

DETROIT POLICE DEPARTMENT

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date May 22, 1958

To: Commissioner

Subject: Circumstances Surrounding the Death of:
Lark Jordan 38/w
17815 John R, Apt. #6
Police Prisoner

On May 7, 1958, Inspector Richard Miller of the Homicide Bureau submitted the following summary report concerning the death of Lark Jordan:

At 1:55 a.m., May 6, 1958, Scout 12-2, manned by Patrolmen Thaddeus Tompor and Charles Hancock, received a radio run to John R and Montana on report of a disturbance. Upon arrival, the officers were met by Scout 12-1, manned by Patrolmen Robert Trozak and Robert Kohls, who were in the vicinity and arrived at the scene first.

Patrolmen Trozak and Kohls informed the officers on Scout 12-2 that they had in custody Lark Jordan, 38/w, whom they had observed running north in the middle of the street on John R and Montana. He was calling for help and for the police. The officers observed that the man's hands and clothing were covered with blood. When they attempted to question him, his answers were incoherent and rambling. A citizen, whose name is unknown, told the officers on Scout 12-1 that he had heard the man calling for help and at the same time heard glass breaking at 17815 John R.

Patrolman Kohls then went to the above address and spoke to William J. Sulatycki, 75/w, and his wife, Marie Sulatycki, 53/w, both of 17815 John R, Apt. #6. At this time, Patrolman Kohls observed that a 24 x 24" window in the rear bedroom of the apartment had been broken as well as two 24 x 24" windows in the dining room. He also observed that a 2 x 5' plate glass window of the street door entrance to the apartment had also been broken.

Mr. and Mrs. Sulatycki informed Patrolman Kohls that the deceased, who was a new roomer in their home, had awakened them by his screams. At the same time, they heard glass breaking. When they got up to investigate, they found the above described damage. They stated that the deceased was screaming and yelling, "They are after me. They are in the alley." At that time, he crashed his fists through the windows. He then struck Mr. Sulatycki in the jaw and ran down the stairs leading to the

sidewalk at which time he attempted to open the door with the plate glass window. When he was unable to do so, he rammed both of his hands and arms through the upper part of the window and then dove head first over the remaining portion of the glass, out onto the sidewalk. He then ran down the street when he was stopped by Patrolmen Trozak and Kohls.

The prisoner was then turned over to Patrolmen Tompor and Hancock (scout 12-2), who conveyed him to the Twelfth Precinct Station, arriving at about 2:15 a.m. The prisoner was registered for "Malicious Destruction of Property" but was not printed because of numerous small lacerations of his hands.

At 2:47 a.m., Scout 12-2 left the station with the prisoner to take him to the Main Receiving Hospital for medical treatment of his injuries. Enroute, and in front of approximately 58 East Melbourne, the prisoner again suddenly went berserk and broke the right rear window of the scout car and kicked the dome light off, beginning to scream and yell. The prisoner then procured a piece of broken glass and attempted to strike Patrolman Hancock, who was riding in the passenger side of the front seat. Patrolman Hancock then grabbed the man's right arm and got one part of the handcuff on his right wrist. Patrolman Tompor, who was driving, ran around the side of the vehicle and secured the man's left hand. The officers had the prisoner's arms astraddled on each side of the door post between the front and rear windows. The prisoner became so violent that the officers dared not release one of his arms to enable them to use the car radio or go for assistance as they feared the prisoner would injure himself more severely on the broken glass of the rear window. They stated they struggled with the man in this manner for approximately fifteen minutes.

At this time, Ulysses Bennett, 58/c, of 50 East Melbourne, Trinity 1-3153, a citizen, came out on the porch of his home and the officers requested him to call the Bethune Station for assistance. At 3:10 a.m., in response to his call, #13 Cruiser and Scout 9-1 were dispatched to 50 Melbourne to assist officers having trouble with a man. Also responding to the scene were Scout 9-3, manned by Patrolmen Marmion Pollard and Marion Payne, Scout 9-5, manned by Patrolmen Albert Bryant and William Nuber, Scout 9-6, manned by Patrolmen Ronald Smith and John Budgis and Lieutenant Thomas Nolan and Sergeant Charles Gerish of the Ninth Precinct.

Scout 9-1, manned by Patrolmen Doyle Johnson and Herman Yost, was the first car at the scene to assist the officers on Scout 12-2. According to statements, two officers entered the left rear seat of the scout car where they secured the prisoner's right arm which was still extended out of the car and held by officers on the outside. They brought the right arm over to his left arm which was also held in the same manner by officers outside the scout car. When they were assured they had hold

May 22, 1958

of his two arms and two legs to prevent him from further injuring himself or them, they removed the prisoner from the car and laid him on the grass between the sidewalk and the curb. They then rolled him on his stomach to enable them to handcuff him with his arms behind his back. They also secured his ankles with handcuffs. All this time, the prisoner was yelling and thrashing about, continuing to struggle violently. He rolled off of the grass over the curb and on his stomach. The officers then held him about the upper part of the body and his legs.

Number 9 Auto, manned by Patrolman Raymond Lippman also responded and assisted the officers in putting restraining straps on the prisoner. Number 13 Cruiser, manned by Patrolmen James Craig, Joseph Loesche, Keith Whitehead and Robert Jackson also responded but took no further action as no additional assistance was required.

At 3:30 a.m., Lark Jordan was conveyed to Receiving Hospital by #9 Auto from the scene and was pronounced D.O.A. by Dr. Frank Akamine. There were abrasions on both of his wrists and ankles, contusions of the chest and abrasions of the left cheek and both knees. Receiving Hospital File #58-8794.

On May 6, 1958, formal statements were taken by Assistant Prosecutor Raymond DeRyck and Stenographer Sally Hyatt from all of the above officers, in the presence of Inspector Peter DeLuca of the Twelfth Precinct, and Detective Lieutenant Charles Kantzler and Detective Robert Garton of the Homicide Bureau. Formal statements were also taken from Mr. and Mrs. William Sulatycki and Elmer Trent, 38/w of 182 Montana, Townsend 9-5873, the deceased's brother-in-law, and Hazel Trenth, 38/w of the same address, the deceased's sister.

A survey was made of the block of East Melbourne from Woodward Avenue to John R for additional witnesses and statements are now in the process of being taken from them.

Photographs were taken at 17815 John R, showing the broken windows and of the broken window of the scout car by Patrolman Andrew Birthelmer of the Central Photo Bureau. Patrolman Birthelmer also took photos of the deceased at the Wayne County Morgue.

On May 6, 1958, an autopsy was performed on the body of Lark Jordan at the Wayne County Morgue by Doctor Robert J. Sillery and the cause of death is pending at this time. Morgue File #58-2911. However, Doctor Sillery made the following statement in the presence of Detective Inspector Richard H. Miller, Commanding Officer of the Homicide Bureau, and Detective Robert Garton of the Homicide Bureau:

"Essentially this is what was found at the autopsy. Multiple superficial lacerations of the skin of the hands, arms, forearms and the legs. There was one big bruise

May 22, 1958

on the left side of the face. There were eight broken ribs, five on the right and three on the left. They were all broken in the front---all simple fractures, with no displacement of fragments. His ribs were of very light weight. (He was a man of slight built and bone structure.)

The only other significant finding is that the lungs were congested as well as other internal organs. The heart is essentially normal.

From the information I have available, it seems as though this man was acting in an extremely abnormal manner, that it was necessary to subdue the man. Many attempts were made to subdue him. The lacerations were probably produced when he broke various windows. There are no indications that he was beaten or any blows were struck. Someone may have pushed on his chest.

Further information indicates that he was strapped-- that a restraining strap was placed around his chest and arms, pinning his arms to his side. This would unquestionably restrict his respiratory movements. Further information indicates that after the restraint was placed on this individual, that he continued to scream, thereby exhausting most of the air from his lungs. His screaming suddenly stopped. Probably when he tried to inspire, which because of the restraint, he was unable to do; he, therefore, suffocated.

As mentioned before, the lacerations were probably caused by the broken glass. The bruises on the side of the face could very well have been caused when he hit the pavement after diving through the door. The fractured ribs were not as the result of any blow. They may have been produced by his striking the ground, landing on his face and chest. They also may have been produced while efforts were being made to subdue him.

This is my impression of the situation as of now with the information available. A final answer will have to await complete laboratory tests."

On May 16, 1958, Doctor Edward S. Zawadzki, Wayne County Medical Examiner, gave the following cause of death: "Shock due to multiple lacerations of the upper extremities, contusions of the trunk and fractures of the ribs." (Case #58-2911 - A58-341). He ruled the death to be accidental. The following is the Epicrisis as reported by Doctor Zawadzki:

"The medical examination of the death of Lark Jordan indicates the following:

1. No poisons or drugs present in the body.
2. Gross and microscopic findings exclude infection or other anatomically demonstrable lesion to account for deceased's behavior and death.
3. Positive anatomic findings include:
 - a. Fractures of ribs.
 - b. Multiple lacerations of skin.
 - c. Scattered pancreatic hemorrhages.
 - d. Congestion of viscera.
 - e. Left hydronephrosis.
4. History indicates that death occurred in the ambulance while on the way to the hospital.
5. The history of deceased's behavior would suggest the characteristic behavior of the excited schizophrenic of paranoid type.

On the basis of these observations, it is our opinion that the deceased being in an excited phase of paranoid schizophrenia did injure himself by punching out several house and car windows, by jumping through a plate glass window of a house door and by struggling with several men at one time. He continued to struggle while restrained on a stretcher in the ambulance bearing him to the hospital. At that time, he became exhausted, lapsed into shock from his injuries and expired prior to reaching his destination."

On May 22, 1958, Samuel H. Olsen, Wayne County Prosecuting Attorney, after reviewing all the statements taken by the Prosecuting Attorney's Office ruled that there is no legal basis upon which to recommend a criminal warrant against any police officer or combine of police officers.

In accordance with the foregoing medical findings of the Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office and from the statements of witnesses, the case is being classified as "Accidental Death" by the Homicide Bureau.

James C. Berg
 JAMES C. BERG,
 Deputy Superintendent

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