

RANDY HOWARD

having been first duly sworn, was examined upon oral interrogatories and testified as follows:

EXAMINATION BY MS. GRIFFIN:

Q Would you tell them your name please?

A My name is Randy Howard.

Q Where do you live?

A I live in Champaign County.

Q Are you from the Bloomington area or did you live there?

A I was born here and spent most of my childhood here.

Q I want to ask you if you're familiar with certain people starting with Jamie Snow?

A Very familiar with him.

Q How do you know Jamie?

A Grew up in the same trailer court with him.

Q How would you describe your relationship with him?

A Back in junior high, we were very tight. I'd say best friends. I moved away for awhile. Came back. I changed. He hadn't. We were still friends, you know, growing up like that you can't just write that off so.

We were friends but not like we used to be. I didn't trust him. I don't think he trusted me.

Q Do you know a person named Mark McCown?

A Oh yeah.

Q How do you know Mark McCown?

A Same trailer court.

Q You know him pretty much all growing up too?

A Yep.

Q Did you know an individual named Susan Powell?

A Susan Powell. I know the name. I can't picture the face, but yeah I think so.

Q What about Mary Cooper?

A Mary Hinthorne?

Q Mary Hinthorne.

A Yeah.

Q How do you know her?

A Parkside Junior High.

Q Todd Hendricks?

A I met the Hendricks--I met Denny first back in Mobileland Trailer Court and I met the rest of his family years later. Probably 10 years later so would have been '90 I guess, somewhere in there.

Q Were you living in Bloomington back on March 31st, 1991 when there was the armed robbery at the Clark gas station on Linden and Empire in which William Little was shot and killed?

A Yes I was.

Q Do you know where you were living at that time?

A I was living on MacArthur Street I think.

Q Were you still associated with Jamie at that time?

A Yes I was. I had recently moved back to the area and we eventually ran into each other, yeah.

Q Do you know when it was you moved back?

A It would have had to have been late '89, maybe mid '89.

Q I want to ask you about that Easter Sunday, the day William Little was shot which was March 31st, 1991. Do you know where you were at on that Easter Sunday?

A I was in Champaign, Illinois.

Q What were you doing there?

A I was visiting my wife Tracy.

Q She your wife at that time?

A She was either my wife or soon to be my

wife, one of the two. I cannot remember.

Q Did you return to Bloomington the next day which would have been April 1st, 1991?

A I do believe so. If it wasn't the next day, it was the day after.

Q And you recall how you got back to Bloomington?

A Greyhound bus.

Q Did anyone pick you up there at the bus station?

A Jamie Snow did.

Q Had you made arrangements with him to pick you up?

A I do believe I called him and asked him to pick me up.

Q So was that during the day time or night time when you got back?

A It was in the evening. I remember it was dark so it had to be at least after 5:00 o'clock.

Q When you were picked up by Jamie Snow, was that in a vehicle?

A Yeah. It was in that blue, I think it was a Ford Fairmont, little two door.

Q When he picked you up there at the bus

station, did he make any statements to you about the Clark station?

A Yeah. But I'm sure there was some kind of common exchange and then probably something like I asked him what he did, and he said, man bro, I fucked up. I shot that kid over at the gas station. I didn't hear nothing about it yet. He told me what had happened. I'm sure I probably said something like ah, you're stupid or something, and then shortly after he said ah, I was just joking. I didn't really do it.

Q Now when he initially told you he fucked up and he shot the guy at the gas station, you said that he told you what had happened. What did he tell you happened? Did he tell you where it was and who it was?

A He said something like yeah, he went to go do an armed robbery to get some money, and I want to say he said the guy recognized him or something, and the gun accidentally went off maybe. I don't know. Back then it seemed like such a meaningless conversation. I didn't pay that much attention. I didn't feel like it was an actual confession, you know. But I do know he knew the guy. I remember him calling him by name. I knew he went to school with him or something. I want to say he probably said that it

probably went off accidentally. The guy knowing him startled him and made him tense up and pull the trigger.

Q So he's telling you that night that he's calling the guy Billy Little or William Little?

A Uh-huh. I think he just used the name Little.

Q And telling you it was at the Clark station?

A Uh-huh.

Q Did he tell you which Clark station?

A The one across from the Laesch Dairy with the big moo cow on it and everything.

Q When he was initially telling you about it, when he initially said man, bro, I fucked up, what was his manner like?

Q Very exaggerated, like he was really worried and real loud. Like he was really playing the role.

Q Then when he turned around and said ah, he was just kidding, what was he like then?

A Laughing, joking. Then when the first composite came out, I think he seemed a little more worried.

Q Did he say anything about that to you?

A When the first composite came out, yeah. He said it looked just like him, or was it--I think the first one came out, it had a hat on and it really didn't look that much like him. But when the second one came out, it looked just like him.

Q You saw those yourself?

A At the time, yeah. I haven't seen them in years.

Q Do you recall--

A Is that the first one?

Q Do you recall which one of those was the first and which one was the second?

A This one sticks out in my mind most.

Q Do you think either one of those looks like Jamie Snow?

A That one definitely don't. I haven't even seen Jamie in so many years. Wasn't there one without a hat on him? Never? If either one of them was to look more like him, I'd say that one, but I don't think it looks a lot like him. The nose is wrong. It actually looks like Steve Clinard. That's who that looks like.

Q But you're thinking you remember one that didn't have a hat on?

A I swore there was one that wasn't a hat.

Q There was another armed robbery at the Clark station in December of '90 before this one that had a composite that I believe did not have a hat. Is that possibly the one you're thinking of?

A Could be.

Q Now the police just recently came and took a taped statement from you about this, is that correct?

A Uh-huh.

Q And in that statement, you indicate to the police that initially you believed Jamie until he told you he was joking, is that right?

A Na, there just wasn't enough time inbetween to really--I mean there was a lot of stuff going on so. You know the way things were going, I suppose I should say it didn't catch me off guard, but as far as believing he killed the guy, I'm not fully. But I mean within the time he said it till within the time he said no he didn't was five minutes or less.

Q I understood from your previous statement that you got the sense that when he initially told you and he saw your reaction, then he started realizing since you weren't as tight as you used to be that maybe

he shouldn't have told you and that's when he--

A That could be a possibility. First let me say one thing, this statement was taken at 5:30 in the morning is when they decided to come wake me up. I would have been glad to come down here in the afternoon but they picked 5:30 in the morning so I was not awake. I hadn't even thought about this for seven years so let's not put too much emphasis on that.

Q So as you think about it now and you thought about it since then, how would you characterize his disclosure?

A I honestly think he just wanted to get a rise out of me. Like I said we weren't as good as friends as we used to be. I don't think he really trusted me as much. And I think if he did honestly do it, I don't think he would have said a word. He definitely wouldn't have said something like that I don't think. Since I was the only halfway reputable person he knew, I think he would have gone just the opposite way.

Q Now was there a time when Jamie brought a weapon to your house to ask you to take care of or get rid of or something?

A Actually we acquired that weapon together.

Do I need to go through the whole story?

Q I don't think they know what you're talking about so.

A I lived down the street from West Side Liquors. My wife lived down in Champaign still, or soon-to-be wife. I don't remember which. There's a pay phone right out front. He had come over. We walked down there together. I do believe he had to relieve himself. He went behind West Side Liquors to do that and they had a back door. He somehow pried the lock open with a little cat's paw. Then the next thing I know we're committing a, you know, breaking and entering. Didn't mean to do it. Didn't want to do it, but it was there. I was there and it happened. I figured we'd just go get some cigarettes or something, maybe some beer maybe. While we were behind the counter, we found a handgun. I do believe it was a 38. We got one of them black jacks I think they call them, some lottery tickets, some more stupid stuff. That's how we came across the gun. Went back to my house. The gun stayed there for awhile. He picked it up for some reason, either just to mess with it, to go out and shoot it or something. And it was gone for maybe a week. He brought it back. I know we had discussed about getting

rid of it either while he had it or shortly after or something. A few other people knew we had it. I didn't like it around. Wanted to get rid of it. I do believe the serial number was already filed off. I took it to a friend of mine in Champaign and sold it for, I want to say 50 bucks, and then we split the money and thought that was the end of it. I do know he did bring it back, it was either one or two rounds missing in it which he said he went out in the country and shot signs.

BY GRAND JUROR: Could you describe the pistol for us?

A It was just black. I've never owned a gun in my life. Seen very few of them. It was just a black--it didn't have a long barrel on it. Kind of, I don't know if it was a snubnose but it did have a short barrel revolver type. It was really nothing--it seemed kind of beat up I remember because I know it wasn't worth a lot of money. I do want to say that the serial numbers were already gone.

BY GRAND JUROR: Do you remember when it was at your house and when it was not?

A Exactly, no. I don't even remember when the thing at West Side happened.

BY GRAND JUROR: Do you remember if it was before or after the Clark gas station?

A I want to say before. I know we acquired it before that I'm sure. As far as getting rid of it, I'd want to say before. Everybody's got a price on them. At that time, Jamie's price wasn't very high. Some people would have turned him in immediately. If the shooting would have happened and then he brings me this gun back, I think I would have handcuffed him and took him down to the jailhouse myself. We were always petty thieves, petty criminals, wanna-bes. All of us always agreed that murder was over the line unless it deserved it. If somebody came in and raped your wife and beat your kids, go kill him, but any other time, just--it's hard to believe that we actually had morals back then while we're out doing all this stuff but we always agreed that murder was just too far.

Q And when in fact Jamie made the statement to you when you got off the bus, he basically tried to tell you it was more or less accidental pull on the trigger because of the shock?

A Uh-huh.

Q As opposed to deliberate?

A Supposedly he said what are you doing Jamie

or something like that.

BY GRAND JUROR: Did Jamie Snow ever bring a bundle to your house that would have had clothing or anything in it and ask you to take it to Champaign somewhere and dump it over there for him or?

A Jamie was an opportunist and always had something in his hand it seemed like. Pick something up along the way, some kind of stolen property he wanted to pawn off somewhere. That kind of rings a bell but as far as being like clothes and a gun wrapped up together, here get rid of this, no, that didn't happen, never happened.

BY MS. GRIFFIN: Does anybody else have any questions?

(No response.)

BY MS. GRIFFIN: Just to doublecheck, you haven't had any contact with Jamie since you moved to Champaign?

A No. They arrested him shortly after that for something else they were trying to pin on him. I moved away while he was locked up, and you know, I was trying to lead a decent life. Wanted nothing to do with it so I tried to stay away. That's how I got involved in the first place. Moved back just to get a job and

make a living and six months down the road, here I am with all these cops at my door. Just not what I wanted. So I haven't seen him within probably 30 days after that shooting happened. I have talked to other people like Todd and everybody. We always discussed it over the years whether we thought he did it or not, but that's about most there was to it. They did come down there and somebody had told them that I was hiding Mary out. Came down there and surrounded the house and everything. Of course she wasn't there. I did volunteer some information once when I moved back here from Virginia. Thought I gave it to the Detective. They said they have no record of it so I don't know who I told. But evidently, that had nothing to do 'cause one thing Jamie did do is when he didn't want to be recognized he pulled his hair up under a hat and you couldn't tell who it was. Matter of fact, the first time I seen him in probably five, six years, he did that when he came over. Knocked on my door for the first time, I didn't know who he was. And then he finally pulled the hat off and, you know, we went from there. When I remembered that, I came back up here and volunteered that information and I thought there might be a cross between the Little guy and a guy Tammy was seeing while

he was in jail once, but they told me that was not the case. I don't know.

EXAMINATION BY GRAND JURY:

Q Were you and Jamie ever picked up for the West Side?

A No. I volunteered that information. Shortly after the West Side, things were getting real crazy. What was that guy's name?

BY MS. GRIFFIN: Coneely.

A Coneely, he was just going nuts. So I call Crimestoppers and volunteered all the information and had planned on turning them over red-handed to them and they started knocking on doors already and scared them off. Then Jamie took Coneely out of state, you know, I gave them that information, you know, 20 minutes after

it happened so at that time I realized things were getting a little crazy and was trying to make things right again. So I don't know why I was never arrested for it. I guess I could. I admitted to it.

BY MS. GRIFFIN: Okay.

A Can I voice an opinion? I mean I don't know if you guys want to know it or not. Like I said, Jamie was always a very petty thief and I honestly don't think that he killed that guy. I don't have any evidence to prove it but I honestly don't think he did it. I'm sure Jamie deserves to be in jail for something but I don't think that's it.

BY MS. GRIFFIN: Well it's not just a petty thief to go do an armed robbery with a handgun or do you consider that petty theft?

A As far as I know, Jamie never did that. As far as I know, it was Coneely doing the actual armed robbery and Jamie was right around the corner and then usually I was right around the other corner.

BY MS. GRIFFIN: So you were at the Freedom station in that burglary?

A No. But shortly after they came over and brought the lottery tickets and the cigarettes and you know, all the other stuff they were getting.

BY MS. GRIFFIN: What about the bus station armed robbery?

A That I think I heard about the next day. They were pretty proud of it. I guess they got a lot of money, \$1,400.00, \$1,500.00, something like that the first time. So I was never right there but I wasn't too far away. I actually had a full time job and worked and so I usually caught wind you know like a couple days later or the next day.

BY MS. GRIFFIN: Okay, thank you.

(Witness excused.)