

= White House Farm murders =

The White House Farm murders took place near the village of Tolleshunt D 'Arcy , Essex , England , during the night of 6 ? 7 August 1985 . Nevill Bamber , a farmer and magistrate , and his wife , June , were shot and killed inside their farmhouse , along with their adoptive daughter , Sheila Caffell , and Sheila 's six @-@ year @-@ old twin sons . The only surviving member of the immediate family was Nevill and June 's adoptive son , Jeremy Bamber , then 24 years old , who said he had been at home a few miles away when the shooting took place .

The police at first believed that Sheila , diagnosed with schizophrenia , had fired the shots then turned the gun on herself . But weeks after the murders Jeremy Bamber 's ex @-@ girlfriend told police that he had implicated himself . The prosecution argued that , motivated by a large inheritance , Bamber had shot the family with his father 's semi @-@ automatic rifle , then placed the gun in his unstable sister 's hands to make the case appear as a murder ? suicide . A silencer the prosecution said was on the rifle would have made it too long , they argued , for Sheila 's fingers to reach the trigger to shoot herself . Bamber was convicted in October 1986 by a 10 ? 2 majority , and sentenced to a minimum of 25 years ' imprisonment . In 1994 , Bamber was informed that he would never be released from prison .

Bamber has protested his innocence throughout , although his extended family remain convinced of his guilt . Between 2004 and 2012 his lawyers submitted several unsuccessful applications to the Criminal Cases Review Commission . They argued that the silencer might not have been used during the killings ; that the crime scene may have been damaged then reconstructed ; that crime @-@ scene photographs were taken weeks after the murders ; and that the time of Sheila 's death was miscalculated . A key issue was whether Bamber received a call from his father that night to say Sheila had " gone berserk " with a gun . Bamber said that he did , that he alerted police , and that Sheila fired the final shot while he and the officers were standing outside the house . It became a central plank of the prosecution 's case that the father had made no such call , and that the only reason Bamber would have lied about it ? indeed , the only way he could have known about the shootings when he alerted the police ? was that he was the killer himself .

= = Bambers = =

= = = Nevill and June Bamber = = =

Ralph Nevill Bamber ( known as Nevill , born 8 June 1924 , 61 when he died ) , was a farmer , former RAF pilot , and a local magistrate at Witham Magistrates ' Court . He and his wife , June ( née Speakman , born 3 June 1924 , also 61 when she died ) , had married in 1949 and moved into the Georgian White House Farm on Pages Lane , Tolleshunt D 'Arcy , set among 300 acres of tenant farmland that had belonged to June 's father . Nevill was described in court as 6 ' 4 " tall and in good physical health , a point that became significant because Bamber 's defence was that Sheila , a slim woman of 28 , was able to beat and subdue her father , something the prosecution contested .

Unable to have biological children , the couple adopted Sheila and Jeremy as babies ; the children were not related to one another . The Bammers were wealthy and gave the children a good home and private education , but June was intensely religious and reportedly tried to force her children and grandchildren to adopt the same ideas . She had a poor relationship with Sheila , who felt June disapproved of her , and June 's relationship with Jeremy was so troubled that he had apparently stopped speaking to her . The court heard that Sheila 's ex @-@ husband was concerned about the effect June was having on his sons ; she apparently made them kneel and pray with her , which upset him . She suffered from depression and in 1982 was treated by the same psychiatrist who would later treat Sheila .

= = = Sheila Caffell = = =

### === Background ===

Sheila Jean Caffell ( born 18 July 1957 , 28 when she died ) was born to the daughter of a chaplain of the Archbishop of Canterbury and adopted by the Bambers when she was eight weeks old . She attended private schools , first Moira House in Eastbourne , Sussex , then Old Hall School in Hethersett , Norfolk , followed by secretarial college in Swiss Cottage , London .

In 1974 , when she was 17 , Sheila discovered she was pregnant by her boyfriend , Colin Caffell ( later her husband ) ; the Bambers arranged an abortion . Her relationship with her adoptive mother deteriorated significantly that summer , when June found Sheila and Colin sunbathing naked in a field . June reportedly started calling Sheila the " devil 's daughter , " which the psychiatrist identified as the trigger for Sheila 's paranoid delusions about having been taken over by the devil .

Sheila continued with her secretarial course , then trained as a hairdresser , and briefly found work as a model with the Lucie Clayton agency , which included two months ' work in Tokyo . She and Colin married in May 1977 when Sheila was 19 . She suffered two more miscarriages , before giving birth to identical twins Nicholas and Daniel on 22 June , 1979 . The birth led to a deterioration in her mental health . She became increasingly erratic , throwing pots and pans at her husband , and once pushing her hands through a window , cutting herself . The couple separated just four months after the birth , and divorced in May 1982 .

After the breakdown of the marriage , Nevill bought Sheila a flat in Morshead Mansions , Maida Vale , London , and Colin continued to help raise the children from his home in nearby Kilburn . Sheila became friendly with a group of young women who nicknamed her " Bambi , " and who later told reporters that she was vulnerable and desperately insecure , often complaining about her poor relationship with her adoptive mother . One said there was a lot of partying and drugs , particularly cocaine , and older men who were interested in the women for all the wrong reasons . Sheila 's brief modelling career ended after the birth of the boys , and she lived on welfare or took low @-@ paying jobs , including as a waitress at School Dinners , a London restaurant in which a traditional British menu is served up by young women in stockings and suspenders . There were also cleaning jobs , and there was one episode of nude photography , much regretted .

### === Mental health ===

Sheila 's mental health continued to decline , with episodes of banging her head against walls and becoming agitated to the point where one of her boyfriends feared for his safety . She decided to trace her birth mother , then living in Canada , and with the help of social services they met at Heathrow Airport in 1982 for a brief reunion , but it seems the relationship did not develop . The boys were briefly placed in foster care in 1982 and 1983 , an arrangement that seemed to cause no problems .

In August 1983 , Sheila was referred by her family doctor to Dr. Hugh Ferguson , the psychiatrist who had earlier treated June . He said she was in an agitated , paranoid and psychotic state ; he admitted her to St Andrew 's Hospital in Northampton , where she was diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder .

Ferguson wrote that Sheila believed the devil had given her the power to project evil onto others , and that she could make her sons have sex and cause violence with her . She called them the " devil 's children , " the phrase June had apparently used of Sheila , and said she believed she was capable of murdering them or of getting them to kill others . She spoke about suicide , though the court heard that Ferguson did not regard her as a suicide risk . She was discharged on 10 September 1983 . Ferguson continued treating her as an outpatient ; he diagnosed schizophrenia and prescribed trifluoperazine , an antipsychotic drug .

In 1985 Sheila became more enthusiastic about religion , to the surprise of her friends who were apparently unaware that she came from a religious family . She was re @-@ admitted to St Andrew 's in March 1985 , five months before the murders , believing her boyfriend at the time to be the devil

and herself to be in direct communication with God . She was discharged just under four weeks later , and as an outpatient received a monthly injection of haloperidol , an antipsychotic drug that has a sedative effect .

She went to stay at White House Farm to recuperate . It was obvious to her friends and family that her mental health was getting worse . Just before the murders , Colin complained that he was doing 95 percent of the work with the boys ; he drafted a letter to Sheila 's father in late March or early April 1985 , which was never sent , asking him to persuade Sheila to let the twins live with Colin most of the time . According to Bamber , the family discussed placing the boys in daytime foster care over dinner on the night of the murders , with little response from Sheila .

Despite Sheila 's erratic mental state , her psychiatrist told the court that the kind of violence necessary to commit the murders was not consistent with his view of her . In particular , he said he did not believe she would have killed her father or children , because her difficult relationship was confined to her mother . Her ex @-@ husband said the same : that , despite her tendency to throw things and sometimes hit him , she had never harmed the children . June Bamber 's sister , Pamela Bouffour , testified that Sheila was not a violent person and that she had never known Sheila to use a gun ; June 's niece , Ann Eaton , told the court that Sheila did not know how to use one . Bamber disputed this , telling police on the night of the shooting , as they stood outside the house , that he and Sheila had gone target shooting together . He acknowledged later that he had not seen her fire a gun as an adult .

= = = Jeremy Bamber = = =

Jeremy Nevill Bamber ( born 13 January 1961 ) is the son of a vicar 's daughter who , after an affair with a married army sergeant , gave her baby to the Church of England Children 's Society when he was six weeks old . His biological parents later married each other and had other children . They were working at Buckingham Palace when Bamber was convicted , reportedly unaware that he was their son until reporters informed them .

Nevill and June adopted Bamber when he was six months old . They sent him to private schools , first to Maldon Court , a preparatory school , then to Gresham 's School , a boarding school in Holt , Norfolk . He left Gresham 's with no qualifications , but attended sixth @-@ form college and in 1978 passed seven O @-@ levels . Nevill paid for him to visit Australia , where Bamber took a scuba diving course , then New Zealand . Former friends alleged that he had broken into a jeweller 's shop while in New Zealand and had stolen an expensive watch , and had also boasted , they said , of being involved in smuggling heroin .

He returned to England to work on his adoptive parents ' farm for £ 170 a week , and set up home rent @-@ free in a cottage Nevill owned at 9 Head Street , Goldhanger ( 51 @.@ 745857 ° N 0 @.@ 755881 ° E ) . The cottage lay 3 ? 3 @.@ 5 miles ( 5 @.@ 6 km ) from the farmhouse ( 51 @.@ 7591 ° N 0 @.@ 8032 ° E ) , a five @-@ minute drive by car and at least 15 minutes by bicycle . His father also gave him a car to use , and eight percent of a family company , Osea Road Camp Sites Ltd , which ran a caravan site .

To Bamber 's supporters , who over the years have included several MPs and journalists , he is the victim of Britain 's most serious miscarriage of justice . The Guardian took up his case at one point ; two Guardian journalists who interviewed him in 2011 called him " clever and strategic . " They wrote that there was something about him that made the public unsympathetic toward him : he was " handsome in a rather cruel , caddish way ? he seemed to exude arrogance and indifference . ... Like Meursault in the Camus novel L 'Etranger , he did not seem to display the appropriate emotions . "

His detractors , a group that includes his extended family , see him as a psychopath , and regard his long fight to have the conviction declared unsafe as part of the clinical picture . His father 's secretary , Barbara Wilson , told a documentary in November 2013 that Bamber used to provoke his parents , riding in circles around his mother on a bicycle , wearing make @-@ up in public to upset his father , and allegedly once hiding a bag of live rats in his mother 's car . She said that Bamber 's father did not trust him , and that whenever Bamber visited the farmhouse there were arguments . She also said tension had increased in the weeks before the murders , and that Bamber 's father

had said something to her about foreseeing a " shooting accident . " Bamber underwent several assessments in prison , and according to the Guardian no indication of mental illness or psychopathy was found . He also passed a lie detector test in 2007 .

= = = Extended family , inheritance = = =

The financial ties and inheritance issues within the immediate and extended family added a layer of complexity to the case . The prosecution argued that Bamber had killed his family to inherit £ 436 @, @ 000 , the farmhouse where the murders took place , 300 acres ( 1 @. @ 2 km<sup>2</sup> ) of land , and the caravan site in Maldon . Because of his conviction , the estate passed instead to the cousins who had found the silencer in the gun cupboard after the murders , with the flecks of blood and paint that proved pivotal to the prosecution 's case .

After Bamber 's conviction , one cousin on his mother 's side moved into White House Farm , and that cousin and several others acquired ownership of the caravan site . Bamber argues that they set him up , a claim another cousin dismissed in 2010 as " an absolute load of piffle . " Bamber has launched two legal actions to secure a share of the estate , which the cousins said in 2004 were part of an attempt to harass and vilify them .

= = Murder weapon = =

Nevill kept several guns at the farm . He was reportedly careful with them , cleaning them after use and securing them . The murder weapon was a .22 Anschütz semi @-@ automatic rifle , model 525 , which Nevill purchased on 30 November 1984 , along with a Parker Hale sound moderator ( a " suppressor " ) , telescopic sights , and 500 rounds of ammunition . The rifle used cartridges , which were loaded into a magazine that had a ten round capacity . Twenty @-@ five shots were fired during the killing , so assuming it was fully loaded to begin with , it would have been reloaded at least twice . The court heard that the gun became progressively harder to load as the number of cartridges increased ; loading the tenth was described as exceptionally hard .

The rifle had normally been used , with the silencer and telescopic sights attached , to shoot rabbits . The court heard that a screwdriver was needed to remove the sights , but they were usually left in place because it was time @-@ consuming to realign them . Nevill 's nephew , Anthony Pargeter , visited the farmhouse around 26 July 1985 , and told the court that he had seen the rifle , with the sights and suppressor attached , in the gun cupboard in the ground @-@ floor office . Bamber testified that he had visited the farmhouse on the evening of 6 August , hours before the murders , and that he had loaded the gun , thinking he heard rabbits outside , then left it with a full magazine and a box of ammunition on the kitchen table .

= = White House Farm , 6 ? 7 August 1985 = =

= = = Sheila 's visit = = =

On 4 August 1985 , three days before the murders , Sheila and the boys arrived at her parents ' home at White House Farm to spend the week with them . The housekeeper saw her that day and noticed nothing unusual . Sheila was seen the next day with her children by two farm workers , Julie and Leonard Foakes , who said she seemed happy . One of the crime @-@ scene photographs shows that someone , possibly Sheila , had carved " I hate this place " into the cupboard doors of the bedroom the twins were sleeping in .

Bamber visited the farm on the evening of Tuesday , 6 August . He told the court that his parents suggested to Sheila that evening that the boys be placed in day @-@ time foster care with a local family , because of her mental @-@ health problems . Bamber said Sheila did not seem bothered by the suggestion and had simply said she would rather stay in London . The boys had been in foster care before , although in London rather than near White House Farm , and it had not

appeared to cause a problem for Sheila . Her psychiatrist , Dr. Ferguson , told the Court of Appeal in 2002 that any suggestion that the children be removed from her care would have provoked a strong reaction from Sheila , but that she might have welcomed daytime help .

Barbara Wilson , the farm 's secretary , telephoned the farmhouse at 9 @. @ 30 pm that evening and spoke to Nevill . She said he was short with her , and Wilson was left with the impression that she had interrupted an argument . June Bamber 's sister , Pamela Bouffour , also telephoned that evening at about 10 pm . She spoke to Sheila , who she said was quiet , then to June , who seemed normal .

= = = Telephone calls = = =

There was one telephone line and normally four telephones at the farm . There was a cordless phone with a memory @- @ recall feature in the kitchen ; a beige digital phone , also kept in the kitchen ; a blue digital phone in the first @- @ floor office ; and a cream rotary phone ( dial phone ) in the main bedroom . The cordless phone had been sent away for repair on 5 August , so on the night of the murders there were three phones in the house .

The rotary phone that was normally in the main bedroom had been moved into the kitchen where the beige digital phone normally sat . Police found the latter under a pile of magazines . They found the rotary phone in the kitchen with its receiver off the hook . The implication was that someone ? Nevill , according to Bamber ? had been interrupted mid @- @ call .

A central issue is whether Nevill telephoned Bamber before the murders to say that Sheila had gone crazy with a gun . Bamber said he did receive such a call , and that the line went dead in the middle of it , which was consistent with the phone being found off the hook . The prosecution said that he had not received such a call , and that his claim to have done so was part of his setting the scene to blame Sheila ; it was Bamber himself , they said , who had left the phone off the hook . This was one of three key points the jury was asked to consider by the trial judge during his summing up . In 2010 Bamber 's lawyers highlighted two police phone logs ( below ) in support of Bamber 's application to have his case referred back to the Court of Appeal . The question was whether these logs described one call to the police , from Bamber alone , or two calls , one from Bamber and another from his father .

= = = Telephone log 1 = = =

A police log timed at 3 : 26 am on 7 August 1985 ( see right ) was entered as evidence at the trial but not shown to the jury . It discusses a telephone call made that night to a local police station . According to the prosecution , the log discusses a call known to have been made by Bamber . According to Bamber 's defence team , it may show that a separate call was made by Nevill .

The log is headed " Daughter gone berserk " : " Mr Bamber , White House Farm , Tolleshunt d ? Arcy ? daughter Sheila Bamber , aged 26 years , has got hold of one of my guns . " It adds : " Message passed to CD by the son of Mr Bamber after phone went dead . " It goes on to say : " Mr Bamber has a collection of shotguns and .410s , " and it includes the telephone number 860209 , the number at the time for White House Farm . The final entry says : " 0356 GPO [ the telephone operator ] have checked phone line to farmhouse and confirm phone left off hook . " The log shows that a patrol car , Charlie Alpha 7 ( CA7 ) , was sent to the scene at 3 @. @ 35 am .

= = = Telephone log 2 = = =

A different police log shows that , at 3 @. @ 36 am , Bamber rang Chelmsford Police Station using a direct line , rather than the emergency number ( 999 ) , and spoke to PC West . The court accepted that the officer who recorded the log misread a digital clock , and that the call had probably come in at around 3 : 26 am , around the time of the call mentioned in the first log .

Bamber said : " You 've got to help me . My father has just rung me and said , ' Please come over . Your sister has gone crazy and has got the gun . ' Then the line went dead . " Bamber said he had

tried to ring his father back , but there was no reply . The log continues : " Father Mr. Bamber , White House Farm , Tolleshunt D 'Arcy ... Sister Sheila Bamber age 27 . Has history of mental illness . ... Dispatched CA5 [ Charlie Alpha 5 ] to scene ... Informant requested to attend scene . "

= = = Police response = = =

PC West contacted civilian dispatcher Malcolm Bonnet at the Chelmsford HQ Information Room using a radio link ; this conversation was recorded as having taken place at 3 @.@ 26 am . PC West then spoke to Bamber again , who apparently complained about the time the police response was taking , and said : " When my father rang he sounded terrified . " He was told to go to the farm and wait for the police . At 3 @.@ 35 am Bonnet sent a police car to White House Farm . A telephone operator checked the line to the farm at 03 : 56 , according to a police log , or at 04 : 30 , according to the Court of Appeal . The phone was off the hook , the line was open and a dog could be heard barking .

Explaining why he had called a local police station and not 999 , Bamber told police that night that he had not thought it would make a difference in terms of how fast they arrived . He said he had spent time looking up the number , and even though his father had asked him to come quickly , he had first telephoned his girlfriend , Julie Mugford , in London , then had driven slowly to the farmhouse . He also said he could have called one of the farm workers , but had not at the time considered it . In his early witness statements , Bamber said he had telephoned the police immediately after receiving his father 's call , then telephoned Mugford . During later police interviews , he said he had called Mugford first . He said he was confused about the sequence of events .

= = = Scene outside = = =

After the telephone calls , Bamber made his way to the farmhouse , as did PS Bews , PC Myall and PC Saxby from Witham Police Station , passing Bamber in their car on the way there . They told the court that , in their view , he was driving much slower than them . Bamber 's cousin , Ann Eaton , testified that Bamber was normally a fast driver .

Bamber arrived at the farmhouse one or two minutes after the police . They waited for a tactical firearms group to arrive , which turned up at 5 am . Police determined that all the doors and windows to the house were shut , except for the window in the main bedroom on the first floor . They decided to wait until daylight . They eventually entered at 7 : 54 am through the back door , which had been locked from the inside . The only sound they reported from the house was a dog barking .

While waiting outside , the police questioned Bamber , who they said seemed calm . He told them about the phone call from his father , and that it sounded as though someone had cut him off . He said he did not get along with his sister . When asked whether she might have gone berserk with the gun , the police said he replied : " I don 't really know . She is a nutter . She 's been having treatment . " The police asked why Nevill would have called Bamber and not the police . Bamber replied that his father was the sort of person who might want to keep things within the family .

Bamber told the police that Sheila was familiar with guns and that they had gone target shooting together . He said he had been at the farmhouse himself a few hours earlier , and that he had loaded the rifle because he thought he had heard rabbits outside . He had left it on the kitchen table fully loaded , with a box of ammunition nearby . After the bodies were discovered , a doctor , Dr. Craig , was called to the house to certify the deaths , which he testified could have occurred at any time during the night . He said Bamber appeared to be in a state of shock ; he broke down , cried and seemed to vomit . The doctor said Bamber told him at that point about the discussion the family had had about possibly having Sheila 's sons placed in foster care .

= = = Inside farmhouse = = =

===== Nevill =====

When police entered the house , they found five bodies with multiple gunshot wounds . Twenty @-@ five shots had been fired , mostly at close range . Nevill was found downstairs in the kitchen , dressed in pyjamas , lying over an overturned chair next to the fireplace , amid a scene suggestive of a struggle . A telephone was lying on one of the kitchen surfaces with its receiver off the hook , next to several .22 shells . The police said chairs and stools were overturned , and there was broken crockery , a broken sugar basin , and what looked like blood on the floor . A ceiling light lampshade had been broken .

Nevill had been shot eight times , six times to the head and face , fired when the rifle was a few inches from his skin . The remaining shots to his body had occurred from at least two feet away . Based on where the empty cartridges were found ? three were in the kitchen and one on the stairs ? the police concluded he had been shot four times upstairs , but had managed to get downstairs where a struggle took place , during which he was hit several times with the rifle and shot again , this time fatally .

There were two wounds to his right side , and two to the top of his head , which would probably have resulted in unconsciousness . The left side of his lip was wounded , his jaw was fractured , and his teeth , neck and larynx were damaged . The pathologist said he would have had difficulty speaking . There were gunshot wounds to his left shoulder and left elbow . He also had black eyes , a broken nose , bruising to the cheeks , cuts on the head , bruising to the right forearm , and circular burn @-@ type marks on his back , consistent with his having been hit with the rifle . One of the pillars of the prosecution case was that Sheila would not have been strong enough to inflict this beating on Nevill , who was 6 ft 4 in ( 1 @. @ 93 m ) tall and by all accounts in good health .

===== June =====

The court heard that the other four bodies were found upstairs . June 's body was heavily bloodstained . She was found lying on the floor in the master bedroom by the doorway , bare @-@ footed and wearing her nightdress . She had been shot seven times ; one shot to her forehead between her eyes , and another to the right side of her head , would have caused her death quickly . There were also shots to the right side of her lower neck , her right forearm , and two injuries on the right side of her chest and her right knee . The police believed she had been sitting up during part of the attack , based on the pattern of blood on her clothing . Five of the shots occurred when the gun was at least a foot from her body . The shot between her eyes was from less than one foot .

===== Daniel and Nicholas =====

The boys were found in their beds , shot through the head . They appeared to have been shot while in bed . Daniel had been shot five times in the back of the head , four times with the gun held within one foot of his head , and once from over two feet away . Nicholas had been shot three times , all contact or close @-@ proximity shots .

===== Sheila =====

The court heard that Sheila was found on the floor of the master bedroom with her mother . She was in her nightdress and bare @-@ footed , with two bullet wounds under her chin , one on her throat . The pathologist , Dr. Peter Vanezis , said that the lower of the injuries had occurred from three inches ( 76 mm ) away , and that the higher one was a contact injury . The higher of the two would have killed her immediately . The lower injury would have killed her too , he said , but not necessarily straightaway . Vanezis testified that it would be possible for a person with such an injury to stand up and walk around , but the lack of blood on her nightdress suggested to him that she had not done this . He believed that the lower of her injuries had happened first , because it had caused bleeding inside the neck ; the court heard that if the immediately fatal wound had happened first ,

the bleeding would not have occurred to the same extent . Vanesiz said that the pattern of blood stains on her nightdress suggested she had been sitting up when she received both injuries .

There were no marks on her body suggestive of a struggle . The firearms officer who first saw her said her feet and hands were clean , her fingernails manicured and not broken , and her fingertips free of blood , dirt or powder . There was no trace of lead dust . The rifle magazine would have been loaded at least twice during the killings ; this would usually leave lubricant and material from the bullets on the hands . A scenes @-@ of @-@ crimes officer , DC Hammersley , said there were blood stains on the back of her right hand , but that otherwise her hands were clean .

There was no blood on her feet or other debris , such as the sugar that was on the downstairs floor . Low traces of lead were found on her hands and forehead at postmortem , but the levels were consistent with the everyday handling of things around the house . A scientist , Mr Elliott , testified that if she had loaded 18 cartridges into a magazine he would expect to see more lead on her hands . The blood on her nightdress was consistent with her own , and no trace of firearm @-@ discharge residue was on it . Blood and urine samples indicated that she had taken the anti @-@ psychotic drug haloperidol , and several days earlier had used cannabis .

The rifle , without the suppressor or sights attached , was lying on her body pointing up at her neck . June 's Bible lay on the floor to the right of Sheila . It was normally kept in a bedside cupboard . June 's fingerprints were on it , as were others that could not be identified , including one made by a child .

= = Police investigation = =

= = = Criticism = = =

Journalist David Connett , who attended the trial , writes that it was by common consent a poor investigation . The trial judge , Mr Justice Drake , expressed concern about what he called a " less than thorough investigation . " Claire Powell wrote that " doing a Bamber " briefly became police slang for making a mess of a case .

According to Connett , the officer in charge , DCI " Taff " Jones , deputy head of CID , was told that it was a " domestic , " and went off to play golf . Jones became so convinced of the murder ? suicide theory that he ordered Bamber 's cousins out of his office when they asked him to consider whether Bamber had set the whole thing up . Evidence was not recorded or preserved , and three days after the killings the police burned bloodstained bedding and a carpet , apparently to spare Bamber 's feelings . The inquest opened on 14 August 1985 , and the police gave evidence that it was a murder ? suicide .

The scenes @-@ of @-@ crime officer did not find the silencer in the cupboard . It was found by one of Bamber 's cousins days later , and it took the police three days to collect it from them . The same officer moved the rifle without wearing gloves , and it was not examined for fingerprints until weeks later . The Bible found with Sheila was not examined at all . Connett writes that a hacksaw blade that might have been used to gain entry to the house lay in the garden for months . Officers did not take contemporaneous notes ; those who had dealt with Bamber wrote down their statements weeks later . Bamber 's clothes were not examined until one month later . The bodies were cremated . Ten years later all blood samples were destroyed .

Unlike DCI Jones , his junior officers were suspicious of Bamber , and when Jones was removed from the case , they began to look more closely at him . ( Jones died before the case came to court after falling from a ladder at his home . ) Bamber 's behaviour after the funeral increased suspicion that he had been involved . The Times reported that , immediately after the bodies were found , he broke down and was offered tea and whisky by police , and apparently managed to persuade them to burn bedding and carpets inside the house . He wept openly at the funerals , supported by his girlfriend , Julie Mugford , after which he flew to Amsterdam , where he apparently tried to buy a consignment of drugs and offered to sell nude photographs of Sheila to tabloid newspapers . He also invited friends to expensive champagne @-@ and @-@ lobster dinners . His behaviour served



to draw police attention to him .

= = = Fingerprints on rifle = = =

A print from Sheila 's right ring finger was found on the right side of the butt , pointing downwards . A print from Bamber 's right forefinger was on the breech ( rear ) end of the barrel , above the stock and pointing across the gun . He said he had used the gun to shoot rabbits . There were three further prints of insufficient detail to be identified .

= = = Silencer = = =

On the day of the murders , the police searched the gun cupboard in the ground @-@ floor office , but did not examine it closely or search for the silencer or sights for the rifle . Three days later , members of Bamber 's extended family visited the farm with Basil Cock , the estate 's executor . During that visit one of Bamber 's cousins , David Boutflour , found the silencer and sights in the cupboard . The court heard that several people had witnessed this discovery : Boutflour 's father and sister ; the farm secretary ; and Basil Cock . The family took the silencer to Boutflour 's sister 's home to examine it . They said they found the surface of it had been damaged and that there seemed to be red paint and blood on it . They told the police about their find , and the police collected the silencer from them on 12 August , five days after the murders . At that point the police reportedly noticed an inch @-@ long grey hair attached to the silencer , but this was lost before the silencer arrived at the Forensic Science Service at Huntingdon .

The family returned to the farmhouse to search for the source of the red paint , and found what they said was recent damage to the underside of the red @-@ painted mantelpiece above the Aga cooker in the kitchen . A scenes @-@ of @-@ crime officer , DI Cook , took a paint sample from the mantelpiece on 14 August , and it contained the same 15 layers of paint and varnish that were in the paint flake on the silencer . On 1 October casts were taken of the marks on the mantel , and the marks were deemed consistent with the silencer having come into contact with the mantelpiece more than once . In February 2010 Bamber 's legal team submitted evidence that they said showed the marks had been created after the crime @-@ scene photographs were taken ( see below ) .

A scientist at the Forensic Science Laboratory , Mr. Hayward , found blood on the inside and outside surface of the silencer , the latter not enough to permit analysis . The blood inside was found to be the same blood group as Sheila 's , although it might have been a mixture of Nevill 's and June 's . A firearms expert , a Mr. Fletcher , said the blood was backspatter , caused by a close @-@ contact shooting . Tests at the lab indicated that it would have been physically impossible for Sheila to have reached the trigger to shoot herself with the silencer attached .

= = = Julie Mugford 's allegations = = =

= = = Background = = =

A month after the murders Bamber 's girlfriend , Julie Mugford , changed her statement , as a result of which Bamber was arrested . He and Mugford had started dating in 1983 when she was a 19 @-@ year @-@ old student at Goldsmith 's College in London ; she was still studying there when the killings occurred . Mugford admitted to a brief background of dishonesty . She had been cautioned in 1985 for using a friend 's chequebook to obtain goods worth around £ 700 , after it had been reported stolen ; she said she and the friend had repaid the money to the bank . She also acknowledged having helped Bamber in March or April 1985 to steal just under £ 1 @,@ 000 from the office of the Osea Road caravan site his family owned ; she said he had staged a break @-@ in to make it appear that strangers were responsible . The admission added to the picture of her own and Bamber 's lack of credibility .

As part of their submission to the Criminal Cases Review Commission in 2012 , Bamber 's lawyers

found a letter dated 26 September 1985 showing that the assistant director of public prosecutions who prepared the case against Bamber had suggested that Mugford not be prosecuted for the burglary , the cheque fraud , and for a further offence of selling cannabis . She subsequently testified against Bamber during his trial in October 1986 . The judge told the jury that they could convict Bamber on Mugford 's testimony alone .

= = = Statements to police = = =

Mugford was at first supportive of Bamber after the murders ; newspaper photographs of the funeral show him weeping and hanging onto her arm . On the day after the killings , she told police that she had received a telephone call from him at about 3 : 30 am on 7 August , shortly after the murders , during which he sounded worried and said , " There 's something wrong at home . " She said she had been tired and had not asked what it was .

Her position toward Bamber changed on 3 September 1985 , after they rowed about his involvement with another woman . She threw something at him , slapped him , and he twisted her arm up her back . She went to the police four days later and changed her statement . In the second statement she said he had talked disparagingly about his " old " father , his " mad " mother , his sister who he said had nothing to live for , and the twins who he said were disturbed . Bamber denied having said these things and argued that Mugford was motivated by jealousy , but other witnesses offered similar testimony . Mugford 's mother said Bamber had told her he hated his adoptive mother , and that he had described her as mad . A friend of Mugford 's testified that Bamber had said around February 1985 that his parents kept him short of money , his mother was a religious freak , and " I fucking hate my parents . " A farm worker testified that Bamber seemed not to get on with Sheila and had once said : " I 'm not going to share my money with my sister . "

In discussions Mugford said she had dismissed as fantasies , she alleged that Bamber had said he wanted to sedate his parents and set fire to the farmhouse . He reportedly said Sheila would make a good scapegoat . Mugford alleged he had discussed entering the house through the kitchen window because the catch was broken , and leaving it via a different window that latched when it was shut from the outside .

She said she had spent the weekend before the murders with him in his cottage in Goldhanger , where he had dyed his hair black . She also said that she had seen his mother 's bicycle there . This was significant because the prosecution alleged that he had used the bicycle to cycle between his cottage and the farmhouse on the night of the murders . She told police Bamber had telephoned her at 9 : 50 pm on 6 August to say he had been thinking about the crime all day , was pissed off , and that it was " tonight or never . " A few hours later , at 3 : 00 ? 3 : 30 am on 7 August , she said he phoned her again to say : " Everything is going well . Something is wrong at the farm . I haven 't had any sleep all night ... bye honey and I love you lots . " Her flatmates ' evidence suggested that call had come through closer to 3 am . He called her later during the morning of 7 August to tell her that Sheila had gone mad , and that a police car was coming to pick her up and bring her to the farmhouse . When she arrived there , she said he had pulled her to one side and said : " I should have been an actor . "

Later that evening , on 7 August , she asked Bamber whether he had done it . He said no , but that a friend of his had , whom he named ; the man was a plumber the family had used in the past . Bamber allegedly said he had told this friend how he could enter and leave the farmhouse undetected , and that one of his instructions had been for the friend to telephone him from the farm on one of the phones in the house that had a memory redial facility , so that if the police checked it , it would give him an alibi . Everything had gone as planned , he said , except that Nevill had put up a fight , and the friend had become angry and shot him seven times . The friend had allegedly told Sheila to lie down and shoot herself last , Bamber said . The friend then placed the Bible on her chest so she appeared to have killed herself in a religious frenzy . The children were shot in their sleep , he said . Mugford said Bamber claimed to have paid the friend £ 2 @ , @ 000 .

= = = Bamber 's arrest = = =

As a result of Mugford 's statement Bamber was arrested on 8 September 1985 , as was the friend Mugford said he had implicated , although the latter had a solid alibi and was released . Bamber told police Mugford was lying because he had jilted her . He said he loved his parents and sister , and denied that they had kept him short of money ; he said the only reason he had broken into the caravan site with Mugford was to prove that security was poor . He said he had occasionally gained entry to the farmhouse through a downstairs windows , and had used a knife to move the catches from the outside . He also said he had seen his parents ' wills , and that they had left the estate to be shared between him and Sheila . As for the rifle , he told police the gun was used mostly with the silencer off because it would otherwise not fit in its case .

He was bailed from the police station on 13 September , after which he went on holiday to Saint @-@ Tropez . Before leaving England , he returned to the farmhouse , gaining entry by the downstairs bathroom window . He said he did this because he had left his keys in London and needed some papers from the house for the trip to France ; he entered through the window rather than borrow keys from the farm 's housekeeper who lived nearby . When he returned to England on 29 September , he was re @-@ arrested and charged with the murders .

= = Trial , October 1986 = =

Bamber was tried in October 1986 before Mr Justice Drake and a jury at Chelmsford Crown Court , during a trial that lasted 19 days . The prosecution was led by Anthony Arlidge QC , and the defence by Geoffrey Rivlin QC , supported by Ed Lawson , QC . The Times wrote that Bamber cut an arrogant figure in the witness box . At one point when prosecutors accused him of lying , he replied : " That is what you have got to establish . "

= = = Prosecution case = = =

The prosecution case was that Bamber had been motivated by hatred and greed . They argued that he had left the farm around 10 pm on 6 August 1985 , and returned by bicycle in the early hours of the morning , using a route that avoided the main roads . He had entered the house through a downstairs bathroom window , taken the rifle with the silencer attached , and gone upstairs .

He had shot June in her bed , but she had managed to get up and walk a few steps before collapsing and dying . He had shot Nevill in the bedroom too , but Nevill was able to get downstairs where he and Bamber had fought in the kitchen , before Bamber shot him several times in the head . He had shot Sheila in the main bedroom , and had shot the children in their beds , in their own bedroom , as they slept .

They argued that Bamber had then set about arranging the scene to make it appear that Sheila was the killer . He had discovered that she could not have reached the trigger with the silencer attached , so he had removed it and placed it in the cupboard , then placed a Bible next to her body to introduce a religious theme . He had removed the kitchen phone from its hook , left the house via a kitchen window , and banged it from the outside so that the catch dropped back into position . He had then cycled home . Shortly after 3 am , he had telephoned Mugford , then the police at 3 : 26 am to say he had just received a frantic call from his father . To create a delay before the bodies were discovered , he had not called 999 , had driven slowly to the farmhouse , and had told police that his sister was familiar with guns , so that they would be reluctant to enter .

The prosecution argued that Bamber had not received a call from his father , that Nevill was too badly injured after the first shots to have spoken to anyone , that there was no blood on the kitchen phone that had been left dangling , and that Nevill would have called the police before calling Bamber . The prosecution position was that , if the call to Bamber really had been the last thing the father had done before shots were fired , and if he thereafter dropped the receiver , the line to Bamber 's home would have remained open for one to two minutes , and Bamber would not have been able to telephone the police immediately to let them know about his father 's call , as he said he had . That the line would not have cleared in time for him to call the police is one of several

disputed points .

The silencer played a central role . It was deemed to have been on the rifle when it was fired , because of the blood found inside it . The prosecution said the blood had come from Sheila 's head , when the silencer was pointed at her . Expert evidence was submitted that , given her injuries after the first shot , Sheila could not have shot herself , placed the silencer in the downstairs cupboard , then run back upstairs to where her body was found . There was also expert testimony that there were no traces of gun oil on her nightdress , despite 25 shots having been fired and the gun having been reloaded at least twice .

Prosecutors argued that , had Sheila killed her family then discovered she could not commit suicide with the silencer fitted , it would have been found next to her ; there was no reason for her to have returned it to the gun cupboard . That she had carried out the killings was further discounted because , it was argued , she was mentally well at the time , had no interest in or knowledge of guns , lacked the strength to overcome her father , and there was no evidence on her clothes or body that she had moved around the crime scene or been involved in a struggle .

= = = Defence case = = =

The defence maintained that the witnesses who said Bamber disliked his family were lying or had misinterpreted his words . Mugford had further lied about Bamber 's confession , they said , because he had betrayed her , and she wanted to stop him from being with anyone else . No one had seen him cycle to and from the farm . There were no marks on him on the night that suggested he had been in a fight , and no blood @-@ stained clothing of his was recovered . The reason he had not gone to the farm as quickly as he should have when his father telephoned was that he was afraid .

They argued that Sheila was the killer , and that she did know how to handle guns , because she had been raised on a farm and had attended shoots when she was younger . She had a very serious mental illness , had said she felt she was capable of killing her children , and the loaded rifle had been left on the kitchen table by Bamber . There had been a recent family argument about placing the children in foster care .

The defence also argued that people who have carried out so @-@ called " altruistic " killings have been known to engage in ritualistic behaviour before killing themselves , and that Sheila might have placed the silencer in the cupboard , changed her clothes and washed herself , which would explain why there was little lead on her hands , or sugar from the floor on her feet . There was also a possibility that the blood in the silencer was not hers , the defence said , but was a mixture of Nevill 's and June 's .

= = = Summing up , verdict = = =

The judge said there were three crucial points , in no particular order . Did the jury believe Julie Mugford or Jeremy Bamber ? Were they sure that Sheila was not the killer who then committed suicide ? He said this question involved another : was the second , fatal , shot fired at Sheila with the silencer on ? If yes , she could not have fired it . Finally , did Nevill call Bamber in the middle of the night ? If there was no such call , it undermined the entirety of Bamber 's story , and the only reason he would have had to invent the phone call was that he was responsible for the murders . The jury found Bamber guilty on 28 October 1986 by a majority of ten to two ; had one more juror supported him , he would not have been convicted . The judge told him he was " evil , almost beyond belief " and sentenced him to five life terms , with a recommendation that he serve at least 25 years .

= = Appeals = =

= = = Leave to appeal refused , 1989 , 1994 = = =

Bamber first sought leave to appeal in November 1986 , arguing that the judge had misdirected the jury . The application was heard and refused by a single judge in April 1988 . Bamber 's lawyer requested a full hearing before three judges , arguing that the trial judge 's summing up had been biased against Bamber , that his language had been too forceful , and that he had undermined the defence by advancing his own theory . The lawyer also argued that the defence had not pressed Julie Mugford about her dealings with the media , but should have , because as soon as the trial was over her story began to appear in newspapers . The judges rejected the application in March 1989 .

Because the trial judge had criticized the police investigation , Essex Police held an internal inquiry , conducted by Detective Chief Superintendent Dickinson . Bamber alleged this report confirmed that evidence had been withheld by the police , so he made a formal complaint , which was investigated in 1991 by the City of London Police . This process uncovered more documentation , which Bamber used to petition the Home Secretary in September 1993 for a referral back to the Court of Appeal , refused in July 1994 .

During this process , the Home Office declined to give Bamber the expert evidence it had obtained , so Bamber applied for judicial review of that decision in November 1994 ; this resulted in the Home Office handing over its expert evidence . In February 1996 the Essex police destroyed many of the original trial exhibits without informing Bamber or his lawyers . The officer responsible said he had not been aware that the case was on @-@ going .

= = = Court of Appeal , 2002 = = =

The Criminal Cases Review Commission ( CCRC ) was established in April 1997 to review allegations of miscarriage of justice , and Bamber 's case was passed to them at that time . The CCRC referred the case to the Court of Appeal in March 2001 on the grounds that new DNA testing on the silencer constituted fresh evidence .

The appeal was heard by Lord Justice Kay , Mr Justice Wright , and Mr Justice Henriques from 17 October to 1 November 2002 , and the decision published on 12 December . The prosecution was represented by Victor Temple QC , and Bamber by Michael Turner QC . Bamber brought 16 issues to the attention of the court , 14 about failure to disclose evidence or the fabrication of evidence , and two ( points 14 and 15 ) related to the silencer and DNA testing . Point 11 was withdrawn by the defence .

Although most of the issues were reviewed by the court , the reason for the referral was point 15 , the discovery of DNA on the silencer , the result of a test not available in 1986 . The silencer evidence during the original trial came from a Mr. Hayward of the Forensic Science Laboratory . He had found human blood inside the silencer , and had stated that its blood group was consistent with it having come from Sheila . He said there was a remote possibility that it was a mixture of blood from Nevill and June .

Mark Webster , an expert instructed by Bamber 's defence team , argued that Hayward 's tests had been inadequate , and that there was a real possibility , not a remote one , that the blood had come from Nevill and June . This was a critical point , because the prosecution case rested on the silencer having been on the gun when Sheila was shot , something she could not have done herself because of the length of her arms . If she was shot with the silencer on the gun , it meant that someone else had shot her . If her blood was inside the silencer it supported the prosecution 's position , but if the blood belonged to someone else , that part of the prosecution case collapsed .

The defence argued that new tests comparing DNA in the silencer to a sample from Sheila 's biological mother suggested that the " major component " of the DNA in the silencer had not come from Sheila . A DNA sample from June 's sister suggested that the major component had come from June , they argued .

The court concluded that June 's DNA was in the silencer , that Sheila 's DNA may have been in the silencer , and that there was evidence of DNA from at least one male . The judges ' conclusion was that the results were complex , incomplete , and also meaningless because they did not establish how June 's DNA came to be in the silencer years after the trial , did not establish that Sheila 's was

not in it , and did not lead to a conclusion that Bamber 's conviction was unsafe . In a 522 @-@ point judgment dismissing the appeal , the judges said that there was no conduct on the part of the police or prosecution that would have adversely affected the jury 's verdict , and that the more they examined the details of the case , the more they thought the jury had been right .

= = = Against whole @-@ life tariff = = =

The trial judge recommended a minimum term of 25 years , but in December 1994 Home Secretary Michael Howard ruled that Bamber should remain in prison for the rest of his life . In May 2008 Bamber lost a High Court appeal against the whole @-@ life tariff before Mr. Justice Tugendhat . This was upheld by the Appeal Court in May 2009 .

Bamber and three other British whole @-@ life prisoners appealed to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg , France , but the appeal was rejected in January 2012 . Bamber and two prisoners , Douglas Vinter and Peter Moore , appealed that decision too , and in July 2013 the European Court 's Grand Chamber ruled that keeping the prisoners in jail with no prospect of release or review may not be compatible with Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights , which prohibits inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment .

= = Criminal Cases Review Commission = =

= = = Campaign = = =

A campaign gathered pace over the years to secure Bamber 's release , and from March 2001 several websites were set up to discuss the evidence . Bamber used one of the websites in 2002 to offer a £ 1m reward for evidence that would overturn his conviction .

His case was taken up by MPs George Galloway and Andrew Hunter , and journalist Bob Woffinden . Woffinden argued between 2007 and 2011 that Sheila had shot her family , then watched as police gathered outside the house before shooting herself . He changed his mind in May 2011 , arguing that evidence in the house had convinced him that Bamber was guilty .

In 2004 Bamber launched a fresh attempt to obtain another appeal , with a new defence team that included Giovanni di Stefano . ( In March 2013 di Stefano was sentenced in the UK to 14 years in prison for having fraudulently presented himself as a lawyer to several clients between 2001 and 2011 . ) Di Stefano applied unsuccessfully in March 2004 to have the Criminal Cases Review Commission ( CCRC ) refer the case back to the Court of Appeal . The defence team made a fresh submission in January 2009 .

= = = Defence arguments = = =

= = = = Crime scene = = = =

The defence argues that the first officers to enter the farmhouse inadvertently disturbed the crime scene , then reconstructed it . Crime @-@ scene photographs not made available to the original defence show Sheila 's right arm and hand in slightly different positions in relation to the gun , which is lying across her body . The gun itself also appears to have moved .

Former Lancashire Detective Chief Superintendent Mick Gradwell , shown the photographs by the Guardian and Observer , said in January 2011 : " The evidence shows , or portrays , Essex police having damaged the scene , and then having staged it again to make it look like it was originally . And if that has happened , and that hasn 't been disclosed , that is really , really serious . "

= = = = Sheila 's body , time of death = = = =

The defence disputes the location of Sheila 's body . The police said they had found her upstairs with her mother , but PC Collins reported seeing through a window what he thought was the body of a woman just inside the kitchen door . Later police reports said that only Nevill had been found in the kitchen . A retired police officer who worked on the case said in 2011 that the first police logs were simply mistaken in reporting that a woman 's body had been found downstairs .

Bamber 's lawyers argue that images of Sheila taken by a police photographer at around 9 am on 7 August 1985 show her blood was still wet , and that , had she been killed before 3 : 30 am as the prosecution said , it would have congealed by 9 am .

= = = = Scratch marks on mantelpiece = = = =

The defence commissioned a report from Peter Sutherst , a British forensic photographic expert , who was asked in 2008 to examine negatives of the kitchen taken on the day of the murders and later . In his report , dated 17 January 2010 , Sutherst argued that scratch marks in paintwork on the kitchen mantelpiece had been created after the crime @-@ scene photographs had been taken . The prosecution alleged that the marks had been made during the struggle in the kitchen between Bamber and his father , as the silencer , attached to the rifle , had scratched against the mantelpiece . The prosecution said that paint chips identical to the paint on the mantelpiece were found on or inside the silencer .

Sutherst said the scratch marks appeared in photographs taken on 10 September 1985 , 34 days after the murders , but were not visible in the original crime @-@ scene photographs . He also said he had failed to find in the photographs any chipped paint on the carpet below the mantelpiece , where it might have been expected to fall had the mantelpiece been scratched during a struggle . He was asked by the CCRC to examine a red spot on the carpet visible in photographs underneath the scratches on the mantelpiece . He said the red spot matched a piece of nail varnish missing from one of Sheila 's toes . He concluded that the scratch marks on the mantel had been created after the day of the murders .

= = = = Police telephone , radio logs = = = =

Police telephone logs had been entered as evidence during the trial , but had not been noticed by Bamber 's lawyers . Bamber 's new defence team said the logs showed that someone calling himself Mr. Bamber had telephoned police on the night of the attack to say his daughter had " gone berserk " with one of his guns . Stan Jones , a former detective sergeant who worked on the case , told the Essex Chronicle in 2010 : " The only person who telephoned the police was Jeremy Bamber . There is no way his father phoned . To suggest it is farcical . "

A separate log of a police radio message shows there was an attempt to speak to someone inside the farmhouse that night , as police waited outside to enter , but there was no response . Police say the officers had simply made a mistake .

= = = = Silencer = = = =

Gun experts commissioned by the defence argued that the injuries were consistent with the silencer not having been used , and that its absence would explain burn marks on Nevill 's body . That the gun had a silencer on it during the murders was central to the prosecution 's case . The experts involved in compiling the report were David Fowler , chief medical examiner for the state of Maryland in the United States ; Ljubisa Dragovic , chief medical examiner of Oakland county in Michigan ; Marcella Fierro , former chief medical examiner for the state of Virginia ; Daniel Caruso , chief of burn services at the Arizona Burn Center ; and Dr. John Manlove , a British forensic scientist .

= = = = Letter regarding Mugford = = = =

Bamber 's lawyers told the press in March 2012 that they had found a letter , dated 26 September 1985 , from John Walker , assistant director of public prosecutions , to the Chief Constable of Essex Police , discussing the prosecution of Bamber . Walker had written that he was suggesting , " with considerable hesitation , " that Mugford be told she would not be prosecuted for drugs offences , burglary and cheque fraud , offences she had confessed to during her police interviews regarding Bamber . Bamber 's lawyers said this raised the possibility that she had been persuaded to testify in the hope that charges would not be pursued . According to the Guardian , the trial judge told the jury that they could convict Bamber based on Mugford 's testimony alone .

= = = CCRC response , 2012 = = =

The CCRC provisionally rejected Bamber 's 2009 submission in February 2011 in an 89 @-@ page document . It invited his lawyers to respond within three months , extended the deadline to allow them to study all 406 crime @-@ scene photographs , then in September 2011 granted them an indefinite period in which to pursue an additional line of inquiry . The CCRC finally rejected the application in April 2012 in a 109 @-@ page report , which said the submission had not identified any new evidence or legal argument that would raise the real possibility of the Court of Appeal overturning the conviction . As of May 2013 , according to his website , Bamber 's defence team was preparing a fresh submission .