

**REPORT: INVESTIGATOR'S SUMMARY**

**CASE: HOMICIDE - #00-0255**

**SUSPECT: JOEY WATKINS**

On January 11, 2000 Rome Police Department Officers Mike Taylor and Hank Jackson were dispatched to a vehicle accident located south of Primrose on Hwy. 27. Upon their arrival at approximately 7:22 p.m.—the initial dispatch time was 7:20 p.m.—officers observed Rome Fire Department personnel on the scene, numerous bystanders including some witnesses, and a white Toyota pickup truck resting upright off the highway on the edge of the woods. Officers Taylor and Jackson began their investigation of the accident. They observed a white male occupant of the truck and requested assistance from Sgt. Roger Powell. The officers recorded the information received from their investigation on an Accident Report and a Supplemental Report of which copies are part of this case file. As the initial investigation continued, the occupant of the truck—identified as the driver Isaac Dawkins—was removed and transported to Floyd Medical Center for medical care.

Upon the arrival at Floyd Medical Center, Isaac Dawkins was attended to by the Emergency Room physician Dr. Jill Head. Dr. Head administered aid to Isaac Dawkins which included a “cat scan” of his body. During the course of this care, medical personnel discovered that Isaac Dawkins had suffered a gunshot wound to the back of his head behind his right ear. Floyd Medical personnel notified E-911 and Officer Dora Shropshire of the findings. Officer Shropshire was sent to Floyd Medical to obtain a blood sample through medical personnel from the person of Isaac Dawkins.

At approximately 9:00 p.m. on January 11, 2000 Sgt. Carla Pearson of the Rome Police Department advised me of the findings at Floyd Medical Center in reference to Isaac Dawkins. Also during this time, Lt. Debbie Burnett was summoned to the accident scene for investigation purposes.

Upon Lt. Burnett's arrival, she began her investigation of the accident scene and observed the condition of the truck which included the finding of a back window from the truck. This windowpane displayed an apparent bullet hole consistent with the point of entry from the outside in.

After the initial collection of evidence and statements at the scene of the accident, Lt. Burnett notified Captain Marshall Smith of the circumstances discovered. During the course of the initial case investigation follow-up, Captain Smith arrived at the scene of the accident where he collected a rear glass window that was discovered as belonging to the white Toyota truck. This window came from the rear sliding glass window frame of the Toyota truck at the accident scene. Captain Smith secured this window as part of this investigation.

Upon notification of the findings at Floyd Medical Center regarding Isaac Dawkins' injury to his head—the gunshot wound—I arrived at Floyd Medical Center at approximately 9:07 p.m. Shortly thereafter I observed a white male identified as Isaac Dawkins in one of the Emergency Room trauma rooms receiving medical attention.

Contact was made with Dr. Jill Heard and Dr. Carl Herring who showed me the gunshot wound to the head of Isaac Dawkins as well as a second wound caused by a separate foreign matter. Photos of these wounds were taken and are part of this case file.

While at Floyd Medical Center on January 11, 2000 I spoke with Sam, Francine, and Samantha Dawkins as well as other friends of Isaac Dawkins. During this time information was obtained regarding any possible name(s) of any person(s) who would want to cause injury to or have a grudge against Isaac Dawkins. It was during this time that Joey Watkins' name surfaced as one who possibly would want to or did have something to do with this incident. This information was based on prior altercations between Isaac Dawkins and Joey Watkins. The past allegations surrounded the dating of a Brianne Scarber who both Joey Watkins and Isaac Dawkins dated. Information gathered was that Joey Watkins was jealous of anyone dating his ex-girlfriend Brianne Scarber, and thus Joey Watkins would instigate altercations with Brianne Scarber's current or ex-boyfriends. Information was also received that Joey Watkins allegedly shot Isaac Dawkins' dog, and threatened Isaac as late as December 1999.

Follow-up investigation led to a search of the approximate area of the location where Isaac Dawkins' truck appeared to leave the roadway on Hwy. 27, northbound into Rome close to the business "Profile." The scene was viewed by other officers and me on January 12, 2000. Also during this time on January 12, 2000 Officer Lee Carter located a spent 9mm shell casing on the east side shoulder of the road approximately 366'8" south of the "Profile" business sign in the Hwy. 27 northbound lane. This shell casing was recovered, secured, and later sent to the GBI Crime Lab where testing by Jay Jarvis determined the gun was fired from that of a handgun consistent with a 9mm Ruger.

As the follow-up investigation continued I began to process Isaac Dawkins' truck, collect any identifiable evidence, and take assorted photographs. During the course of processing the white Toyota truck driven by Isaac Dawkins, the contents of the truck

were removed and photographed, and later released to Mark Lambert. The truck was photographed and visually checked for any existing bullet holes to the exterior and interior but none were found.

On January 12, 2000 the investigation focused on talking to assorted witnesses of the accident, and establishing the whereabouts of Isaac Dawkins prior to the incident. Information gathered showed that on January 11, 2000 at approximately 7:15 p.m., Isaac exited an American History class at Floyd College and walked to his truck where he left the campus and traveled north on Hwy. 27.

While on Hwy. 27 northbound, witness Wayne Benson was returning home from his work place in Cedartown. According to Mr. Benson he was travelling north on Hwy. 27 into Rome during which time as he was approaching the mobile home sales center for Comfort Housing, he noticed the brake lights of a white truck in front of him come on and the truck appeared to quickly slow down. A small blue colored vehicle in front of the truck then swerved to the shoulder of the road, thus allowing the truck to continue north in the outside lane. The truck changed lanes and the small blue car—possibly that of a Honda or Hyundai—pulled back onto the roadway and continued north beside Isaac Dawkins.

As the vehicles traveled north, Mr. Benson stated in my first interview with him that the vehicles were travelling at or just above the posted speed limit in a usual driving manner. Mr. Benson states that he was approximately six or so car lengths behind the vehicles. He stated that traffic was light, it was dark and nothing that he first remembered out of the ordinary happened. Then suddenly the white truck left the roadway, traveled north in the median then into the southbound lanes of traffic before

crashing on the west bank off of the southbound lanes. Mr. Benson stopped his vehicle, lost focus on the light blue car, and went to the accident scene to assist Isaac.

Mr. Benson was later interviewed a second and third time during which times he reiterated what he observed on January 11, 2000. He further disclosed on audiotape on March 20, 2000 that he believed he saw a muzzle flash come from the blue car prior to Isaac's accident. This interview was audio taped and is part of this case file. Mr. Benson was shown pictures of a Pontiac Sunfire—Tandi Watkin's car—but he stated the blue car he saw was different and had different hubcaps.

Over the course of the next six to eight months, numerous witnesses were interviewed regarding any knowledge of the shooting as well as confirmation of certain individual's whereabouts. These interviews were at times met with verbal opposition, and at times individuals were no shows.

As the investigation progressed, Joey Watkins became the focus of the investigation. This focus was due to a collection of various witness statements and past accounts of Joey's temper and aggressiveness toward anyone who currently did or has dated Brianne Scarber.

In conjunction with the investigation efforts of the Floyd County Police Department in this case, witness information and testimony gathered by Rome Police are in essence and in principle the same with each department. Thus, no further summation of witness testimony will follow, but the summation of events and witness information is concurred with by me.

Det. Jim Moser  
Rome Police Department