

## John George Haigh – the Acid Bath Murderer

Read through the information and answer the questions... if you dare!

Time of terror	9 September 1944 – 18 February 1949
Why did he kill?	For money
Who did he kill?	William McSwan Donald and Amy McSwan Dr Archibald Henderson and his wife Rosalie Mrs Olive Durand-Deacon
What happened to him?	He was hanged on 10 August 1949

John Haigh's first three victims were beaten to death. The last three were shot with a revolver belonging to Dr Henderson. After he had killed them, Haigh says that he drank a cup of the victims' blood.

He then pushed the bodies into a 45-gallon drum. He put on a rubber apron, gloves, wellies and a gas mask and poured concentrated sulfuric acid into the drum. The heat from the action of the sulfuric acid on the bodies dissolved the human bones. Some days later, Haigh returned and emptied the remaining sludge on to nearby waste ground.

Haigh confessed to these crimes but thought that he could not be charged with murder if the bodies were never found. BUT he was wrong. Sulfuric acid is a very strong chemical but it can't dissolve everything, plastic or glass for instance. Parts of the body of Mrs Durand-Deacon and other items were found among the sludge and used to convict Haigh. The police found:

- ★ A gallstone
- ★ Two discs from the lower spine
- ★ False teeth
- ★ A lipstick

Using a different colour highlighter for each question, find the answers in the text and highlight them. Then write the answers in the spaces below.

1 How did Haigh kill his victims?

\_\_\_\_\_

2 What did he use to get rid of the evidence?

\_\_\_\_\_

3 How did he protect himself from the acid?

\_\_\_\_\_

4 Why did he think he would not be charged with murder?

\_\_\_\_\_

5 What went wrong with his plan?

\_\_\_\_\_

6 What scientific fact did Haigh not know?

\_\_\_\_\_