

# Preface

When the group of forensic scientists had their first meeting with the Royal Society of Chemistry to discuss the proposal for a new forensic science textbook, one of the main points of discussion and concern was whether it would attract a significant market. The decision in the end was to continue and provide a book primarily for supporting the teaching of forensic science degree courses in the UK.

At the time of the first meeting and even when the first edition of *Crime Scene to Court* was published in 1998, there was only a handful of universities offering forensic science courses. However, dramatic changes in universities have since led to the introduction of many forensic science courses and this book has become one of the recommended textbooks for many of the courses. Hence, when the book was published it could not have been more timely and subsequently has exceeded all our market expectations.

It has also been extremely pleasing to note that the book, as originally intended, has appealed to a much wider readership. *Crime Scene to Court* has been used and referred to by the courts, forensic scientists, police and scene of crime officers and read by lay people who just have a fascination for the subject. Interestingly, although originally intended for the UK the book now sits on many bookshelves throughout the world. This can possibly be attributed to the fact that all the authors are recognised experts in their discipline within the UK forensic science profession, which has an international reputation.

As with any scientific subject technology moves on and hence there was always going to be the inevitable question of a revised edition. Since its publication some forensic practices, both scientific and professional, have changed and when approached all the authors agreed the need for a second edition. Furthermore, the authors were also prepared to give up their valuable time to revise their own chapters, for which I am indebted.

Readers can now benefit from these revisions which provide details of current crime scene and laboratory scientific practices but again the original philosophy of producing a relatively non-technical textbook has been adhered to. As indicated earlier there have also been changes in professional requirements. Maintaining a respected and professional forensic science service is crucial and accreditation of laboratories and individuals, forensic science teaching and quality assurance are all issues which have received considerable attention during the past few years. I am delighted that Brian Caddy, with his extensive professional knowledge and involvement in many of these matters agreed to revise and contribute to Chapter 1 to help address these issues.

This second edition also gave the opportunity to consider if any other forensic disciplines should be included. Computer based crimes in civil and criminal cases have risen dramatically within the past decade and special units have been set up to examine such crimes. Hence a new chapter covering this topic has been introduced. Jonathan Henry provides the reader with the benefit of his considerable experience by introducing how different computer based media store information which, when skillfully restored, can provide evidence for courts.

The other new chapter considered very worthy of inclusion covers the subject of Blood Pattern Analysis. Adrian Emes and Christopher Price, both involved as trainers for the Forensic Science Service in this discipline, explain how information regarding location, sequence of events, disturbance of a scene and even which samples should be considered for DNA analysis can all be gleaned from the careful examination of a blood pattern found at a scene or on an item.

As editor I am grateful for these contributions from the new authors and would like to express my thanks to all authors for their support, valuable time and for providing readers with the benefits of their expertise and experiences. I would also like to record my thanks to the Royal Society of Chemistry for its support and Lorraine Stewart for assistance with the typing.

Peter White