

**Activities Involving Possible**  
**Hit & Run**  
**Sandy Run Road near Joe Miley Road**  
**Stephen N. Smith**  
[REDACTED]

**July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

I was called by Cpl. Allen at 0537hrs advising we had a possible Hit & Run fatality on Sandy Run Road. He was advised to call the on-call commander (Lt. King).

Cpl Allen called me back at 0608hrs to advise the MAIT team was enroute to the scene and he was almost there. I left my residence and headed to the scene and was advised by Cpl. Allen that it was a homicide, not a hit & run. I advised Cpl. Allen to make sure that was the ruling of the coroner and Hampton County Sheriff's Office and that I would be there shortly. I arrived on scene at approximately 0625hrs and observed a white male lying in the roadway on the center line with head trauma to the right side above his brow. I spoke with Hampton County Coroner Ernie Washington, who immediately advised me it was a homicide. He pointed out the wound to be a gunshot wound and showed me the entry point. Assistant Coroner Kelly Greene then began to show me photographs they took, again pointing to the entry point to the head and also a defensive wound to the hand. I then asked for clarity if they were sure it was a homicide and their response was yes. I then advised we no longer needed the MAIT team. I asked if our assistance was needed and I was told no, they were just waiting of SLED's crime scene unit to arrive. I walked the scene and saw no evidence of any car parts or pieces and then had all units clear the scene.

At approximately 1615hrs I was called by L/Cpl. Rowell, who advised the Sheriff T.C. Smalls called him and advised an autopsy was conducted as MUSC and that no bullet was found and it was determined to be a Hit & Run. I immediately called Sheriff Smalls ([REDACTED]) to clarify the issue. He advised me that the Doctor was ruling it a motor vehicle accident and they were turning it over to us. I asked if he was the lead investigator and he advised me Lt. Perry Singleton was the lead investigator and gave me his phone number ([REDACTED]). I immediately called Lt. Singleton and asked for any notes or information he had and he told me he was not at his desk and would call me back in thirty minutes. I then called Hampton County Coroner Ernie Washington at 1640 hrs and asked him if that was his ruling as well and he stated he would have to go with the Doctor's ruling. I then reminded him that earlier that morning they were certain it was a gunshot wound and he told me he had to go by the opinion of the Doctor. I asked him where the body was at and he stated it had been taken to Rhoden funeral home in Hampton per the family's wishes at the time of the death notification. I asked him what time and who they notified and he stated that they notified the mother and father (Joel and Sandra Smith) at their home at 4220 Joe Miley Road in Brunson at approximately 1030 hrs. I called the funeral home and spoke with Gordon Rhoden ([REDACTED]). I asked him if he had the clothing the deceased was wearing so we could pick it up and he stated it was in a paper bag with the body. I asked him to immediately stop whatever preparations they were making to the body and cover him up and we would come get the clothing. He agreed to do so and I had L/Cpl. Rowell pick up the clothing shortly, I then called Lt. King at 1757 hrs to advise him what was occurring and he told me he would make some calls and get back with me. I immediately called back Ernie Washington and asked for the name and phone number of the Doctor who conducted the autopsy. I was given her number and called a Doctor Aaron Presnell to try and understand what brought her to that decision. She said that it was not a gunshot wound and no bullet or fragments were found during the x-ray and that it didn't look like a bullet wound in her opinion and that since the body was found in the roadway, she could only theorize that it had to

be a motor vehicle that caused the death. I asked if he had any other injuries and she stated only a partial dislocated right shoulder. I asked her if she found any glass fragments or any other evidence of a motor vehicle and she stated no. I then asked her why she was ruling it as a motor vehicle accident and what she thought caused the head injury. She told me it was not her job to figure that out, it was mine. I then tried calling Lt. Singleton back since he had not returned my phone call and all I got was his voicemail. I then hung up and call Sheriff Smalls to see if he could get me the information they had and he stated he would call me right back. After not hearing back from him as well, I called him back and got his voicemail as well. I then called L/Cpl. Rowell to see if he was in Hampton and he advised he was on his way from Bamberg. I told him to go back by the scene and make sure the body had been marked and to start looking to any vehicle debris in both directions. He called back and advised he could find no debris at all. I then called L/Cpl. Altman and told him when he came out to go to the scene at Sandy Run Road near Joe Miley Road and look for any vehicle debris. He also called back stating he could find nothing. I then told him to go out to the scene and sit from around 0300 hrs until 0500 hrs to document what type of traffic was moving that time of the morning. Lt. King then called me back at 1928 hrs and advised Lt. Brock with the MAIT team would be calling me and to see if I could get in touch with someone from SLED to come out the next day. I spoke with Lt. Brock at 1940 hrs and explained the entire scenario to him. He advised me to have someone go out to the scene and look for debris. I told him I already had someone on scene and he advised he would have Sgt. Booker call me shortly. I spoke with Sgt. Booker at 2002 hrs and explained the scenario to him. We decided to meet at the funeral home in Hampton the next day at 9am and asked if SLED could meet us there as well. I told him I would find out which agents were there and try and set it up. I called Agent Jeff Croft with SLED, whom I knew, to see if he could find out which agents came to the scene that morning. He called me back with the name and phone number of Brittany Burke [REDACTED]. I called her at 2022 hrs and she stated that she and Agent Trey Tallon were called out at 0610 hrs that morning at the request of the Hampton County Sheriff's Office regarding a homicide. She stated they arrived at the scene around 0900 hrs and looked at the wound and didn't think it was a gunshot wound. She stated they told the Sheriff and Coroner that they didn't believe it to be a gunshot wound. She told me they were adamant it was a gunshot wound, so they mapped the scene and began to gather evidence as they would normally do. She stated that they found a smart phone and car keys in the deceased right pocket. The phone was undamaged but could not get it work. They also located the vehicle of the deceased on US 601 a couple miles from the scene and also checked that as well. They went through the vehicle and found the wallet of the deceased and also noticed the gas cap was off. They also found engine oil in the vehicle and believed that he had vehicle trouble because they could not get the vehicle to start. Since he was found between the vehicle and his residence, they believed he was walking home when the incident occurred. She also advised me that they went to the autopsy along with assistant coroner Kelly Greene and the doctor confirmed it was not a gunshot sound, which is what they (SLED) believed originally. At that point, she stated they left and returned to Columbia. I asked her if she could come to the funeral home the next morning at 9am and she stated she would have to ask her superior and call me back. She called back at 2042 hrs and advised she would be there at that time and would bring all her notes and photos. I called Sgt. Booker back at 2045 and advised him that one of the SLED agents would meet us there at 9am.

#### July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015

I called L/Cpl. Rowell and L/Cpl. Payne at 0550 hrs that morning and told them both to go back out to the scene at Sandy Run Road and look for any debris of any kind or anything out of the ordinary. They called me back and again were unable to find anything and I asked them both to meet me at the Rhoden funeral home at 9am for a meeting. I then spoke with Lt. King at 0835 hrs and briefed him regarding the time and location of the meeting. He advised me to get in touch with CRO Sonny Collins to explain what