

11. Pathology

Full or limited autopsy

Full autopsies were conducted in all but seven cases, where the head was not opened for examination of the brain. The reasons given for this were, in one case, specific non-consent from relatives for opening the skull. In five other coronial cases where the clinical history was presented, the pre-mortem clinical data indicated no issue of possible significant brain clinical pathology. This is now regarded as reasonable, as long as it can be justified that little or no pathological purpose may be served by opening the head and rendering the cadaver less presentable to relatives⁴². Interestingly, in one case where the head was not opened, the pituitary was stated to be normal: presumably this reflects over-reliance on a standard autopsy proforma.