



## Memorandum of Interview

**Date:** September 10, 2015

**Time:** 11:30 - 13:00 hours (CST)

**Person Interviewed:** Robert "Bobby" Jack Rowell

**Interviewer:** Jack L. Barnhart

### **Details:**

On the above time and date, Reporting Investigator interviewed Robert "Bobby" Jack Rowell, father of VICTIM, at Rowell's residence in Mobile, Alabama. The purpose of the interview was to obtain detailed information regarding Rowell's recall regarding the events surrounding VICTIM's murder. A few times, the interview was interrupted by Myrtle Rowell, VICTIM's mother.

Rowell said that the last time he saw VICTIM was at 07:30 hours on 02/05/1982. Rowell said that was before VICTIM left for school and he left for work. Rowell stated that he returned home at 17:00 hours and his wife, Myrtle, and his daughter, Kristi, were the only ones home. According to Rowell, Mike Rowell, VICTIM's brother came home around 17:30 hours. Rowell claimed that Mike Rowell was "high" and went to bed and stayed there all night. Reporting Investigator told Rowell that there were statements indicating that Mike Rowell went to Lisa Collins' trailer looking for VICTIM. Rowell claimed that was a lie and insisted that Mike Rowell was home all night. Reporting Investigator asked Rowell if he ever asked Mike Rowell to identify that last place Mike was with VICTIM. Rowell answered in the negative.

Reporting Investigator reminded Rowell that he testified that he (Rowell) was unemployed. Rowell denied ever saying that he was

unemployed. Reporting Investigator asked Rowell if he remembered telling the Coroner's Investigator that the last time Rowell saw VICTIM was at 17:30 hours on 02/05/1982 at home. Rowell denied ever telling the Coroner's Investigator this fact. Reporting Investigator asked if the Coroner's Investigator lied. Rowell became flustered and repeated that the last time he saw VICTIM was on the morning of 02/05/1982.

Rowell claimed that 19:00 hours, he went looking for VICTIM. Rowell claimed that he walked to the Civic Center, then along I-75, through the trailer parks and through the field. Rowell stated he saw Wampler's neighbors leaving in a pick-up truck. Rowell denied looking in Wampler's vehicle, as he said he did in his court testimony. Reporting Investigator asked Rowell if he looked in the area of the barbeque pit at the Civic Center. Rowell claimed he did not know where the barbeque pit was.

At that point, Myrtle Rowell, VICTIM's mother, interrupted the interview. While looking at Reporting Investigator, she pointed her finger at Rowell and said, "**He killed David. He cut his dick off. He killed David. He killed Mike. He murdered my boys.**" Myrtle Rowell, then, looked at Rowell and said, "**David hid behind Mike Johnson at the Civic Center and you killed him.**" At that point, Rowell became violently angry. He got out of his seat and began yelling at Myrtle Rowell. He threatened to walk out of the interview if she did not leave the room. Krista Rowell immediately forced Myrtle Rowell into the kitchen.

After Myrtle Rowell left the room, Rowell returned to his chair. Rowell stated that Myrtle Rowell was "nuts" and has been treated for mental illness. Rowell said, "*She hasn't been right since David died.*" Rowell returned to answering questions.

Rowell said that he did not knock on anyone's door to see if VICTIM was there. Rowell said that after his search by foot, he began

a search by vehicle for VICTIM. Rowell said that he went as far as the Dayton Mall looking for VICTIM. Rowell stated that he helped a broken down motorist get home. Rowell claimed that the motorist was near Dayton Mall. Reporting Investigator asked Rowell from where was the motorist coming. Rowell denied knowing from where she was coming. Reporting Investigator asked Rowell if where he found the motorist was a route that one takes from Dayton International Airport. Rowell denied knowing where Dayton International Airport was located. Rowell said that he did use the airport once when he flew from Dayton to Mobile, Alabama. Rowell said that he talked to the broken down motorist and said that he told her that he was looking for VICTIM. Rowell said that after that he returned home and went to bed.

Rowell claimed that he heard a scream while at his residence on 02/05/1982, but could not provide a time. According to Rowell, Moraine Police told him that it was children playing near his house.

Rowell stated that on the next day (02/06/1982), he went for a walk through the field and saw nothing. According to Rowell, he then left his home and went to Huber Heights, Ohio, where he worked at a friend's television repair shop until 13:00 hours.

Rowell said that he returned home around 13:00 hours and was the only one home. Reporting Investigator asked Rowell where he went in his house. Rowell said that he was just in his house. Rowell denied going to the basement, as he stated in his trial testimony. Rowell said that he had "visions of trees" and that is what made him return to the field. According to Rowell, this is when he discovered VICTIM.

Rowell said that VICTIM looked like a mannequin. According to Rowell, VICTIM was decapitated and an arm was amputated. Rowell claimed that VICTIM's head was in a bag. Reporting Investigator told Rowell that description does not match the autopsy. Rowell became agitated. Rowell claimed that bloody towels were near VICTIM.

Reporting Investigator told Rowell that VICTIM only lost 10cc of blood, which is about two teaspoons. Rowell became more agitated.

Reporting Investigator asked Rowell from whom did the towels belong? Rowell said that the towels belonged to Wampler. Reporting Investigator asked Rowell how he knew that and Rowell responded by saying, "the police told me."

Rowell claimed that a trail of blood went from the body to Wampler's trailer. Reporting Investigator pointed out that no trail of blood was mentioned in the police reports. Again, Rowell became agitated. Rowell said that there were footprints in the snow coming from Wampler's trailer to VICTIM's body. Reporting Investigator asked if there were any other sets of footprints. Rowell responded by claiming that he did not notice.

Rowell, then, stated that there was not snow on the ground on 02/06/1982. Reporting Investigator told Rowell that according to the National Weather Service the Dayton area received 0.2 inches of snow between 17:00 - 22:30 hours on 02/05/1982. Rowell insisted that the National Weather Service lied and stated that there was no snow on the ground. Reporting Investigator asked if there was no snow, then how could there be footprints. Rowell became indignant and swore that there was no snow. Reporting Investigator reminded Rowell that the Moraine Police documented footprints near the body. Rowell, continuing to be indignant, stated that the police were wrong. Reporting Investigator reminded Rowell that he (Rowell) stated that there was snow on the ground in his trial testimony. Again, Rowell said, almost yelling, that there was no snow and reminded Reporting Investigator that, "You weren't driving around that day."

Rowell described Mike Johnson as being "bad" and "evil". Rowell claimed that Johnson jumped in front of Rowell's van when Rowell was driving on Kreitzer Road. Rowell claimed that Johnson wanted Rowell

to hit him. Rowell said that Johnson lived in a condemned house in one of the trailer parks.

Rowell denied knowing Wampler. Rowell knew that Mike Rowell would visit Wampler, but never met him. Rowell said that Wampler killed VICTIM. When asked what evidence did Rowell have regarding Wampler's involvement? Rowell said because Wampler made a 14 page confession. When Reporting Investigator stated that is not accurate, Rowell became indignant and insisted that Wampler confessed. Reporting Investigator asked if the confession could have come from Johnson and Rowell insisted that Wampler confessed.

Rowell denied knowing any of Mike Rowell's or VICTIM's friends.

Rowell denied that VICTIM was ever kicked off the bus. Reporting Investigator confronted Rowell with his court testimony that stated VICTIM was kicked off the bus two months prior to the murder and then again on the day of the murder. Rowell said that was false.

Rowell was asked how he disciplined his children. Rowell never directly answered the question. Rowell did respond by asking for scenarios. Reporting Investigator, then, asked what Rowell did to punish the boys when they were caught smoking. Rowell said that he locked them in a closet so they could smoke, in hopes that they would get sick and quit. Reporting Investigator, then, asked what would Rowell do if the boys were caught breaking a window. Rowell did not say what he would do, but did state that he never would hit them.

Rowell stated that he had life insurance on VICTIM and that it was a \$3,500 policy with a double indemnity clause. Rowell said that he received \$7,000 from the insurance company after VICTIM's death.

Rowell claimed that Mike Rowell was the victim of an overdose in 2000, then he said 2002. Reporting Investigator told Rowell that

someone said that Mike Rowell committed suicide. Rowell said that it was not suicide.

Rowell said that he lived in New Carlisle, Ohio, prior to moving to Moraine. Rowell denied that anyone threatened his family or him while they lived in New Carlisle. Rowell said he lived in the Dayton area from 1974 to 1982.

The interview ended under favorable conditions.

**Investigator's Note:** Rowell's recall of the neighborhood and the events of 02/05/1982 was deceptive at best. Throughout the interview, Rowell's conduct was indicative of a person with a short and violent temper. Rowell recollection of material facts in this case was not support by his statements to the police or his trial testimony. The fact that he would argue over whether or not there was snow on the ground in an indicator of an attempt to conceal information. It is very clear that Myrtle Rowell's claim that Rowell was involved in VICTIM's death must be further investigated, but that investigation must be conducted by law enforcement and a mental health professional. It is too easy to put Myrtle Rowell's comments to the side and consider them rantings from a mentally ill person. Given Rowell's demeanor in the interview and his lack of honesty, there may be something in what Myrtle Rowell claimed.

Given that Rowell contradicted his own trial testimony and statements to the police, his credibility is in serious question. Rowell recall of the events, and his willingness to argue with his own trial testimony, really raises questions regarding his honesty.