

IN THE MATTER OF LORRAINE KEOGH, Solicitors Clerk

- AND -

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOLICITORS ACT 1974

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Mr. K I B Yeaman (in the Chair)  
Mr. A G Ground  
Dame Simone Prendergast

Date Of Hearing: 11th June 1996

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## FINDINGS

of the Solicitors' Disciplinary Tribunal  
constituted under the Solicitors Act 1974

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An application was duly made on behalf of the Law Society that an order might be made by the Tribunal directing that as from a date to specified in such Order no solicitor should, except in accordance with permission in writing granted by the Law Society for such a period and subject to such conditions as the Society might think fit to specify in the permission, employ or remunerate in connection with the practice as a solicitor Lorraine Keogh a person who was or had been a clerk to a solicitor or that such Order might be made as the Tribunal should think right.

The allegation was that the respondent had occasioned or been a party to with or without the connivance of the solicitor to whom she was or had been a clerk, an act or default in relation to that solicitor's practice which involved conduct on her part of such a nature that in the opinion of the Law Society it would be undesirable for her to be employed by a solicitor in connection with his or her practice.

The application was heard at the Court Room No. 60 Carey Street, London WC2 on the 11th June 1996 when Gerald Malcolm Lynch solicitor and partner in the firm of Drysdales & Janes of 16 Warrior Square, Southend-on-Sea Essex appeared for the applicant and the respondent did not appear and was not represented.

The Tribunal accepted that notice of the proceedings and procedural notices had been duly served upon the respondent by advertisement.

The evidence before the Tribunal included exhibit "LK 1".

At the conclusion of the hearing the Tribunal ORDERED that as from the 11th June 1996 no solicitor should except in accordance with permission in writing granted by the Law Society for such a period and subject to such conditions as the Society might think fit to specify in the permission employ or remunerate in connection with the practice as a solicitor Lorraine Keogh of Croydon a person who was or had been a clerk to a solicitor and the Tribunal further ordered that she do pay the costs of and incidental to the application and enquiry fixed in the sum of £1,752.14p inclusive.

The facts are set out in paragraphs 1 to 4 hereunder:-

1. At the material times the respondent was a secretary/personal assistant in the employ of Messrs Freeman Pollard, solicitors of 13 Radnor Walk, Chelsea, London SW3. Her employment with that firm began on the 11th March 1991 and ended on the 16th April 1991 when she was summarily dismissed.
2. The respondent had in respect of a cheque drawn on the firm's office account in payment on account of her salary, changed a figure of £100 to £1000. That had been intercepted by the firm's bank and the cheque was not paid. The firm did not suffer loss and an apology was received from the respondent upon which basis it was decided that the matter need not be referred to the police, but the respondent was summarily dismissed. The matter was referred to the Solicitors Complaints Bureau (the Bureau).
3. From the copy correspondence which was sent to the Bureau it was clear that the respondent had held herself out to be a trainee solicitor articled to a partner in the firm of Freeman Pollard and also suggested that she was a qualified solicitor.
4. On 8th February 1995 the Conduct Committee of the Adjudication & Appeals Committee of the Solicitors Complaints Bureau resolved that application should be made to the Tribunal for an Order pursuant to Section 43 of the Solicitors' Act 1974.

**The submissions of the applicant**

5. The action of the respondent in forging the salary cheque represented an act of dishonesty in respect of which it was appropriate that a Section 43 Order be made.

The Tribunal FOUND the allegation to have been substantiated. Clearly it was right that this dishonest clerk should not be employed within the solicitors' profession unless the Law Society consented to such employment. The Tribunal made the Order sought and Ordered the respondent to pay the costs of and incidental to the application and enquiry, which in the peculiar circumstances of this particular case, were substantial.

DATED this 19th day of July 1996

on behalf of the Tribunal



K.I.B. Yeaman  
Chairman

Findings filed with the  
Law Society on the 29<sup>th</sup>  
day of July 1996