BBC LEARNING ENGLISH
News Report
Murder Mystery

In 1930, Alfred Rouse **faked** his own death. He **hit a man over the head** and put him in a car, which he then **set alight**, in Hardingstone, a small town in Northamptonshire, UK. Rouse then **fled** to Wales, but his crime was discovered, and he was **convicted** of murder and **hanged**.

But, if Rouse did not die in the burning car, who was the victim? DNA tests are being carried out in the hope of answering this question.

Paul Davies, 63, from South Wales, believes his "missing" great-grandfather could be the mystery man.

Mr Davies said his great-grandfather, James Brick, lived near Rouse's girlfriend. Mr Brick had nine children, but he left his family and disappeared **shortly after** he **inherited** some money.

Rouse was having money problems at the time of the crime. "If Rouse had come across James Brick and learned he had money, it could have been an **incentive** to kill him," says Mr Davies.

Also, like Rouse, Mr Brick had red hair. This could have been another reason for Rouse to choose him as a victim.

Who really died in Alfred Rouse's car? Was it James Brick? Perhaps these questions will be answered soon.

Scientists at Northumbria University have successfully **extracted** DNA from the victim of the murder. It is just possible that they might be able to identify the body, 85 years after the murder **took place**.

Vocabulary

fake
to pretend; to make people believe something which isn't true

hit someone over the head
to hit someone's head

set something alight
to make something burn

fled
the past form of 'flee', meaning to escape from a bad situation by running away

to convict
to officially decide that someone is guilty of a crime

hanged
the past form of 'hang', meaning to kill someone by tying a rope around their neck and then dropping them, especially as a punishment for a crime

shortly after
a short time after

inherit
to receive money or property from someone after they have died

incentive
a reason to do something

extract
to take one thing out of another

take place
to happen

This story is based on an original BBC News story:
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