science dendrochronology is sometimes considered as just a tool for archaeology, art history, biology, climatology, forestry, glaciology, etc. The development of techniques like X-ray densitometry, isotope analysis, special statistical analysis for tree ring interpretation, etc., together with new aspects in the theory of tree-ring formation mean that tree-ring analysis should be considered as an independent branch of earth science.”

Source: M.Worbes, 2004



Pic copyright; Quora

THE LINDBERGH JR. CASE

8:00 p.m., 1 March 1932.

Betty Gow, the Lindbergh family's housekeeper, puts the baby to sleep in his crib. Around 9.30pm his father Charles, who is in the library adjacent to his son's bedroom, hears a noise coming from a nearby room.

Believing that something had simply fallen in the kitchen, he pays no attention.

At 10.00 pm the housekeeper returns to the child's bedroom and notices the empty crib and the open window.

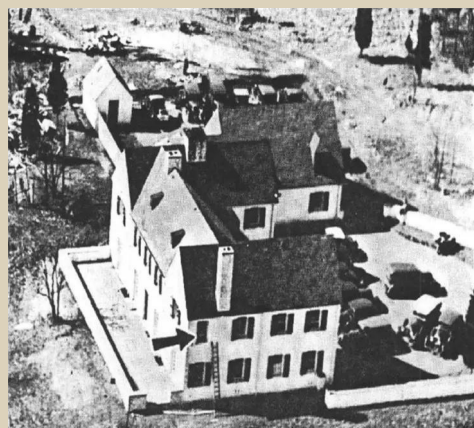
He calls the mother Anne, asking her if she had taken the child with her and, when the answer is negative, she informs the father who in turn denies having moved the child and, sensing what has happened, runs into the bedroom, where he finds a closed envelope resting on the windowsill.

Rifle in hand, Lindbergh goes outside and searches the entire perimeter of the house for several minutes, and then decides to call the police.

The agents arrive on site within 20 minutes, together with some journalists and the Lindberghs' trusted lawyer.

Late at night, in the muddy ground around the house (it had rained that day) the trace of a tire was identified, but it was not possible to understand which vehicle had left it and where it was headed.

Later, in a bush near the house, a wooden ladder broken into three pieces was found.



THE BEGINNING OF INVESTIGATIONS

Harry Wolfe, chief of the Hopewell police station, accompanied by New Jersey police officers was the first to arrive at the crime scene.

The investigators searched the entire house and the surrounding areas corresponding of an area of several miles. After midnight, a fingerprint expert also arrived at the Lindbergh villa and examined the letter left on the windowsill and the ladder found in the garden.

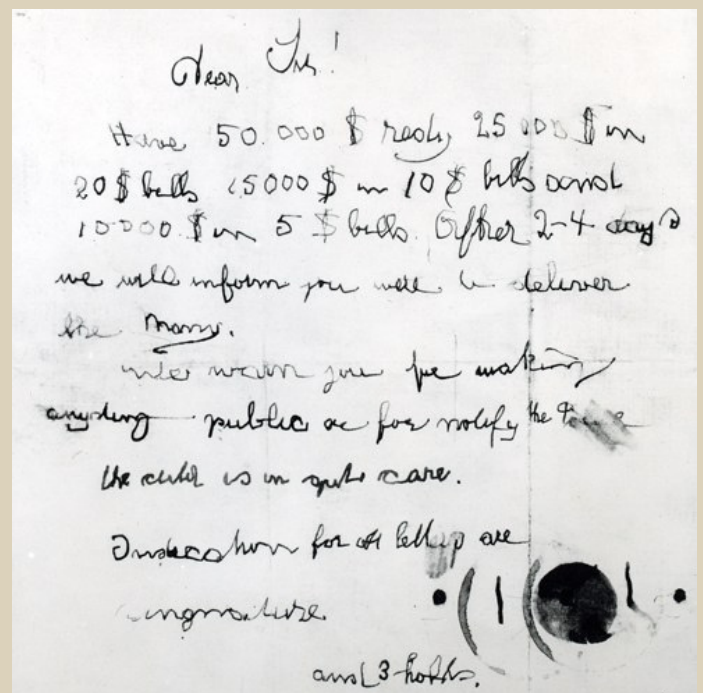
Nearly 400 traces of fingerprints and footprints were found straight on the staircase, which however were too worn to be of any use and therefore discarded.

More generally, no really useful clues were detected inside or outside the house. The envelope found in the child's bedroom was then opened, which turned out to contain a ransom note, written in broken English, showing a bad handwriting and with many morphosyntax errors; at the bottom of the letter there was a strange symbol, made up of some circles, dots and holes on the paper.

Dear Sir!

Have 50.000\$ redy 25 000\$ in
20\$ bills 15000\$ in 10\$ bills and
10000\$ in 5\$ bills After 2-4 days
we will inform you were to deliver
the mony.

We warn you for making
anyding public or for notify the Police
The child is in gut care.
Indication for all letters are
Singnature (Symbol to right)
and three hohls



News of the kidnapping spread very quickly.

A multitude of people began to show up at the Lindbergh estate.

Among them Lindbergh agreed to be supported by Norman Schwarzkopf Sr. (superintendent of the New Jersey police), Henry Skillman Breckinridge (lawyer active on Wall Street) and William J. Donovan "Wild Bill" (World War I hero and future leader of the OSS).

This group assumed de facto leadership of the investigation, starting to believe that organized crime was responsible for the kidnapping and that the ransom note had been written by a native German speaker.

Mickey Rosner, a Broadway stooge who was said to be in contact with criminal circles, was then contacted; Rosner in turn contacted two speakeasy managers, Salvatore "Salvy" Spitalo and Irving Bitz, who Lindbergh decided to appoint as his intermediaries.

However, many high-profile criminals soon began to deny their involvement and some of them - specifically Al Capone, Willie Moretti, Longy Zwillman, Joe Adonis - even offered their help to the family to find the child, promising the kidnapper money and favors in exchange for liberation.

The following morning the news of the kidnapping was reported to US President Herbert Hoover, who, although the federal laws of the time did not contain any specific provisions regarding cases of kidnapping, as the legislation on this matter varied from state to state, declared that he would "*moved heaven and earth*" to find baby Lindbergh. The Bureau of Investigation (previous to the FBI) was therefore authorized to investigate the case along with the Coast Guard, the national customs service, the immigration service.

New Jersey investigators offered a \$25,000 reward for anyone who helped find the child safe and sound. Additionally, the Lindbergh family itself offered 50,000 dollars, which was a considerable amount of money, considering the Great Depression. At the same time, posters with the photo and a detailed physical description of the child were printed and distributed all over the United States.

Within a few days a new letter from the kidnappers has been shipped at the Lindbergh home; it appeared to have been sent from the Brooklyn area and was identified as authentic by the symbol with the circles and holes. Later on, a second and third letter arrived, again sent from Brooklyn, which unlike the previous one were signed with an initials which was interpreted as B.H. The third in particular informed that, since the family had alerted the police - in contravention of the requests of the first ticket -, the ransom for the child's freedom had been raised to 70,000 dollars.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE BODY

May 12th, 1932.

A truck driver named William Allen parked his truck on the side of a road about 4.5 miles (7.2 km) south of the Lindbergh homestead in the village of Mount Rose, New Jersey.

He headed towards a grove of trees to urinate. In that moment he found the body of a child in an advanced state of decomposition.

Having recovered from the shock, Allen called the police, who took the little body to the Trenton morgue, where it was subjected to an autopsy.

The doctors found that the skull was severely fractured (considering it as probable cause of death) and the remains appeared to have been dismembered from wild animals.

The body also showed some burns, potentially due to a clumsy attempt to burn it.

Charles Lindbergh and Betty Gow, informed of the discovery, identified the body by observing a malformation on the toes of her right foot and the shirt the baby was wearing (sewn by Betty Gow herself).

The body was cremated shortly afterwards.

As soon as Congress was informed of the macabre discovery, the parliamentary process of approving a federal law against kidnappings was accelerated, to allow the FBI to totally devote itself to investigating the case.



flannel shirt made by Betty Gow on March 1, 1932
photo: ronelle delmont

BODY 4 MILES FROM HOME
Kidnaping Aroused Entire World

Dead

JASIE REFUSES TO TALK

TO PHONE LINDY

SAVE MONEY

McCREERY
FIFTH AVENUE—34th STREET
Sale!
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FLIGHT STARTED FROM NEWARK FIELD
MIDDLERSBOROUGH MAN IS FATALLY INJURED BY HEAVY PRESS

WHITESTONE STATION CREAMERY DESTROYED BY UNEXPLAINED FIRE

RELIEF WORKERS GET DARK PICTURE

Missing from Body Found by Truckmen
INFAANT'S SKULL FRACTURED

Authorities Believe Child May Have Been Slain Within an Hour After Kidnaping; Body—Not More Than a Skeleton—Found Covered by Brush, Leaves and Dirt

'INTERMEDIARIES' QUESTIONED BY POLICE FOR ALL CLUES

No Weapon Found and Possibility Exists That Infant May Have Been Violently Tossed From Moving Automobile by Mad Man; Lindbergh Back Home at 3 A. M. Today

RANSOM NOTE IS PUBLISHED

THE FOOTPRINTS

“Muddy but indistinct footprints were found in the bedroom.

A ladder was discovered some distance from the Lindbergh house, broken where two sections joined, and footprints were found leading into the woods at the edge of the property.” (Britannica)

The footprints in question, as per the attached photograph, they only offer as a clue:

- the direction of travel
- approximate length
- approximate width
- approximate stride
-

as the centripetal action of the mud makes the measurement fallacious.

During the investigation phase, however, they failed

- to follow them
- to identify the lack of regularity related to the track pattern as a result of wear element and erosion of the sole itself
- preserve them (especially in the indoor environment), making this evidence, unfortunately, compromised and not usable in trial as a certain element of the accusation.

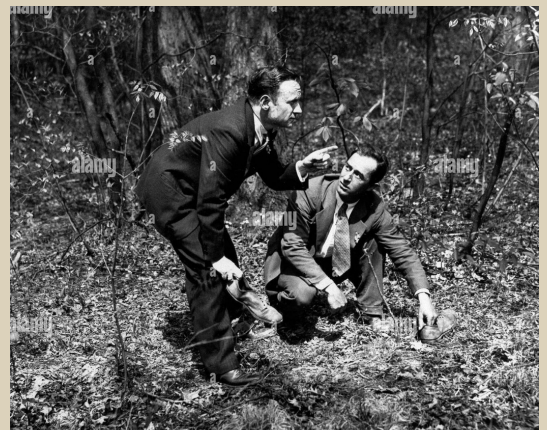
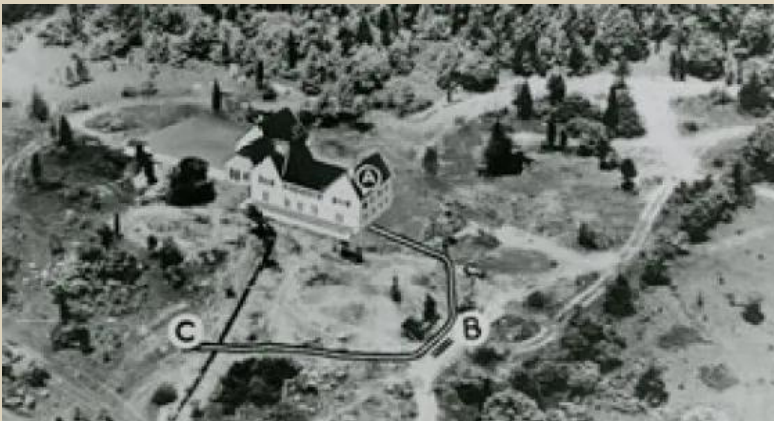
“During the search at the kidnapping scene, traces of mud were found on the floor of the nursery. Footprints, impossible to measure, were found under the nursery window. Two sections of the ladder had been used in reaching the window, one of the two sections was split or broken where it joined the other, indicating that the ladder had broken during the ascent or descent.” (FBI)



THE TERRAIN AND THE GEO-MORPHOLOGICAL SCENARIO

The Lindbergh home, as visible from the photos, was located in an open area surrounded by woods, with a high percentage of:

- humidity
- soft ground and therefore well suited to the capture and preservation of footprints
- intertwined vegetation which could easily bend into the direction of travel and remain so for a considerable amount of time due to the thick canopy
- generally speaking, private land, therefore not (theoretically) accessible to all - however contaminated by Lindbergh senior primarily on the very night of the kidnapping



WOOD ANALYSIS AND DENDROCHRONOLOGY

In order to convict Bruno Hauptmann as author of the kidnaping as well as the ransom letter, the FBI would need more and solid evidence.

Then the Forest Products Lab came in as one of elements the evidence gathered at the crime scene was the homemade ladder employed to climb up the side of the Lindbergh home.

Forest Service scientist Arthur Koehler was able to identify, through the analysis of microscopic techniques, the wood used in the ladder.

His studies led to a step-by-step process of identification where the wood for the ladder was milled and ultimately sold, and who was the buyer, eventually recognized as Bruno Hauptmann.

Additionally, *“Koehler was able to prove that one of the steps used in the ladder was from a plank of wood in Hauptmann’s attic.*

This was the first time wood forensics were used in a major triall and helped send a brutal kidnapper and murderer to the electric chair”. (Robert H. Westover)

“The ladder used in kidnaping the Lindbergh baby would reveal valuable information regarding the kidnaper was obvious as soon as it was thoroughly examined.

So many different things could be observed on this ladder that it was almost certain that if one thing did not yield important clues another or several others would. A complete catalog of all the items observed would be too long a list to print, but those which proved to be valuable and some others that appeared to have possible significance are here given. Observations Made on the Ladder

1. The ladder was home-made, which meant that it contained individual characteristics. It was not one out of a thousand or ten thousand, all superficially alike; it was the only one like it and could be expected to reveal some of the peculiarities and associations of the man who made it.



WOOD ANALYSIS AND DENDROCHRONOLOGY

2. The rungs of the ladder, although made of soft ponderosa pine, showed absolutely no signs of wear, which indicated that the ladder had no previous usage and was undoubtedly made for this particular job. This fact made the possibility of tracing it much better than if it had been an older, used ladder.

3. It showed poor design and workmanship and indicated that the man who made that ladder was not a high-grade mechanic.

4. It was made in three sections comprising a number of different kinds of lumber. Three of the six uprights, or rails, were North Carolina pine; the other three rails and one rung were Douglas fir; and the other ten rungs were ponderosa pine. The two dowels used to fasten the three sections of the ladder together were birch.

5. Five of the six rails were regular 1x4-inch lumber, which when dressed usually is 4 inch thick and 38 or 34 inches wide. One of the North Carolina pine rails, however, had been narrowed down from a wider board as was indicated by hand saw and hand plane marks on the edges. Two of the North Carolina pine rails were cut from one board which was fourteen feet long originally. It could be determined that it had been dressed to 34 inches in width, which made it unnecessary to pay any attention to similar stock dressed to 38 inches in width. In fact, that $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch difference in widths narrowed down the tracing of lumber from sixty-three to forty-five carloads. The ponderosa pine rungs were cut from two 1x6-inch boards that were first ripped along the middle before the cross cuts were made.

6. The two bottom North Carolina pine rails were dressed on a planer with eight knives in the cutter heads that dressed the wide surfaces and six in the cutter heads that dressed the edges, as determined by the number of individual knife cuts between successive cuts made by a defective knife. The lumber went through the planer at the rate of 0.93 inch per revolution of the top and bottom cutter heads and 0.86 inch per revolution of the cutter heads that dressed the edges, as determined by the distance between identical cuts made by a defective knife on each surface. It was by means of the number of knife cuts per revolution of the cutter heads and their widths that these two rails were traced to the M. G. and J. J. Dom Company of McCormick, South Carolina.

The other pine rail was dressed on a different planer; and, strange as it may seem, the three Douglas fir rails were dressed on three different planers, which tripled the chances of successfully tracing at least some of the fir lumber through the mill at which it was manufactured. The ponderosa pine rungs were dressed on a planer having eight knives in one cutter head and six in each of the other three—a most unusual combination. In fact, only two mills out of a hundred or so that shipped pine lumber to the New York district in 1931 had such a planer. One was located in Bend, Oregon, and the other in Spokane, Washington.

WOOD ANALYSIS AND DENDROCHRONOLOGY

7. Peculiar gouges on one edge of each of the two bottom North Carolina pine rails, made by a defective knife in the cutter head (which obviously would be altered as soon as the knives were resharpened) made it possible to identify a shipment of lumber sent from McCormick, South Carolina, to the National Lumber and Millwork Company in the Bronx as the shipment from which the ladder rails came.

8. The famous rail number 16 had four nail holes in it made by 8-penny cut nails. These holes had no connection with the making of the ladder, and therefore indicated previous usage of the lumber. The rail, although sapwood, showed no signs of having been exposed to the weather for any length of time, since the lumber was bright, unchecked, and had no rust around the nail holes. Therefore, it must have been nailed down indoors and since it was of a low grade of lumber it could not have been used for finish purposes, but rather for rough construction. The suggestion that that rail came from the interior of a barn, garage, or attic was made at the time of the initial critical examination of the ladder.

9. A rather dull hand plane was used in planing the two edges of rail number 16. The plane left numerous characteristic ridges on the wood identical in size and spacing with ridges left by a hand plane on one edge of each of the ponderosa pine rungs. Here were two different kinds and sizes of pine lumber in the ladder planed with the same plane. That meant that very likely the edges of the lumber were planed when the ladder was made rather than on some previous occasion. While the probability of finding that plane in the same condition it was in when the ladder parts were planed became more and more remote as the months and even years elapsed after the kidnaping, the possibility of finding other lumber planed with that plane in the possession of a suspect always remained. (Incidentally, a short piece of lumber planed with that plane was found in Hauptmann's garage.)



WOOD ANALYSIS AND DENDROCHRONOLOGY

10. The chisel used in cutting out the recesses for the rungs was a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch chisel, as could be seen from the width of some of the cuts made with it. This chisel was so sharp that it left no other identifying marks except its size and that it was in excellent condition of sharpness. The chisel found on Colonel Lindbergh's premises on the night of the kidnaping answered the above description, although there undoubtedly also were numerous other sharp $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch chisels in existence. The chisel was identified by the manufacturer in New England as having been made about forty years ago. The age therefore greatly limited the number of such chisels still in use. At the time of Hauptmann's arrest it developed that he had a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch chisel of the same make and pattern.

11. Some of the saw cuts made in cutting out the recesses for the rungs were made deeper than the depth to which the recesses were chiseled out, which made it possible to determine the width of the saw cuts as 0.035 inch. Hauptmann possessed nine saws, two of which made cuts of that width, both with 10 teeth per inch, one of which was dull and the other sharp. 12. Scratches made on the sides of some of the rungs by accidentally drawing the side of a sharp crosscut saw over the side of the board from which the rungs were cut, or vice versa, revealed through a rather complicated mathematical analysis that they were made with a saw having ten teeth per inch.

13. A thin shaving about the size of a 25-cent piece had been cut with a pocket knife or chisel from the broad sides of two of the rungs near an edge. The cutting edge of that knife or chisel had nicks in it which might have yielded valuable corroborating evidence if the maker of the ladder had been apprehended within a few weeks after the kidnaping. No reason was apparent for the removal of the shavings and the only possible purpose in so doing that presents itself is that an accidental injury in making the ladder might have resulted in a couple of blood spots on the wood which the maker thought best to remove. 14. One of the fir rails had across one face and edge a stripe of red paint several inches wide. It was found to be similar to paint marks made on lumber cargos to mark off lots from individual shippers, although the color of the paint used for that purpose is not always red. The red paint mark narrowed down the tracing of the particular shipment of fir lumber from which that rail came to those for which red paint was used as an identifying mark.

15. The nails used in making the ladder were 8-penny wire nails made by a Pittsburgh wire nail manufacturing concern, as was indicated by their mark, a "P", in the shank of the nail immediately under the head.

16. Only a few hammer dents were visible around the nail heads in the rungs. They, however, showed no peculiar characteristics by means of which the hammer that made them could be identified.

17. There was some barely legible handwriting on one of the Douglas fir rails.

WOOD ANALYSIS AND DENDROCHRONOLOGY

A large part of the investigation required intimate knowledge of wood and wood working, such as identification of species, distinguishing between artificial and natural features, and determining that the pine rails came from young second-growth trees. commercially cut in the Atlantic Coast States. Such intimate knowledge of wood is a type of specialized training that police officials cannot be expected to have, but it serves to show how technical experts along various lines can often assist law enforcement agencies in tracking down and convicting criminals.”

Arthur Koehler, winter 1937

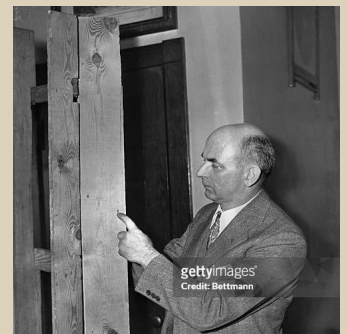
Looking from a Woodsman perspective the Lindbergh’s case highlights the very fact that everything is not always at it seems.

For this to be the very first case in legal history where a plants and trees expert has been called in as an expert witness, it is surely mindblowing.

“*Plants do not lie, man can do*”: this short but effective sentence should always be kept in mind when the necessity to call real experts arises.

In fact, “*you see what you know or think to know, the trick is to know what you see*”.

Indeed Arthur Koehler has been able to recognize several different species of wood as the component parts of one single ladder.



THE TRIAL

Hauptmann's trial was held at the Hunterdon County Courthouse in the city of Flemington, becoming a media event.

Attorney Edward J. Reilly was sent by the tabloid Daily Mirror to defend the defendant, in exchange for the newspaper's exclusive right to publish Hauptmann's story. The prosecution was represented by Magistrate David T. Wilentz.

In addition to the \$14,000 that had been found in his garage, the prosecution highlighted a remarkable similarity between Hauptmann's handwriting and that of the hand that had written the letters of claim (many of which, incidentally, were signed with the initials B.H.). Eight different graphologists (Albert S. Osborn, Elbridge W. Stein, John F. Tyrrell, Herbert J. Walter, Harry M. Cassidy, Wilmer T. Souder, Albert D. Osborn, and Clark Sellers) were called to testify by the prosecution.

The defense responded by calling the experts John M. Trendley, Samuel C. Malone and Arthur P. Meyers to testify but only the first accepted. Thanks to the tests conducted by Arthur Koehler at the Forest Products Laboratory, the prosecution introduced as evidence against Hauptmann the correspondence between the pieces of wood found in the attic of his house with the material of the ladder found at the Lindbergh house.

Furthermore, the prosecutor accused the defendant of finding Condon's contact details in his house, written in pencil on a door; Hauptmann replied that he had written down the address of the "mediator" after reading the story of the kidnapping in a newspaper, having found it interesting and wanting to remember it. However, when the prosecution asked him how he also knew Condon's telephone number, Hauptmann refused to answer. The defense never questioned the identity of the child's body, whose recognition had indeed been carried out in great haste, thanks to the father's desire to regain possession of it immediately.

Hauptmann was eventually found guilty and sentenced to death; the sentence was upheld on appeal, although New Jersey Governor Harold G. Hoffman temporarily blocked the execution of the verdict, instructing the New Jersey Board of Pardons to review the trial (a decision that sparked popular protests and led to Hoffmann's expulsion by the Republican Party, which disavowed him as its representative). The latter body also rejected the requests.

Hauptmann rejected a large monetary reward offered by a newspaper in exchange for his confession, and equally rejected a proposal to commute his sentence to life imprisonment, again in exchange for his confession. He was executed on April 3rd, 1936 by electric chair. After Hauptmann's death, journalists and independent investigators began to raise doubts about the accuracy of the investigation, about possible tampering with evidence, about possible false testimony and about the very balance of the court that had issued the verdict. Twice in the 1980s, Hauptmann's widow, Anna (d. 1994), sued the state of New Jersey, accusing it of wrongfully having her husband killed. In both cases, the judges rejected the requests.

CONCLUSIONS

The Lindbergh Jr. case, if on one hand introduced dendrochronology and, in general, forensic botany into the investigative phases of a crime, on the other hand denoted an absence of a far-sighted analysis on the tracks that could have studied, preserved and followed related to the dynamics of the perpetrator's escape.

The two disciplines, Forensic Tracking and Forensic Botany, deal with irrefutable evidence linked to the world of soil and plants: a combination which, if identified as the maximum source of indictable evidence, has immense potential in the phase of finding clues, one-to-one matching, preservation of the evidence itself and demonstration to the court.

The infinite possibilities to combine different disciplines together reinforce the validity of science to be able to observe, measure, quantify and understand the natural world and how those disciplines may apply in law and the proof of the truth.

