

CASE FILE

NO. 75-1027
4

Colleton County Jail

SUBJECT: Blume, Billy CHARACTER: 4-13

CITY OR COUNTY: Colleton DATE: 11-12-75

INVESTIGATING OFFICER: L. C. Zimmerman, S. Hammett

PROCESSED

DATE NOV 1 1975

BY [Signature]

CASE CLOSED

DATE 11-12-75

SUMMARY REPORT OF CASE =

On Nov-7-1975 at 10¹⁵ PM
I rec call from H.G. stating that
Capt Casper wanted me to go to Waltham
to see if I could be of any help to
the Sheriff Dept. The Jail had burnt and
some prisoners were dead. When I arrived
I found that one cell block had been
set fire by Billy Blume a prisoner.
and he was dead. 5 other prisoners had been
taken to Hospital. All had been released but
one. Agent Hannitt was called because
Arson was expected. I turned the Trer ~~over~~
over to him. Please See his Report

Final Disposition: Name(s) _____

Type of Court: () General Sessions () Magistrate's Court Judge/Magistrate _____

Date Tried: _____ County: _____

Offence: _____

Charge was Violation of Section: _____

Sentence: _____

Signature: J. J. Hannitt

Date: 11-9-75

SOUTH CAROLINA LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION
MEMORANDUM REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

TYPE OF REPORT:	STATUS:	LAB EXAMS AND LAB NUMBERS:	RECORDS SECTION USE ONLY
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Opening	<input type="checkbox"/> Active	<input type="checkbox"/> Chemical No:	Case File # <u>75-1687</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Awaiting Court Action	<input type="checkbox"/> Forensic No:	Date received at SLED:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closing	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed by Arrest	<input type="checkbox"/> Polygraph No:	CHARACTER # <u>4-13</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Final	<input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient Info.	<input type="checkbox"/> Other No:	CHARACTER DETAIL:
<input type="checkbox"/> Crime Scene	<input type="checkbox"/> Unfounded		<u>Fire at Colleton</u>
Processing only			<u>Co Jail Sub Set</u>
			<u>See Divd infra</u>

Complaints other than mail from Headquarters:

Telephonic Personal Mail
 Received from: SLED HQ
 Address: Colo, SC
 Date received: 11-7-75
 Date of Crime: 11-7-75
 Location of Crime: Colleton Co Jail
 (City and County) WATERBORO, SC

SUBJECT(S) or SUSPECT(S)

Billy Blume

VICTIM(S) Billy Blume

Arrest Ticket Number _____ (If closed by arrest)
 Fingerprint Card Available: Yes _____ No _____ Photograph Available: Yes _____ No _____
 If fingerprint card or photograph taken by other than Investigating Officer list:
 Sheriff/Police Department: _____ County: _____ Date: _____

Turned this over to Agent George Hammitt

Person(s) Interviewed:

Name	Address	Date
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____

SLED CHARACTER CODE NUMBERS LISTED ALPHABETICALLY

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Abortion | 11. Confidential | 21. Forgery | 31. Oper. Nuisance |
| 2. Abduction | 12. Conspiracy | 22. Fraud | 32. Robbery |
| 3. Administrative | 13. Death Inv. | 23. Gambling | 33. Rec. St. Goods |
| 4. Arson | 14. Delinquent | 24. Housebreaking | 34. Safe Cracking |
| 5. Assault & Battery | 15. Desertion, N/Sup. | 25. Inter W/Officer | 35. Sex Crimes |
| 6. Blue Law | 16. Disorderly Conduct | 26. Kidnapping | 36. Traffic |
| 7. Breach of Peace | 17. Destruction of Prop. | 27. Larceny | 37. Trespassing |
| 8. Bribery | 18. Drug Violation | 28. Malfeasance | 38. Unlaw. Weapon |
| 9. Burglary | 19. Election Law | 29. Vio. of Liq. Law | 39. Worthless Checks |
| 10. Civil Rights | 20. Escapee | 30. Obt..False Pretense | 40. Other |

General Instructions:

This report should be submitted for all investigations and with all statements and related material. All information on this form is vital in order that the Records Section may properly process Case reports. This report does not replace a narrative report when such is in order.

Case 75-1687

TO: Chief J. P. Strom
RE: Walterboro Jail Fire
FROM: George B. Hammet

On 11-7-75, at approximately 10:30 P. M. I received a request from Headquarters to go to Walterboro in Colleton County to investigate a jail fire. This fire was investigated by Lt. L. C. Kemmerlin, Kiser, and Parnell.

We found there had been a small fire set in cell block #13 in the back cell which was occupied by Billy Blume, the dead man. Cell #3 was occupied by Bill Marietta who has been hospitalized.

From our investigation we found that Mr. Blume had become highly aggravated with the Sheriff. The Sheriff had confined them to single cells due to the fact that Mr. Blume had reported for week end service of a sentence drinking. He made the statement to the Sheriff that if he didn't let him out of there he was going to burn the jail down. He stacked the mattress and bedding in front of his cell door and poured some paint, paint thinner, and possibly lighter fluid and lit this material, which ignited faster than he expected causing a toxic smoke which made it impossible for his rescue which resulted in his death.

The only negligence that I could find at the Sheriff's Department in the operation of the jail was that the paint and paint thinner were available, but this man was a trusty, serving in the trusty cell block and they were allowed to keep their personal belongings. This is a very modern jail and has recently been inspected and approved by the State and the Federal Inspectors and the mattresses were Federally approved which put off the toxic smoke.

The scene of the fire has been photographed and samples taken for analysis.

95-1689

TO: Chief J. P. Strom

RE: Information

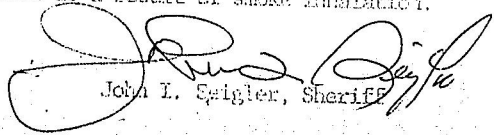
On 11-7-75, at 7:10 P. M. Mr. Billy Blume reported to the County Jail to complete the last day of his 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ week-end sentence for DUI. Mr. Blume reported to the County Jail while under the influence of alcohol. He was sentenced to his cell block.

It seems the turn key, Bill Marietta, had allowed Blume to pick up some liquor that he left outside the jail before going to the cell block. Mr. Marietta who also feeds the prisoners as a turn key had arranged to leave the doors open to Ives Smoke Cell and to Florence Eugene Priester, a white female, age 29 which had all congregated in the Bull Pen. Sheriff Seigler had been informed that this had occurred a week-end prior to this and received a telephone call from Leroy Jenkins that it was going on again and the Sheriff came to the Jail and went up to the cell block, along with Polly Riley, the Jailer, and two Deputies. They placed the female back in her cell and locked the three males back into their individual cells. The Sheriff said that Blume went completely fool when he locked him in his cell and said, "If you don't let me out of this cell, I will burn the dam jail down." He asked to talk to the Sheriff. The Sheriff said, "I will be back in a few minutes and talk with you," and in less than five minutes after the Sheriff left the jail, he had set the jail on fire. Also found after the fire were three pints of liquor bottles in the cell block.

One of the deputies, Lonnie Crosby, was hospitalized attempting to rescue.

MEMO

At approximately 3:00 P.M. on 11-7-75, I came to the Colleton County Jail for a routine check. I found four prisoners in a large upstairs cell block engaged in loud conversation. I was in the process of returning them to their individual cells and locking them up each individually, when Billy Blane became highly aroused because he was being locked up individually and made the statement that he was going to burn the jail down, this was heard by at least 4 other people. After locking the prisoners in their individual cells, I walked back downstairs and within approximately five minutes, another inmate from the opposite cell block ran downstairs and said there was smoke coming from the cell of Billy Blane. I, along with four deputies immediately ran back upstairs to the troubled cell block with the keys and succeeded in opening the two outer doors leading into the cell blocks by pulling several trips up and down the stairs to bertha. Heavy smoke had already accumulated in the main hallway leading to all the upstairs cell blocks. It was impossible for us to stay for any length of time. In the heavy smoke in an attempt to rescue the two remaining inmates. Malta-bore City Fire Dept. had been called immediately and they arrived on the scene with six trucks. After many attempts in the dense smoke, one inmate was retrieved from his cell and rushed to the Colleton Reg. Hospital. Eventually the firemen and deputies worked their way into the cell of Billy Blane, who had set the fire. According to the preliminary Doctor's report, upon arrival to the Colleton Regional Hospital he was pronounced dead as a result of smoke inhalation and heat inhalation. Three other prisoners and Chief Deputy I.A. Crosby were admitted to the hospital as a result of smoke inhalation.


 John L. Ezigler, Sheriff

November 8, 1975
2: 45 P. M.

On the evening of November 7, 1975 I was in the dispatchers office of the Colleton County Jail. At approximately 8:30 P. M., Leroy Jenkins, a trustee, came running into the office reporting that he smelled smoke upstairs and that he heard Bill Marietta yell to Billy Blume something to the effect that " My God you've set us on fire."

I immediately got the cell Keys out of the dispatchers desk and gave them to Bernard Mitchell, (another trustee) and we both went up-stairs.

Upon arrival at cell block #13 heavy smoke was coming from around the main door. Bernard unlocked the electrical control panel door and I operated the machinism opening the individual cells as well as the bull pen door. Bernard went downstairs for some lights and I went on inside to search for the occupants of the cells. As I entered the cell block and proceded along the outside wall a mild explosion occurred. I took it to be caused by the influx of air allowing rapid combustion. I realized that I could not stay in the cell block, so I went downstairs and donned a "Scott Air Pac", (self contained breathing apparatus).

I went back upstairs with two city firemaen and Bernard Mitchell found Bill Marietta and he was removed from the cell with the assistance of F. A. Smith. He was breathing at this time. I am a certified Emergency Medical Technician, so I was able to determine that he was in respiratory distress but still alive.

I went back inside and assisted the extrication of Billy Blume, and attempted to revive him by administering Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation. I continued CPR at the hospital under the direction of Dr. James L. Altman, but all efforts of resuscitation were unsuccessful, and Billy Blume was pronounced dead.

Ira Donald Pouser
Deputy Sheriff
Colleton Co., S. C.

STATEMENT OF LEROY JENKINS:

"I heard Billy Blume saying, 'Let me out of here. I am gonna burn this God Damned jail down tonight.' I then heard glass break and I went down to inform the dispatcher. I came back up and laid down. A few minutes later I heard Bill say, 'O God, You set us on fire.' I went to the back cell and saw smoke coming out and went downstairs to get help. We got back upstairs and saw that the smoke was coming out so that we were unable to get to the cell block."

75-1687

REQUEST FOR SLED ASSISTANCE

DATE AND TIME OF REQUEST: 11-7-75 10:30 P. M.

RECEIVED FROM Harold Miller Agent Columbia
Name Position Location

BY: Radio Phone Letter In Person Teletype

TYPE OF FIRE: Auto Commercial Church/School Jail
Dwelling

DATE AND TIME FIRE OCCURRED: 11-7-75 8:30 P. M.

FIRE LOCATION: Walterboro Walterboro
City County Other Description

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS Colleton County

DRIVER OR TENANT: _____

INSURANCE _____
Company's Name Company's Name
Policy Number Policy Number
Amount - Coverage Amount - Coverage

AUTO DESCRIPTION _____
Model Make Body Type No. Passengers

No. Cylinders Serial No. Optional Equipment Other Equipment

REMARKS: County Jail fire investigated by Lt. L. C. Kemmerlin
Lt.Kiser Leonard and Ira Parnell

Arson File NO. _____ Sled File NO. _____ Agent's Signature _____

The above request should be filled out and mailed to Headquarters immediately upon receipt of a request for SLED Arson Assistance.

USE BACK IF NECESSARY

75-1687

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Lt. Kiser Leonard and Ira Parnell

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