

## Claudia Lawrence Timeline

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### Overview

If you are new to the case, or need to remind yourself of the top level, start here. The detail follows on the next page. As always, this is a work in progress so please do let me know if you find more information or any errors. I have spent considerable time checking the details for Wednesday 18th March 2009 in particular. There is a wealth of CCTV sightings and other anecdotes about Claudia's whereabouts on this day, contrasted to the day she did not turn up for work, the Thursday. I believe that too much emphasis has been placed on Claudia coming to harm on the Thursday morning. Whichever way you look at this timeline, it is equally likely that Claudia came to harm on the Wednesday evening, and may not even have been in her own home - the possibility that she slept at home as normal on the Wednesday night has never been proven in any public sources of information. Over to you!

Date	Information / Claim
<b>18.03.2009</b> <b>WEDNESDAY</b>	This is a seemingly routine day in Claudia's life but is vital to the investigation because it establishes some timings and patterns to her daily routine, mainly via CCTV but also via phone records. We know she normally arrives punctually just a couple of minutes before her shift starts at 6am on the dot. We know she leaves around 14:30 and we know (from other sources) that such an early start did tend to mean she went to bed comparatively early each night.
<b>19.03.2009</b> <b>THURSDAY</b>	This day is anything but routine: none of the normal events happens at all. Claudia does not arrive at work by 6am and in fact never arrives at work again. Claudia's father and the police believe she set off from home as normal on this Thursday morning, but she was not capture on any CCTV cameras, not even the one in Melrosegate which is close to her house.
<b>20.03.2009</b> <b>FRIDAY</b>	This is the day when family and friends start to panic and the police are called. The police take Peter Lawrence's missing persons report seriously and dispatch officers to Claudia's house immediately.
<b>GAP</b>	
<b>25.03.2009</b> <b>WEDNESDAY</b>	Detective Superintendent Ray Galloway announces that Claudia "might have come to some harm." There are 100 officers on the case at this point.

## In Depth

Date	Time	Information / Claim	Source	Queries
<b>16.03.2009 MONDAY</b>	14:30 - 15:00	Man in tan coloured jacket seen on phone walking along Heworth Road. He had a rucksack. He knocks on Claudia's door and she lets him in.	Major Lang (Medium)	Who was this man?
	Night	A witness came forward a year after Claudia went missing to state that she stayed out all night, until 5am, on Tuesday 17th with a boyfriend. Could she have been out with the man in the tan coat?	GONE	Any statement made after such a long delay is liable to be unreliable, or is it?
<b>17.03.2009 TUESDAY</b>		Witness suggests that Claudia was 'very tired' at work after drinking in York until 4am and returning home at 5am.	GONE	
	Night	St Patrick's Day. Many of Claudia's circle were from an Irish Catholic background so this would normally be a big night in the Nag's Head. Where was Claudia this night and who was she with, if anyone?	Major Lang (Medium)	
<b>18.03.2009 WEDNESDAY</b>	05:35	The left-handed smoker. A woman and man are seen talking (possibly arguing?) at Melrosegate bridge. They are seen by a cyclist who would not have had long to take in what he saw.	GONE	This sighting is often wrongly attributed to 19th March but might still be important.
	05:57	Claudia is captured on CCTV arriving at work at the Roger Kirk Centre of York University.	GONE	
	14:05 - 14:40	Claudia's mother thinks she had a short phone call with Claudia in this timeframe. Was this conversation during Claudia's walk home?	Major Lang (Medium)	
	14:31	Claudia is captured again on the same CCTV camera walking home after he shift. The York Press website shows that Claudia was spotted by multiple CCTV cameras on campus and can be tracked across a car park heading in the direction of home. Claudia seems to be carrying her jacket in her hand - what was the temperature that day? (It is sunny.)	GONE Major Lang (Medium)	Why have the timestamps on the York Press CCTV been cropped? Major Lang suggests Claudia was on the phone in this footage although it is very grainy. Was she talking to mum?
	14:47 (approx)	Claudia returns to her home from her short errand: Claudia posts a letter at Melrosegate post office and is seen walking in the direction of her house on CCTV at 15:05. The CCTV clearly shows Claudia posting a letter on the York Press website.	GONE Major Lang (Medium)	What was this letter? Who was it to?
	14:47 - 14:50	Claudia is picked up by a female friend called Jo in a car and driven	GONE	

	(approx)	home. This happened after the footage from the postbox. Jo collected Claudia in the layby shown on BBC Crimewatch near 225 Melrosegate Road. It takes just 3-4 minutes to drive from this point to Claudia's home.	BBC Crimewatch	
	14:50 (approx)	Claudia is seen walking <u>away</u> from her home by neighbour and childminder Linda Chapman. Linda spoke to Claudia and is unlikely to be mistaken. Linda reports that Claudia did not seem anxious.	Major Lang (Medium)	Claudia cannot have been inside her house more than a few minutes. Where was she going?
	15:05	Claudia is captured on a different CCTV camera at a private place likely to be near Quartz Travel. This puts Claudia at the junction of Heworth Road and East Parade. She is alone and walking towards her house.	Major Lang (Medium)	Corroborated from police timeline. Why was this footage not shown widely? The police suggest it was so grainy and did not show Claudia's house.
	???	Texts with Suzy Cooper, her close friend. Suzt believes her last text communication was sometime on the Wednesday, but no time is given except 'during the day' which excludes the night. It is most likely that these texts happened mid-afternoon, after Claudia arrived home but before the calls with her parents.	Major Lang (Medium)	
	18:08 18:25 18:42	Claudia texts Steve Sammons in Cyprus three times about plans for a holiday on the island. At around this time, and probably before 19:00, Claudia is also texting Liz Holder, a friend who worked at Boots in the pharmacy.	Major Lang (Medium)	
	19:12	Steve Sammon texts again from Cyprus. This is the crucial 'final' message received by Claudia's phone. It now seems likely that this text was received shortly after 7pm UK time and not 9pm as most sources state. This is because Cyprus is 2 hours ahead of the UK and Steve is in Cyprus giving times out - these were almost certainly local times, as anyone would use local times when talking about anything.	Major Lang (Medium)	If Major Lang is right about the time, and it seems very logical that he is, and the times also fit the rest of the text conversation between Steve and Claudia, then in fact this is <u>not</u> the final text received by the phone. This needs checking.
	19:30	Claudia phones her father. They agree to meet at the Nag's Head on the Friday evening. Major Lang has this call happening at 20:10.	GONE Major Lang (Medium)	
	20:00 - 20:30	Claudia phones her mother and they watch Location, Location, Location on Channel 4 'together' while on the phone. Joan believes her daughter is watching the TV in her bedroom and is either in bed or getting ready to go to bed.	GONE	
	20:23	Claudia texts a friend, Jen King.	GONE Major Lang (Medium)	

	21:00	Location, Location, Location finishes which provides the last possible time for Claudia to talk to her mother, in case Joan is mistaken.	TV Listings	
	21:12	This is the publicly quoted time that Steve Sammon's text arrives from Cyprus. Who is right about this? Claudia's phone receives a text so was still switched on. Nobody knows if she read it, or if she had already gone to bed, or...	GONE	See entry for 19:12
	21:00 - 21:30	This is the sort of time Claudia would normally go to bed when she had to be up at 5am for work, unless she had social plans. Was she even in her own house at this point? All her friends and family seem to believe so.	GONE Police	
	21:01 - 21:37	Bus CCTV footage shows a Ford Ranger Thunder parked outside the house next to Claudia's at 21:01, 48 Heworth Road. It is seen later by another Bus camera leaving the area at 21:37. What was this car doing there? This is the same Bus camera that spotted a white Vauxhall Astra van parked in Claudia's road on the other side to her house. It was not 'opposite' as mentioned in various sources but some distance away and its presence is still interesting. This van belonged to Concrete Grinding Limited of Huddersfield.	Major Lang (Medium)	
<b>19.03.2009 THURSDAY</b>	05:00 - 06:00	None of the CCTV cameras between Claudia's house and the university capture her image as they had done the previous day. If she ever set off for work, something odd must have happened very quickly during the walk.  However, BBC Crimewatch did show CCTV footage of several men in the area around Claudia's house at this time, and York Press shows several people walking past the post office at around the time Claudia would have been expected there.	BBC Crimewatch	
	05:42	Police have shown CCTV of a Ford Focus driving slowly (around 20mph) outside Claudia's house and braking at an unexpected spot. Was it stopping outside Claudia's? Sadly it moves out of view. This is too late for Claudia to start walking to work. Was this car giving her a lift? Major Lang believes this to have been a taxi. Maybe it was just braking to pass a parked car - the footage also shows a shadow that could be a car parked opposite Claudia's house.	Major Lang (Medium)	The police think this car is significant. Major Lang believes the police have muddled up the times of the CCTV footage. It would have been better had the police shared the timestamps. Claudia had told Liz the day before that she planned to walk to work, not get a taxi. Did her plans change at the last minute? The timing of this Ford Focus could be critical: if it was around 05:15 it could be someone hoping to catch Claudia during her walk. If it was nearer 05:45 it could be a taxi giving her a lift to work.

	06:00	Claudia fails to show up for her shift at York University.		
	06:05 - 06:10	This is the moment when a parked car is seen on Melrosegate with the <u>passenger</u> door left open and a couple (male and female) arguing at the side of the road. This is too late to have been Claudia, unless something had started going wrong much earlier. How did she get past the Melrosegate Post Office camera without being seen? The implication is that she was a passenger in this car, an argument had started, and Claudia had forced the car to stop and jumped out.	BBC Crimewatch Major Lang (Medium)	The woman has never been shown to be Claudia. However, the location of the parked car is the perfect point to drop off someone who worked at the university: there is an obvious and logical cut-through for a pedestrian at this point on Claudia's route. This is one point of evidence that might suggest Claudia stayed at another location to home on the Wednesday night, and this person drove her to work and dropped her off, albeit a little bit late. Crimewatch shows this as a red estate car. A maroon Volvo estate was owned by someone at 19 Heworth Place, very close to Claudia's house.
	06:45 - 06:55	A male is seen outside Claudia's house.		
	10:00?	Claudia's employer rings her mobile and leaves a message in an attempt to find out why she did not arrive at work.	BBC Crimewatch	
	12:10	Claudia's phone powers down. Her Samsung D900 had a battery life of 2-3 days and it was Claudia's constant link to the world and her friends and family. It is not believed therefore that this phone had a flat battery: it is believed that someone other than Claudia willfully switched it off.	GONE	The police know where this phone was when it went offline.
	13:00?	A backpack similar to Claudia's is seen near the university.	Various	Never proved to be Claudia's backpack and could be a distraction.
	Evening	Claudia had arranged to meet Suzy Cooper in the Nag's Head but does not show up. Suzy leaves her some teasing voice messages about the miscommunication. Why does Suzy not think to knock on Claudia's front door, which is just a few houses and a thirty second walk from the pub? Jen King is on duty behind the bar and they discuss Claudia's no-show.	GONE Major Lang (Medium)	Does this suggest that there was nothing surprising about the crossed wire? Perhaps this had happened before.
<b>20.03.2009 FRIDAY</b>	10:30	Suzy has still not heard from Claudia and is getting worried. This time when she calls Claudia's phone she cannot leave a message because she just hears the recording 'unavailable'. Suzy calls the Nag's Head landlord Simon 'George' Forman, who knocks on Claudia's front door but gets no response. Suzy calls the hospital next, followed by Claudia's father, Peter. Peter then calls the university who confirm she did not arrive at work the day before and	GONE	What time did George knock on the door?

		they had left her a voice message to call them, but she had not responded.		
	Later	Peter drives 20 miles from his home to the Nag's Head. He collects the landlord, Forman, and uses his set of keys to get into Claudia's house. It is eerily normal. The only things missing are Claudia's rucksack with her chef whites and her mobile phone. Her handbag and bank cards are in the property. Peter says she would not normally take these to work, and this is when the belief that Claudia left for work as normal on Thursday morning begins.	GONE	
	14:00	Peter calls the police at this point to report his daughter missing. The audio was aired on BBC Crimewatch	BBC Crimewatch	

## Sources

- Book: ***GONE*** by Neil Root, 2013
- **BBC Crimewatch**, June 2009  
<https://youtu.be/l-yK5SvGLIs?t=158>
- **York Press**, various articles  
Excellent CCTV resource: <https://www.yorkpress.co.uk/Video/96968>
- **The Guardian** has [more CCTV footage](#)
- **YouTube** CCTV footage released by police, including news of 3 arrests in 2015: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elCmgdh3o-g>
- [News of the police search of gravel pits](#) in summer 2021
- [Major Lang on Medium](#) is a brilliantly rich source of information and he has carried out some primary research
- [Another excellent Medium article](#) by Krystyna, who knew Claudia and her circle