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Jones Grand Jury Finds True Bill in Murder of Jake Koonce Last Week

After a long and somewhat unprecedented deliberation the Jones County Grand Jury Tuesday returned a "True Bill" in the indictment of Jasper Metts, Comfort store keeper, charged with the murder of Jake Koonce last Tuesday, February 26, in front of Charlie Battle's store in Comfort.

Solicitor Robert Rouse was called repeatedly to the grand jury room to answer questions from members of the jury who wanted to be "exactly right" about what they were doing. Judge Chester Morris of Coonjock, who is holding the one-week mixed term of Jones County's Superior Court refused a request to go to the grand jury room to answer a technical question. Judge Morris said he would answer any question of any juror in open court but he was afraid it was a little "unprecedented" for him to go to the jury room.

Metts has admitted shooting Koonce shortly before 2 p. m. with a .22 caliber automatic rifle as the result of a month-old feud between the men that is widely reported to have been caused by Koonce's temporary separation of Metts and his wife.

Witnesses say that Metts walked 75 to 100 yards diagonally across from his store to the Battle store and began firing his rifle at Koonce as he came out of the store and his brother, E. W. Battle, came out of Battle's store where they had drunk a Coke.

The witnesses say Metts engaged in a brief tussle with one of his brothers who attempted to take the rifle from him before he crossed the road where he killed Koonce with two "22 longs" in the back of the head, inflicted when Koonce turned to run from the rapid fire of the automatic rifle, which Sheriff Brown Yates believes to have been fired at least six or possibly seven times.

Efforts to obtain Metts' release on bond until the September term of Jones County Superior Court were unsuccessful and he was ordered held until that time without privilege of bond and was transferred to the Lenoir County jail in Kinston for safe-keeping, since sentiment was reportedly running pretty high in some circles as a result of the shooting. The Jones County jail is on the ground floor of the court house and is easily accessible to the general public, whereas the Lenoir County jail is on top of the court house and can only be reached by one doorway.

Last week's issue in reporting the Koonce murder stated that Koonce had "served a five year hitch" in federal prison on a white slavery charge. This was technically incorrect, since Koonce only was in prison just over two years before being released.

Solicitor Robert Rouse announced Thursday afternoon that Jasper Metts would be permitted release under \$15,000 bond, pending trial in September for the murder of Jake Koonce on February 26. Rouse also said he was not going to try Metts for first degree murder. No reason was given for

Finer Carolina Supper Meeting in Trenton

A Finer Carolina Supper was served Wednesday night at the Methodist Church to 12 guests and two Carolina Power and Light Company officials. The purpose of the supper was to make plans for the 1957 contest. There are to be three projects and one alternate for the term Jan. 1, 1957 through June 30, 1958. During the meeting, Miss Tiny Hammond was elected chairman and Mrs. Fred Pippin, publicity chairman. The projects are to be selected by March 10 in order to enter the contest. Wade Murchison and Roland Gaddy of New Bern gave some high lights of the contest and rules. Guests were Miss Hammond, Mrs. Pippin, Mrs. Austin Koonce, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Swiggett, Rev. Lewis Dillman, Bill Hammond, Marvin Thomas, Bill Parker, Jim Franck and Mrs. Ben Hester. Ladies who served the supper were Mrs. Paul Huffman, Mrs. Lewis Dillman, Mrs. W. S. Hill, and Mrs. Sylvanus Mallard.

Reluctant Witness

Young William Banks of Comfort proved to be a most reluctant witness when called to the stand in the Jones County Superior Court in the case which charged Haywood Philyaw and Roosevelt Garris with engaging in an affray in which deadly weapons were used. Similar charges against Banks had been dropped when it became evident that he was not involved in the actual affray. But Banks didn't know what the argument was about, who hit whom with what, or why, or when or exactly where. And he admitted that a bruised spot on his face resulted when he stumbled and fell in his hurry to depart the company of Garris and Philyaw.

Robert Toler Pleads Guilty to Hit-Run Driving in Maysville

Robert T. Toler pled guilty to hit and run driving Tuesday in Jones County Superior Court in Maysville on the night of February 22nd in front of Preston Collins' cafe when his car knocked \$122 worth of dents in the car of a Rocky Mount man.

Presiding Judge Chester Morris told Toler he had until noon Wednesday to scrape up the \$122 or face pretty severe punishment. Toler promised to be back before that deadline, and with the money.

Comfort Pair Found Guilty in Cutting

Roosevelt Garris and Haywood Philyaw Tuesday were found guilty of engaging in an affray in which deadly weapons were used.

The fight was supposed to have taken place on the night of February 16 in Comfort — or "Little Dodge City" as some wits have recently named it, and in the scuffle Philyaw suffered a two-inch cut across the forehead and a split thumb, while Garris wound up departing the scene in high gear with a slashed jacket and a scratched side where a knife had penetrated his clothing and gotten "to the skin".

Judge Chester Morris gave each of the defendants an 8-to-12 month jail term suspended on payment of \$50 fine and court costs and condition of three year's good behavior.

No Collector Like Ring of Jail Keys, Judge Morris Feels



JUDGE CHESTER MORRIS

Judge Chester Morris of Coonjock, who is presiding over the current term of Jones County's Superior Court, certainly made his point Tuesday afternoon when he asserted, "In my 31 year's experience in the courts I've reached the conclusion that there is no collection agency on earth with the power of the jail house key".

This remark came after the Judge had cited Jatha Boyd Smith \$233 behind in support payments to his wife and minor child of Bayboro. His wife, Delilah Emily Smith, testified that Smith had told her he did not intend to comply with the court order which specified that he should pay her \$50 per month for maintenance of their four year-old son. She also said he had never made payments except when a contempt citation was in the process of service.

Smith said he couldn't pay, so Judge Morris ordered him in custody of Sheriff Brown Yates, but before the Judge could finish smoking a cigarette in a brief recess the money to pay up the arrears had suddenly appeared and Judge Morris agreed to "amend the contempt citation", by letting Smith out of jail and also listening to arguments that the \$50 per month payment be reduced because of what Smith's attorney, Darris Koonce, argued were a lower income than when the original order was entered, and a subsequent marriage which has made Smith a father again.

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Few of Typical 4-H Projects



This is Dwight Stroud astride his major 4-H Club project, a tractor; which is not quite accurate. The tractor is not his 4-H Club project but care and maintenance of the tractor, as well as safe use of same are his project for the

year. Young Stroud, son of Mr. and Mrs. Marvitt Stroud of the Liddell Community, has enjoyed many 4-H projects in the past, but says he's getting the biggest kick as well as the most information this year out of the care of this "iron, steel and rubber project".



This proud young 4-H'er is Tommy Smith, foster son of Mr. and Mrs. Lott West of Sandhill Township, who has as his major 4-H project the care of this pure-bred Duroc sow — now two and a half years old — and the litter of fine healthy pigs which she has

produced. The corn Tommy had spread to bring his Duroc mama to the photographer proved more attractive than the camera lens, or the cameraman. But she is a fine specimen of her type and has been a profitable as well as educational 4-H project for Tommy.



This is "Buck" Kennedy with his Aberdeen-Angus steer which he is fattening for the annual Coastal Plain Fat Stock Show. Young Kennedy, son of Mr. and Mrs. Adair Kennedy of the Woodlinton Community, has been an

active 4-H Clubber for many years, and has worked on many interesting and educational projects, but his hopes are highest for this walking beef steak which he hopes will hang some blue ribbons in his trophy case.

Jones Citizens Due Shock for Refusing To List Their Taxes

An examination of county offices Tuesday by the Jones County Grand Jury revealed that there was a considerable number of people living in the county who have failed repeatedly to list their taxes.

In spite of every effort by officials in the tax collection department these people have simply ignored the law, but there is an in-

dication that they may not take matters too lightly in the future since the list of those in this category has been turned over to Solicitor Robert Rouse for prosecution.

BENEFIT SUPPER

The Christian Youth Fellowship of Haskins Chapel Christian Church is sponsoring a supper from 4 until 7 Saturday at the Church and all proceeds from the supper are going into a fund for a recreation center at the church.

HONORING OUR 4-H CLUBS