

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT IN AND  
FOR BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

CRIMINAL DIVISION  
CASE NUMBER: 82-002-CF-A

STATE OF FLORIDA,

Plaintiff,

versus

WILLIE JESSIE SNIPES,

Defendant.

FILED  
APR 23 10 25 AM '82  
CLERK OF COURT  
BREVARD COUNTY  
TITUSVILLE, FLORIDA

TRANSCRIPT OF JURY TRIAL

The transcript of the Jury Trial taken in the above-styled cause, at the Brevard County Courthouse, Titusville, Florida, on the twelfth through the sixteenth days of April, 1982, commencing at 10:35 o'clock a.m. on the twelfth day of April, 1982, before the Honorable J. William Woodson.

APPEARANCES:

JOHN DEAN MOXLEY, JR., ESQ.,  
Assistant State Attorney  
State Attorney's Office  
Brevard County Courthouse  
Titusville, Florida 32780

Appearing for Plaintiff

WILLIAM J. LAMBERT, JR., ESQ.,  
Of Halloman & Lambert  
Post Office Drawer 592  
Arcadia, Florida 33521

Appearing for Defendant.

-- (CONTINUED) --

VOLUME III OF IV



Gerard F. Ryan & Associates

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1 the State Attorney's Office removed from the case,  
2 which was denied.

3 So, I would, on the basis of the denial of  
4 that Motion, at this time, I would move for a mis-  
5 trial.

6 THE COURT: Okay, the Court's going to deny  
7 all those Motions as the Court -- the same ones the  
8 Court has denied which you previously made.

9 We'll be ready to start then at one o'clock.

10 (Thereupon, the Court was in recess for the luncheon  
11 hour, after which the following proceedings were had in the  
12 presence of the Defendant, together with Counsel, and the  
13 Jury as follows:)

14 THE COURT: Are you ready to proceed?

15 MR. LAMBERT: We're ready, your Honor.

16 Your Honor, the Defense would call Willie Snipes  
17 to the stand.

18 THEREUPON,

19 WILLIE JESSIE SNIPES,

20 the Defendant herein, called as a witness on his own behalf,  
21 being first duly sworn, was examined and testified upon his  
22 oath as follows:

23 DIRECT EXAMINATION

24 BY MR. LAMBERT:

25 Q Willie, would you state your full name for the

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record, please?

A Willie Jessie Snipes.

Q Willie, how old are you?

A Thirty-four.

Q And are you married?

A Yes, sir, I am.

Q And Bonnie Snipes who testified here today, is she your wife?

A Yes, sir, she is.

Q And where do you live with her?

A Clewiston, Florida.

Q And how long have you lived down there?

A Roughly eighteen years, about eighteen years.

Q Is Clewiston on Lake Okeechobee?

A On the south edge of Lake Okeechobee, yes.

Q And what do you do for a living?

A Presently, I am commercially fishing, was when they arrested me and picked me up. Plus, I have a general equipment business, painting exterior light concrete driveways, so forth and so on, plus I buy cars and fix them up and resell those, you know, hobby.

Q Willie, do you know one Bo Snowden?

A Yes, sir, I do.

Q How did it come about that you know him? Have you known him for a long time?

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1 A About five or six weeks, somewhere thereabouts,  
2 that's rough, before I got arrested, or before I was up in  
3 Titusville on the nineteenth, that was the first time I had  
4 met him, was about a month before that.

5 Q Where did you first meet him at?

6 A At his home here in Titusville.

7 Q And how did it come about that you met him? What  
8 was the purpose of you all's encounter?

9 A He has some relatives that live in Moore Haven,  
10 Florida. It's a town pretty close to my town. My brother  
11 married one of their sisters; but, I was coming to Orlando  
12 to see a friend of mine, and she asked me, Margaret Works  
13 asked me would I come by Titusville, which wasn't too far  
14 out of the way, she said, and pick up a bulldog. So, I told  
15 her sure I would. It was further away than I thought.

16 Q And did you come up here?

17 A Yes, I did.

18 Q And about when was that?

19 A Could have been the middle of November, I guess,  
20 of '81.

21 Q That was the first time you had ever seen him or  
22 knew anything about Bo Snowden?

23 A Yes, sir, it was.

24 Q And how long were you in Titusville on that occasion?

25 A The dog wasn't at the residence. I had to wait

1 about thirty, forty-five minutes for the gentleman to make a  
2 phone call. It was over at Buddy's house or something, and  
3 they brought the dog about thirty, forty-five minutes, I  
4 guess.

5 Q And did you have any involvement -- did you come with  
6 anybody or did you come by yourself?

7 A By myself.

8 Q And while you were up here on that occasion, did  
9 you purchase a car?

10 A Not on that occasion, I didn't, no, sir. When  
11 the Space Shuttle was supposed to go off, but, I think they  
12 postponed it that time, or they postponed it at one time,  
13 it was just a short while after that, that's when I came for  
14 the Space Shuttle.

15 And, Leroy Brookerson, which is some relation to  
16 Bo Snowden, he is the one that came with me on this thing,  
17 and we was here a couple days, three days, and that's when I  
18 bought this car, when I was up here then.

19 Q And did you take that car back with you?

20 A No, sir.

21 Q And why didn't you take it back with you?

22 A The only reason I bought it, to start with, is  
23 because that's part of my hobby. But, it makes pretty good  
24 money, too, but, he said he'd sell it up here for me.

25 Q Who said they could sell it here for you?

1 A. BO Snowden or his dad.

2 Q. And about how long was that prior to the nineteenth  
3 of December?

4 A. I am not really sure to be exact, three weeks, I  
5 guess, three or four weeks. That's roughly guessing.

6 Q. Prior to the nineteenth?

7 A. Right, when the Space Shuttle was supposed to go  
8 off the last time, when was that?

9 Q. And then did you come back to Titusville on the  
10 nineteenth of December?

11 A. Yes, sir, I did.

12 Q. And why did you come that day?

13 A. I came to pick up the automobile that I had pre-  
14 viously bought, which I called a few days before, four, five  
15 days before, found out if he still had it or the money, if  
16 he sold it. And, he said the car was still here, he hadn't  
17 sold it.

18 I didn't call back the day before I came up. I didn't  
19 get to go the day I wanted to, which was on a Tuesday or a  
20 Wednesday, but, when I finally did get to the first break I had  
21 from fishing, I got my wife, and she was going to come with me  
22 to drive the car back.

23 Q. But, Bonnie didn't come with you?

24 A. No, sir.

25 Q. And that's for the reason she stated yesterday?

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A. Couldn't find a babysitter.

Q. You all have a little child, don't you?

A. Right, plus a thirteen year old son and a fifteen year old son.

Q. Did you get someone else to come with you to help you drive the vehicle back?

A. Yes, sir, Bo Harrell, which is a friend of mine.

Q. So, you'd have two vehicles, you'd have the one you went up with, and bringing the other one back, it required two people?

A. Right.

Q. How do you know Bo, this is Bo Harrell we are talking about?

A. He is a part-time employee of mine. He works with his dad, which is a construction worker, and when he is not working with his dad, then he helps me if I have work to do, plus he is a real good friend, also. So, that's how I know him.

Q. How old is Bo Harrell?

A. I am not really sure. He is twenty-one, twenty-three, somewhere in there.

Q. And about what time did you all leave Titusville -- I mean Clewiston on the nineteenth to come to Titusville?

A. I left home to come up here about three or four o'clock, I guess that's roughly, I didn't leave town right

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1 then, but I left home right then. It's about five, I guess  
2 we left town.

3 Q Did you consume any alcoholic beverages on that  
4 day?

5 A Yes, sir, we did.

6 Q When did you start drinking?

7 A Well, when we left my home to the process of coming  
8 up here, we went by the Time Saver to get a bag of ice and  
9 a bottle of Coke, and we met a friend of mine there, Mr.  
10 Hester, he is an ex-landlord, I guess you could speak of a  
11 trailer park, and his car had broken down, anyway, and he  
12 wanted us to give him a ride home. I was hesitant about it,  
13 because I was in a hurry.

14 I had been since noon trying to get busy; but, we  
15 left there and went by the bar to get a quart of C & C, and  
16 we left back there and took him out to Brooker's Point, too  
17 where his trailer was.

18 We didn't have time to go through and get his car  
19 back; but, we drank the quart of liquor, we stopped in a  
20 Howard Johnson's, we hadn't drank at all.

21 Q Where is Yeehaw Junction in relationship to the  
22 trip from Clewiston?

23 A It's an hour, forty-five minutes, an hour north of  
24 Okeechobee, the north side of Okeechobee. It's about two  
25 hours, I guess, from Clewiston, two hours and a half.



1 Q You all had started drinking even before you left  
2 Clewiston, is that correct?

3 A When we started to leave, that's when we bought a  
4 bottle, yes, sir.

5 Q Had you finished that bottle by the time you got  
6 to Yeehaw Junction?

7 A No, sir, but it was getting low, and we stopped at  
8 a package store left of the intersection and got another one,  
9 and we was feeling good by that time, you know, we did.

10 Q What were you actually drinking?

11 A Canadian Lord Calvert.

12 Q What size bottle did you originally pick up down  
13 in Clewiston?

14 A We got a quart at the Clewiston Bar and Package  
15 Store in Clewiston. I don't know if it was a fifth or quart,  
16 it was one or the other, when we got to Yeehaw Junction.

17 Q On the way up here, did you finish the first bottle?

18 A Yes, sir.

19 Q And had you began drinking on the second bottle  
20 prior to getting to Titusville?

21 A Yes, sir.

22 Q By the time you got to Titusville, do you recall  
23 how much inside the bottle you all had consumed?

24 A Not exactly. It was -- we was into it, had been  
25 for a little while, half to three-quarters was still left in it.

1 I guess.

2 Q And Bo Harrell was with you on this trip?

3 A Yes, sir.

4 Q Was he the only person with you?

5 A Yes, sir.

6 Q And he was drinking, also, is that correct?

7 A Yes, sir.

8 Q Does Bo have a bit of a drinking problem?

9 A Yes, sir, he does.

10 Q When you got to Titusville, what's the first thing  
11 -- about what time did you get to Titusville?

12 A Time, I don't know, it was after dark. I have no  
13 idea, really.

14 Q You all basically drove straight on up here?

15 A The only stop we made was the one at Yeshaw Junction,  
16 and that was all, I believe, till we got here.

17 Q What was the weather like that day, do you recall?

18 A It was cold.

19 Q Was it just a little chilly or was it --

20 A No, sir, it was very cold. That's why I borrowed  
21 my mom's car, so my wife would have something with a heater  
22 in it, so I could drive back. My own personal car did not  
23 have a heater. That was the reason I borrowed my mom's car,  
24 so she could have something warm to drive back in.

25 Q Do you own a toboggan hat?

1 A Eight or ten, the wife and kids and I.

2 Q Why did you have some of those?

3 A Last Christmas, the Christmas before last, now, we  
4 went to the Smokey Mountains for vacation. We went right the  
5 day after Christmas, I think, when we left, and it's cold  
6 weather, so that's the reason.

7 But, this time I was wearing one, using one on  
8 account of fishing, you know, cold weather. When you are  
9 fishing, you don't go on the lake without a toboggan on your  
10 head.

11 Q Would you describe for us what you mean when you say  
12 a toboggan hat?

13 A It's a knitted-type, I guess, cap, you could call  
14 it, without a bill, it's just one you slide over your head  
15 and it folds up to a little collar like.

16 Q So, it more or less covers your ears?

17 A You pull it down to cover your ears, right.

18 Q And did you wear that on the nineteenth?

19 A Yes, sir, I did.

20 Q What's the first thing you did when you got to  
21 Titusville?

22 A We stopped at a gas station, Bo Snowden lives right  
23 next to a gas station, almost next door. The parking lot  
24 runs up within twelve, fifteen foot of his house, as a matter  
25 of fact; but, I stopped in there to go and gas up right then.

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1 you know, we were getting low on fuel, anyway; and, so, that's  
2 when I stopped and I saw Bo fixing to leave with some friends  
3 of his, I guess it was friends of his, and a car pulled up  
4 toward his front door, so I hollered at him.

5 Q Then what happened, what did you all do?

6 A I asked Bo Harrell, the friend of mine that was  
7 with me, if he would finish filling the car up while I talked  
8 to Bo. I didn't see the car that I owned, the one that was  
9 supposed to be here when I got here, so I went over and talked  
10 to him before he left with those friends of his, to find out  
11 where it was at or to get my money for it that he sold, or  
12 whatever.

13 Anyway, he told the guys that he was fixing to  
14 leave with to go ahead and go, that he was going to stay and  
15 talk to me.

16 Q What had happened to that car; had he sold it, or  
17 where was the car?

18 A He told me that he had took it off and got drinking  
19 and wrecked it. I don't know, I figured he had sold it and  
20 spent the money, or, you know, whatever; but, that's what he  
21 said.

22 Q Then, did you all go on that occasion, did you all  
23 go into Bo Snowden's house?

24 A Yes, sir, we did.

25 Q And what did you do there?

1 A. Well, Bo said come in, he wanted to go back to  
2 Clewiston. He asked us to drive back to Clewiston with us.

3 Q. Who asked you to go?

4 A. Bo Snowden, and, so, I said sure, but he wanted us  
5 to come in and say hello to his dad, Ace, and his mother,  
6 which is in a wheelchair. So, I said sure. Ace, he drinks,  
7 too, he likes to drink.

8 So, I took the bottle, went inside and said hello  
9 and give Ace a drink, and he don't really drink alcohol, but  
10 he took a drink with me, just for the heck of it anyway. But,  
11 we wasn't there very long, and then we left there and went  
12 outside and got in the car and left.

13 Q. Where were you going when you left Bo Snowden's  
14 house?

15 A. He had two or three guys he had to go back and see.  
16 One, he had to see about a radio, he had a pretty good size  
17 portable radio that you carry around with a cassette player  
18 and all, this kind of stuff, and he wanted to see a few friends  
19 of his before we left, and went back to Clewiston with us.

20 Q. Where did you all go? Did you see some of his  
21 friends?

22 A. He did. We stopped at several places. We went to  
23 one public place, I remember the name, Cue, it was a pool room,  
24 some kind of pool and cue, or something like that, Pus and  
25 Cue, or something.

1 Q Did you go in there?

2 A Yes, sir, we did.

3 Q How long did you all stay there?

4 A Just a moment. I remember ordering a beer when I  
5 get inside, I turned to order the other two guys one, and they  
6 was ready to go. They said let's go. So, I think I drank  
7 a swill of my beer, and then we left. So, it was five minutes,  
8 I guess, at the most.

9 Q Where did you go from there.

10 A I don't remember if that was -- went to three or  
11 four different places, and that was in one of those places,  
12 I don't remember, I was pretty well soused, okay, but, from  
13 there, I don't remember.

14 Q During the course of riding around, did you all go  
15 up to a residential house and stop?

16 A To two or three residential houses, yes, sir.

17 Q Did you get out at any of those places?

18 A No, sir.

19 Q Why were you going to those places?

20 A He had a radio that he had to attain from one of  
21 them. The rest of them, I didn't know, you know, I didn't  
22 know this one until he came back in the car with the radio,  
23 and then I knew that that's the reason he went there.

24 Q From one of the houses, did he come back with a  
25 rifle?

1 A. Yes, sir, he did.

2 Q. Do you know what kind of rifle it was?

3 A. Not distinctly, to be honest. I can tell you what  
4 it looked like to me, but I couldn't -- you know, I didn't  
5 examine it or look at it closely.

6 Q. Before he came out -- did you go in that house  
7 where he got the rifle?

8 A. No, sir.

9 Q. Prior to him coming out with the rifle, did you  
10 know that that was the reason that he was going to that house  
11 was to obtain a rifle?

12 A. Not for a fact. If he told me, I don't remember it.

13 Q. After he came back with a rifle, and got back in  
14 the car, did he make any comment to you about why he went and  
15 got the rifle?

16 A. No, sir, not that I recall.

17 Q. Did you ask him?

18 A. No reason to.

19 Q. While you all are still riding around, are you  
20 still continuing to drink?

21 A. Oh, yes, sir.

22 Q. Did you take the bottle with you from Bo Snowden's  
23 house ---

24 A. Oh, yes.

25 Q. And at some time during that evening, did you all

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go to the shrimp place known as the Shrimp Boat?

A. Now, I know that's the name of the place, yes, sir.

Q. Had you ever been there before?

A. No, sir.

Q. When you went there, did you even know what it was?

A. Not until after I was -- until after certain things was over with, then I was back in my car, or back in the car that belonged to my mom.

Q. Why did you go to the Shrimp Boat?

A. He said this guy owed him some money for some nursery work that he had done and he wanted to get this money from this guy here before we left to back to town, to go back to Clewiston.

Q. In your other stops, had he tried to collect money from people he knew?

A. I assumed he had, that was the reason for going by and seeing them in person, a lot of them was money and stuff that was owed to him.

Q. Who was driving when you got to the Shrimp Boat, do you recall?

A. I don't remember exactly.

Q. By that time, Willie, how much had you been drinking?

A. We hadn't finished the second bottle. We were still on the second bottle, of course, Bo was helping us drinking the third bottle -- I mean, the second bottle.

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1 Q And what was your state of sobriety at the time that  
2 you got to the Shrimp Boat?

3 A I don't quite understand the question.

4 Q Were you still fairly sober or were you drunk at  
5 that time?

6 A He was all pretty well -- or, Bo and I was for sure.

7 Q And do you have any idea about what time that was  
8 that you all got to the Shrimp Boat?

9 A No, sir, I don't.

10 Q When you -- your Honor, may he step down?

11 THE COURT: All right.

12 (Thereupon, the witness stepped down from the  
13 witness stand.)

14 Q (By Mr. Lambert) When you got to this place that  
15 you later found out was the Shrimp Boat, were the lights on,  
16 did it appear to be open?

17 A I don't remember seeing any lights on for it to be  
18 open.

19 Q You recall the testimony concerning the layout of  
20 this?

21 A Briefly.

22 Q And the first person designated this as the Shrimp  
23 Boat, where this S.B. is.

24 A Um-hum.

25 Q Where did you park when you first got to the Shrimp

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1 Boat?

2 A There's a driveway right here, and there's a  
3 building back here. I remember a building there, a party  
4 going on or something right here, but, we stopped here, I don't  
5 know if this was one of the parking spaces or what, but we  
6 stopped right here, and Bo Snowden said get out of the car,  
7 at this point.

8 Q How far would that be from the building?

9 A From this building?

10 Q Yeah, from -- well, now, from the Shrimp Boat,  
11 we are calling this, has been designated for purposes of this  
12 diagram as the Shrimp Boat building, and this is the highway.

13 Were you in -- did you park in the parking lot of  
14 the Shrimp Boat?

15 A No, sir, I was thinking this was the place and we  
16 stopped here, but, you said no it was through this way, so,  
17 there was some halfway wooded-type area through here.

18 Q Why did you stop there?

19 A Because he had to see this guy that was supposed to  
20 owe him the money for the nursery work he was doing, or what-  
21 ever.

22 MR. LAMBERT: Take your seat back.

23 (Thereupon, the witness regained the witness stand.)

24 Q (By Mr. Lambert) What happened -- so, after you  
25 stopped the car, what did you do, Willie?

1 A. We got out of the car.

2 Q. Did Snowden say anything to you?

3 A. He got out of the car first -- maybe not. Anyway,  
4 we got out of the car, and he handed me a pipe wrench and  
5 said here, take this here, you may have to stand at the back  
6 door and scare him or hold him there, you know, he is a pretty  
7 good sized guy. And, I was drunk, but, still, I did it.

8 Then he said: Let's go this way, which was away  
9 from the building. Where he was facing, where he pulled up  
10 to it, was to the left of that, there in the wooded area. So,  
11 he said follow me.

12 So, we went from there to the wooded area to the  
13 back of this building, and there he said wait here and I will  
14 be at the front, and when you hear me coming back around or  
15 holler for you, you just come out the front. I said okay.

16 So, I stood there, didn't seem like very long.  
17 Then, again, it does seem like a long time, I don't remember  
18 exactly how long it was. But, while standing there, I heard  
19 the one shot.

20 When I heard the first shot, I got scared. I  
21 sobered up considerably, because it scared me. It freaked me  
22 out. I didn't know what was going on.

23 Then, I heard a second shot, and I knew I had to go.  
24 While I was at the back of the restaurant, I heard the car  
25 leaving, and at the time, I couldn't understand why. I didn't

1 really worry about it.

2 And, so, I ran to the, I guess you would call it  
3 the north side of the building, the right-hand side of the  
4 building. At any rate, around the right-hand side of the  
5 building, I saw a pick-up truck, a red pick-up, which, I  
6 guess, was the El Camino they was talking about, maroon color,  
7 but, looked red to me.

8 And, there was a space between the El Camino and  
9 the building of some distance, I don't remember exactly how  
10 much it was, but I saw Bo Running. When I saw Bo running,  
11 I knew I had to run, because I knew he must be where  
12 the car was.

13 I knew that I must follow him to find out where the  
14 car is; but, I saw a man laying on the pavement on the  
15 asphalt. So, I turned to the right-hand side of the pick-  
16 up and ran as fast as I could, as fast as I could.

17 Q And how far did you run?

18 A Seemed like ten miles, but I guess a couple hundred  
19 yards.

20 Q And did you -- and were you following Bo through  
21 this course?

22 A Not step for step, but in the same general direction  
23 he was going, yes, sir.

24 Q And then did you finally come back and find the car?

25 A Yes, sir, I did.

1 Q Then what did you do upon getting back to the car?

2 A I got inside as quickly as possible.

3 Q And then where did you all go?

4 A We left there, and, to the best of my knowledge,  
5 straight back to Clewiston.

6 Q After the time that you heard the shot, what was  
7 your state of mind?

8 A Bac.

9 Q By that, what do you mean, what were your emotions?

10 A Scared to death.

11 Q Willis, have you ever been convicted of a crime?

12 A No, sir.

13 MR. LAMBERT: That's all I have of this witness,  
14 your Honor.

15 CROSS-EXAMINATION

16 BY MR. MOXLEY:

17 Q Mr. Snipes, is it true that you knew Ace Hogan  
18 prior to going up there on December nineteen?

19 A Yes, sir.

20 Q And you knew Susie or Sue Hogan, too, right?

21 A Yes, sir.

22 Q Is it also true, sir, that you actually lived in  
23 their home with them for a little while?

24 A I stayed there. Their first cousin and myself, for  
25 the two, three, might have been four, at the most, days at