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INVESTIGATIVE AND IDENTIFICATION DIVISION District File: 20-45-18

Case originated at: Hayneville Ala. Lowndes County File No. 20-870

Report Made at: Mobile, Alabama	Date when Made: 10-25-57	Period for which Made: 10-23-57 & 10-24-57	Report Made by: C. F. Coley
TITLE OF CASE: Roger Hamilton C/M, Age 18 (Victim)		CHARACTER OF CASE: Homicide	

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS: The victim in this case was picked up at his home five (5) miles West of Hayneville at approximately 1:30 on the morning of October 22, 1957 and taken .3 mile from his home and shot. This shooting is alleged to have been witnessed by his mother, Beatrice Hamilton.

REFERENCES: This investigation predicated upon a request by Sheriff Frank Ryals, Lowndes County and upon an order from Chief T. J. Carlisle, Investigative and Identification Division, Department of Public Safety.

DETAILS: The writer was contacted by Chief Carlisle at 11:40 A.M. October 22, 1957 and advised to go to Hayneville, Lowndes County, Alabama the following morning to assist the Sheriff in the killing of a Negro male.

The writer contacted Deputy Sheriff Joe Jackson at Hayneville at 10:30 A. M. October 23, 1957 and started on the investigation of the killing of Roger Hamilton, C/M, age 18. Mr. George McCurley, the employer of the victim, was contacted and he stated that this Negro had worked for him on his farm all of his life, that he had never known of him being in any trouble, but that he knew very little about where he went or what he did when he wasn't working. He stated that Beatrice Hamilton, mother of the victim, came to his house sometime between 1:30 and 2:00 Tuesday morning, October 22, 1957, and woke him up and told him that Roger had been shot and wanted him to call the Sheriff. He stated that the Negro woman said that she didn't know anything about who shot the Negro and didn't mention any white men as having done it at first, but later stated that two (2) white men in a truck had carried him off from the house.

Preston Fields, C/M, age 18, a nephew of the victim and lived in the same house with the victim, stated that he heard the vehicle come up the lane to the house and that he heard someone call Roger five (5) times. He said after about the second time Roger was called, his grandmother, Beatrice Hamilton, called Roger and told him to get up that someone outside wanted him. He stated that Roger got up and went out the door of the room in which they were sleeping onto the porch.

Copies of this report to:
2 - Central File
1 - District File
1 - Hon. Joe Kettler, Cir. Sol., Laverne
1 - Sheriff Frank Ryals, Hayneville
1 - Hon. Carlton Perdue, Co. Sol., Hayneville

APPROVED

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He further stated that in a few minutes he heard the vehicle's door slam and that it turned around and drove back down the lane towards the road and that after the door slammed, his grandmother got up and opened the door leading from her room out onto the porch, that she then came to the door of the room in which he was sleeping and called him and tried to get him to get up and go with her and follow the truck, but that he told her there was no use of following the vehicle to see where Roger was going.

Hattie Mae Edwards and Hattie Lewis, two (2) Negro girls who live East of Hayneville, were questioned in reference to the victim. Hattie Mae Edwards stated that she had been going with the victim for about two (2) years but that they quit going together a couple months ago and that he had started going with Hattie Lewis but that she had never heard of any fuss or argument about him going with Hattie Lewis. Hattie Lewis was contacted and stated that she had been going with the victim a couple of months and that she had been going with no one else since that time, that she turned down all the boys for Roger.

Beatrice Hamilton, mother of the victim, was interrogated by the writer and the following information was obtained. She stated that she was lying in bed smoking and heard a vehicle coming up towards the house, that it came up and turned around and then she heard someone call Roger twice and that she herself called Roger and told him to get up, that somebody outside wanted him. She said that she went to the front door of her room when the vehicle first drove up but that she did not unlatch the door but turned and went to the door in Roger's room and called him, then when Roger got up and went out his door to the porch she went back to her front door and unlatched it and cracked the door just a little bit. She stated that she heard Roger and whoever had called him mumbling, but did not ever hear any words plain. She further stated that she was peeping out the door and could see the truck standing outside the yard, that it was a green pickup truck and that it was a white man who was standing talking to Roger in the yard, that after talking a few minutes in the yard Roger and the man went to the truck and leaned up against the truck and talked some more. She did not know just how long but assumed it was about five (5) minutes. Then she stated that she saw the man put his hand on Roger and Roger got in the truck and the man got in beside him, then as the truck drove back down the lane she called to Preston to get up and go with her to see where they were taking Roger. He would not get up and she stated that her other children all got up and tried to keep her from going out of the house, but that she shook them loose, slipped on a coat and shoes and followed the truck down the lane from her house and when she got to the cattle gap at the end of the lane and on just a little ways beyond the cattle gap in the road she saw the truck stopped in the road and that she could see Roger and one man standing out on the ground and that she saw this man pull out a pistol and as he pointed the pistol at Roger, she screamed, "Lord, don't shoot my boy", and at this instant the pistol fired and Roger fell to the ground and the man got back in the truck and it immediately drove away on towards the highway and that she went on down to where Roger was lying on the ground and that she flashed her flashlight down on his face. She stated that although she had a flashlight when she left the house, that she had never turned it on until she reached Roger lying on the ground and when she saw that Roger had been shot in the forehead, she turned and went to Mr. George McCurley's residence to get him to call the Sheriff.

The writer had Beatrice Hamilton point out to him just where she was standing in her room and how she was peeping out the door to see what was going on and it was learned that she could not possibly have seen the two (2) men, Roger and the unknown man, standing in the yard where she stated they were standing. She also pointed out which side of the truck Roger was put in and according to the statements she made in reference to

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how the truck was standing, Roger would have been put in on the drivers side, which would have been impossible if the driver was still under the wheel and she stated that there was never but one man out of the car. There was a hedge between the front of this house and where the truck was parked and since it was approximately 1:30 in the morning it is doubtful that Beatrice Hamilton could have determined the color of the truck or the color of the men who carried him away. She stated to the writer that when she reached the point to where she could see the shooting that she saw a tag on the truck. When questioned as to the color of this tag, she stated that it was a yellow tag with black numerals on it. There is doubt that anyone could have told whether-or-not this tag was yellow, white or gray. It is the opinion of the writer that at that time of night that the only color that could have been distinguished would have been light or dark and at no time was this vehicle in the light. It is hard to conceive that Beatrice could have determined the color of either the truck or the tags.

It is the opinion of the writer that Beatrice Hamilton, although sincere in her belief that her statement is true, that due to emotional upset of her son being killed that in all probability she is mistaken in many respects to what she stated. At the present time there is no clue as to what could have been the motive for this killing. The Negroes that were questioned were questioned along the lines of racial unrest or any activity that the victim may have had along these lines or any activity that any member of his family may have had and no information was obtained as to any one having been involved in any way in the racial disputes nor could any clue be obtained as to any argument the victim may have had with any one in reference to his girl friends or to any gambling that he might have been involved in.

This investigation is being continued by the Sheriff's Department of Lowndes County.

PENDING