

Bloody footprint may link Soering to murder scene

By Leslie Postal
Staff writer

BEDFORD — A state evidence expert says it is "highly probable" Jens Soering left the bloody footprints police found at the scene of Derek and Nancy Haysom's 1985 murders.

According to a laboratory report filed in court Tuesday, a print of Soering's right foot corresponds "to a high degree of similarity" with a right foot impression left in blood on the Haysoms' living room floor. Police photographed the bloody impression, made by a socked foot, shortly after the Haysoms were found stabbed to death in their Boonsboro home.

Soering is charged with two counts of first degree murder in the slayings and is now in Bedford Jail awaiting trial. Under court order, the 23-year-old West German gave investigators his footprints, fingerprints and a blood sample last month so that they could compare them with evidence found at the scene.

When police asked Soering for similar evidence more than four years ago, he and his girlfriend, the Haysoms' daughter, Elizabeth, fled to Europe. At the time, both were sophomores at the University of Virginia. They were arrested a year later in Great Britain on unrelated charges and while in a British

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prison confessed to killing his parents.

By enlarging the photograph of the bloody foot print to natural size and then overlaying it with a transparency of Soering's print, Robert B. Hallett, of the state's Bureau of Forensic Science in Fairfax, was able to compare the two.

Because of the similarities in the two prints, "the conclusion was reached it is highly probable the impression was made by Jens Soering," Hallett's report said.

Police also found a left foot impression on the oak floor but it was partially distorted, possibly by a fold in a sock. The report said that a comparison of Soering's left foot print with that impression showed some similarities but was not conclusive.

In the months after the Haysoms' deaths, police obtained footprints, fingerprints and blood samples from a number of possible suspects, including Elizabeth Haysom, but none of those prints or samples matched with the evidence. Later, Haysom said she helped plan the murders but was in Washington, D.C. establishing an alibi and not in the house when they were actually committed. She is now serving a 90-year prison sentence.

Earlier tests showed that unidentified fingerprints found in the Haysom house were probably not left by Soering and that Soering has blood type O. Small amounts of type O blood were found in the house, though neither victim had that type.

Though Soering has confessed to the murders and Elizabeth Haysom is expected to testify that she killed her parents, physical evidence apparently tying him to the crime scene could be important if a judge grants a defense request to have the confessions barred from the upcoming trial.

None of the attorneys could comment on the evidence because Judge William W. Sweeney as requested they not publicly discuss the case until the trial is over.

According to court records, Soering told investigators that

after he stabbed the Haysoms he went outside, took off his shoes and then returned to the home wearing only socks and tried to wipe up some of his footprints. Inside, he said he also bandaged his hand cut during his fight with Derek Haysom.

His attorneys have moved to have the confessions suppressed on the grounds that they were coerced and made because he thought Elizabeth Haysom was in danger. Sweeney will decide next week whether the confessions will be admissible in the March 8 trial.

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