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Federal Bureau of Investigation

Prosecutive Report of Investigation Concerning



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Roy Bryant - Deceased;
John William Milam, also known as J.W. Milam - Deceased;
Leslie F. Milam - Deceased;
Melvin L. Campbell - Deceased;
Elmer O. Kimbrell - Deceased;
Hubert Clark - Deceased;
Levi Collins, also known as, Too Tight Collins - Deceased;
Johnny B. Washington - Deceased;
Otha Johnson Jr. also known as Oso - Deceased;


Emmett Louis Till - Deceased - Victim;
Civil Rights - Conspiracy
Domestic Police Cooperation

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IV. INVESTIGATION OF THE OFFENSE: The kidnaping and murder of Emmett Till has been the subject of numerous books, academic studies, documentary films and news stories. During the course of this investigation some authors and producers of these works provided copies of transcripts and raw film footage of interviews they had conducted during the course of their work. Throughout this report the statements made during these interviews are provided in the interest of corroboration, or lack thereof, to contemporary interviews conducted during the course of the investigation. The circumstances surrounding these interviews cannot be determined or evaluated. The circumstances surrounding third party witness interviews – how the witnesses were prepared, and, what, if any, inducement or influence was involved – is not known.

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A. Time Line:

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Saturday – August 20-21, 1955: Emmett Till and [redacted] residents of Chicago, Illinois, travel to Mississippi with Mose Wright.

Wednesday – August 24, 1955 - Evening: Till entered Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market in Money, Mississippi. Carolyn Bryant-Donham alleged Till accosted her and exited the store. Bryant-Donham followed Till out so she could retrieve a pistol from a car and upon Bryant-Donham's exit, Till whistled at her.

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Saturday – August 27, 1955 – Evening: [redacted] a black teenager, entered Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market in Money, Mississippi. [redacted] was verbally confronted by Roy Bryant about being from Chicago. [redacted] related that a similar incident (likely the same instance) occurred on this night and she told Roy Bryant that the boy [redacted] wasn't the right person and the confrontation ended.

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Sometime between Wednesday – August 24, 1955 and Saturday – August 27, 1955 – Dusk: [redacted] a black teenager, was walking north from Money, Mississippi, when J.W. Milam, Roy Bryant, J.W. Washington and [redacted] came up behind him in a pickup truck. Washington, at Roy Bryant's direction, took [redacted] and threw him in the truck. [redacted] told Roy Bryant that [redacted] wasn't the right person and [redacted] was released.

Sunday – August 28, 1955 – 2:30 a.m.: Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam came to Mose Wright's home, east of Money, Mississippi, looking for the boy that "did the talking" in Money, Mississippi. Till was taken from the home and someone with a "lighter voice than a man's" identified Till as the right person as they left.

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Sunday – August 28, 1955 – Time Unknown, Early Morning: Roy Bryant, J.W. Milam and a man named Kimbrell brought Till to [redacted] at Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market in Money, Mississippi.

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Sunday – August 28, 1955 – Time Unknown, Early Morning: [redacted] and Leslie Milam were awakened by either J.W. Milam or Roy Bryant. [redacted] overheard Leslie Milam telling whomever to take the boy back where they got him.

Sunday – August 28, 1955 – 6:00 – 7:00 a.m.: Willie Reed observed four white men and three black men in a truck with Till entering Leslie Milam's farm on the Clint Shurden Plantation outside of Drew, Mississippi. Reed then heard the sounds of someone being beaten inside a barn.

Sunday – August 28, 1955 – 6:30 – 7:00 a.m.: Willie Reed came to Mandy Bradley's home. Bradley observed four white men and a truck by a barn at Leslie Milam's farm. One of the men was tall and bald.

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Sunday - August 28, 1955 - 8:00 a.m.: Add Reed walked past a shed and an oat bin on Leslie Milam's farm and observed Leslie Milam and another man there.

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Sunday - August 28, 1955 - Early Morning: [redacted] and [redacted] observed a fire in a barrel outside of J.W. Milam's home in Glendora, Mississippi.

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Sunday - August 28, 1955 - Morning: [redacted] [redacted] observed Otha Johnson Jr., Levi "Too Tight" Collins, and J.W. Milam with Milam's truck at Milam's gas station/store in Glendora. [redacted] saw that something was under a tarpaulin in the bed of the truck and blood was dripping from the bed of the truck. When [redacted] asked about the blood, J.W. Milam threatened him. Milam called for a man [redacted] knew as [redacted] to join the group, they drove to the Glendora Cotton Gin and then departed town.

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Sunday - August 28, 1955 - 10:00 a.m.: Levy "Too Tight" Collins paid [redacted] [redacted] 25 cents to clean blood out of the back of J.W. Milam's truck while it was parked by Milam's gas station/store in Glendora.

Sunday - August 28, 1955 - 2:00 p.m.: Leflore County Sheriff George Smith questioned Roy Bryant about Till's disappearance. Bryant admitted to taking Till from Mose Wright's home and bringing him to Carolyn Bryant-Donham at the store in Money. He further claimed that Till was then released. Bryant was placed under arrest.

Monday - August 29, 1955 - Time Unknown: J.W. Milam appeared at the Leflore County Jail. Milam talked with Deputy John Ed Cothran and admitted to taking Till from Mose Wright's home, taking him to Money, Mississippi and letting him go. Milam was placed under arrest.

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Wednesday - August 31, 1955 - 6:30 - 7:00 a.m.: [redacted] "Robert" Hodges discovered a body floating in the Tallahatchie River north of Phillip, Mississippi. The body was later identified as being Emmett Till.

Wednesday - August 31, 1955: Till's body was recovered from the Tallahatchie River and transported to the Century Burial and Funeral Home in Greenwood, Mississippi. It was later transported to Chicago for viewing, a funeral and burial.

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B. Sequence of Events:

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1. **Saturday/Sunday - August 20-21, 1955:** Emmett Till, Mose Wright and [redacted]

[redacted] departed Chicago, Illinois via train and arrived in Mississippi. Till and [redacted] were scheduled to return to Chicago two weeks later. Till's mother, Mamie Till-Mobley, had given Till his deceased father's ring prior to his leaving Chicago.^{50, 51, 52}

2. **Wednesday - August 24, 1955:**

SUN		MOON	
Begin Civil Twilight	5:03 a.m.	Moonset on the Preceding Day	9:53 p.m.
Sunrise	5:29 a.m.	Moonrise	12:17 p.m.
Sunset	6:37 p.m.	Moonset	10:34 p.m.
End Civil Twilight	7:03 p.m.	Moonrise on the Following Day	1:11 p.m.
Weather			
High Temperature	92 degrees		
Low Temperature	71 degrees		
Precipitation	None		
Meteorological, Light and Weather Data			

All moon and light data used throughout this report was obtained from the United States Naval Observatory, Astronomical Applications Department. Weather data used throughout this report was obtained from the *Greenwood Commonwealth* newspaper.⁵³

a. **August 24, 1955 - 8:00 p.m. - Money, Mississippi:** Till, his cousins, and

members of the Wright family traveled to Money, Mississippi and visited Bryant's Grocery & Meat

Market. With Till were [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]

[redacted] Maurice Wright (deceased) and Curtis Jones (deceased). Also at the store that evening

was [redacted] and [redacted] the [redacted]. Upon arriving several black

persons were already present at the store on the front porch, playing checkers. Till entered the store

⁵⁰ *Death of Innocence, The Story of The Hate Crime That Changed America*, Maime Till-Mobley and Christopher Benson, 2003

⁵¹ [redacted]
⁵² [redacted]

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⁵³ [redacted] Moon and Light Data, April 14, 2005 [redacted]

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alone, followed shortly thereafter by his cousin, [REDACTED] who entered the store and came out with Till. Shortly after Till and [REDACTED] exited the store [REDACTED] exited as well. Upon [REDACTED] exit, Till whistled.

• **Carolyn Bryant-Donham:** During the trial of J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant for the murder of Emmett Till, Bryant-Donham testified on behalf of the defense, out of the presence of the jury. Bryant-Donham stated that on the evening of August 24, 1955 she was tending the store alone. Her sister-in-law, Juanita Milam, was in the living quarters at the rear of the store, taking care of the Milam and Bryant children. At about 8:00 p.m., a "nigger man came in the store and he stopped there at the candy case." Bryant-Donham waited on the customer, but did not recall at the time of her testimony what he had purchased. Bryant-Donham placed the item on the candy case and held her right hand out for the money. Instead of taking the money from her hand, the customer "caught my hand", holding her hand by grasping all the fingers in the palm of his hand with a strong grip. When he grabbed her hand he asked "How about a date, baby?" Bryant-Donham "jerked" her hand loose and turned to go to the back of the store. The customer followed her down the counter to the cash register, "caught" her by the waist with his hands and said, "What's the matter, baby? Can't you take it?" Bryant-Donham, with difficulty, freed herself from his grasp. He then stated, "You needn't be afraid of me" and used language Bryant-Donham did not use, including "one unprintable word", and "with white women before." Bryant-Donham stated this incident left her "just scared to death." About that time "this other nigger came in the store and got him by the arm", telling the customer "come on and let's go". The customer left the store unwillingly, stating as he went out "Good-by". Upon the

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customer's leaving Bryant-Donham "called out" to Juanita Milam "to watch me" and Bryant-Donham ran out the door to Juanita Milam's car to retrieve her [Bryant-Donham's] pistol. When Bryant-Donham exited the front of the store, she saw the customer again, "standing by one of the posts on the front porch" and "He whistled and then came out in the road." Bryant-Donham retrieved the pistol from under the driver's seat, turned around and observed the customer getting in a car. Juanita Milam had been at the store so that Bryant-Donham would not be alone while her husband, Roy Bryant, was in Brownsville, Texas taking a load of shrimp there from New Orleans, Louisiana.⁵⁴

[redacted] described that when she "called out" to [redacted] that "...I had screamed for [redacted] and screamed for [redacted]..." "...as soon as he touched me I started screaming for [redacted]..." and the statements made to her by the customer on this day had left her with the impression he would be back at a later time. Additionally, [redacted] stated that during the incident she had reached for a pistol which was normally kept underneath the store counter, but the weapon was not there and she retrieved the pistol from under the driver's seat of [redacted] vehicle, which [redacted] had been driving.^{55, 56} [redacted] [redacted] also stated she was not the person who initially told Roy Bryant what had happened in the store saying, "...I didn't say anything and one of the reasons I, I didn't say, ever say anything more about it, was because I was afraid that, what I was worried about was he's gonna go find and beat him up." And "...I told [redacted] what

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⁵⁴ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Mrs. Roy Bryant, 258 to 277

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had happened, I asked her not to tell J.W., because I didn't intend to tell Roy, because I was afraid of what they would do." 57, 58

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Additionally, on this night [redacted] recalled sleeping at [redacted] home. 59

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• [redacted] Recently, [redacted] stated she was not at the store when this incident occurred saying "I thought I was in Greenville." [redacted] stated she "...would not have been babysittin for her..." and that when Roy went out of town [redacted] did not stay with [redacted] saying "...I'm sure I didn't, no." and speculated that [redacted] may have made the story up stating "...the only way I can figure it is that she did not want to take care of the store. She thought this wild story would make Roy take care of the store instead of leavin' her with the kids and the store. That is a [redacted] point of view." "...the only thing to me that would upset her would be if she wanted Roy to stay at the store more..." A review of Juanita Milam's trial testimony reveals she did not make any statements, nor was she questioned about, the incident at the store or her presence at Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market on the day Till whistled at Carolyn Bryant-Donham. 60, 61

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• [redacted] [redacted] stated that Till had not been in Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market prior to Wednesday, August 24, 1955. On that day, [redacted] Till, [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] and others went to the store. Till went into the store alone, or as [redacted] was leaving, with [redacted] entering the store

60 Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie Misc O/S County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Mrs. J.W. Milam, 277 to 281

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as Till finished his purchase. "...Maurice told me to go in behind him and make sure he didn't say anything that he shouldn't have, but I don't know if he said anything before I got there, I don't know. But while I was in there, he didn't. He paid for his items and we left together, we walked out calmly, I didn't think anything was wrong at the time..." [redacted] did not grab Till and pull him out of the store. [redacted]

[redacted] was not yelling or screaming when they left and everything appeared normal. Shortly after Till and [redacted] exited the store [redacted] exited as well. When [redacted] exited, Till whistled. Everyone knew Till's whistling was trouble so they ran to the car and left town. ^{62, 63}

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• [redacted] [redacted] advised that on a Wednesday evening [redacted] [redacted] Maurice Wright, Till and approximately three other family members went into Money, Mississippi to Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market. [redacted] went into the store just prior to Till, and [redacted] exited the store as Till was entering. [redacted] observed Till exiting the store with [redacted] they didn't appear rushed and nothing was unusual about their exit. [redacted] exiting shortly thereafter and Till whistled. Everyone knew Till's whistling was trouble so they ran for their car and left Money, Mississippi and went home to Mose Wright's house. ^{64, 65, 66}

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• [redacted] [redacted] advised that on a Wednesday Till, [redacted] [redacted] Maurice Wright and [redacted]

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[redacted] went to Money, Mississippi and visited Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market.

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When the group arrived at Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market, there were about seven other black people already in front of the store. Prior to Till going into the store, several of the group dared Till to say something to the white woman in the store because Till had shown them a photograph of a white woman in his wallet (the kind of photograph that comes in a new wallet). [redacted] came out of the store heading toward her car and Till whistled. [redacted] believes Till was whistling at a bad move by the checker player. ^{67, 68}

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- [redacted] [redacted] stated he was at the store on the day that Till whistled at [redacted] and was present when Till whistled. ⁶⁹

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- **Confidential Source** [redacted] A confidential source, hereinafter referred to as [redacted] advised that [redacted] was already present at Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market when Till arrived with his cousins. [redacted] observed Till entering the store, purchasing bubble gum from [redacted] and exiting the store with [redacted] without incident. [redacted] didn't hear [redacted] yelling or screaming and did not observe Till accosting [redacted] in any way. Following Till's exit [redacted] recalled a whistle occurring but no other details about it [redacted] observed Till, Wright and others getting into a vehicle and the vehicle leaving. When the incident occurred, the sun had set and it was dark outside. ⁷⁰

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[redacted]
[redacted]

[redacted]

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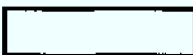

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• **Note:** Till's surviving relatives, 

do not recall  being present at the store during this incident.

• **Curtis Jones (deceased):** Jones and his cousins snuck out of church to go to Bryant's Meat Market and Grocery on this day and Jones was present at the store during the whistling incident. Jones recalled Till having a picture of a white girl in his wallet. Additionally, someone challenged Till about saying something to the white woman in the store prior to Till entering the store.⁷²

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• **Note:**  and  stated Jones was not present at the store when the above noted incident occurred.

Additionally,  advised Jones recanted his statements prior to his death and apologized to Mamie Till-Mobley.⁷³



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3. Saturday - August 27, 1955:

SUN		MOON	
Begin Civil Twilight	5:05 a.m.	Moonrise on the Preceding Day	2:02 p.m.
Sunrise	5:31 a.m.	Moonset	12:08 a.m.
Sunset	6:33 p.m.	Moonrise	2:49 p.m.
End Civil Twilight	6:59 p.m.	Moonset on the Following Day	1:00 a.m.
Weather			
High Temperature	86 degrees		
Low Temperature	71 degrees		
Precipitation	None		
Meteorological, Light and Weather Data			

a. August 27, 1955 - Daytime - Money, Mississippi: Roy Bryant, who had been hauling a load of shrimp to Brownsville, Texas earlier in the week, returned home to Money, Mississippi.

- [redacted] In a recent interview, [redacted] recalled that on the morning prior to Bryant's arrest he was home. "Well I just remember that when he came back, I didn't tell him about it [the incident at the store when the black customer had accosted [redacted] and he waited a long time and he asked me didn't I have something I wanted to tell him and I told him no..." "...he was really mad at me." [redacted] recalled that Roy Bryant was angry and harsh and she told him what had occurred. [redacted] then recalled she gave Roy Bryant a

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detailed account of the black customer grabbing her hand, grabbing her waist and how she had screamed for [redacted] to come and help her. ⁷⁴

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b. August 27, 1955 - Evening - Money, Mississippi:

• [redacted] lived near Money, Mississippi, and had just returned to Mississippi from a summer vacation trip to Chicago, Illinois. [redacted] entered Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market, accompanied by his uncle and his mother. When he entered the store, Roy Bryant and [redacted] were inside. Roy Bryant asked [redacted] where he [redacted] was on "that Thursday or Friday or something..." "I didn't know what the devil he was talkin' about, so he, he acted like he wanted to do something to me..." [redacted] mother intervened... "and she said what's goin' on? And ah, he just started out off and he say you all got to teach this boy how to say I said yes sir, no sir." At about the same time, [redacted] said something to Roy Bryant that [redacted] could not hear. The next day, [redacted] father went and told their landowner about the incident. The landowner went to find out if Roy Bryant had a problem with [redacted] and learned that Roy Bryant was in jail for kidnaping Preacher Wright's grandson the night before. ⁷⁵

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• [redacted] On the evening prior to Till's kidnaping, a black boy entered Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market and Roy Bryant was aggressively quizzing the boy. Initially, [redacted] did not recall exact details about the incident. ⁷⁶ However, in another interview [redacted] recalled "...I know that there was a lady and her little boy or her grandson or somebody was in the store and, I don't

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know, Roy said something to 'em, and I remember telling him to leave him alone that, you know, that wasn't him", meaning it wasn't Emmett Till. ⁷⁷

• [redacted]: Sometime between the incident at the store and Till's kidnaping, at about dusk, [redacted] walked north, out of Money, Mississippi, on the road home to his house on [redacted] [redacted] had been to a store in the town of Money and had purchased some syrup (molasses) and snuff, which he was taking home. A truck pulled up behind [redacted] and stopped. In the cab of the truck were Roy Bryant; J.W. Milam; [redacted] and in the back of the truck was J.W. Washington, a black man [possibly Johnny B. Washington]. Roy Bryant instructed Washington to throw [redacted] into the back of the pickup truck and Washington did so. [redacted] came out of the truck and told Bryant "that's not the nigger! That's not the one." Roy Bryant said "who?" [redacted] responded "That's the [redacted] boy. That's not him, but he was there with, with him." [redacted] also said "Roy, I keep telling ya, that's not the one." Roy Bryant then instructed Washington to throw [redacted] off the truck. Washington did so, breaking [redacted] top, front teeth off. ⁷⁸

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• **Confidential Source** [redacted] A confidential source, hereinafter referred to as [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] ⁷⁹

[redacted]

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c. August 27, 1955 - Evening - Money, Mississippi

[redacted] [redacted] also recently advised that "...J.W. came to that back door and got Roy and they left and I was there all night by myself. Alone. With two boys." ⁸⁰ And "Well, after he left with J.W., I know the boys were asleep. I had them on the bed there in that first room. I know I was just scared to death, sittin' there, didn't know what, and I think that was the first time I'd ever been alone at night there." ⁸¹

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d. August 27, 1955 - Night - Glendora, Mississippi:

• **Otha Johnson, Jr., also known as Oso (deceased):** Johnson, a black male, related to his [redacted] that on the night of August 27, 1955 Johnson was at J.W. Milam's store in Glendora, Mississippi and a group of white men were sitting around drinking when they decided to take Till. Otha Johnson, Jr. drove J.W. Milam and others throughout the night during the events surrounding Till's kidnaping and murder. ⁸²

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[redacted] [redacted] was gambling at a place in Glendora, Mississippi when J.W. Milam, Roy Bryant and Tallahatchie County Sheriff H.C. Strider came asking for directions to Mose Wright's house. [redacted] indicated that he saw [redacted] (possibly [redacted] Too Tight (likely Leroy Collins) and Oudie B. Brown with Milam, Bryant and Strider in Glendora. ⁸³

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[redacted]

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• Note: [redacted] also states in the interview he accompanied [redacted] when [redacted] transported Till's body. [redacted] account of the injuries to Till are not consistent with the physical findings of the Medical Examiner.⁸⁴

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4. Sunday - August 28, 1955:

SUN		MOON	
Begin Civil Twilight	5:06 a.m.	Moonrise on the Preceding Day	3:23 p.m.
Sunrise	5:22 a.m.	Moonset	1:00 a.m.
Sunset	6:32 p.m.	Moonrise	3:32 p.m.
End Civil Twilight	6:58 p.m.	Moonset on the Following Day	1:56 a.m.
Weather			
High Temperature	91 degrees		
Low Temperature	73 degrees		
Precipitation	None		
Meteorological, Light and Weather Data			

a. August 28, 1955 - 2:30 a.m. - Money, Mississippi: At approximately 2:30

a.m. Till was taken from Mose Wright's home on the Grover C. Frederick farm. Present in the home were Mose Wright (deceased); his wife Elizabeth Wright (deceased); grandson Curtis Jones

(deceased); [redacted]; son Maurice Wright (deceased); [redacted]

[redacted]; and great nephew Emmett Till. The drawing depicted below is based on descriptions

from [redacted] [redacted] and from Mose Wright's testimony during the trial of Milam

and Bryant for Till's murder. The person's names are depicted in the rooms in which they were

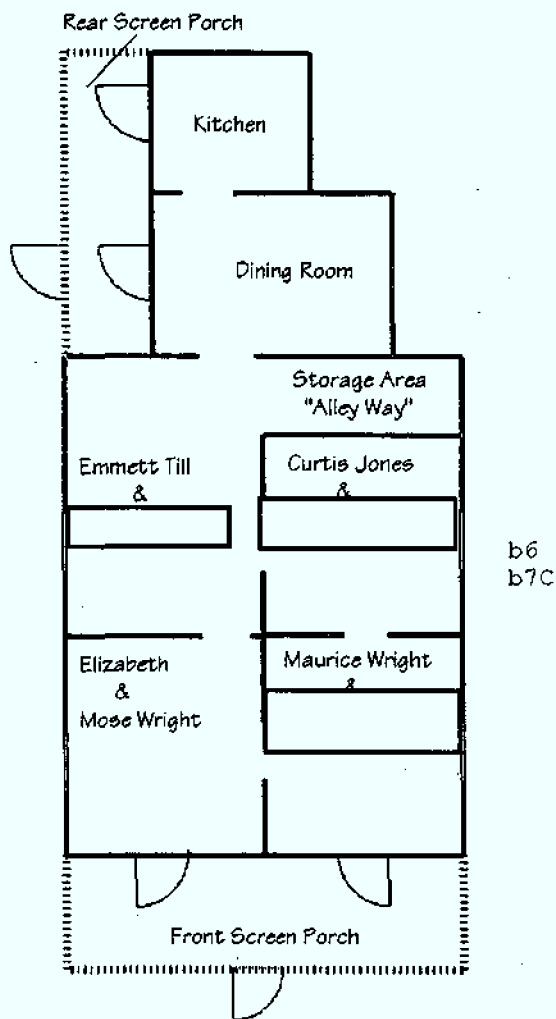
sleeping when Till was taken from the home.

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- **Mose Wright (deceased), also known as Preacher:** Wright testified that at about 2:00 a.m., someone came to the front door of the home saying, "Preacher -- Preacher". Wright asked who it was and the person responded, "This is Mr. Bryant. I want to talk to you and that boy." Wright opened the door of the home and found J.W. Milam "standing there at the door with a pistol in his right hand and he had a flashlight in his left hand." Additionally, another man was "standing at the screen door, and Mr. Bryant was standing kind of out away from the door." Milam asked Wright if he had

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"two boys there from Chicago" and Wright responded "Yes, Sir." Milam then said "I want that boy that done the talking down at Money."

Wright started to lead Milam and Bryant to the bedroom Till was sleeping in and Milam stated "If this is not the right boy, then we are going to bring him back and put him in the bed." When they approached Till's bed, Milam "said for him to get up." Till "got up and dressed. He sat on the side of the bed and dressed." After that "...they started out, then he asked me if I know anybody there and I told him, 'No, Sir. I don't know you.' And then he said to me, 'How old are you?' And then I said 'Sixty four.' And then he said, 'Well, if you know any of us here tonight, then you will never live to get to be Sixty five.'"

As Milam, Bryant and Till were exiting the house they walked through Wright's bedroom, where his wife was present. "She had gotten up out of bed, and then he said to her, 'You get back in bed, and I mean, I want to hear the springs.'" Wright's wife "...said that we will pay you whatever you want to charge if you will just release him. She said that we would pay them for whatever he might have done if they would just let him go." Milam and Bryant did not respond to her.

After exiting the home, Wright stood at the screen porch door and observed a car to be "parked towards Money." Before Milam and Bryant entered the car with Till, "They asked if this was the boy, and someone said 'Yes'". When asked if the voice was that of a man or a woman, Wright replied, "It seemed like it was a lighter voice than a man's." After receiving the response from the person in the car, they "...drove off towards Money."

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Wright could not identify what type of automobile was used by Milam and Bryant. The vehicle was operated without headlights. After the vehicle departed, Wright "...stood on the porch there for maybe twenty minutes or more."

When asked if anyone else, with the exception of Milam and Bryant, was there at the time of Till's kidnaping, Wright responded "There was one man who stood there at the screen door." "...he was standing kind of with his head down like this here peering. He was trying to hide, it looked like." "He acted like a colored man."

Wright stated he did not see Till, or anyone else, getting into a car and didn't see anyone in the car when it drove off. Wright did not observe headlights, tail lights or interior lights on the car. Wright was asked about the voice he heard out by the car being the voice of one of the three men. Wright responded, "It was just a voice. They took him out there, and somebody said, 'Is this him?' and then a voice said, 'Yes.' But it wasn't one of them." Wright could not tell if the vehicle used to take Till from his home was a truck or a car because of the darkness.

Wright described Till as having "...stammering speech. Sometimes he couldn't get a word out." Additionally, Till weighed about one hundred fifty pounds and "He looked like a man."

Wright testified that when Milam and Bryant came into his home there were no lights on in the home and no lights were turned on. The only lighting was the flashlight carried by Milam. Wright believed Till was sleeping in his shorts and maybe a shirt. When told to get up and put his clothes on, Till put on a shirt, trousers and shoes. Wright described in detail where each individual in the home was

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sleeping on the night Till was kidnaped and the structural layout of the home. Wright stated he did not see Till or anyone else getting into a car and didn't see anyone in the car when it drove off.

Wright described that following Till being taken from his home he went, got gasoline, "went to a store" and returned home about 8:00 a.m. ^{85, 86}

[redacted] The night Till was kidnaped, the entire Wright family went into Greenwood, Mississippi. The family returned home and [redacted] went to bed. Till and [redacted] were asleep in the same bed when, "...I heard this noise ah...ruckus going on in the room, that's when I woke up and I saw ah...Bryant, I recognized him, I saw Milam, but I didn't know who he was, and he had the gun, and ah...it was ah...automatic, at the time I said it was a .45, which, that's the only automatic we knew about." "I kind of raised up to see what was going on. He (Milam) told me to lay back down and go back to sleep." "...that's when they made Emmett get up and put his clothes on, and during that time [redacted] (Elizabeth Wright) - [redacted] was ah...begging them not to - to ah...take him, they offered them money..." "Milam he was, he was forceful and was telling Emmett to hurry up, put his clothes on, [redacted] (Mose Wright) was begging not to take him, then they said well we not gonna, we just gonna take him up the road and just whip him..." The two men took Till and left.

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⁸⁵ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Mr. Mose Wright, 4 to 62

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⁸⁶ [redacted] "I Saw Them Take Emmett Till - The tape-recorded story by Emmett Till's Uncle Moses Wright, *From Page Detective*, October 25, 1955, [redacted]

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[redacted] recalled a ring that Till had worn and had allowed [redacted] to wear for a while. After [redacted] returned the ring, Till constantly wore it, never taking it off.^{87, 88}

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• [redacted] On the Saturday following the incident at Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market, [redacted] Till, Maurice Wright, [redacted] and others went into Greenwood, Mississippi. After returning home, everyone went to bed with [redacted] and Maurice Wright sleeping in the same bed. [redacted] awoke to voices and someone was asking about "a fat boy from Chicago, and ah...I said oh my goodness..." "...the first thing I said, I'm - I'm getting ready to die." Two men came into his bedroom, "...when they stepped in there I saw that pistol and their flashlight..." "...I remember them saying they looking for a fat boy, and at that time [redacted] and Emmett was kind of chunky, so they passed on by and they went to the next room..." "...I could hear 'em talking, and I can't remember exactly what the conversation was, I - I think I remember one thing he wanted to put his socks and -- ah...he was saying yes and no, yeah, no, and they was cursing, they were very upset over that..." After the men took Till, there was silence in the house and "nobody talked to anybody."^{89, 90, 91}

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[redacted] [redacted] did not awaken during the incident and did not hear or see any of the events that transpired. [redacted] advised that [redacted] Mose

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Wright, related to him that Mose Wright may have heard Johnny B. Washington's voice at the Wright home the night Till was kidnaped.⁹²

- **Curtis Jones (deceased):** Jones, who was sleeping at the time of the abduction, stated he "was awakened by a group of mens in the house." "So I woke up, rubbing my eyes, you know, and I seen all these white guys, you know, standing around, some of 'em had shotguns and stuff. And it like this should of scared me, but, I went back to sleep before they left. I went back to sleep, and when I woke up the next, uh, morning I thought it was a head, was a dream."⁹³

- **Confidential Source** [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted] [redacted] members of his family and members of the

Wright household had been to Greenwood, Mississippi earlier in the evening. On the

[redacted]

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way home "...when we came back outta Greenwood there was another guy rode with us lived down the road farther. We seen Mose Wright at this little store on the place..." "...Getting' gas that late at night. But we ain' think ta stop an' ask Mose what was wrong." 96

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[redacted] "Old man Mose Wright come there to the house that Sunday morning..." "...and told us they got Emmett. An' den me and Mose jump in the car and went down to Money lookin' for 'em." [redacted] further explained "...So I let [redacted] out in [redacted] house. Let [redacted] and Maurice at Mose Wright house, let them off an' then turn around an' come on back. I went an' in the house an' I was sittin' on the side of the bed..." "...An' Mose Wright come up an' said uh, [redacted] they took my boy..." "...Then me an' Mose Wright hop in the car an' we went up there in Money [redacted] We went up there lookin' for 'im, so we didn't see 'em, turn around an' come back..." "...We didn' get out. So we come on back..." Mose Wright told [redacted] that Milam and Bryant were there when Till was taken and a "...woman was in the background..." and "For a fact there was two people back there he said." 97, 98

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[redacted] [redacted] stated [redacted] Johnnie B. Washington, was at home with her the night Till was kidnaped and murdered. 99

b. August 28, 1955 - Early Morning - Money, Mississippi :

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[redacted] [redacted] recently stated that sometime in the early morning hours, before daylight, someone who sounded like a black person came

[redacted]

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to the residential entrance of the store (the back door) and knocked on the door.

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[redacted] stated she was scared because she was alone with her two children and did not answer the door. ^{100, 101, 102}

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Additionally, [redacted] advised that she was at home in Money, Mississippi with [redacted] when sometime during the night Roy Bryant, J.W. Milam and Kimbrell appeared at the home/store with Emmett Till. "...I think they came back and I think that Kimbrell man was, was with, with 'em..." "...I think it happened pretty much like he, like they said. I think they probably asked me who, if

[redacted] I believe. Because I really think no matter

[redacted]

[redacted] I thought [redacted] "I think he (Roy Bryant) told me he was gonna take him back." ^{103, 104, 105, 106}

c. August 28, 1955 - Early Morning - Clint Shurden Plantation, Drew,

Mississippi:

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[redacted] [redacted] advised that on the night which

[redacted] later learned was the night that Emmett Till had been kidnaped, J.W.

Milam and/or Roy Bryant came to their house sometime after midnight. While

[redacted] did not see the men, she heard one of the two talking to [redacted]

and heard [redacted] Leslie Milam, tell the man something to the effect that "they

[redacted]

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needed to get away from here and take him back to where they got him." [redacted]

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[redacted] later realized they had been talking about Emmett Till. Leslie Milam came back [redacted] after J.W. Milam and/or Roy Bryant appeared at the house. ¹⁰⁷

In a subsequent interview [redacted] recalled the individuals who [redacted] [redacted] on this night as being both Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam. [redacted] also reiterated that Leslie Milam [redacted] [redacted] also stated, "now what he did that day, I don't know..." "...After he left the house..." "...cause he was gone." ^{108, 109}

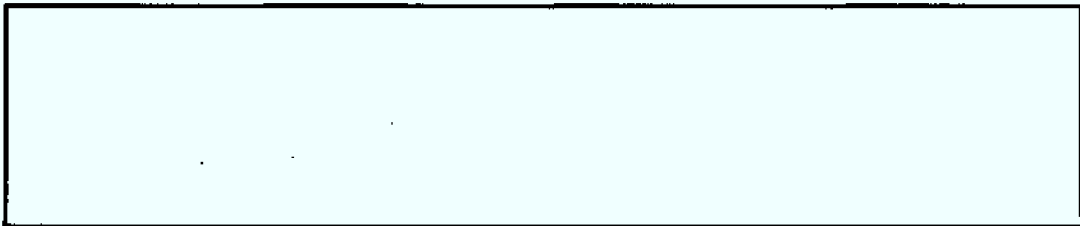
d. August 28, 1955 - Day Break - Money, Mississippi :

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[redacted] Sometime around daybreak, [redacted] went down the street and utilized a telephone to call [redacted] Melvin Campbell, in Minter City, Mississippi, to ascertain the whereabouts of Roy Bryant. Campbell told [redacted] they had been playing poker all night and Roy Bryant would be home later. ^{110, 111, 112}

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[redacted] [redacted] did not recall a telephone call from [redacted] [redacted] to [redacted] on this morning. Additionally, [redacted] could not recall if Melvin Campbell had been home or away from home the previous night. ¹¹³



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e. August 28, 1955 - 6:00 am - Clint Shurden Plantation, Drew, Mississippi:

• **Willie Reed:** Reed, a witness in the 1955 prosecution, testified that on Sunday, August 28, 1955, Reed saw J.W. Milam when Milam was coming to a well at Leslie Milam's farm. Reed is familiar with Leslie Milam's farm because Reed lives with his grandfather, Add Reed, on the Clint Shurden Plantation, in a home just across the bayou from Leslie Milam's farm. Sometime between six and seven o'clock in the morning, Reed left his home to go to Glenn Patterson's store. When going from his home to Patterson's store, Reed had to pass by Leslie Milam's place, where there was a green barn with doors. As Reed was walking, a white over green, 1955 Chevrolet truck passed him. Reed testified he saw four white men in the cab of the truck, three black men on the sides of the back of the truck and a black boy sitting down in the bed of the truck. Reed identified Till as the boy in the back of the truck from a photograph he saw in the newspaper and which he was shown at trial. Reed testified he was unable to see the three black men in the bed of the truck with Till well enough to identify them. Reed then saw the truck parked in front of a barn. Reed heard someone hollering and it sounded like someone was whipping someone in the barn. After passing the barn, Reed went to Mandy Bradley's house and told her what he had heard. Reed then went to the well to get Bradley a bucket of water. While at the well, Reed could hear "some licks like somebody was whipping somebody" and he could hear someone hollering from inside the barn. J.W. Milam then came from the barn to the well and got a drink of water. Reed recalled J.W. Milam having a pistol on his belt. After leaving the well, Reed went to the store. On his way home from the store, Reed did not hear or see anything and the truck was gone. Reed knows Leslie Milam

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and J.W. Milam. Reed had seen J.W. Milam on about three or four occasions prior to August 28th. Reed had never seen Emmett Till prior to that Sunday. When asked, "...you don't know whether that was Emmett Till or not, do you?" Reed replied that Till favored the picture he had just looked at. Reed had been in the barn on one occasion, did not know who had control of the barn, but stated Leslie Milam lives next to the barn. ¹¹⁴

In contemporary interviews, Reed identified only two white men and two black men accompanying Till in the truck as it entered the farm. Reed identified the white men as Milam and Bryant and the two black men as Levi "Too Tight" Collins and Hubbard. ^{115, 116, 117, 118}

• **Add Reed (deceased):** Reed was sixty-five years old in 1955 and the grandfather of Willie Reed. They lived together on the Clint Shurden Plantation. Reed's home was just across a bayou from Leslie Milam's home. On Sunday, August 28th, at about 8:00 o'clock in the morning, Reed left his home, walking east, turned north, crossed a bayou and crossed Leslie Milam's place. Reed passed by a shed and an oat bin on Leslie Milam's place and observed two men, Leslie Milam and another man Reed did not know. Reed also observed a pickup truck to be parked at a building. Willie Reed had left home prior to Add Reed leaving the house and Willie Reed had not yet returned home when Add Reed departed. ¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Mr. Willie Reed, 210 to 245

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Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Mr. Add Reed, 245 to 249

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• **Mary "Amanda" "Amandy" "Mandy" Bradley (deceased):** In 1955, Bradley was fifty years old and lived on Leslie Milam's place. Leslie Milam's house could be seen from Bradley's home. Bradley knew Willie Reed, who lives south of Leslie Milam, on Clint Shurden's land. On Sunday, August 28th, between six-thirty and seven o'clock a.m., Willie Reed came to Bradley's house. Reed mentioned to Bradley something unusual he had seen or heard that morning and Bradley looked out the window. Bradley saw four white men and a truck by the barn. Bradley did not know who the four white men were. The men were coming in and out from the barn; one man went to the well and got a drink of water then returned to the barn. The man who got the drink of water was tall and bald headed. Bradley saw the truck when they backed it up under the shed, the same shed they were going back and forth from and Bradley saw the truck as it drove away.¹²⁰

• **Confidential Source** [redacted] A confidential source, hereinafter referred to as [redacted] that Glenn Patterson (deceased) revealed to [redacted] that the pickup truck containing Till's body passed by Patterson's house as it left the Clint Shurden Plantation. Patterson also revealed to [redacted] that Patterson believed Till was shot while at Leslie Milam's farm.¹²¹

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[redacted] [redacted] advised that on the day following Till's kidnaping, "I was, ah, playin' beside the road and I saw Mr., ah, Mylam's (sic) truck coming by

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¹²⁰ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Amandy Bradley, 250 to 258

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and it had a -- had a cover over the door we called a tarpaulan (sic), had a tarp over it, and I heard somebody hollerin' on the truck, but I didn't see nobody." ¹²²

In a later interview [redacted] described his home as being located near [redacted] west of Money on the way to [redacted] [redacted] also stated he saw Milam's truck pass him, with Milam and Branch [Bryant] inside, on either a Tuesday or Wednesday and that it could not have been a Sunday. [redacted] also stated the truck passed him about lunch time. ¹²³

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f. August 28, 1955 - before daylight - Glendora, Mississippi

[redacted] In 1955 [redacted] and her family lived in a home that was located near [redacted] [redacted] Sometime in the middle of the night [redacted] and her sister [redacted] [redacted] were at home, sitting at a window, trying to get some air, when they noticed a fire burning in a barrel behind J.W. Milam's home. [redacted] later learned that someone had burned something in the barrel. [redacted] later saw shoes that had burned in the fire and was told the shoes were Emmett Till's. ^{124, 125}

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[redacted] [redacted] recalled "I remember the shoe. Like at night my sister an' I was in the bed an' you know you had your windows up down south..." "An' we say like maybe two or three guys, back then you would bring your garbage up a tall barrel you..." "...They put somethin' in that an' set it on fire..." [redacted] later learned it was Till's shoe which had been burned. ¹²⁶

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g. August 28, 1955 - early morning - Glendora, Mississippi

[redacted] [redacted] [redacted] at the time, recalled many years later, that he and his father, who is now deceased, walked past J.W. Milam's store on a Sunday morning. Upon passing the store, [redacted] saw that Milam's 1953 - 1955 GMC pickup truck was parked by the store. As [redacted] passed between the store and the truck, he noticed something under a tarpaulin, in the bed of the truck. A black man was sitting on the side of the bed of the truck with a foot on the tarpaulin. Another black man was standing beside the truck. [redacted] recalled the names of the men as "Oso" and "Too Tight" but could not recall which of the men was in the truck and which was by the truck. Blood was running out of the bed of the truck and pooling on the ground. [redacted] father was present. About the time [redacted] reached the truck, J.W. Milam came from the store. When Milam appeared, [redacted] father said something to Milam about the blood coming out of the truck. Milam stated he had killed a deer. [redacted] father pointed out that deer season was not in and Milam responded by pulling [redacted] father over to the truck and lifting the tarpaulin to show [redacted] father what was underneath. [redacted] was not able to see what was under the tarpaulin, but heard J.W. Milam state, "This is what happens to smart niggers." [redacted] father then grabbed [redacted] and dragged him to their house. [redacted] also recalled many years later that he saw [redacted] [redacted] coming toward the store from a nearby house.

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J.W. Milam was calling for [] to hurry. [] saw Milam and the others drive off in the truck to the Glendora Cotton Gin and then leave town. ^{127, 128}

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[] [] who was [] at the time, recalled walking with four friends when they saw "Too Tight" and [] washing blood out of J.W. Milam's green 1950s Chevrolet truck. "Too Tight" offered to pay [] and his friend [] 35 cents each to wash the blood out of the truck for him and they did so. [] believed this occurred one day during the week and not on a Sunday.

[] described washing out the blood "...I never seen lumps of blood look like that..." "...yeah, thick like jelly..." "...Somebody else asked him. Where did all that blood come from? And he said we killed a deer last night..." "You know ah, the blood stain was still in the, the truck. And then ah, we washed and washed and we couldn't get it out..." ¹²⁹

[] [] recalled, "...I was watering the flowers in the yard, and I had to go to the, we used to call it the hydrant...but it was a faucet..." "...I can see it in my mind, I see the truck over there, the green and white truck, and I can see J.W. and I can see Leroy Collins, but that's where I stop at. I can't say it was [] [] I think, or as...Oso was over there, but it wasn't the two to my knowledge."

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[] recalled [] Robert Walker Sr., told her he had seen them washing blood out of a truck at J.W. Milam's store on this morning. When asked where the blood had come from, J.W. Milam stated he had gone hunting. []

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also stated [redacted] told her... "When they were washing the blood, they moved this canopy, we used to call it a tarpaulin..." "...they moved it out the way and he saw this shoe..."^{130, 131}

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[redacted] stated he was waiting outside the "gambling place" [redacted] with some other men when a girl named [redacted] approached and told them that J.W. Milam had taken a boy, killed him and dumped his body in the river. [redacted] witnessed [redacted] pointing out to the group a shoe lying on the ground that, according to "Too Tight" Collins, the boy [Till] had been wearing.¹³²

In a separate interview [redacted] stated he had been gambling at a juke joint in Glendora, Mississippi on the night of Till's murder and had been called to help a girlfriend with a flat tire. [redacted] did so, purchasing [redacted] in [redacted] Mississippi with Melvin Campbell's assistance and then returning to Glendora, Mississippi. Once back in Glendora, Mississippi a man named [redacted] showed [redacted] and several other people a burned shoe, which [redacted] said was one of Emmett Till's shoes.¹³³

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During all known interviews of [redacted] he has denied any involvement in Till's kidnaping and murder.

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- **Oudie Brown (deceased):** Brown related that on the morning after Till was killed he was walking and "Too Tight" [Collins] was washing J.W. Milam's truck out. "...I looked down and I said what all that blood coming from. He laughed. The boy laughed. That's what he did. He said there's a shoe there. There's one of his shoes

[redacted]

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here. I said Who? That's the way I said it, I say Who? Emmett Till's shoe. Now that's the way he said it." Brown also recalled being with J.W. Milam on the day Milam was arrested by the "high sheriff" in Minter City, Mississippi.¹³⁴

h. August 28, 1955 - 2:00 p.m. - Money, Mississippi:

• **George Smith (deceased):** Smith was Sheriff of Leflore County. On Sunday, August 28, 1955, at approximately 2:00 p.m., Smith arrived at Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market in the town of Money, Mississippi. Upon his arrival, he found that the Bryant's store was closed and Bryant was asleep in the back of the store. Smith spoke with Roy Bryant, while seated inside Smith's car, outside Bryant's store in Money, Mississippi. "I asked him why did he go down there and get that little nigger boy, and he said that he went down and got him to let his wife see him to identify him, and then he said that she said it wasn't the right one, and then he said that he turned him loose" "in front of his store". Bryant told Smith, they got Emmett Till at "Mose Wright's". Bryant also told Smith "He said he went to some of his people - - I don't remember just who he said now - - and he said he played cards there the rest of the night." Smith arrested Bryant and took him to the jail in Greenwood, Mississippi, where Bryant stayed "from that time on until he was brought to Tallahatchie County..."¹³⁵

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¹³⁵ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Mr. George Smith, 85 to 99 and 117 to 128

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5. Monday - August 29, 1955:

a. Greenwood, Mississippi:

• **John Ed Cothran:** Cothran was a Deputy Sheriff for the Leflore County Sheriff's Department. Cothran testified that he spoke with J.W. Milam in the Leflore County jail, after Milam was arrested, on a Monday. "I asked him if they went out there and got that little boy and if they had done something with him. And he said that they had brought him up there to that store and turned him loose, there at Roy Bryant's store." Milam told Cothran they had got the boy at "Mose Wright's." Milam further told Cothran "...they brought him up there and talked to him, and then they let him go."¹³⁶

[redacted] stated "Well about all I remember is that ah, J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant went to that old nigger house of Mose Wright, that little boy Emmett's granddaddy. Well I talked to him on several different occasions when I was working that time. They never did mention nobody but Milam and Bryant..." [redacted] recalled [redacted] when Bryant and Milam were arrested, stating "...the Sunday evening me and him arrested Roy..." "...at the store in Money, and that was a Sunday evening. The Monday morning, me and the sheriff was sitting in the sheriff's office and I looked out at the window and I said lookey yonder George. He said oh dog gone let's go get him..." "...That's Milam..." "...he come down around there to see about his half brother. Well he got to see about him cause he went right up there with him."¹³⁷

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¹³⁶ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Mr. John Ed Cothran, 143, 144

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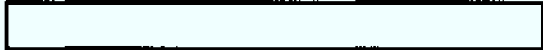
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6. Wednesday - August 31, 1955:

a. August 31, 1955 - early morning - Pecan Point Area on the Tallahatchie

River, north of Philipp, Mississippi:

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Robert Hodges: Hodges testified he was

fishing when he "...seen two knees and feet," about a mile from his house, on the left side, going down river, in Tallahatchie County. The body was hung up on a snag. Hodges reported finding the body to his father, who reported it to their land owner, B.L. Mims, at about six thirty or seven o'clock in the morning. Later in the day, Hodges, B.L. Mims, Deputy Sheriff Melton, Charlie Fred Mims and Hodges' father went to the location of the body in two boats. Then "they brought the rope back there, and then me and this other boy was in a boat, and Mr. Melton was there, and they had the rope around the boy's legs and then they hung it on there, and they had it on this other boat, and then they carried it down the river and took it out on the other side there." Upon pulling the body out onto the bank they found a gin fan to be attached to the body with a piece of barbed wire that was wrapped around the neck. Hodges described the body as "beaten pretty bad in the back...and hips,"...and the head was "also gashed in on the side." Hodges witnessed the barbed wire being disconnected from the gin fan, the placement of the body and gin fan in a boat and the boat traveling to a landing. At the landing, Hodges observed Chester Miller, the undertaker, arrive, place the body in a box, and place the box in the coach. Hodges observed a silver ring to be on one of the body's fingers. At trial Hodges was shown a ring which was engraved "May 25, 1943", with the engraved initials "L.T." and he

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advised the ring he was being shown looked like the ring he had seen, but he "didn't get close enough to see the initials."¹³⁸

[redacted] was interviewed in 2004 and 2005 regarding his testimony in 1955 and the [redacted] and acknowledged that the transcript of his testimony "sounds accurate." [redacted] is currently a [redacted] and has fished the Tallahatchie River all of his life. Additionally, [redacted] recalled that he had [redacted] [redacted] when he had been checking [redacted] After observing [redacted] [redacted] went home and told his father and their land owner that he had [redacted] [redacted] led several people, traveling in one or two boats, to the body and they recovered it. The body did not have any clothing on it and the main injuries to the body were to the head. [redacted] marked on the aerial photograph depicted here the location where he discovered Till's body on August 31, 1955. ^{139, 140, 141}

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¹³⁸Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Robert Hodges, 100 to 110

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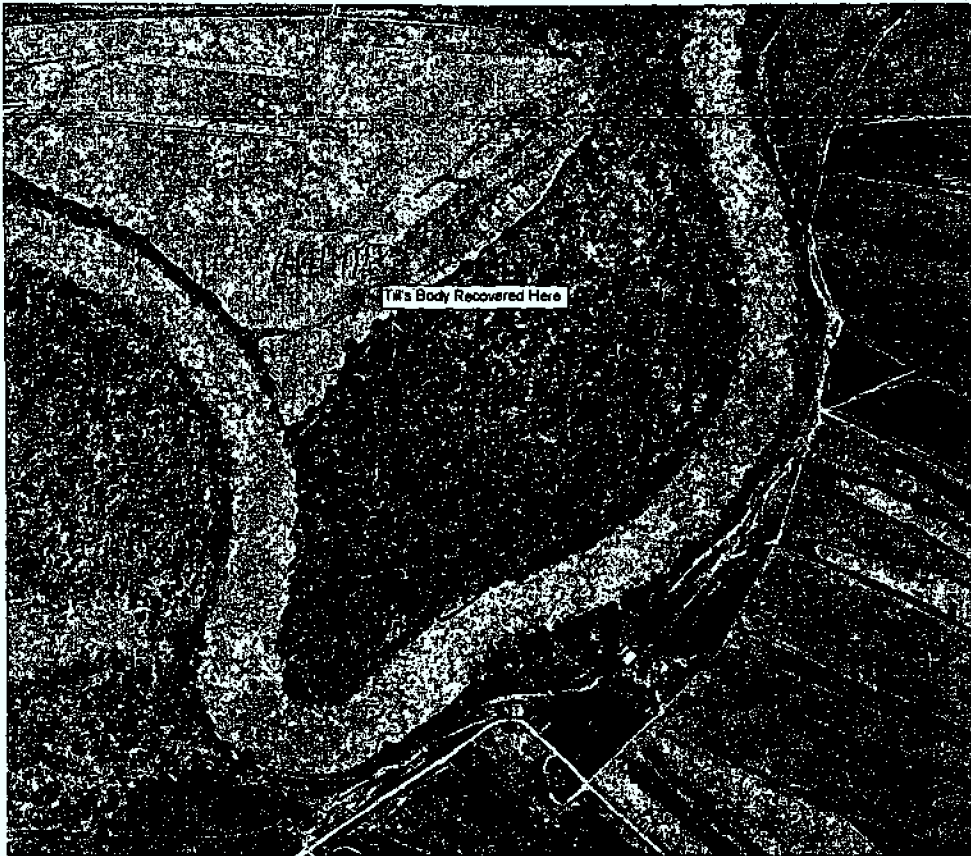
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Tallahatchie County

Leflore County



Farm Service Agency Photograph, April 14, 1957
Location marked by

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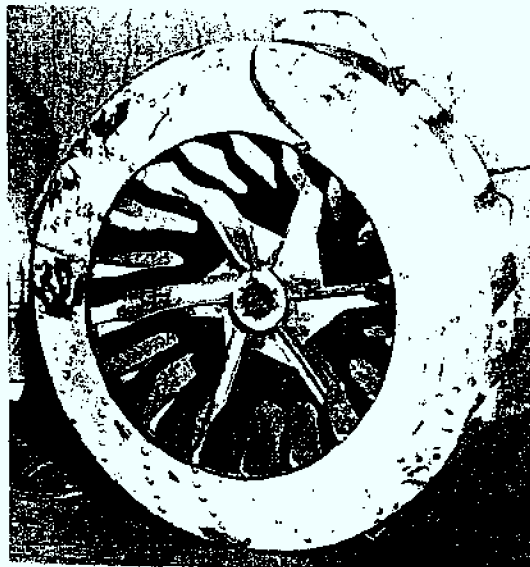
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• [redacted] [redacted] was at home when [redacted] a [redacted]
[redacted] arrived at [redacted] home and advised him that [redacted] had
been sent by [redacted] [redacted] to get [redacted]
to assist in the recovery of a body that had been found in the Tallahatchie River.

[redacted] and [redacted] took a boat from the [redacted] farm and proceeded to a bend in the
river, where they found a body, caught on a snag of debris. They floated the body to
a sandbar, placed it on a piece of visquine or other fabric, loaded it in the boat, and
proceeded north on the river to Fish Lake Landing. Upon arriving at Fish Lake
Landing [redacted] departed almost immediately. ¹⁴²

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Gin Fan & Barbed Wire Recovered with Till's Body

Photograph from "Getting Away With Murder:
The True Story of the Emmett Till Case" by Chris Crowe

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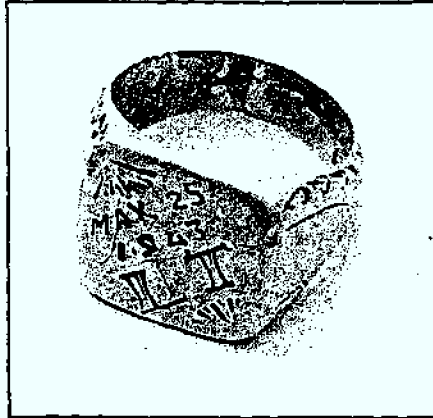
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b. August 31, 1955, Fish Lake Landing, on the Tallahatchie River, north of Philipp, Mississippi:

- **B.L. Mims (deceased):** Testified that on August 31, 1955, Mims was told about a body being found on the Tallahatchie River and he went down the river and found "him". Accompanying Mims, in Mims' boat, was Deputy Sheriff Garland Melton. Accompanying Mims and Melton, in a second boat, was his brother, Fred Mims, and Robert Hodges. Mims observed, "Well, we saw a person - - from his knee on down and including his feet - - we saw that sticking up above the water. And we could tell by looking at it that it was a colored person..." The body was hung up and they sent one of the boats back to get a rope. Upon getting the rope, they pulled the feet together, tied the rope to the ankles and pulled the body loose from the bottom. They then towed the body downstream to a shallow bank, landed there, and pulled the body out. Mims observed a gin fan to be attached to the body at the neck with barbed wire. A Deputy Sheriff disconnected the weight [gin fan] from the body, they pulled the body out, and placed the body and the weight in an extra boat. The extra boat was attached to Mims' boat and Mims towed the boat with the body and the gin fan to a landing. Upon arriving at the landing, the boat was pulled out of the water onto the river bank.¹⁴³

- **Note:** During the course of the investigation it was determined that the gin fan had been disposed of during the early 1970s.

¹⁴³ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of B.L. Mims, 110 to 115



Ring Taken From the Body and Identified as Till's

Photograph from "Getting Away With Murder:
The True Story of the Emmett Till Case" by Chris Crowe

- **Chester A. Miller (deceased):** Testified that Miller was an undertaker in Greenwood, Mississippi. Miller and his helper, Simon Garrett, were summoned to the Tallahatchie River, near Philipp, Mississippi, on August 31, 1955, to pick up a body. Upon arriving at the scene, they found the body to be lying, face down, in a boat. The boat was pulled up on the bank of the river. They turned the body over and discovered a silver ring on one of the body's fingers. Miller identified a ring which was inscribed "May 25, 1943" and with the initials "L.T.", as the ring that was taken off of the body by his helper [Simon Garrett]. Miller later gave the ring to Mose Wright. Miller observed a metal wheel and a strand of barbed wire to be in the boat with the body and the barbed wire was wrapped around the neck of the body. Mose Wright identified the body to Miller as being the body of Emmett Till. After loading the body into a casket shipping container, Miller transported the body to his funeral home in Greenwood, Mississippi. At the funeral home, Mr. Strickland, a Greenwood

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Police Officer, took photographs of the body. Miller then prepared the body for burial in Money, Mississippi, and transported the body to a cemetery there. The body was not buried and Miller carried the body back to his funeral home in Greenwood, Mississippi. He later delivered the body to an undertaker in Tutwiler, Mississippi. Miller stated the body was not clothed when he observed it in the boat. Miller described the body as approximately five foot four or five inches in height, weighing approximately one hundred-fifty or one hundred-sixty pounds, "looked to be that of a colored person" and "the flesh in the palm of the hand, well, it looked like it was the body of a young person. And from certain parts of the body -- well, in my experience in handling those kinds of bodies, by certain parts of the body it looked like a youth more so than a grown person or an older person." Miller described what he saw of the body as "the whole crown of his head, from here above (indicating with his hand) was just crushed in." Miller also said "The crown of his head was just crushed out and in, you know, and a piece of his skull just fell out there in the boat, maybe three inches long or maybe two and a half inches wide, something like that." "I saw a hole in the skull," further describing the hole as "Oh, about --- maybe half an inch square, something like that", located about three-quarters of an inch above the right ear. The other side of the head was "crushed on the other side. You couldn't tell too much it was crushed so. And it was all cut up and gashed across the top there." Miller said the wounds he described were sufficient to cause death, but could not tell if the wounds were caused before or after death or "in a car accident or otherwise..."¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Chester Miller, 64 to 80 and 94 to 99

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• **John Ed Cothran:** Testified that on August 31, 1955, at about 10:00 a.m. he and Mr. Weber, a Leflore County Deputy Sheriff, traveled to a place on the Tallahatchie River, between Philipp and Macel, Mississippi, stopping en route at Mose Wright's home to pick him up. Upon arriving, they found a body had been taken out of the river and was in a boat on the river bank. Sheriff Strider, Sheriff Smith, and other people were present. Chester Miller, the Negro undertaker, arrived a short time later. Cothran witnessed the transfer of the body from the boat into a casket under the supervision of Chester Miller. Cothran also witnessed Simon Garrett, Miller's helper, remove a silver ring from a finger on the body. Garrett gave the ring to Mose Wright, who carried it home, and who, in turn, gave it to Cothran. Cothran identified the ring as being inscribed "May 25, 1943" with the inscribed initials "L.T." Cothran identified a metal gin fan which had been in the boat with the body and a piece of barbed wire that had been attached to the body. Cothran described the condition of the body as "his head was torn up pretty bad. And his left eye was about out, it was all gouged out in there, you know. And right up in the top of his head, well, there was a hole knocked in the front of it there. And then right over his right ear - - well, I wouldn't say it was a bullet hole..." Cothran further stated there was a small hole in the head about an inch above the ear and he could not tell if the hole penetrated the skull. Also the head had "a place knocked in on his forehead." Other parts of the body did not appear to be mutilated. After arriving at the river, as they walked up to the boat, Mose Wright said "I believe that's him". Cothran also heard Mose Wright

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state "he didn't know about the ring at the time, but he said he would carry it out to his house and ask his boy about it, that he would know." ¹⁴⁵

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[redacted] stated he was at the river when Till's body was found, saying "Well they, they had him in a boat, they already pulled the boat up to the bank when I got up there." He described the injuries to the body as "Oh it was in, it was in pretty bad shape. Now I don't know ah, it's been so long, I tell ya how it's just. I can't remember. I know it was just the stinkinist thing I ever saw."

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[redacted] recalled the ring recovered from the body stating, "The last time I saw it a district attorney up at Sumner had it. Now they took the ring off of that boy's finger and Sheriff Strider an gave it to me. Well I gave it to the district attorney"... "when that trial started they had all of us in the room, all the witnesses. The district attorney brought that ring and then showed it to Emmett's mother. Asked her if she ever remembers seeing that ring. She said no sir, I, I hadn't, I hadn't ever seen it. About thirty minutes later, they put her on the witness stand and she swore she saw that ring on little Emmett's finger when he boarded the bus in Chicago." ¹⁴⁶

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[redacted] [redacted] who did not testify at trial in 1955, worked for the [redacted] located in Greenwood, Mississippi in 1955. [redacted] assisted [redacted] in the recovery of Till's body along the Tallahatchie River and the processing of the body at the [redacted] [redacted] recalled [redacted] and many other people being at the site where the

¹⁴⁵ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of John Ed Cochran, 133 to 175

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body was brought to the shore. The body was lying on the river bank with a gin fan pulley tied around its neck with barbed wire. [redacted] recalled untangling the wire

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from the body; injuries to the head of the body, [redacted]

[redacted] and carrying the body to the funeral home in Greenwood, Mississippi. [redacted]

could not recall the body having a ring on any of its

fingers. ¹⁴⁷

• **Mose Wright (deceased):** Testified that following Till's kidnaping on August 28, 1955, the next time Wright observed Till was the following Wednesday when "...he was taken out of the river. He was in a boat then "...and..."He was dead." A Deputy Sheriff from Greenwood, Mississippi notified Wright to come to the river. Present at the river was Sheriff Strider, Deputy Garland Melton and a lot of other white people. Wright observed the undertaker, Chester Miller, take a ring off of Till's finger and place it on the seat of the funeral coach. Miller then gave the ring to Wright and Wright later gave the ring to a Leflore County Sheriff's Deputy. When asked about the ring taken from Till's finger, Wright stated he had never seen the ring before, but had been told by Simeon and Robert [Wright's sons] the ring was Till's. ^{148, 149}

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[redacted] recalled, "What happened was, the sheriff brought the ring out to our house and showed it to dad, which I was standin' there with him, said this is the ring that we found on the body. And that's when I uh, blurted out, said

¹⁴⁷ [redacted] Misc O/S
¹⁴⁸ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Mose Wright, 4 to 64
¹⁴⁹ [redacted] - "I Saw Them Take Emmett Till - The tape-recorded story by Emmett Till' Uncle Moses Wright," *Front Page Detective*, October 25, 1955, [redacted] Misc o/s

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that's Emmett's, that's Bobo's ring." [redacted] had seen Till wearing the ring during Till's visit to Mississippi.¹⁵⁰

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[redacted] was at home when Mose Wright told him that they had found a body and Mose Wright wanted to go and identify it. [redacted] carried Mose Wright to where the body was, watched as Mose Wright pulled a ring from Till's finger and then heard Mose Wright state the body was Till. Additionally, Mose Wright told [redacted] that Till's [redacted].¹⁵¹

- **Note:** During the course of the investigation the ring was not discovered and there is no reason to expect that it will be found.

d. August 31, 1955, 3:00 p.m., Greenwood, Mississippi:

- **C.A. Strickland (believed deceased):** Strickland was an Identification Officer, Collision Department, Greenwood Police Department. At approximately 3:00 p.m. on August 31, 1955 Strickland was called upon to take photographs of a dead body at the Century Burial Funeral Home in Greenwood, Mississippi. At trial, Strickland identified a photograph he had taken of the body. The photographs were not located during the course of the investigation.¹⁵²

- **C.F. (Chick) Nelson (deceased):** Testified that Nelson was the manager and operator of a funeral home in Tutwiler, Mississippi. Nelson was requested to pick up the body of Emmett Till during the last part of August and Nelson sent someone to pick up the body at Century Funeral Home. The body was then brought to Nelson's

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¹⁵² Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of C.A. Strickland, 80 to 85

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funeral home where the body was prepared for shipping to Chicago and subsequently shipped to A. A. Rainer and Sons Funeral Home in Chicago.¹⁵³

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[redacted] After Roy Bryant's arrest, [redacted] was taken in by family members. "I was at Buddy Milam's store..." "...and Raymond [Roy Bryant's twin brother] came in. I don't know if Raymond was by himself or not. I think that was the day the body was found, and I think that he told me that and, and uh, I don't know what I said to him, that Roy, Roy said he didn't do anything to him or something and anyway, Raymond said Roy didn't. It was Melvin. Well eh went, I said well why would, why would they arrest Roy then? And he said I was not to tell anybody it was Melvin and I said well I will..."¹⁵⁴

C. Movement and Identification of the Body:

[redacted] [redacted] who did not testify at trial, worked at the [redacted] [redacted] in Greenwood, Mississippi, transported Till's body from the recovery site on the Tallahatchie River to the funeral home. Once there, [redacted] recalled placing the body in a coffin and then taking the body to Money, Mississippi for burial. While there, a Deputy Sheriff "and that boy's uncle" advised them the body needed to be taken to Tutwiler, Mississippi, as the body was going to go to Chicago for burial. The following morning [redacted] and Chester Miller went to the funeral home in Tutwiler and were told they had soaked the body in fluid to preserve it. The body was placed in rubber pouches, placed in a casket and they took the body to Clarksdale to the train. [redacted] did not recall a doctor looking at the body. So

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¹⁵³ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of C.F. (Chick) Nelson, 177 to 180

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many people came to look at the body while it was at the funeral home the police had to keep people back. ¹⁵⁵

[redacted] In 1955, [redacted] who did not testify at trial, was employed by the Tutwiler Funeral Home, located in Tutwiler, Mississippi. [redacted]

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transported Till's body from the Century Burial and Funeral Home, located in Greenwood, Mississippi, to the Tutwiler Funeral Home and prepared the body for shipment to Chicago. [redacted] stated the body was "in bad shape" when he got him.

[redacted] embalmed the body, prepared it for shipping and shipped it to Chicago, Illinois, for burial. ¹⁵⁶

[redacted] worked for [redacted] in Chicago,

Illinois. [redacted] received Till's body upon arrival in Chicago and opened the shipping container. [redacted] described the body as "I couldn't recognize it was a body because

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the body had been in the water and when a body's in the water, it becomes swelled, disfigured, you can hardly tell who the person is." [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Till's mother directed that

no work be done on the body before it was shown to the public. [redacted] didn't agree with her decision, but did as she asked. ¹⁵⁷

- **Mamie Bradley (deceased):** Bradley viewed her son's body at the A. A. Rainer Funeral Home. When Bradley observed the body, it was still in the casket. She saw it again later when it had been removed from the casket and placed on a slab. The

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[redacted]

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body had not been tampered with except that it had been clothed. Bradley was able to positively identify the body, in the casket and on the slab, as that of Emmett Louis Till by looking very carefully at the ears, forehead, hairline, hair, nose, lips and chin. Bradley knew it was her boy "beyond a shadow of a doubt."

Bradley further testified Till frequently wore a ring that had been sent to her in her husband's effects following his death. Bradley identified a ring, which had been taken off of the body recovered from the Tallahatchie River, as a ring worn by Till and the ring she had received in her husband's effects following his death.

Additionally, at trial Bradley identified Till from a photograph which had been taken by Mr. Strickland as a photograph of Till.^{158, 159}

D. State of Mississippi vs. Roy Bryant and J. W. Milam: Milam and Bryant were indicted by a Grand Jury in Tallahatchie County on September 5, 1955 on one count each of kidnaping and murder.¹⁶⁰ The kidnaping charge was dropped by the prosecution and the trial for murder took place in Sumner, Mississippi from September 19, 1955 through September 23, 1955, on which date they were acquitted.

Press accounts reveal that after the trial had begun, additional witnesses were identified and a break in the proceedings occurred on Tuesday September 20, 1955 in order for these leads to be pursued.¹⁶¹ [redacted] advised that a barn on the Clint Shurden Plantation was searched on September 20, 1955 by Sunflower County District Attorney Stanny Sanders and Sunflower County Sheriff's

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¹⁵⁸ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Mamie Bradley, 180 to 210

[redacted]
¹⁶¹ *The Lynching of Emmett Till, a Documentary Narrative*, Christopher Metress, 62 to 63

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Department Deputy Rice. Dr. T.R.M. Howard, a prominent black citizen who is credited with finding some of the additional witnesses was also allegedly present when the barn was searched. ¹⁶²

A partial transcript of the trial was made and a copy was in the possession of defense attorney J. W. Kellum. Kellum apparently loaned the transcript to someone, could not recall who he had loaned it to and thus it became lost. At the time of Kellum's death in 1996 his son, [redacted] b6
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[redacted] searched Kellum's files and was unable to locate the transcript. ¹⁶³ In 1983 [redacted] recalled "...a transcript of that case was made for the purpose of having it in the event a kidnaping charge

was placed against those boys in Leflore County." ¹⁶⁴ [redacted] currently a [redacted] [redacted] understood that [redacted] had a transcript of the trial made. [redacted] had borrowed a copy of the transcript from [redacted] during [redacted] attendance at law school and subsequently returned it to [redacted] b6
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[redacted] a native of Tallahatchie County, and a [redacted] [redacted] obtained a copy of the trial transcript from defense attorney J.J. b6
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Breland. [redacted] used the transcript as a reference material in writing [redacted] [redacted] never returned the transcript and kept it for many years. Some years ago, [redacted] home suffered a flood and the transcript, along with other Till research material, was destroyed. ¹⁶⁶

[redacted] recalled that the family had ordered a copy of the court records and had to pay \$75 to have them made. ¹⁶⁷



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[redacted] a native of Tallahatchie County, provided the Federal Bureau of Investigation with a copy of the trial transcript. [redacted] Lee McGarrh, Sr., had testified at the trial of Milam and Bryant as a character witness for the defense. Upon McGarrh, Sr.'s death, [redacted] obtained the copy of the transcript from [redacted] ¹⁶⁸

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A review of the purported transcript provided by [redacted] reveals that the final page is a certification of the document which is signed by Court Reporter James T. O'Day in Tate County, Mississippi on October 28, 1955. ¹⁶⁹

News accounts of the trial depicted photographs of the ring which was entered into evidence, one of which is shown below. A review of this photograph reveals the tag attached to the ring has the words "Exhibit 1 to Testimony of Mr. Cothran 9/21/55" and appears to bear a signature of "J T O'Day."

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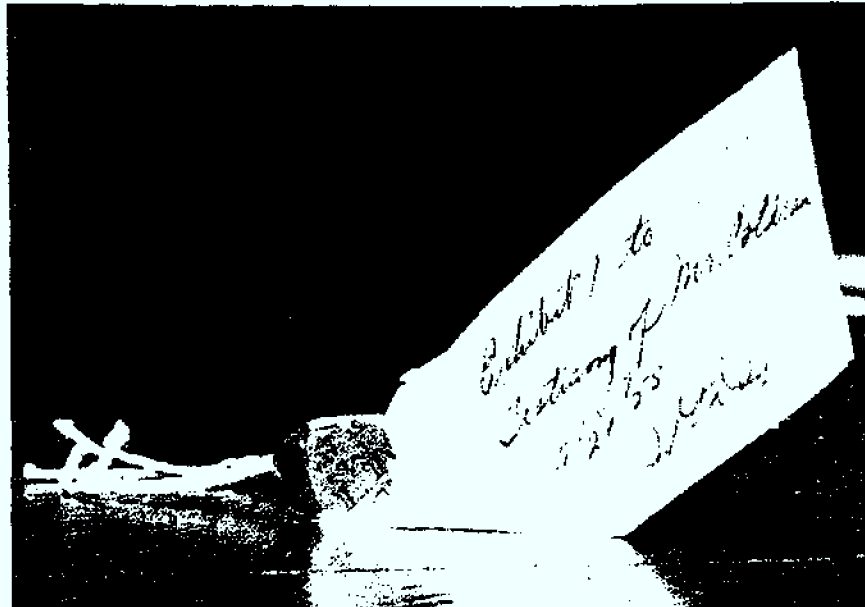
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¹⁶⁹ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District, September 1955, 351

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Ring Taken From the Body and Identified as Till's

Photograph from "Death of Innocence, The story of the Hate Crime that Changed America," by Mamie Till-Mobley and attributed to AP/Wide World Photos

Records from the Tate County Circuit Clerk's Office reveal James T. O'Day was a Court Reporter working for the Chancery Court of Tate County from July 1, 1955 until his removal from office on August 15, 1958.^{170, 171} An interview with [redacted] revealed that James T. O'Day died in 1993 at a Veteran's Hospital in Arizona.¹⁷²

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E. November 8, 1955 - Leflore County Grand Jury: On November 8, 1955, a Grand Jury considered a charge of kidnaping against J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant. Witnesses for the

¹⁷⁰ [redacted] - Records from the Tate County Circuit Clerk, October 31, 2005, [redacted] Misc
¹⁷¹ [redacted] - Records from the Tate County Circuit Clerk, September 16, 2005, [redacted]
¹⁷² [redacted]

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prosecution were Mose Wright, Willie Reed, John Ed Cothran and George Smith. The Grand Jury returned a No Bill on the charges.¹⁷³

F. Admissions:

1. **Look Magazine:** The January 24, 1955 edition of *Look* magazine contained an article by author William Bradford Huie, entitled "The Shocking Story of Approved Killing in Mississippi."¹⁷⁴ Bryant and Milam were paid \$1,500 each for the interview, with their attorneys receiving \$1,000. The following excerpts outline key portions of the story as reported by Huie:

- On August 27, 1955, J.W. Milam drove to Minter City, to his brother-in-law's (Melvin Campbell's) store, where he worked until 12:30 a.m. on Sunday morning, August 28, 1955. Milam then left and went home to Glendora, Mississippi.
- After returning home to Glendora, Milam decided not to go to bed. Instead, he filled his truck up with gasoline and went to Money, Mississippi.
- Milam arrived in Money, Mississippi about 2:00 a.m. and found Roy and Carolyn Bryant asleep. Milam knocked on the back door and Roy Bryant came outside.
- Both men were sober.
- Milam and Bryant (no other persons are mentioned) traveled to Mose Wright's home and took Till.
- If there was doubt about Till's identity the group would have stopped in Money and had Carolyn Bryant identify Till.

¹⁷³ [redacted] Leflore County Court Records, November 8, 1955, [redacted]
¹⁷⁴ [redacted] William Bradford Huie, "The Shocking Story of Approved Killing in Mississippi," *Look Magazine*, January 24, 1955, [redacted]

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- They attempted to find a bluff along the Mississippi River at which to whip Till and scare him, but could not find it, after driving almost 75 miles. They then drove to Glendora, Mississippi, arriving at about 5:00 a.m.
- They took Till into a shed located behind Milam's home in Glendora and pistol whipped him there.
- After deciding to kill Till, they traveled to a cotton gin at Boyle, Mississippi and picked up a discarded gin fan there. Milam is quoted as saying, "When we got to that gin, it was daylight, and I was worried for the first time. Somebody might see us and accuse us of stealing the fan."
- The two forced Till to load the fan into the truck and then drove back to Glendora, then north to Swan Lake, crossing the Tallahatchie River bridge. They traveled south about two miles on a gravel road that paralleled the Tallahatchie River. Once at a spot Milam was familiar with, they forced Till to carry the gin fan to the river, made him strip his clothing off, and Milam shot Till. This occurred or was just prior to 7:00 a.m.

A comparison of the *Look* magazine statements and the evidence reveals a number of inconsistencies or differences. They are:

a. Roy Bryant stated to Cooperating Witness [] hereinafter referred to as [] in 1985 that on the night they took Till there was a lot of drinking and the group had not gone to Boyle, Mississippi that night to get the gin fan. Additionally, Roy Bryant took [] to the barn in which they beat and killed Till, and [] photographed the barn. The barn is the same as that identified

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by [redacted] and is located on the former Clint Shurden Plantation where Leslie Milam operated a farm in 1955, as discussed earlier.¹⁷⁵

b. On August 28, 1955 civil twilight began at 5:06 a.m. and sunrise was at 5:22 a.m.

Daylight arrived while, according to Huie's account, the group was in Glendora, Mississippi, beating Till in the shed behind Milam's home. Milam is quoted as being worried about being seen after arriving in Boyle as daylight had arrived.

c. The distance from Money, Mississippi to Rosedale, Mississippi is 56 miles. The distance from Rosedale, Mississippi to Glendora, Mississippi is 50 miles. The distance from Glendora, Mississippi to Boyle, Mississippi is approximately 33 miles. The group would have traveled over 164 miles (139 miles plus the additional 25 miles stated in the article spent looking for the bluff on the Mississippi River) from the time they kidnaped Till at approximately 2:30 a.m., until the time they arrived at Boyle, Mississippi. With an average speed of 45 miles per hour, and allowing for a ten minute stop in Money, Mississippi (as related by [redacted] the total time in travel would have been approximately 3 hours 38 minutes. This calculation has the group arriving in Boyle, Mississippi after 6:08 a.m. and does not allow any time for the beating of Till in Glendora, Mississippi.

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Dawn arrived on August 28, 1955 at 5:06 a.m. It appears difficult for the travel distances and times outlined in the article to be physically possible when arriving at Boyle, Mississippi at or near day break.

d. The proximity of the buildings in Glendora, Mississippi at the time would have created a situation wherein the noise created by someone being beaten in a shed behind Milam's home would

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in all likelihood have been heard by other residents of the town. No interviews, press accounts or anecdotal evidence indicate this occurred.

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e. [redacted] advised that Roy Bryant, J.W. Milam and a man named Kimbrell brought Emmett Till to [redacted] in Money, Mississippi during the early morning hours of August 28, 1955.¹⁷⁶

f. Willie Reed's testimony in 1955 stated that four white men and three black men were in the truck with Till.

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g. Amandy Bradley testified as to an individual, whose physical description was that of J.W. Milam, being at Leslie Milam's farm when Till was there.

h. Add Reed testified that Leslie Milam was present at Leslie Milam's farm when Till was there.

[redacted] observed J.W. Milam to be near Milam's pickup truck, which contained something underneath a tarpaulin that was bleeding, in Glendora, Mississippi, early on the morning of August 28, 1955. At or near the truck were Oso (Otha Johnson, Jr.), "Too Tight" Collins (Levi Collins), and [redacted] was approaching the truck. The *Look* magazine confession does not mention a stop in Glendora during full daylight hours.

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j [redacted] stated that there was no barn located behind her and [redacted] in Glendora, Mississippi, stating "There wadn't any barn [redacted] It was just a field out there and then the river."¹⁷⁷

2. **J.W. Milam's Admission:** During the course of conducting research on Emmett Till's murder Confidential Source [redacted] interviewed Milam on three occasions over the telephone. During these conversations Milam related the following details about Till's kidnaping and murder:

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[redacted]

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On the Saturday evening and Sunday morning of Till's kidnaping, Melvin Campbell and J.W. Milam were together and Roy Bryant was at his home/store in Money, Mississippi. Sometime during the evening Campbell, J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant met and were playing cards and drinking moonshine. While together, the story of Till whistling at [redacted] came up and Milam, Bryant and either "Too Tight" Collins or [redacted] using Hubert Clark's car, traveled to Money, Mississippi to pick up [redacted] and then to Mose Wright's home.

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Once the group had Till, they dropped [redacted] off in Money, Mississippi and drove back to where they had been drinking. Once there, J.W. Milam, Roy Bryant, Melvin Campbell, Hubert Clark, "Too Tight" Collins and [redacted] were present. The group beat Till there and eventually loaded him into Milam's truck to take him to a place on the Mississippi River to scare him.

They couldn't find the location on the river and rode around for a long time. Eventually, it was beginning to get light and they had to do something, so they went to Leslie Milam's farm, outside of Drew, Mississippi. Leslie Milam was not happy about the group showing up with Till because he had work to do that day.

The group now included Roy Bryant, Leslie Milam, J.W. Milam, Hubert Clark, Melvin Campbell, "Too Tight" Collins and [redacted]. They took Till into a barn and continued to beat him. At some point Till's wallet fell out of his pants and the group discovered a photograph of a white woman in it. During the beating Till was never respectful to the men and did not say "yes sir" or "no sir." Things got out of hand and Till stated something to the effect of "he was as good as they are."

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LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

Till was killed in the barn on Leslie Milam's farm. After he died Till's clothing was stripped off and Collins and [redacted] were directed to clean the blood up that was on the floor. After cleaning the blood up a second time they spread cotton seed on the floor to cover up the blood stain.

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J.W. Milam, Roy Bryant and Melvin Campbell took Till's body in Milam's truck, left Leslie Milam's farm and picked up a gin fan somewhere. They took Till's body to a bridge in a secluded area, affixed the gin fan to Till and threw him off the bridge, into the Tallahatchie River. At about the same time Clark, utilizing Leslie Milam's car, took Collins and [redacted] to bury Till's clothing, however, Till's shoes were overlooked and remained in Leslie Milam's car. After burying the clothing [redacted] and Collins walked home.

The night after the kidnaping and murder Collins was drinking and talking too much at a café. A friend of Collins named Buck, got Collins out of the café and took him to Treola Collins' house.

After Roy Bryant was arrested the Bryant/Milam family met at their mother's home to discuss what to do. The brothers were concerned about Roy Bryant "running his mouth" and didn't think he could stick to the story. It was decided that J.W. Milam should get himself arrested so he could be with Roy Bryant in jail and help control what Roy Bryant did. ¹⁷⁸

3. Roy Bryant's Admission: In 1985 an individual, who is now a cooperating witness, but who was unaffiliated with law enforcement at the time, hereinafter referred to as [redacted] met with Roy Bryant and approached him about [redacted] [redacted] and Bryant rode together to the Wright home, Bryant's Meat Market and Grocery and to the barn where Till had been beaten and killed. During the trip [redacted] was equipped with an audio cassette recorder and successfully recorded portions of their conversation. The following statements were made by Bryant and captured on tape:

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[redacted]
Misc O/S

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

- When asked about taking Till to a bluff on the Mississippi River near Rosedale they were going to "put his ass in the river", the Mississippi River. ¹⁷⁹
- When asked if they were drinking "Yeah, hell yeah we was drinkin" "Now we wasn't drunk" "...wasn't nobody drunk." ¹⁸⁰
- About killing Till "Well, we done whopped the son of a bitch, and I had backed out on killin' the mother fucker..." "...and we gonna take him to the hospital. But we done whopped that son of a bitch. I mean, it was, the, carryin' him to the hospital wouldn't have done him no good (laughs)." "Put his ass in the Tallahatchie River." ¹⁸¹
- When asked why they stopped in the woodshed over there (Leslie Milam's) "I donno. Tryin' to make our minds up." ¹⁸²
- About going to Boyle to get the gin fan "We didn't go to Boyle." ¹⁸³
- About Glendora "Didn't go back to Glendora. Went through Glendora." ¹⁸⁴
- About other people knowing what had happened that night with Till "I'm the only one who's livin' that knows it (laughs)" "That's all that will ever be known" "That's the only two that was ever tried." ¹⁸⁵

4. Leslie F. Milam's Death Bed Confession: Sometime just prior to his death in

August of 1974 Leslie Milam requested that [REDACTED] appear at his residence.

[REDACTED] was aware that Milam was dying of cancer and traveled to his home. Upon his arrival

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Milam told [REDACTED] he (Leslie Milam) had something he wanted to get off his chest, that he had

[REDACTED]

Misc O/S

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been personally involved in the murder of Emmett Till in 1955. Milam told [redacted] that Milam knew it was wrong and it had bothered him for all the years since the incident took place. Milam did not provide any details as to his role in Till's murder, where the events transpired, or the identities of any other persons involved in the matter.¹⁸⁶

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5. Leslie F. Milam's Statements to Confidential Source [redacted] During 1965 and 1966 Confidential Source [redacted] hereinafter referred to as [redacted] was the owner of a business located in Drew, Mississippi. While employed there [redacted] met two brothers with the last name Milam at a [redacted] [redacted] described one of the brothers as living in Ruleville, Mississippi and who operated a "mom and pop" store. The other brother was described as living in Cleveland, Mississippi and whose spouse was named [redacted] [redacted] also understood that [redacted] owned [redacted] [redacted] Mississippi.

During [redacted] conversation with the Milam brother who lived in Cleveland, Mississippi the brother revealed the following information about the killing of Emmett Till:¹⁸⁷

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- Till's body could not be located by authorities in a river because it had not been thrown in a river.
- Till had gone to a "mom and pop" store owned by the Milam brother who lived in Ruleville, Mississippi and had asked [redacted] for a date. This infuriated the Milam brothers and they decided to kill Till.
- The Milam brothers took Till out to the woods and "beat the hell out of him with chains." Believing Till was dead, they placed his body in the back of a pick-up truck and drove around trying to figure out what to do with the body.

[redacted] Misc O/S

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

- Two blacks, who worked for the Milams, were part of the group that beat and killed Till. One of the blacks discovered Till wasn't dead so the two blacks killed him and helped in the disposal of his body.

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- Till's body was buried in a barn on property owned by [redacted] [redacted] owned a farm that was located on [redacted] just west of the country club, outside of Drew, Mississippi.

An analysis of the information provided by [redacted] indicates the following:

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a. The information provided appears to have been provided by Leslie F. Milam due to the fact that Leslie F. Milam resided in Cleveland, Mississippi at the time of the alleged conversation and that [redacted]

b. The second Milam brother [redacted] met appears to be either Stanley Lamar "Bud" Milam or Roy Bryant. According to information provided by family members both Stanley Lamar "Bud" Milam and Roy Bryant owned and operated small country stores in Ruleville, Mississippi at some point in time.

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6. Carolyn Bryant-Donham's Admissions: Bryant-Donham testified on behalf of the defense at trial in 1955. Additionally, during the course of this investigation [redacted] [redacted] During her testimony [redacted] [redacted] in the events under

investigation here. These are:

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- At trial, [redacted] Bryant-Donham related the story of Till's entering the Bryant Grocery and Meat Market on August 24, 1955 wherein Till grabbed Bryant-Donham's hand, waist and made advances toward her. [redacted]

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

[redacted] whom [redacted]

[redacted] 188, 189, 190

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• [redacted] stated she was afraid to tell [redacted] about the incident at the store with Till because [redacted] .."go find [Till] and beat him up" and "... [redacted] what had happened, [redacted] not to tell J.W., because [redacted] because [redacted] of what they would do." 191, 192

• On Saturday, August 27, 1955, when confronted by Roy Bryant about what had happened at the store, [redacted] gave him a detailed account of the incident where Till grabbed her hand, waist and made advances toward her. 193

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• On Saturday, August 27, 1955, "...there was a lady and her little boy or her grandson or somebody was in the store and, I don't know, Roy said something to 'em, and I remember telling him to leave him alone, that, you know, that wasn't him." [Emmett Till] 194

• On Sunday, August 28, 1955 Roy Bryant, J.W. Milam and a man named Kimbrell brought Emmett Till to [redacted] " [redacted]

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[redacted] they probably asked [redacted] who, if that was him and [redacted] [redacted] Because [redacted] no mater what [redacted] said no that's not

¹⁸⁸ Appendix A - Transcript - State of Mississippi vs. J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, Second District of Tallahatchie County, Seventh Judicial District, September 1955 - Testimony of Mrs. Roy Bryant, 258 to 277

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194
[redacted]

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him because [redacted]

[redacted] 195, 196, 197, 198

7. **Lamarcus Pilate:** Memphis television station Fox 13 conducted an interview with Lamarcus Pilate. In the interview, Pilate alleged that J.W. Milam confessed about Milam's involvement in Till's murder to him when Pilate was fourteen years old. Pilate described Milam as living in Ruleville, Mississippi at the time of the confession and as being employed as a police officer at some point in time after Till's murder. Pilate also alleged Milam told him an [redacted] and [redacted] were involved in Till's killing.¹⁹⁹

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- Pilate's statement regarding Milam being a law enforcement officer appears to be in reference to Stanley Lamar "Bud" Milam, a Milam brother, who was a law enforcement officer in Sunflower County sometime after the Till incident.²⁰⁰

- No other information learned during the instant investigation indicates an [redacted] [redacted] or a [redacted] was involved in this matter.

G. Laboratory, Medical and Other Findings:

1. **Ithaca, Model M1911-A1, .45 caliber pistol, serial number 2102279:** [redacted]

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[redacted] provided the investigating Agents with an Ithaca, Model M1911-A1, .45 caliber pistol which her brother, [redacted] believes was owned by J.W. Milam and used to kill Emmett Till. The pistol had been owned by the [redacted] father and was given to [redacted]

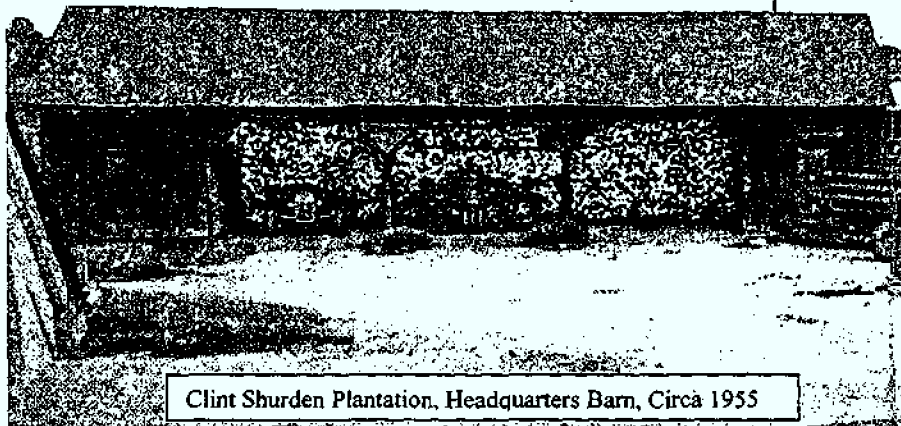
195	[redacted]
196	[redacted]
197	[redacted]
198	[redacted]
199	Interview of Lamarcus Pilate by Fox 13 News, [redacted]
200	[redacted]

Misc o/s

by her father.^{201, 202, 203} Manufacturer's data reflects that this weapon was manufactured in 1945 and was inspected by Ithaca inspector [redacted]⁰⁴

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Latent print analysis was conducted on this weapon; however, no latent prints of value were detected.²⁰⁵ This weapon was test fired in the laboratory and was found to function normally.²⁰⁶

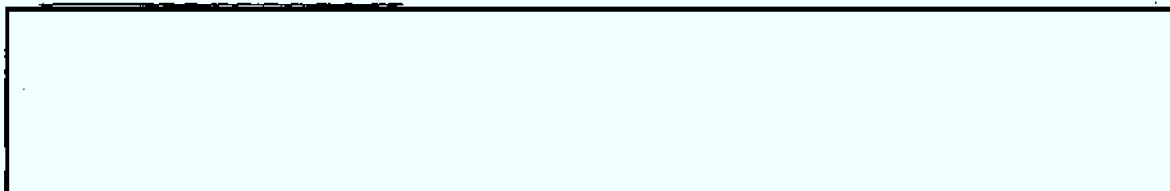


2. Identification and Search of [redacted] Barn: A review of the trial transcript, published accounts, photographs and information from individuals, identified [redacted] [redacted] Drew, Mississippi as the location of the former Clint Shurden Plantation. The property is currently owned by [redacted] and [redacted]. Situated on the property are [redacted] that appear to have been standing in 1955.

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[redacted] traveled to Mississippi during April 2005 and visited the property in the company of investigators. During the tour of the property [redacted] explained the layout of the property

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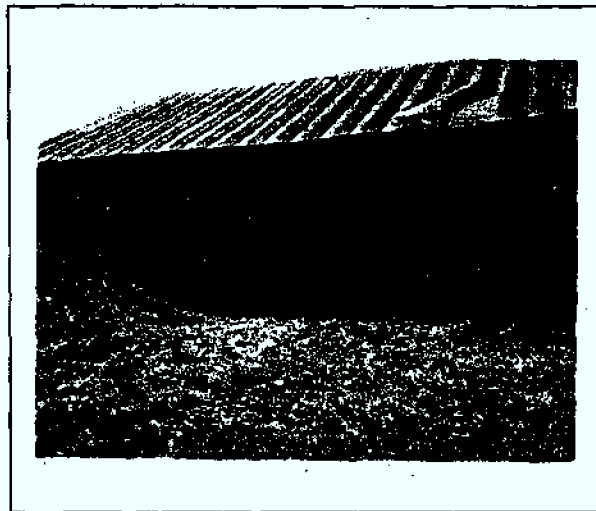
LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

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as it existed in 1955, the location of the various buildings and homes [redacted] also positively identified the barn, shown above, as the barn in which Emmett Till had been taken and from which [redacted] heard screams on August 28, 1955.²⁰⁷

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Additionally [redacted] who met with Roy Bryant in 1985, was taken to the property by Bryant and told that Till had been tortured/murdered inside the barn. The photograph taken by [redacted] in the presence of Roy Bryant is depicted below:



Barn Identified by Roy Bryant in 1985

On May 18, 2005, a search was conducted of the barn identified by [redacted]. The search included the removal and sifting of dirt from the barn floor in one of the rooms known to exist in 1955 and the use of luminal on framing believed to exist in 1955. Seized during the search were five items believed to be possible bone fragments.²⁰⁸ Examination of these items by [redacted]

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[redacted]
Misc O/S

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

[redacted] revealed three of these fragments to be animal bones and the remaining two items as rocks. ²⁰⁹

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3. Exhumation & Autopsy of Remains: Pursuant to an Illinois State Court Order, on June 1, 2005 the remains interred at the Burr Oak Cemetery, Alsip, Illinois, in a grave marked to be that of Emmett Louis Till, were exhumed. ^{210, 211} Following the exhumation of the gravesite, the vault containing the casket and remains were transported to the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office. The vault was opened, the casket removed from the vault, and the remains removed from the casket. Following removal of the remains from the casket, an autopsy was performed under the direction of [redacted] Chief Medical Examiner, Cook County, Illinois. ^{212, 213, 214}

a. CT Examination: Upon removal from the casket, and prior to any physical examination, the remains were transported to the John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County and subjected to CT testing. The examination revealed there were extensive and dramatic fractures of the skull, metallic fragments were identified in the cranium, and a vertical symphyseal fracture of the thyroid cartilage was observed. The distal left femur was fractured. A possible subtle fracture of the right capitate bone was observed in the right wrist, as well as a fracture to the left lunate bone of the left wrist. ^{215, 216}

209 [redacted]
210 [redacted] - Cook County Court Orders, May 5, 2005
211 [redacted]
212 [redacted]
213 [redacted]
214 [redacted]

Misc o/s

[redacted]

Misc o/s

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

b. Forensic Dental Examination: Dental examination of the remains was conducted to establish the approximate age of the subject and to conduct a photographic comparison of dental details. The dental development and the tooth eruption of the remains revealed that the estimated mean dental age of the remains was 14.6 years, with a standard deviation of one year.²¹⁷

Family photographs of Emmett Till, taken during his lifetime, were obtained and provided to the Cook County Medical Examiner for use in a forensic dental examination.²¹⁸ Examination of the ante mortem photographs revealed a distinctive gap or space between the maxillary left lateral incisor and the maxillary left canine. Measurements taken on the ante mortem photograph revealed an angle of 74 degrees for the proximal angle of this gap. Postmortem examination of this gap revealed an angle of 77 degrees for the proximal angle of this gap.

A photographic comparison wherein the superimposition of the left maxillary lateral incisor and maxillary left canine teeth were compared to an overlay of the ante mortem and post mortem dental images. This comparison revealed a concordance of both the anatomic contours of the incisal one-third of these teeth and their proximal angles.

The dental examination concluded that based on a reasonable degree of dental certainty, the dental age, and proximal angle comparisons, are consistent with that of Emmett Louis Till.

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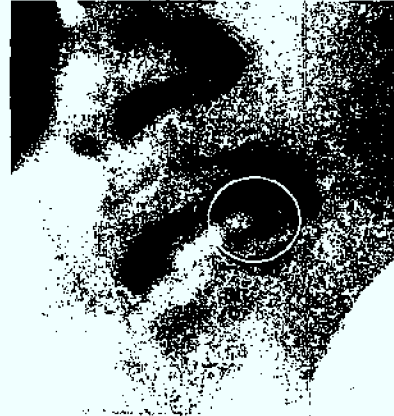
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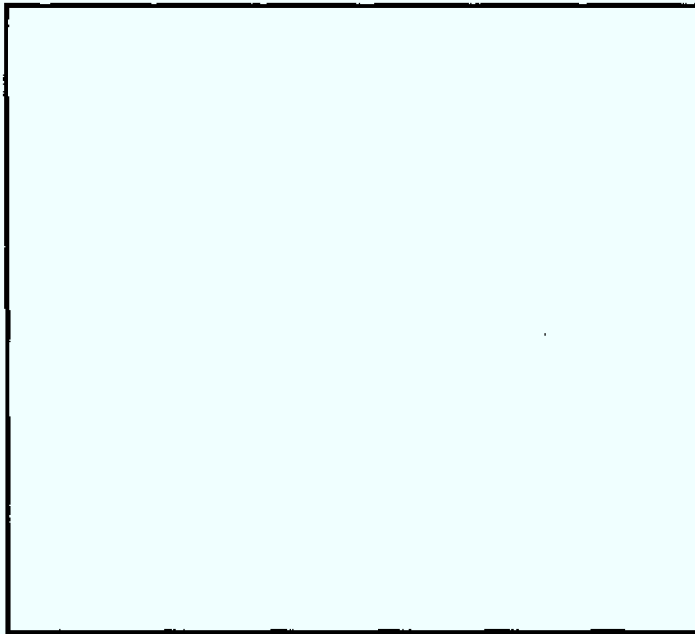
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Emmett Till, circa December 1954



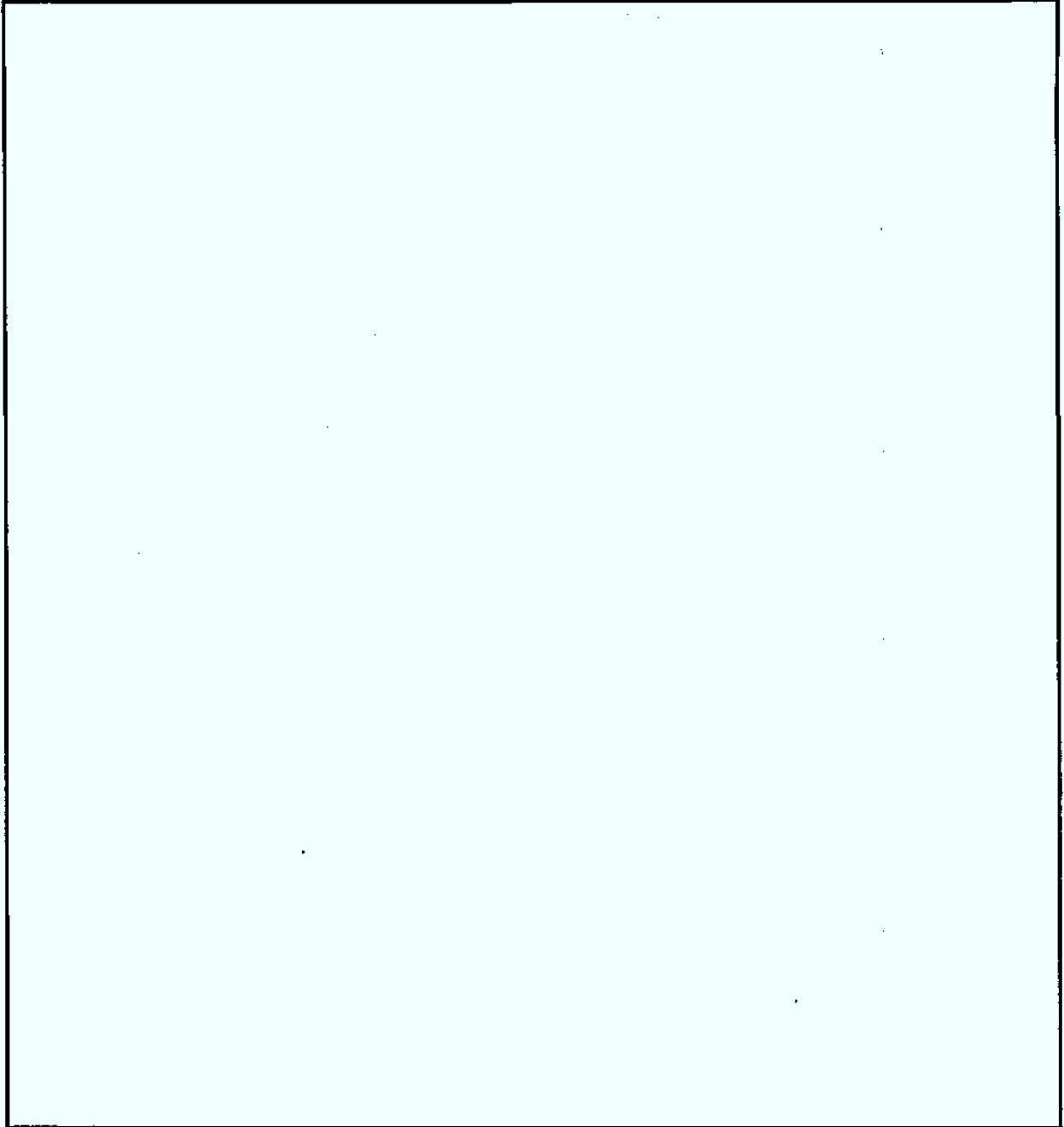
Inset of Gap in Teeth:



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LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

c. Evidence of Injury: The autopsy revealed the following evidence of injury to the remains: ²¹⁹



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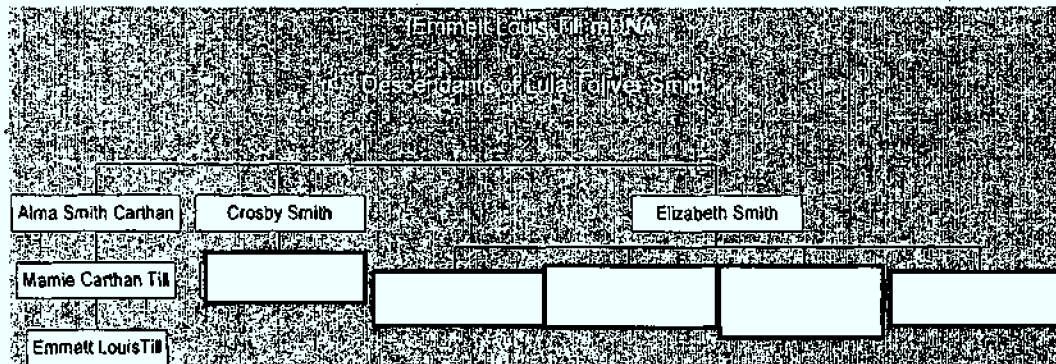


LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

d. Mitochondrial DNA Examination:

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(1.) Till Family Genealogy: The data presented on the chart below was provided by [redacted] other data sources, and verified through vital records checks.^{220, 221, 222, 223}



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(2.) Laboratory Results: A blood sample and two buccal swabs were obtained from [redacted] for mtDNA comparison purposes.²²⁴ A piece of muscle tissue was obtained from the remains exhumed on June 1, 2005. The mtDNA sequences obtained from the specimens contributed by [redacted] and the muscle tissue from the remains are the same. Therefore, Emmett Till cannot be excluded as the source of the muscle tissue. A search of the mtDNA population database available at the time of testing revealed two observations of this sequence in the African American population, with 1,148 individuals represented. The upper bound frequency for this occurrence is .42%.²²⁵

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[redacted]
[redacted]
- Birth Certificate of Emmett Louis Till [redacted]
[redacted]

Misc o/s

mtDNA Sequencing Results

Specimen	K4 Muscle Tissue from Remains	K8 Blood Stain From [redacted]
Range	np 15998-16389	np 15998-16389
HVI	16124 C 16223 T 16319 A	16124 C 16223 T 16319 A
Range	np 49-408	np 49-408
HVII	73 G 150 T 152 C 263 G 309.1 C 315.1 C	73 G 150 T 152 C 263 G 309.1 C* 315.1 C *C8TC6-Major C9TC6

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e. Anthropological Examination: During the autopsy process, anthropological examinations were conducted and the following conclusions reached:²²⁶

(1.) Observations of age at death factors are consistent with the known age at death of Emmett Till of 14 years. In particular, an age at death of approximately 14 years is suggested by the extent of dental formation, bone development, and epiphyseal union.

(2.) The cranium exhibited extensive fractures with areas of missing bone, with the fractures concentrated in areas of the cranial vault and base. No evidence of healing was associated with the fractures and they did not display evidence of having been produced during exhumation and examination. The characteristics of the fractures are consistent with having been produced at or about the time of death.

Misc O/S

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

(3.) Areas of radiodensity were noted during radiographic examination and samples were collected.

(4.) Deposits of dark, metallic-appearing material were noted during examination of the cranial skeletal remains. Samples of these deposits were collected for further examination.

f. Laboratory Results:

(1.) Lead Fragments: Four of the lead fragments recovered during autopsy were found to be consistent in their remaining physical characteristics with deformed shot pellets. The weights of these pellets are consistent with either number 7^{1/2} or number 8 lead shot pellets.²²⁷

(2.) Metallic Deposits: The deposits of dark, metallic-appearing material collected during the anthropological examination were found to contain lead residue.²²⁸

g. Ammunition Data: Remington Arms Company manufactured two .45 caliber pistol cartridges prior to 1955 which contained shot, the M12 and the M15 cartridges. Each of these cartridges contained number 7^{1/2} chilled lead shot and were manufactured for the Army Air Force to be utilized by aircraft combat crews for survival purposes.²²⁹

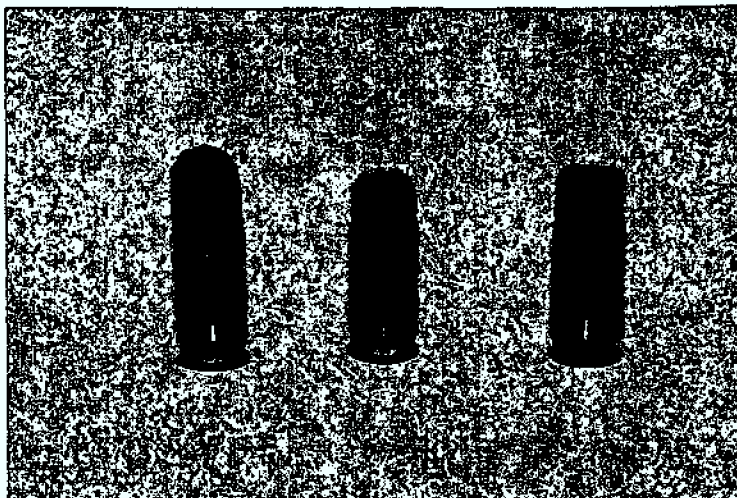
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[redacted] advised that his [redacted] was very accurate with his .45 caliber pistol and that "I can tell ya how good he was with that old pistol. I seen him shoot bumble bees out of the air with it."²³⁰

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Misc O/S



M12 (left) and two versions of M15 Ammunition

h. Processing of Evidence: Following the June 2, 2005 autopsy of the remains removed from the gravesite alleged to contain the remains of Emmett Till evidence collected was processed and forwarded to the laboratory. ^{231, 232}

i. Anatomic Diagnosis: ²³³

- (1.) Gunshot wound of the head.
- (2.) Multiple comminuted skull fractures.
- (3.) Multiple lead fragments recovered from head and skull.
- (4.) Fractures of the right and left wrist bones.
- (5.) Fracture of the distal left femur.
- (6.) Embalmed body with numerous venting incisions in the skin and floor of mouth.
- (7.) Missing left upper central incisor with open socket.

Misc O/S

j. Medical Examiner's Opinion: Emmett Louis Till died of a gunshot wound of the head. Manner of death: homicide. ²³⁴

G. Other Allegations & Issues:

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1. [redacted]

[redacted] conducting research on a lynching in Mississippi, met an individual who represented himself to be [redacted] [redacted] related to [redacted] that [redacted] had witnessed the torture of Till. ²³⁵ [redacted] initially identified [redacted] as [redacted] during a telephone conversation on June 2, 2004. ²³⁶

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During a later interview, [redacted] identified the individual he met as [redacted] a white male [redacted] at the time [redacted] interviewed him in 2001. [redacted] stated he had not revealed [redacted] true name initially, because at the time he had yet to meet the investigating Agent and was attempting to protect [redacted] identity and [redacted] information from inadvertent disclosure to other [redacted]

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[redacted] related to [redacted] that he witnessed the torture of Emmett Till in 1955. [redacted] described receiving a telephone call to meet someone and ending up at a barn. Present at the barn were ten to twelve other people, including two black men, a white woman and a white boy of about twelve years old. The torture took place inside the barn in a small room that contained a set of bleachers.

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According to [redacted] Till was beaten with fists, an anvil was used to strike his head, his skin was pierced at multiple places with an awl, and [redacted] [redacted] used a brace and bit (a hand operated drill) to drill a hole in Till's head. Drilling wounds were located on

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[redacted]

Misc o/s

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

the head about one inch above Till's right ear, as well as on other parts of Till's body. Additionally, most of Till's teeth were knocked out, the right side of his face was caved in and there were scraping wounds along Till's ribs.

[redacted] related that Till's killing had been approved by the local Ku Klux Klan leadership and part of the reason Till had been killed were the facts that he was from Chicago and not considered to be a child.

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[redacted] believes that, based upon his interview of [redacted] and other information he has heard that, in addition to [redacted] the following were present at the barn during Till's torture: J. W. Milam; Roy Bryant; [redacted] [redacted] an unknown man from [redacted] Mississippi; [redacted] Levy "Too Tight" Collins'; an unknown white woman; and a white teenage boy.²³⁷

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[redacted] was shown a total of sixty-nine photographs which depicted white males from Mississippi and one white male from Texas, all with the last name [redacted] each of the approximate age [redacted] believed [redacted] to be. [redacted] was unable to identify any of the men depicted in the photographs as [redacted]^{238, 239}

A comparison of the story related to [redacted] by [redacted] to the evidence reveals a number of inconsistencies or differences. They are:

- a. Only one tooth was missing from Till's remains at the time of autopsy.
- b. No "scraping wounds" or "awl" wounds as described by [redacted] were present on Till's body at the time of autopsy.

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Misc o/s

c. The testimony of Amandy Bradley, Willie Reed and Add Reed did not indicate a large number of automobiles were present at the Clint Shurden Plantation on the morning Till was present there.

d. The testimony of Amandy Bradley indicates she only saw four white men present at the Clint Shurden Plantation on the morning Till was present there.

e. No evidence of wounds made by a drill were found on Till's body. It should be noted, however, that Till's [redacted] was missing [redacted] at the time of autopsy.

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Mississippi Sovereignty Commission records reveal two instances wherein a Billy Wilson, the owner of [redacted] a store in [redacted] Mississippi is alleged to have been involved in the Till murder.²⁴⁰ [redacted] the wife of Billy Wilson, the owner of [redacted] was interviewed. [redacted] stated her husband died in 1991. The couple married in 1951 and lived their entire lives together in the [redacted] and [redacted] Mississippi areas and never lived in the Leflore, Tallahatchie or Sunflower County areas. [redacted] was aware that certain allegations existed that her husband made statements about being involved in Emmett Till's murder, however, she believes it was another Billy Wilson who lived in the Mississippi Delta who made those statements.²⁴¹

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2. [redacted] [redacted] is a [redacted] who grew up in [redacted] Mississippi. [redacted] is the subject of [redacted]

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[redacted] The book is biographical in nature and recounts certain events in [redacted] including

[redacted]

[redacted] is the daughter of [redacted] [redacted] father operated a [redacted]

²⁴⁰ [redacted] - Sovereignty Commission Records, [redacted]
²⁴¹ [redacted]

Misc o/s

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LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

[redacted] in the 1950s in [redacted] Mississippi. [redacted] mother picked cotton. [redacted] alleged that [redacted] had some involvement in Till's murder. [redacted] recalled an incident where she traveled with [redacted] J.W. Milam, two other men and [redacted] to several locations in Leflore County. She believes the locations the group visited were locations involved in Till's kidnaping and murder.

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[redacted] stated that as a child she accompanied her father on many occasions when he would stop at Bryant's Grocery & Meat Market in Money, Mississippi. He would stop at the store whenever he passed through on his way to check his trotlines and go fishing. During these stops, [redacted] witnessed her father kissing and hugging [redacted] on numerous occasions.

Sometimes on these visits [redacted] and her brothers would have to wait on their father for hours.

[redacted] believes her father, and [redacted] both had affairs with [redacted]

[redacted]²

3. Ku Klux Klan and Other Allegations: An extensive search and review of records pertaining to the activities of the Ku Klux Klan during the 1950s, and in the area of interest here, was conducted. This research, including the review of case files and informant files, did not reveal any information indicating that the Ku Klux Klan had any involvement in the kidnaping and murder of Emmett Till. Additionally, these records did not reveal any information that any of the persons of interest to this investigation were involved in Ku Klux Klan activities.

A review of Federal Bureau of Investigation files related to Till's kidnaping and murder revealed several references to the alleged kidnaping of Levi Collins and [redacted] prior to trial in 1955. At the time Robert Smith, III, a Special Prosecutor assigned to assist at the trial of Milam and Bryant, and a former Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, conducted

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[redacted]

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investigation into these allegations on behalf of the prosecution. Smith searched for [redacted] and Collins and determined they had not been at the Charleston, Mississippi jail, as been alleged. Smith learned these details from the Tallahatchie County Sheriff, a Deputy Sheriff, a search of the jail, and interviews of jail inmates by the Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol.²⁴³

While there are other rumors regarding the murder of Emmett Till which have been expressed from time to time, there is insufficient corroboration, lead information or other evidence to warrant further investigation into any of these rumors.

Misc O/S

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