

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 11-19-74

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At approximately 12:23 a.m. on November 15, 1974, in response to the beckoning of SA JOSEPH G. MASTERSON, SA ROBERT L. SCHWARTZ joined SA MASTERSON and DONALD MARK WOODS, age 18, in an anteroom to the council meeting room, City Building, Oakharbor, Ohio.

SA MASTERSON had been conversing with DONALD WOODS prior to SA SCHWARTZ's arrival.

Upon approaching DONALD WOODS, he mentioned that he had been unable to sleep and had been "eating his guts out" making reference to the disappearance of Mrs. MUSSER.

At this time, WOODS further stated that he did not want to go to jail and did not believe he could take incarceration.

SA SCHWARTZ informed him that he did not have to make a statement and that any statement he did make could be used against him in a court of law. He was further informed that if he did make a statement he was free to discontinue at any time. He was further informed that he had the right to consult an attorney prior to making any statement.

DONALD WOODS advised that he was aware of his rights which had previously been furnished him both orally and in writing by SA MASTERSON and SA GARY K. WEBB. He stated he understood his rights.

At this point, SA SCHWARTZ informed WOODS that his actions had now involved him with Federal authorities. At this point, WOODS began to cry and stated that Mrs. MUSSER's body could be located in a barn behind a feeding trough on County Road #15 located a short distance south of Route 2, opposite the Erie Industrial Park.

At this point, Chief of Police WILLIAM G. PAULSEN and LAWRENCE ST. CLAIR, Assistant Chief, both of the Oakharbor Police Department, were invited to join in the interview due to the fact it did not appear the victim had been transported interstate.

Interviewed on 11-15-74 at Oakharbor, Ohio File # Cleveland 7-1167

SA's ROBERT L. SCHWARTZ, JOSEPH G. MASTERSON, GARY K. WEBB,
ASAC HERBERT L. MONAHAN, JR., Chief of Police WILLIAM G.

by PAULSEN, Assistant Chief LAWRENCE
ST. CLAIR, Oakharbor Police Department

Date dictated 11-19-74

RLS:rep

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Chief PAULSEN was observed making notes during the interview.

At this point, DONALD WOODS was requested to begin at the beginning and stated that on the morning of November 12, 1974, at about 1:30 a.m. JEFF WALKER, LOWELL MEACHAM, also known as Junior, RICK MEACHAM, and himself broke into Shirley's Bar located in Oakharbor, Ohio. He stated that they broke into two coin machines in the bar and also took two bottles of wine. He stated that sometime after this breaking and entering at about 4:00 a.m. to the best of his recollection the same group then went to the Northland Bait and Sporting Goods Store located on North Locust Street in Oakharbor, Ohio.

He stated that JEFF WALKER removed a store window and entered the Northland Bait Store and then let the remaining three individuals in through the front door of the shop. He pointed out that as he recalled the inner door of the shop had been left unlocked.

He advised that while they were looking through the shop and gathering ammunition and revolvers a decoy was kicked over, and a dog started barking.

He advised that Mrs. MUSSER then came downstairs and entered the store; and as she did so, JEFF WALKER covered her with a rifle.

He advised that Mrs. MUSSER was then led to the rear of the store where he placed a blindfold over her eyes at the request of the others.

DONALD WOODS maintained that the others had kept a gun pointed at him all the time even while they had been burglarizing Shirley's Bar.

DONALD WOODS stated that they loaded the handguns while they were still in the store; and someone, just who he did not recall, had put the small dog underneath a box.

DONALD WOODS advised that they left the Northland Bait Store by the front door traveling across yards to his girl friend's car, which he was using.

He stated Mrs. MUSSER was surrounded by the group and led blindfolded to the car.

He estimated that they had been in the Northland Bait Store all totaled about 20 minutes.

He stated that upon arriving at his white over blue Dodge automobile, which was actually owned by his girl friend, Mrs. MUSSER was placed in the middle of the front seat. DONALD WOODS maintained that at this time JEFF WALKER held a gun pointed at his, DONALD's, head; and JUNIOR MEACHAM, sitting in the front passenger's seat, covered Mrs. MUSSER.

DONALD WOODS advised that he drove the automobile, and RICK MEACHAM sat in the right rear seat.

DONALD WOODS stated that after leaving the Northland Bait Store they drove north on Route 19 to the automobile body shop where they made a right turn on County Road 98 traveling north to the Erie Industrial Park located on Route 2. He advised that at this point they drove RICK MEACHAM to the area of MEACHAM's residence located on Willow Beach Road on the east side of Camp Perry, Ohio, where they dropped RICK off.

DONALD WOODS advised that he continued to drive; and following JEFF WALKER's directions, he drove to a red barn located on County Route 15 just south of Erie Industrial Park. He stated that JEFF WALKER stated this was where they were going to do it, and he maintained that JUNIOR MEACHAM and JEFF WALKER had the handguns. He estimated the time as being approximately 4:30 a.m., November 12, 1974.

DONALD WOODS advised that JUNIOR MEACHAM, JEFF WALKER, Mrs. MUSSER in the center of the group, and himself entered the barn.

DONALD WOODS maintained that he asked JUNIOR and JEFF WALKER not to go through with it, maintaining that they had initially wanted to do it at the bait store.

DONALD WOODS stated that Mrs. MUSSER was placed sitting against a partition or the wall of the barn behind a cattle feeding trough.

He stated he then shot Mrs. MUSSER with the .357 Magnum hitting her once in the stomach, and the other two then told him to shoot her five more times in the same area with the same gun.

DONALD WOODS advised that JUNIOR MEACHAM then shot Mrs. MUSSER once in the head using a .38 revolver.

DONALD advised that after the shooting they then drove around going to Toledo, Ohio, and then returning to the area of the slaying.

DONALD advised that JUNIOR MEACHAM took his .38 revolver with him, and he did not know the disposition of this revolver.

DONALD advised that he had thrown his .357 Magnum revolver into a pond of water in the area of his, DONALD's, mother's residence.

At approximately 12:40 a.m. on November 15, 1974, DONALD WOODS readily agreed to point out the location of Mrs. MUSSER's body.

DONALD WOODS accompanied SA MASTERSON, SA SCHWARTZ, and ASAC HERBERT L. MONAHAN, JR., and directed the group north on Route 19 out of Oakharbor. He directed a right turn at the body shop onto County Route 98 and proceeded in a northeasterly direction into a dead end at Route 2 at the Erie Industrial Park.

He then directed the group west on Route 2 and hence south on County Route 15 subsequently pointing out a red barn on the right as being the location of Mrs. MUSSER's body. It is to be noted that the aforementioned group arrived at the barn at approximately 1:00 a.m. on November 15, 1974.

While en route in the Government vehicle, DONALD WOODS denied that any of the group had sexually molested Mrs. MUSSER at any time.

SA SCHWARTZ asked DONALD WOODS if after leaving the Northland Bait Store they had walked across the lawns to muffle their footsteps, and he replied "No" that they had walked through a plowed area going to the car.

SA SCHWARTZ further inquired of WOODS if he had been drunk during the burglary of the Northland Bait Store and the kidnaping of Mrs. MUSSER, and he replied that he was not drunk but that the group had consumed two bottles of wine and some beer.

SA SCHWARTZ inquired of DONALD WOODS what had motivated him into confessing, and he stated that the location of the empty .357 Magnum shells in his vehicle coupled with the fact that his cowboy boots fitted the footprints in the plowed area in the vicinity of the Northland Bait Store along with the fact that he could not sleep and that since the killing it had been "eating his guts out."

SA SCHWARTZ inquired of DONALD WOODS why it was necessary to have killed Mrs. MUSSER, and he advised that JUNIOR MEACHAM and JEFF WALKER had previously, exact time not specified, been in the Northland Bait Store; and they were afraid that Mrs. MUSSER would accordingly recognize them. At this point, DONALD WOODS again maintained that JUNIOR MEACHAM and JEFF WALKER had held a gun on him the entire evening from the time they had burglarized Shirley's Bar through the time of Mrs. MUSSER's slaying.

DONALD WOODS advised that he had driven the aforementioned Dodge directly up to the barn in transporting Mrs. MUSSER there and that he had stayed on the driveway leading from the roadway back to the barn.

While in the vehicle, SA SCHWARTZ inquired of DONALD WOODS if at any time Mrs. MUSSER had cried out or had begged for mercy, and he advised that she had stated she wanted to live long enough to see the birth of her grandchild.

It should be noted that DONALD WOODS led SA MASTERSON, SA SCHWARTZ, and ASAC MONAHAN through a square opening in the northeast corner of the barn and into what appeared to be a small room containing a feeding trough. Located approximately midway between the trough and the west wall of the room was observed the corpse of a female caucasian appearing to have somewhat of a stocky build reported to be Mrs. MUSSER.

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The body was clothed in what appeared to be an aqua three-quarter length jacket and slacks and low-cut tennis shoes.

A blindfold was still on the body, which appeared to have been made by folding a scarf.

A large pool of what appeared to be coagulated blood had flowed out from under the right cheek of the body.

The female body appeared to have brown wavy hair.

The body was lying on its right side with the knees slightly drawn up and facing the trough.

No attempt to touch or examine the body was made pending the arrival of the coroner.

After pointing to the body, DONALD WOODS turned away and kept his back to the corpse. SA SCHWARTZ directed him to look at the body, and he refused stating, "I couldn't look at her even when I shot her."

SA MASTERSON and SA SCHWARTZ, followed in another vehicle by Chief PAULSEN and Assistant Chief ST. CLAIR, both of Oakharbor, drove DONALD WOODS to the Ottawa County Sheriff's Office, Port Clinton, Ohio where Chief PAULSEN incarcerated WOODS, arriving there at approximately 1:30 a.m., November 15, 1974.