

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

Report of:
Date:

SA [REDACTED]
February 9, 2006

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Office: JACKSON

Case ID#:

44A-JN-30112
62D-JN-30045

NARRATIVE OF THE OFFENSE

I. SYNOPSIS:

On August 24, 1955, Emmett Louis Till, a fourteen-year-old black male from Chicago, Illinois, visiting relatives in Leflore County, Mississippi, entered the Bryant Grocery & Meat Market in the town of Money, Mississippi. Till exited the store and shortly thereafter Carolyn Bryant, the store owner's wife, exited as well. Upon Carolyn Bryant's exit, Till whistled. The relatives accompanying him knew his whistle would cause trouble and they left in haste, taking Till with them.

On August 28, 1955, at approximately 2:30 a.m., Roy Bryant (Carolyn Bryant's husband), J.W. Milam and at least one other person appeared at the home of Mose Wright, Till's great uncle, looking for the boy who had "done the talking" in Money and abducted Till from the home. Following Till's abduction, Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam were arrested by the Leflore County Sheriff's Department and charged with kidnaping.

On August 31, 1955, a naked body presumed to be Till's was found floating in a section of the Tallahatchie River running along the border between Tallahatchie and Leflore Counties. A seventy-five pound cotton gin fan was tied with barbed wire to the neck of the floating body and there was extensive trauma to the head. Upon discovery of the body and its subsequent

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identification as Emmett Till, Roy Bryant and J. W. Milam were indicted on charges of murder in Tallahatchie County.

From September 19, 1955 through September 23, 1955, Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam were tried for Till's murder in the Circuit Court, Second Judicial District of Tallahatchie County, Seventeenth Judicial District of Mississippi, and acquitted.

On November 8, 1955, a Grand Jury in Leflore County met to consider kidnaping charges against Milam and Bryant. The Grand Jury returned a No Bill and no other charges, to date, have been filed on Milam, Bryant, or any other person in connection with Till's kidnaping and murder.

Milam and Bryant later confessed to kidnaping and murdering Till to William Bradford Huie, a reporter, and the account was published in *Look* magazine on January 24, 1956.

J.W. Milam died in 1981 and Roy Bryant died in 1994. The judge at trial, Curtis M. Swango, Jr.; the Court Reporter, James T. O'Day; prosecuting attorneys, Gerald Chatam, Robert B. Smith, III and Hamilton Caldwell; and defense attorneys J. J. Breland, C. Sidney Carlton, J.W. Kellum and John W. Whitten are deceased. Defense attorney [redacted] is the sole surviving court officer who participated in the trial. Additionally, the original court, District Attorney, and investigative records related to the 1955 investigation have apparently been lost. b6 b7C

To date, no investigation into this matter, with the exception of the original 1955 investigation, has been conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation, or any other law enforcement agency.

The instant investigation was opened on May 7, 2004, at the request of the District Attorney, 4th Judicial District, Greenwood, Mississippi, in an effort to determine if other individuals were involved in these crimes and to bring forth state indictments against these individuals if it is deemed appropriate.

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