



Working together for a safer London

SPECIALIST CRIME DIRECTORATE

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Your ref: Letter to dated 7/12/2009
Our ref: 2009120001392

8 December 2009

Dear Sir

I have been asked to respond to your letter addressed to Sir Paul Stephenson QPM dated 7th December 2009.

The Metropolitan Police Service takes the issue of cultural heritage crime very seriously. The Art & Antiques Unit at New Scotland Yard is the only police team within the UK dedicated to investigating such issues.

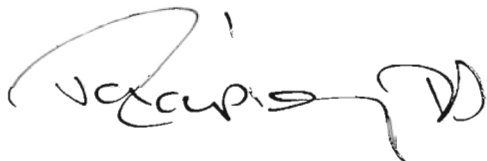
I have carefully read your letter and considered your requests for police intervention.

I am pleased to note that you have addressed your complaint of, possession of stolen goods against the occupants of Broomhall House, to Fife Police. It is correct for them to consider you request. The Metropolitan Police will consider assisting Fife Police if there is a need and if they request us to do so.

I can see no evidence to suggest that the British Museum is handling stolen goods. For goods to be handled the theft must first be proved. Whilst you may believe there to have been a theft or fraud there is no way of testing this theory within a legal framework, as the alleged offender is deceased. It is possible for somebody to be guilty of handling stolen goods or attempting to handle stolen goods, if having received them in good faith they subsequently believe them to be stolen. The British Museum very clearly state, that they do not believe the goods to be stolen and therefore they have no case within the criminal law to answer. The British Museum may not be aware of the evidence you now have. You might like to consider sending the evidence to them, allowing them to consider their position.

With regards to your allegation that the 7th Earl of Elgin bribed and corrupted foreign officials and clerics to illegally obtain sacred goods. This case can not be sent to trial in a criminal law, as the alleged offender is deceased. Without a legal examination of the case, the alleged fraud can not be proved and the property in question can not be shown to be stolen.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vernon Rapley' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Vernon Rapley
Detective Sergeant