

A Brief History of Fingerprinting

- Courtesy yahoo.com

Using fingerprints to identify a person has been used for a lot longer than most people realize. There is good evidence that the Chinese used fingerprints to sign legal documents as long ago as 1000 BC.

In the mid-1800s, French anthropologist Alphonse Bertillon came up with a system to measure and record certain parts of the body. Applying a mathematical formula, he determined that each person's set of measurements was unique.

In 1880, Dr. Henry Faulds suggested that the use of fingerprints for identification purposes might be useful.

Twelve years later, English scientist Sir Francis Galton published the book, 'Finger Prints' which laid out a classification technique for fingerprints. In 1891, Juan Vucetich, a policeman in Argentina, started collecting fingerprint files based on Galton's pattern types, along with each person's Bertillon measurements. The next year, during the investigation of an attempted murder of a woman and the successful killing of her two sons, a blood print was found on a doorpost. Vucetich matched the print to the woman, who was later found guilty for murdering her sons and cutting her own throat to direct

suspicion elsewhere. This was the first criminal case solved using fingerprints. In 1897, Sir Edward Henry modified Galton's system. This new system was soon adopted by Scotland Yard (1901).

In 1903, Will West was sentenced to a term at Leavenworth. However, prison officials soon discovered that West was already incarcerated there, according to their records. Bertillon measurements for William West, who was serving a life sentence for murder, were much the same as this new inmate's. In fact, the two men looked exactly alike. A fingerprint comparison showed obvious dissimilarities, though, and the Bertillon system fell by the wayside in favor of fingerprinting. Henry's system-or variations of it-is what most English speaking countries use today.

What are fingerprints?

Fingerprints are the result of oils from the skin being left behind. Ridges on the skin called friction ridges, create a pattern that is transferred as an individual print.

Prints pressed into a soft substance, resulting in a negative impression are called plastic prints. Prints contaminated with a substance (oil, blood, etc.) are sometimes very clear replicas. Latent prints are hidden and can be found using

chemicals, powders, or other light sources, such as the lasers you might see used on CSI.

Prints will stay where they are until they are obliterated by some physical action - they don't evaporate.

Examination of finger-and palm-prints has three possible outcomes: The person who made them is identified, the person who made them is not identified, or the prints are not useful to determine identification.

If the identification is positive, the print matches the source (a finger) and the previously unknown sample (on a bottle, for example). Because prints are unique to individuals, the match is considered authentic. If the prints do not match, the person in question is cleared of a connection with that object. In some cases, the prints are not clear or a match is not positive (as in the case of a partial print). In this case, the result is undetermined and the person is neither cleared nor implicated.



No, It is not the side effect of the drug.....
He fainted after seeing the medical bills.



The best victory is when the opponent surrenders of its own accord before there are any actual hostilities.....

It is best to win without fighting.

- Sun-tzu (400BC), The Art of War. Planning a Siege