

'JUSTICE FOR WOMEN'



ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOOS NEST

NOTTINGHAM BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

1979

J.P. Griffiths
Roberts & Sale
Solicitors
20 High Street,
Arnold,
Nottingham.
Tel. 205927.



1985

John S Hodgson
Fraser, Brown White & Pears
Solicitors
84 Friar Lane
Nottingham
Tel. 472541



MARTIN BRANDON-BRAVO
(Con)

M.P. States..... 11th January, 1984.

Since none of the local Solicitors are taking action, it seems to me quite wrong that the Law Society will make no comment on the grounds that one of the Solicitors mentioned in the magazine might at some time respond.

I feel I must press this matter for if there is no justice in Mrs Reid's allegations, then I want the matter made clear, and if there is substance in her allegations, the matter should be brought into the open and dealt with.

'CONSPIRACY and FORGERY'

*Behind Closed Doors accuse the NCCL of perverting the course of justice, when on the 11th Nov. 1984 at their AGM, in Nottingham, a motion was proposed by Mr John McGuigan and seconded by Margaret McGlade NCCLs publicity officer, that womens rights would not be taken up or discussed by NCCI in Nottingham.

The reason for this being that an investigation would highlight the unethical conduct of its own Secretary Mr Jules Griffiths, and the activities of John S Hodgson who in sending to Standard Life Assurance a less than truthful insurance policy which had been materially altered, was guilty of gross malpractice which can only constitute that a forgery had taken place.



In the life of every man and nation,
Comes the moment to decide
Between good and evil,
Truth and falsehood.

Is it true?

Democracy or Hypocrisy

Conspiracy and Forgery

This issue of 'Behind Closed Doors' is but one aspect of the suffering a woman went through in her fight for justice with Nottingham's legal eagles over a 4 year period, and which will be told in greater detail in a much larger issue of Behind Closed Doors in the New Year. Yet this woman Ms Lexie Reid's only crime was to be a feminist and fighting for Womens Rights against a Law Society in Nottingham that could be more aptly described as a fraternity of shylocks who under the cloak of respectability of the legal establishment must rank in par with the Mafia in their manipulation of truth and justice.

This issue of Behind Closed Doors deals with the forgery of a joint Insurance Policy which was in both Ms Reids and her husbands name V.T.Southam, one can see that the policy marked No.2 which Ms Reid signed and the materially altered document marked No.3 which John S Hodgson, Victor Southams Solicitor sent to Standard Life Assurance Company are very different indeed. In document No.2., which Ms Reid signed is a paragraph marked X which is omitted in document No.3, also in document No.3 it shows the material alteration to Julian Griffiths signature who at the time was Ms Reids Solicitor, and the alteration of Ms Reids signature. Yet this case has been contained and kept out of court by the Law Society, and aided and abetted by the Nottingham Branch of NCCL's Committee which comprises of Wyn Williams C/man, Julian Griffiths (Secretary) Margaret McGlade (Publicity Officer), Cllr. Nigel Lee (Treasurer), and Mr. John McGuigan (N.U.P.E.) and Mr. John S Hodgson (Solicitor).

Index of Evidence

No. 1. Letter dated 14-6-83 to Ms Reid from Standard Life, which shows that Southam had written to them to try and cash the policy without Ms Reid being aware of it.

No. 2. Policy or Document marked No.2 which Ms Reid signed shows that paragraph marked X stipulates that the money be paid in separate crossed cheques to Ms Reid and her husband Mr. Southam.

No. 3. Document marked No.3 shows that material alterations had been made, as it shows that the paragraph marked X is missing and both Ms Reids signature and that of her Solicitors signature Mr Julian Griffiths had been altered.

Nos.4 and 5. These two pages are self explanatory on "Forgery and Criminal Law".

No. 6. Letter dated 11-1-84 which Ms. Reids Member of Parliament Mr. Brandon-Bravo sent to Mr. Hoyle of the Law Society, asking for an explanation into the unethical conduct of certain members of the legal profession in Nottingham, yet it is almost 2 years ago that he asked for an inquiry to be made public, so far the public are still waiting for an answer.

No. 7. Letter dated 14-1-84 from Cllr. Nigel Lee to Mr M. Spungin, which proves that Hodgson in a panic tried to get an injunction against Behind Closed Doors, through the Attorney General, to try to stop them exposing his illegal and corrupt activities not only in Ms Reids case but in other cases also.

We would like to point out that on the back page there is a letter from Mr Boyd's Solicitor dated the 16-3-84 stating that no action was to be taken against NBCD in spite of Hodgsons attempt to stop them printing.

We must now ask what this woman can expect in the way of compensation from Solicitors like Hodgson, Griffiths and Gregsons to name but a few who have made British Justice the laughing stock of Europe.

SOLICITORS WARNED

SOLICITORS were warned today by the Government's consumer watchdog that unless they come up with a satisfactory new system for dealing with complaints against members of their profession, Parliament will do it for them.

"The Law Society's own

management consultants have firmly concluded that it would be disastrous not to set up an independent complaints body. This is the last chance for solicitors to put their own house in order," said Mr Michael Montague, chairman of the National Consumer Council.

He asked: "Can consumers be sure of a fair hearing under the present system from a body whose main job is to represent the interests of its solicitor members?"

The Law Society should not underestimate the serious damage done to public confidence in solicitors

HALIFAX BUILDING SOCIETY

PJD/JDM

14th June 1983

27 Friar Lane

Nottingham

NG1 6DF

Tel Nottingham 40736 (3 lines)

Ms L Reid

~~100 The Downs~~

~~Collyer Close~~

~~Nottingham~~

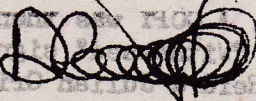
Dear Ms Reid

Your letter of the 13th June has been handed to me for my personal attention and perhaps I can throw some light on what appears to be a rather confusing situation.

First of all I think it is important to point out the Society has not indicated to anyone you have refused to sign the surrender form in question, but it is perfectly true to say we wrote to Mr Southam on the 18th April indicating we had received the form in question, but as this had not been signed by yourself as the joint mortgage holder, it was impossible for any action to be taken.

Frankly, this is still the same situation and until both signatures have been obtained by the Society for this account, there is no possibility of the account being changed in any way. As you will appreciate this does not constitute a refusal on your part and it is perhaps unfortunate Mr Southam has mentioned it to you in the way suggested. Clearly it is very much up to the joint account holders to come to an amicable settlement in cases such as this and I hope you will please contact each other so that a satisfactory conclusion can be brought about.

Yours sincerely



P J Davis
Branch Manager

STANDARD LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY

Policy No : X3499638
 Lives Assured : LEXIE MARY BELL REID & VICTOR TIMOTHY SOUTHAM
 (Last Premium Assumed Paid Mar 83)

	Surrender Value	£	2116.80
		£	2116.80
Less Outstanding Premium Mar 83		£	85.29
		£	85.29
		£	2031.51

WE, LEXIE MARY BELL REID and VICTOR TIMOTHY SOUTHAM, both of

do hereby request the STANDARD LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY to pay the sum of TWO THOUSAND AND THIRTY ONE POUNDS FIFTY ONE PENCE being the amount payable in respect of the above policy which is herewith delivered up to be cancelled.

The payment is to be made by crossed cheque in favour of (1) Lexie Mary Bell Reid £1015.75 and (2) Victor Timothy Southam £1015.75 and should be sent to at

(If cheque is in favour of a Bank state Account to be credited)

We acknowledge that on payment being duly made as aforesaid we shall be deemed to have received the said sum of TWO THOUSAND AND THIRTY ONE POUNDS FIFTY ONE PENCE.

As Witness our hand this _____ day of _____

One thousand nine hundred and eighty three

Witness to the signature of the said Lexie Mary Bell Reid

Witness.....

Address.....

1 Station Rd.

Hucknall Lincs

Occupation.....

Witness to the signature of the said Victor Timothy Southam

Witness.....

Address.....

Occupation.....

(Please note that a wife should not witness the signature of her husband and vice versa)

1.

[Handwritten signature of Lexie Mary Bell Reid]
 L.M.B.R.

[Handwritten initials V.T.S.]
 V.T.S.

[Handwritten 'A' in a circle]

[Handwritten 'A' in a circle]

THIS IS AN UNTESTED COPY
 SIGNATURE BY
 STANDARD LIFE

*This is a copy of the "Special" form Standard Life agreed to make out for Ms Reid after she had contacted them Directly and In Person. She then took the form to her solicitor - Julian Griffiths in order that He 'Witness' her signature. A COPY was then given to Mr Griffiths to send to JOHN S HODGSON to obtain his clients "witnessed" signature.... Note 'Ticks'(as done by Standard Life), Signatures of Ms Reid & Julian Griffiths, SPACING Dotted lines, Initials etc. and complete layout section Marked 'A'.

STANDARD LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY

Policy No : X3499638
Life Assured : LEXIE MARY BELL REID & VICTOR TIMOTHY SOUTHAM
(Last Premium Assumed Paid March 83)

	Surrender Value	£	2116.80
		£	<u>2116.80</u>
Less Outstanding Premium March 83	£	85.29	
		£	85.29
		£	<u><u>2031.51</u></u>

WE, LEXIE MARY BELL REID, and VICTOR TIMOTHY SOUTHAM, of

do hereby request the STANDARD LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY to pay the sum of TWO THOUSAND AND THIRTY ONE POUNDS FIFTY ONE PENCE being the amount payable in respect of the above policy which is herewith delivered up to be cancelled.

(A) X The payment is to be made by crossed cheque in favour of and should be sent to X

at

(If cheque is in favour of a Bank state Account to be credited)

We acknowledge that on payment being duly made as aforesaid We shall be deemed to have received the said sum of TWO THOUSAND AND THIRTY ONE POUNDS FIFTY ONE PENCE.

As Witness our hand this day of

One thousand nine hundred and eighty three

Witness to the signature of the said Lexie Mary Bell Reid

Witness..... *[Signature]*

[Signature] Reid

Address..... J.P. GRIFFITHS
1 Station Road,
Hucknall,
Lincs.

Occupation..... Solicitor

Witness to the signature of the said Victor Timothy Southam

Witness..... *[Signature]*

[Signature] Southam

Address..... 84 Friar Lane
Nottingham

Occupation..... Solicitor

(Please note that a wife should not witness the signature of her husband and vice versa)

n/

Footnote:
This is a copy of the FORGED document received by Standard Life in Edinburgh after the copy of the Original was given to her solicitor to witness and sent to JOHN S HODGSON for his clients 'witnessed' signature. As the result of this FORGERY, the surrender money for the Policy was paid into JOHN HODGSON'S Client Account at 84 Friar Lane, Nottingham.

Paragraph (iii) covers the offence of accusing or threatening to accuse of a crime with intention to extort property where the accusation is *not* contained in a letter or any other writing. It may be in writing, but it need not be for this act to be an offence. This is designed to cover the threat by word of mouth, because many a blackmailer would be far too cunning or too afraid to put his threats in writing.

It is also blackmail if the threats are used not to extort money or property but in order to secure an appointment for yourself or another to a much-coveted job. Threats to publish (*i.e.* write or speak) a libel upon any other person, whether living or dead, if made with the object of procuring a job, are an offence. For instance, if you said to the chairman of a public company that unless he made your son managing director you would let it be known that the chairman's wife had been convicted of shoplifting some long time ago (a fact not known locally), you would be guilty of this offence. And it would not matter whether what you said about the chairman's wife was true or not. If he sued you for libel, as will be seen in another part of this encyclopaedia, you would have a defence to the libel if you proved its truth, but that is no justification for blackmail.

Finally, a person who with intent 'to extort any valuable thing from any person'

'publishes or threatens to publish any libel upon any other person (whether living or dead)

is guilty of a misdemeanour, punishable with up to two years' imprisonment.

Of course, if the libel were an accusation of one of the crimes mentioned above it would be a felony punishable with life imprisonment.

A person commits a similar offence who, with the same intent,

'directly or indirectly threaten to print or publish, or directly or indirectly proposes to abstain from or offers to prevent the printing or publishing of any matter or thing touching any other person (whether living or dead)'

This is quite a useful provision if you are faced with vague threats that somebody will say something about you ('publishing' includes saying things by word of mouth), but the threat must be accompanied by an intent to extort some 'valuable thing'.

FORGERY

THE verb 'to forge' originally meant simply 'to make' and had no suggestion of falsity or fraud. It is still used in that sense, as when a blacksmith forges a shoe. But for some hundreds of years it has also been used in its criminal sense.

The crime of forgery is defined by the Forgery Act of 1913 as follows:

✕ 'Forgery is making a false document in order that it may be used as genuine' ✕
—a delightfully simple definition, although when you examine it you will see that it does need some explanation. The Act also makes it a forgery to counterfeit certain seals and dies.

What is 'a false document' in this sense? It is false:

- (i) if it pretends to be made by someone who did not make it, or did not authorize its making;
- (ii) if the time when it was made or the place where it is made (if either of those is important) are falsely stated;
- ✕ (iii) if material alterations have been made. ✕

A document is not a forgery when it merely contains statements which are false. That definition just quoted goes far beyond the statements in the document itself; to be a forgery the document must pretend to be something which it is not. A letter containing a number of false statements is not necessarily a forgery. But it would become a forgery if it purported, for instance, to be signed by A. when in fact A. knew nothing about it, but B. had written A.'s signature. The point has been well summed up by this definition:

✕ 'a forgery is a document which not merely tells a lie, but tells a lie about itself.' ✕

An example of a forgery resulting from the mis-statement of the time or the place where the document was made is the false ante-dating of a cheque. So too, if a telegraph clerk immediately on hearing the result of a race sends the bookmaker a telegram backing the winning horse and indicates by his stamp that the telegram was handed in at the Post Office before the race was run, he commits a forgery of that telegram.

The word 'document' in the definition quoted above covers *any writing*. A picture, not being written, has been held not to be a document; therefore it was not a forgery to sign the picture with the name of a painter who had nothing to do with its painting. However, this is not to be taken as invitation to cheat by putting false signatures on paintings, because another offence is committed. The offence is the very old one known as 'a Common Law cheat'.

As with all other crimes, it is essential to prove that the accused was acting with some wrongful intent, not merely by accident or mistake.

At Common Law, before the 1913 Statute, it was necessary that the forger should intend not merely to deceive (*i.e.* to persuade someone to believe a thing to be true when it is actually false), but also to defraud.

But the Act specifies many kinds of writing which it makes it criminal to forge, even for the purpose of merely deceiving without any intention of defrauding. These are important public documents of various kinds, *e.g.*

- (i) Any document to which is affixed the stamp or impression of the Great Seal or the United Kingdom or Her Majesty's Privy Seal.
- (ii) Any register or record or certificate of births, baptisms, namings, dedications, marriages, deaths, burials, or cremations.
- (iii) The documents and registers of any Court of Justice.

The full list is set out in Section 3 of the Act, but these examples show the kind of document which it is a crime to forge, even if you want only to tell a lie about your age (*i.e.* to deceive) and have no intention of defrauding.

The penalties vary at their maximum from life imprisonment to seven years, according to the importance of the document.

But generally it is necessary to prove intent to defraud; *i.e.* an intent to persuade some other person to act, or refrain from acting, to his own disadvantage. To deceive is to induce a state of mind; to defraud is to injure by causing another to behave to his prejudice.

Examples of documents which it is a crime to forge with intent to defraud are:

- (i) Any will or codicil either of a dead or living person, any probate or letters of administration.
- (ii) Any deed or bond.
- (iii) Any valuable security (*e.g.* cheque or bill of exchange).
- (iv) Any document of title to land or goods.
- (v) Any power of attorney.
- ✗ (vi) Any insurance policy. ✗

(The penalties vary from life imprisonment to imprisonment for fourteen years.)

The full list is in Section 2 of the Act.

✗ It is important to note that it does not matter whether any person was *actually* defrauded or deceived. What matters is the intention in the mind of the forger, and intentions can be and are inferred by the court from the acts of the accused. ✗

Then, in case the Act by specifying certain documents, a few of which have been mentioned above, should have left out others, there is a rounding-up section to cover any other document, not already mentioned. The reason why some are particularly mentioned is partly to make it a crime to forge some of them with intent only to deceive and partly to lay down the sentences which can be awarded. The more serious and more important the document which has been forged, the heavier the sentence. The sentence can run even to life imprisonment. The rounding up section dealing with other documents not particularly mentioned which are forged with intent to defraud or to deceive lays down a sentence which, compared with the much heavier sentences prescribed for the particular documents named in the Act, is comparatively light, because it is a term not exceeding two years.

The Act deals also with seals and dies as well as with documents. It is, of course, vitally important that there should be public confidence in the many official seals and dies which are used to indicate that a document is authentic. For instance the seal of any of the Courts of Justice, the seal of the Office of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages. Any die or stamp used by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue or the Commissioners of Customs and Excise, and so on.

The offence of forgery consists in making the document or counterfeiting the seal or die, but it is also an offence to 'utter' the document and utter in this sense means in effect to cause the document to go into circulation or to be

received by the person whom it is intended to defraud or to deceive. Anyone who utters any forged document, seal, or die is guilty of an offence as serious as the person who actually made the forgery, and if he is convicted is liable to the same punishment as if he himself had forged the document, seal, or die. He must, of course, know that the document is forged or the seal has been counterfeited, and he must have the intent to defraud or deceive which is necessary to make the document itself a forgery and the forger guilty of an offence.

("CRIMINAL")

CONTEMPT OF COURT —SEE NEXT ISSUE.

INTRODUCTION

THIS offence is perhaps not very happily named. On the one hand, it sounds rather pompous, and so has become a popular 'joke-phrase': that does not much matter, because the law can stand jokes against itself, and indeed enjoys them. On the other hand, from a more serious standpoint, lawyers and judges themselves feel uneasy about CONTEMPT OF COURT, because (1) the phrase gives the impression that it is tied up with the personal vanity of the judge, and (2) a judge can COMMIT somebody to prison for contempt of court without trial and, until recently, without right of appeal. In fact, judges are very reluctant to commit people to prison for 'contempt'.

The true reason why contempt of court is punished is not that judges are particularly sensitive about their personal dignity but that it is important in the public interest that nothing should be done to interfere with the proper administration of justice. To ensure that it is essential that

- (1) the trial is carried out in a decent way, and
- (2) any order made by the court is obeyed.

Therefore to fling an egg at a judge in court would be a contempt, though to do so elsewhere would not necessarily be so—the reason being that the protection of the judge's dignity in court is one of the necessities for the due administration of justice.

'Contempt', however, covers a much wider variety of activities than are implied in the word in its simplest sense. It covers almost any conduct that may impede the course of justice, from things done before a case has even started (*e.g.* bringing pressure on somebody not to start the action or not to give evidence), to things which happen after the case is over (*e.g.* failure to carry out a court order or improper comment while there is still time for appeal).

~~FROM~~ MARTIN M. BRANDON BRAVO M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

11th January, 1984

J M D Hoyle Esq.,
The Law Society,
The Law Society's Hall,
113 Chancery Lane,
London WC2A 1PL.

Dear Mr Hoyle.

Ms L Reid, 109 The Downs, Silverdale Estate

I thank you for your letter dated 30th December and I must express my disappointment at the response.

I too would not wish to comment on the allegations made by Mrs Reid in the publication 'Nottingham Behind Closed Doors' but since clearly there are allegations, and a number of the Nottingham Legal profession are involved, and the fact that Mrs Reid can obtain no satisfaction from this area, she has approached me seeking my help and I, in turn, am seeking the assistance of the Law Society. I am asking for your help in achieving some sort of enquiry into this matter.

Since none of the local Solicitors are taking action, it seems to me quite wrong that the Law Society will make no comment on the grounds that one of the Solicitors mentioned in the magazine might at some time in the future respond.

I feel I must press this matter for if there is no justice in Mrs Reid's allegations, then I want the matter made clear, and if there is substance in her allegations, the matter should be brought into the open and dealt with.

A Question of Conspiracy

NO 7

Armstrong Spungin & Scott
10a King's Walk
Parliament Street
Nottingham

51 Braidwood Court
Myson Green
Nottingham

14th January 1984

Ref: MFS/LJM/10,662

Dear Sirs,

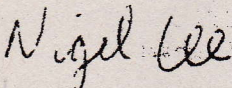
I refer to your letter of 13th January concerning John Boyd.

I am not a member of the Management Committee of 118 Workshop. No doubt members of that committee will be able to explain why Mr Boyd was denied access to 118 Workshop. My understanding is that he was denied access in relation to work for "Behind Closed Doors" because that organisation was not affiliated to the centre and therefore not entitled to use its facilities. If that is the case there would be no reason why he should be granted a hearing. It would no doubt be open to Behind Closed Doors to apply to affiliate.

Regarding the allegations made in my letter, this referred to a conversation I had with John Hodgson of Fraser Brown White & Pears. Mr Hodgson claimed that Mr Boyd had published in Behind Closed Doors affidavits signed by a client of Mr Hodgson which had not yet been presented to the High Court. Mr Hodgson had referred this matter to the Attorney General for possible action for contempt of court. If Mr Boyd wishes to pursue these allegations I suggest you contact Mr Hodgson. I am sure that he will be only too pleased to hear from solicitors acting for Mr Boyd.

In case you have not seen Behind Closed Doors, I enclose a copy of the front page of an earlier issue. You will no doubt be able to advise Mr Boyd as to whether his comments about Mr Hodgson constitute criminal libel or merely civil libel.

Yours faithfully,



Nigel Lee

Harlequin or Councillor

The above letter is Cllr. Nigel Lee's attempt to avoid involving himself in the argument between Unions, Management, and Solicitors at 118 Workshop on Mansfield Road, Nottingham. It involved the setting up of a "Kangaroo Court of Inquiry" which resulted in the banning of "Behind Closed Doors" from using their equipment for printing and from the premises. In the letter he states in paragraph (1) that he was not a member of the Committee, therefore he was not sure why "Behind Closed Doors" was banned, yet in paragraph (2) he contradicts himself when he writes about certain allegations in his letter which he personally handed to Mr. Ian Juniper at 118 Workshop. It was the allegations in his letter which resulted in the Kangaroo Court being set up without Mr. Boyd or any other member of NBGD being present. The above letter refers to his conversation with John Hodgson which proves the allegation NBGD made in an earlier edition that Cllr. Lee was acting as an unpaid batman for John Hodgson, he also tried to coerce Ms Reid by stating to her that her involvement with NBGD could get her 2 years in jail. It also proves that the Kangaroo Court was set up by Cllr. Lee on the instigation of John Hodgson, and when he found we were still printing Hodgson wrote to the Attorney General to try and bring a contempt of court action against NBGD in the hope of getting an injunction to stop them exposing his unethical conduct and his involvement with Cllr. Nigel Lee.

Justice for Women

ATTORNEY GENERAL CLOSES INVESTIGATION AND THERE IS NO CHARGES AGAINST NBCD

NOTTINGHAM BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Armstrong Spungin & Scott

SOLICITORS & Commissioners For Oaths

M. F. SPUNGIN, O.B.E., M.A., B.LITT.
M. L. SCOTT

10a King's Walk
Parliament Street
Nottingham NG1 2AG
Telephones: 0602 - 475359
& 413553

MFS/BEF/10662.

16th March 1984.

Dear Mr. Boyd,

I have today had a telephone call from Inspector Pickard who informs me that he has now received instructions from the Attorney General's Office that no further action is to be taken against you in respect of "Nottingham Behind Closed Doors".

It is odd that you mentioned this to me this week, but apparently the information has only just come through, you can, therefore, cease to have any anxieties with regard to that matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. J.J. Boyd,
38, Percival Road,
Sherwood,
Nottingham.



The
Law
Society

No. 10 (East Midland) Legal Aid Area



"Law Society"

The sharks on land are
more fearful than those at sea.

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

For your copy of "Nottingham Behind Closed Doors" :-
Contact:- "Justice for Women"
c/o 32a Shakespeare Street, Nottingham.
(Postal Address only) Enclosing 75p donation,
P & Postage.

Legal Aid Office
5 Friar Lane
Nottingham
NG1 6BW
MDX 10035 NOTTINGHAM
Telephone (0602) 412424
Mr. Addison
please ask for