



Lawmen carrying victim from thick underbrush.

by DON ALLEN

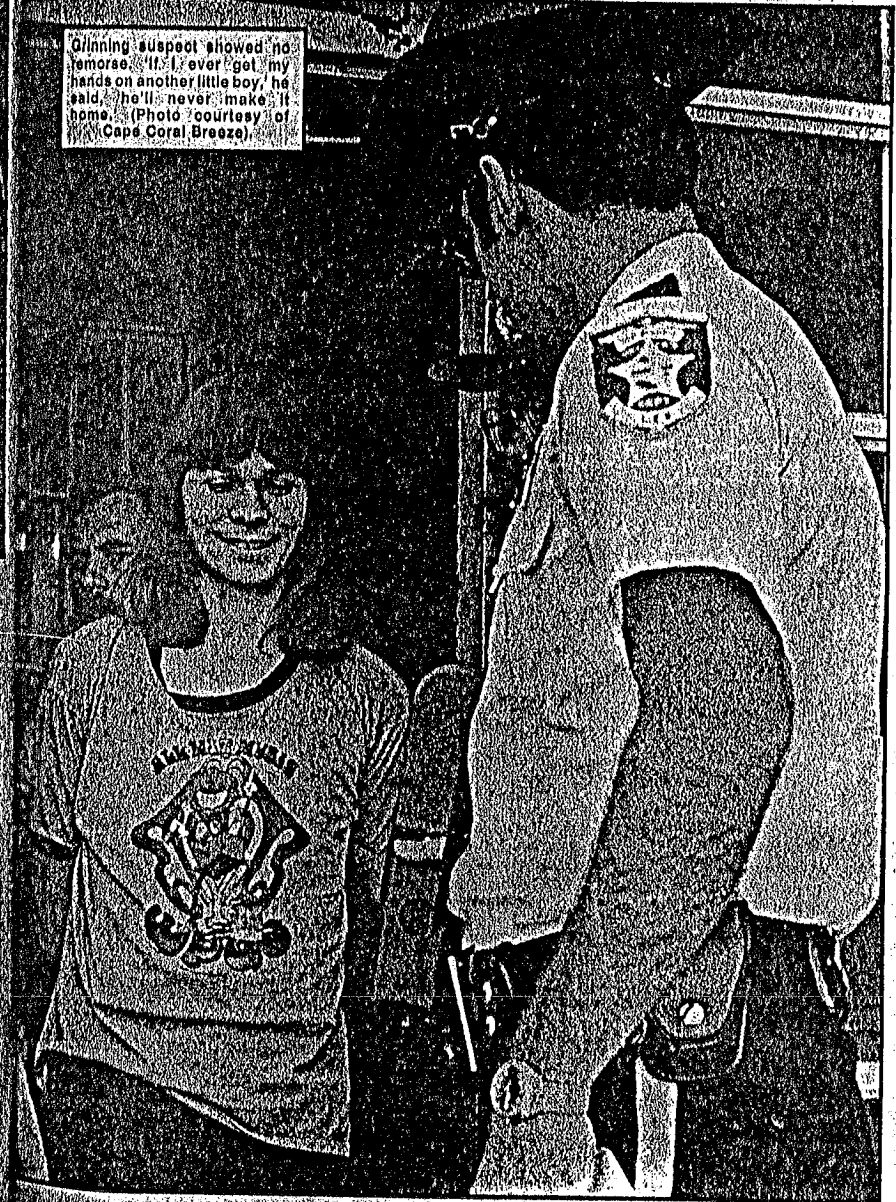
Nine-year-old Jason Steele VerDow was a "new boy" in the Cape Coral, Fla., neighborhood, having moved in with his family two weeks ago, but he was readily accepted and well-liked by other youngsters. A third-grader, Jason was a sports buff and his dad was superintendent at the Executive Golf Club. Already, people were predicting that Jason might one day make it big in a number of sports, including golf.

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Child Slayer Begs To Be Executed!

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Grimacing suspect showed no remorse. "It's never got my hands on another little boy," he said, "he'll never make it home." (Photo courtesy of Cape Coral Breeze)



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GOODE, Arthur Frederick III, white, electrocuted Florida (Lee) on April 5, 1984.

On Friday morning, March 5, 1976, Jason was gathered with a group of other youngsters about 8 o'clock at the Pondella Road school bus stop. A pimply-faced teenager, about 18, with brown straggly hair, approached the youngsters and began asking seemingly innocent questions of the boys, like their names and where they lived.

Jason, a friendly and outgoing youth, responded good-naturedly. The teenager told Jason, "I want to show you something, Jason. Come with me." The two crossed the street and disappeared in a nearby wooded area.

The bus arrived a few minutes later and Jason had not returned. Nor was he home by 7:26 that evening when his parents reported him missing. A routine missing person report was filed with the description of about four feet tall, 60 pounds, brown hair and eyes, wearing blue dungarees, a white T-shirt with a blue collar and two-tone brown leather shoes.

Patrolman William G. Vent was the first officer to learn of the pimply-faced teenager who led young Jason into the woods. He contacted the Leo County Sheriff's Office in nearby Fort Myers and the North Fort Myers Fire Department, and an immediate search of the Pondella Road was launched. The night canvass was unsuccessful, however, and plans were made to resume the operation at daybreak.

Lee County Deputy Stephen L. Mednick was one of the searchers that morning. It was familiar terrain to him. On several occasions, Mednick had chased narcotics suspects through the thick underbrush. Deputy Mednick came across two sets of footprints, one large and one small, and, later on, some knee prints. A number of broken limbs and scuff marks indicated some sort of struggle had taken place.

Coral Patrolman Richard E. Brown joined Mednick, tracking the footprints towards a clump of palmettos. "There's something under that bush," Mednick shouted, and the two halted dead in their tracks. "It looks... it looks like an elbow!"

The two officers pushed the fronds aside and a little boy's nude, cold body came into view. Although thoroughly concealed from the highway where the school bus traveled, it was less than 100 yards from where the school bus had stopped that very morning.

The body was in "a sort of kneeling position," Brown later testified. "The buttocks were all you could see. It was as if someone picked him up in the middle and set him this way, head down and sort of on his knees in a crawling position."

Lt. Ron Ryckman, the first detective on the scene, roped off the area and ringed it with officers to prevent intrusion. He requested assistance from the LSO Crime Scene Unit. Before anything was disturbed, he ordered pictures taken by Lt. Peter Bochnovich and Deputy Abe Miller of the Mobile Crime Lab.

Lt. Roger G. Butler, chief of the Cape Coral detective division, arrived about 9 a.m. and took charge. An ambulance from the emergency medical unit was waiting for pictures to be completed. Then Brown helped Medics Martin Wilkenson and Clay Downing move the little body from the palmettos onto a removal blanket.

Decomposition had not yet begun, but rigor mortis had set in. Lividity, caused by the settling of the blood, had turned the stomach and lower extremities purplish. The left side of the child's head had been savagely bludgeoned, his face and skull crushed. Six thin lines, like wire marks, were on the throat, three on each side. The face was bloodied. One arm was up over the little boy's head, the other was twisted up behind his body on the right side.

Lt. Bochnovich accompanied the child's body to the morgue at Lee Memorial Hospital in Ft. Myers and took more pictures there during autopsy. The medical examiner found "severe trauma" to the head, abdomen, and brain itself, as well as evidence of strangulation which was the ultimate cause of death.

Cape Coral Sgt. James M. Litterello drew sketches of the crime scene, and the area was combed for the little boy's clo-

thing or any other clues. Nothing pertinent to the murder was found.

Lt. Butler sent Ryckman up in a helicopter for aerial photos, and then rounded up all the children and any other possible witnesses who had been at the school bus stop the previous morning. The youngsters were interviewed and, from their accounts, Lt. Gordon Shute made composites with an Identikit.

Inevitably, variations in the children's recollections of the man resulted in several composites. Nevertheless, Lt. Butler, who had been chief of police in Middletown, N.Y., before moving Florida, duplicated these for the lawmen to take in a door-to-door inquiry of the neighborhood. These were also distributed to the media and an all-points bulletin dispatched.

Fifty to 60 men were working on the case, but the first break did not come until Sunday, March 7, 1976. A man sought out Deputy Mednick to give him a child's shoe he said he found on the highway near the Pondella-Pine Island-Del Prado intersection. Unfortunately, he had been handling it all over and no fingerprints were obtainable. But Deputy Mednick recognized the distinctive heel of the smaller prints he had seen in the woods. Jason's mother positively identified the shoe.

A restaurant owner from Matlacha at the Pine Island bridge, a tiny community surrounded by Cape Coral development, reported a nervous young man trying to hitch a ride about 10:30 a.m. the day Jason missed the bus. The restaurant owner and a friend were headed for Matlacha on Del Prado and had stopped for the sign at Pine Island road intersection. The hitchhiker, very nervous and in a hurry, came running up to their pick-up, put his hand on the window, and asked for a lift to Matlacha. They gestured for him to get into the back of the truck bed, where they were hauling groceries. However, the young man ran back to the next car behind. The two men described the hitchhiker as having longish scraggly hair and a broad face with very bad acne.

Three other witnesses confirmed the



Lt. Robert G. Butler (left) was put in charge of the investigation, aided by Sgt. Dick Brown (center) and Det. Ron Ryckman (right).

account of the nervous hitchhiker, and two of them identified him as a man who had applied at their home for odd jobs. They remembered him as very polite, but they had no work for him.

A tourist couple from Michigan said one of the composites looked like a man who had approached their little boy a few days before on the beach at St. James City on the southern tip of Pine Island. He had told the child his name was Fred. Then an anonymous call came in from a woman who told the police she had overheard her neighbor speaking with his son who was about 20. The father had said, according to the neighbor, "This sounds like something you would do. You would take him into the woods but you wouldn't tell him. That composite looks like you."

After obtaining the father's address on Matlacha Drive, Butler assigned two officers to carry out surveillance on the son whose name, police learned, was Arthur Frederick Goode III. Police also determined that the elder Goode had moved to Florida from Maryland in November. A check with Prince George's County, Maryland, police disclosed that the son had a record of child molesting but not of violence. He had been in a mental institution four times.

On Monday, March 8, 1976, Sgt. Litterello and Patrolman McCullough, assigned to tall young Goode in plain clothes, snapped pictures of him walking a small black dog. Photos of numerous other suspects were also being taken. At that point about seven were under intensive scrutiny.

Shortly after 3 p.m., Monday, March 8, 1976, Cape Coral police received an ex-

cited phone call from a man who had spotted a fire in an already burned-out shack on the abandoned road near where the body was discovered. The caller had stopped his car on the highway to investigate and when he approached, a figure ran off into the thicket. He pursued but lost him, then hurried back to his car to phone police. "It looked like the composite pictures I have seen," he told police.

Within minutes, the area swarmed with lawmen: two helicopters, bloodhounds, police on horseback, volunteers in dunebuggies and trail bikes, as well as firefighters who swiftly extinguished the blaze and started investigating its origin.

Hundreds of curious motorists parked along the road shoulders to watch as the massive dragnet tightened. Police set up roadblocks and moved from vehicle to vehicle with the composites. The man seen fleeing the shed was not caught. The dogs did not pick up a scent. Residents of the area locked and barred their doors and left lights burning all night. Everything that moved was suspect.

No evidence relating to the murder was found at the fire site. Nor was there evidence of arson, according to Cape Coral Fire Chief Steve Smith.

At 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 9, 1976, the intensive hunt of the wooded area was called off. Meanwhile, calls continuously poured into the station. All were painstakingly checked. With less confusion in the woods, Ryckman and Sgt. Gary Keppen went back and forth over the ground to obtain time estimates of how long it would take to get from the bus stop area to the site where the body was found, at a slow walk, a fast walk, running.

A youngster reported that a few days before the murder he and two companions had been collecting aluminum cans. A man answering the circulated description had joined them, then tried to separate him from the other two boys to go into the woods behind a supermarket. The youngster refused. He told police the man had been sucking a "slurpy" and he had seen him toss the wax cup in a pond behind the grocery. Police recovered the cup and obtained fingerprints.

A 13-year-old boy said he had been approached at about 8 p.m. at a 7-11 store on Pondella and Orange Grove the same day Jason disappeared. The man wanted him to come into the woods and look for water holes. The boy had refused and the man walked on.

By this time, the seven earlier suspects had been narrowed to three, an anonymous donor had offered \$1,000 reward for information leading to capture of the murderer, and six investigators were working full-time and overtime on the case.

At about 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 10, Ryckman and LSO Deputy James Otis Drake, who had been assigned to assist the Cape Coral force, picked up Goode and brought him down to the police station where he was interrogated by Chief White and Lt. Butler.

Ryckman had advised Goode he was a suspect. The young man admitted he had molested little boys, four or five of them up north. But he never hurt them, he insisted. Violence was not his thing, Furth-ermore, he said, he would not have lured

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'I rejoice every time I hear a little boy getting murdered,' the killer wrote, 'and I don't desire to ever change my mind committing my dirty sexual murders on little boys.'

Slaying of nine-year-old fell under jurisdiction of Police Chief James R. White.

Death Row in Raitford Prison, where suspect writes letters begging to be executed. A trusty is shown playing cards with one of the condemned.



Jason out from a crowd such as was gathered at the school bus stop because that was the way he had been caught before! He would find boys alone, he said, lure them into the woods, and then talk to them about sex and seduce them into anal intercourse.

The detectives asked Goode about some fairly fresh scratches on his arm. He said he got them gardening.

Chief White had obtained Goode's history from the Prince Georges police. Now almost 22, Goode had first been arrested when he was 18 on charges of assault and battery of a 12-year-old boy in July, 1972. A ninth grade dropout, he had later been arrested a number of times for sex offenses. In 1973 he pleaded guilty to such charges and, as condition of parole on a five-year sentence, voluntarily entered the Spring Grove Mental Hospital at Catonsville, a Baltimore suburb.

On Thursday morning, March 11, 1976, Lt. Butler and Deputy Drake took Goode to the crime scene.

"Have you been here?" asked Butler. "No," answered Goode. But to the police his body English was less emphatic. He had been calm during the drive over, discussing the campaign swing of Ronald Reagan in the area. But as they entered the thicket Goode became obviously nervous. He licked his lips and ran his tongue over his teeth. His hands were constantly moving and his eyes shifted about. He kept looking up toward the top of a tall pine tree on his right as they stood at the site where the body had been found.

"He looked like he feared something was coming out of that tree down on him. He was being evasive toward something up to his right. He never did look where the body had lain. His hands were twitching," Drake later recalled.

Goode's parents told Chief White that arrangements had been made, through their Maryland attorney, to return Goode to the Maryland mental hospital. Both the chief and Lt. Butler urged the Goodes to hold Freddie, as their son was called, in Florida at least for a few days longer. They refused, saying delay would jeopardize their lawyer's arrangement. They insisted their son was innocent, that he had been washing windows on Pine Island at the time of Jason's disappearance.

"I maintain that, if he had anything to do with this he would have been long gone," said the father, who was upset and protested that police were trying to accuse their son of murder.

"No," Chief White explained. "He is a suspect. But he is not accused until charges are filed."

The frustrated police had been advised by the state attorney that at that time they did not have enough evidence to lay charges or hold Freddie Goode. Un-

known to Florida authorities, there was indeed sound legal basis for holding Goode, but due to bureaucratic foul-up in Maryland, that was not learned in Florida until too late. On Friday, March 12, the Goodes drove their son to St. Petersburg where he caught the train back to Maryland.

Goode was met by his two older sisters, police learned later, and spent the weekend with them in suburban Baltimore. Shortly after noon Monday, March 15, they drove him back to the mental hospital. There, according to one of the sisters later, they got a "busque" reception. While they were standing by the desk, the woman in charge of admission made a lengthy phone call. Without signing himself in, Goode turned around and walked out. His sisters later explained that their brother probably feared the hospital attendant was notifying police.

A few hours later and about 15 miles away in the North Baltimore suburb of Towson, a 10-year-old newsboy disappeared. He was last seen sorting his papers in front of a diner restaurant preparatory to delivering them.

Cape Coral Chief White had been in touch with Maryland police and they were aware of the nature of the Florida crime. The coincidence of Goode's return to the area and the newsboy's disappearance made Goode an immediate suspect once again.

Police phoned Goode's father. "But my son does not drive," he protested. "I've never heard of an abduction on foot."

Several witnesses, however, told Maryland lawmen they had seen the newsboy on a city bus in downtown Baltimore accompanied by a larger man in his late teens or early 20's. A four-state manhunt was launched.

Gradually, the story of bureaucratic bungling and buck passing came out. Freddie Goode had a psychiatric history dating back to the time he was five. He had been in the Grove Spring Mental Hospital several times. At 12 he had been the victim of sodomy by an older youth. Since the age of 14 he had been molesting younger boys. He threatened them with "a razor, knife, piece of glass," after taking them into a secluded wooded area. The first time he was hospitalized was after he had been caught in his room with a child. He was violence prone, anti-social, and had a predilection for pedophilia and sadism. While at the hospital he had sexually assaulted other patients several times.

But hospital authorities had refused to give Chief White this medical record. According to Maryland law enforcement, the hospital had not notified police when Goode walked out the night of February 10, 1976. Before heading for Florida shortly after midnight, the mental escapee had phoned the hospital from the

Baltimore bus station and talked with a nurse. "I just want to tell you I am on my way to my mother's in Florida."

Goode arrived in Fort Myers about 2 p.m. on February 11. His father said he corresponded with the hospital after arriving and gave his address in Florida. He received two salary checks at the Matlacha Drive address for work done at the hospital while a patient. The Goodes' Maryland attorney was in contact with the hospital making arrangements for their son's re-admission.

"If the law authorities here had known Freddie walked off and violated his parole like that, we would have had sufficient grounds to hold him on that alone," Chief White told Florida newsmen. "But the law enforcement authorities were not aware that he walked out. It seems there was a breakdown in communications, either between the hospital and the law agencies, or between the probation and parole office and law enforcement agencies."

There was even a warrant issued for Goode on February 20. Actually, there were several warrants outstanding against him. He had walked out of the hospital before and returned. The hospital claimed that the parole officer had been notified the day after Goode left, and stressed that he was a voluntary patient. But police did not learn about it until 10 days later and assumed Goode was still in the hospital as before and all warrants could be served when he was finally released.

As law agencies in the Baltimore-Washington area hunted Goode and the newsboy, Chief White had at last gathered evidence sufficient to issue his own warrant for Goode on charges not of the VerBow murder, but on five counts of lewd assault stemming from incidents that occurred March 3 and 4, 1976. The 21-year-old Maryland mental hospital escapee had become, however, the prime suspect in the rape-torture slaying of young Jason.

Following up the report of the Michigan boy's encounter on St. James City beach, police went door-to-door in that community. This search produced two charges against Goode. In both cases, 10-year-old boys coming from the beach had been lured into the woods and assaulted.

Then, on March 15, the same day the Maryland newsboy disappeared, Chief White received a letter from a woman who lived near the Goodes. Her eight-year-old son had been accosted. The boy was alone, riding his bike, when the man approached him on the road and persuaded him to go into the woods. The boy complied.

"He tried to get nasty with me," the youngster told police.

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TO ALL READERS

Can you spare 15 seconds?

Tell Us About Our Magazine

There's Too Much _____

There's Not Enough _____

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Thanks! We'll Take Your Advice

Mail All Replies To:

Editor

Startling Detective

200 Railroad Ave.

Greenwich Conn. 06830

Child Slayer Begs To Be Executed

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"Did he do so?"
"I can't remember. He told me to sit on top of him."

The boy said he had seen this man at the beach the previous day with his dog, and that the man had told him his name was Fred Goode and he lived on Matlacha Drive in a yellow house. The child said that he had been in that house on one occasion after the incident in the woods, because, he said, his cousin wanted to go and accompany him there.

With the Florida warrant issued March 17, the FBI entered the case. Goode was wanted for interstate flight to avoid prosecution. Alert was nationwide.

On Saturday, March 20, another little boy, 11-year-old Kenneth Allen Dawson, disappeared from Falls Church, Virginia. There had still been no clue to the

Maryland newsboy's fate. No ransom demand. No communication. Nothing.
The morning of Tuesday, March 23, Baltimore County Police Capt. Raymond Donovan told reporters the disappearance of the two lads was being linked to Goode "in no uncertain terms." TV and news coverage was broad.

Shortly after the late news program that night, a Falls Church woman called the police. She had recognized the pictures of the newsboy and Goode. The pair had called at her house that same day, asking for handyman chores. She had told them to telephone her the next morning. Baltimore County, Md., and Virginia State Police put the house under overnight surveillance.

At 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 24, Goode phoned the Falls Church woman and was told there would be work for him. He and the newsboy arrived at about 9 a.m. and were taken into custody.

The youngster appeared uninjured. Goode telephoned his father and told him that he and the newsboy had been doing yardwork and staying at night in motels. He said that the boy had not phoned his

mother because he did not want to worry her.
The newsboy told police he had witnessed the homosexual rape and murder of Kenny Dawson. He tried to lead police to where the body was buried, but was unable to find it. Police did recover the murdered child's wallet.

Late that afternoon Goode agreed to guide officers to the shallow gravesite in a wooded area near Tyson's Corner. About 5:30 p.m. police were shown the nude body of the little boy, covered with leaves and brush. As Jason, Kenny had been strangled.

Goode was booked for first-degree murder and placed in the Fairfax County jail without bond. Two days later he was charged with the murder of Jason VerDow. Maryland authorities charged him with the kidnapping of the newsboy and with sexual assault on another Maryland boy the previous October.

The newsboy said that he had watched while Goode stripped his captive of all clothes, but his socks, then jerked Kenny's trousers down over his head and strangled him with his belt. Goode had told him that he would show him what he did to the boy in Florida.

Kenny was on his stomach and Fred was on top of him. Kenny started to squeal. Then he just didn't move."

In Goode's wallet police found a list with the names of Jason VerDow, Kenny Dawson, and the 13-year-old boy he had assaulted with previous October. A Virginia jury convicted Goode of first-degree murder in August, 1976, and recommended that state's maximum penalty, life imprisonment. At his sentencing in September, 1976, Goode pulled a paper from his pocket and read:

"My rights have been violated. I wanted to write the state attorney in Florida to make a statement on the murder committed there: I think I should get the death penalty because if I ever get my hands on another little boy—a sexy little boy—he'll never make it home."

Said Goode's Virginia attorney, "He enjoys the public attention and is really looking forward to his trial in Florida, or at least that's what he's told me."

In October, 1976, on a date undisclosed in advance, for security reasons, Lt. Butler and LSO Col. Dave Wilson flew up to Richmond and brought Goode back to Florida. He arrived after midnight and was rushed to a squad car, waiting at the airport, but the press was waiting when he reached the jail. And he stepped out to the flashing cameras beaming.

"He loves it. He loves all the attention," commented Chief White. He passed notes to newsmen, mugged and gettured in court, through endless preliminary hearings during November, 1976.

"I'm tired of newspaper and TV shot

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of the old boy walking back and forth from jail to the courthouse," finally declared Circuit Court Judge John Shearer, and postponed further hearings until he could be sure there would be no newsmen at the courthouse.

"I'm tired of seeing him waving to the whole world on TV every time we bring him into the courthouse. I'll cull the attorneys involved for a hearing some time when the TV cameras aren't outside waiting for him."

When Goode said he would refuse to be examined by psychiatrists to determine his competency to stand trial, Judge Shearer was equally firm. "We will sit here two or three years until we get those examinations done," the judge declared. Goode was examined and declared competent.

On November 23, 1976, hobbling in with leg chains, Goode demanded the right to fire his court-appointed attorney and defend himself. His request was granted, but a public defender was assigned to assist him.

In a deposition taped in the Lee County jail on November 10, Goode confessed to the murder of Jason VerDow, detailing exactly how it was committed and how he got a ride back to Matlacha. His two-hour statement coincided perfectly with the physical evidence and other information the police had obtained.

Goode also wrote long letters to his victim's mother, describing the sex acts and the murder. These were intercepted by Jason's father and turned over to police.

Freddie Goode was brought to trial in the Lee County Courthouse at Fort Myers in March, 1977. The first time his name was mentioned after a jury was seated, the defendant stood up, grinning broadly, his arms raised above his head, spread wide in the victory gesture of prize-fighters or some just-nominated politicians.

The trial was a circus, an ugly Roman circus. On the second day, at Goode's insistence over strenuous objections of his own lawyer, State Attorney Joseph D'Alessandro played the taped confession of homosexual rape, torture and murder in all its chilling details.

At one point, Goode's lawyer asked permission to withdraw because the defendant kept demanding the prosecution's help in his conviction. At another point, the judge granted a 10-minute break for a press conference held out of the presence of the jury, giggling and smirking. Goode told newsmen,

"I understand you are all concerned about this case. I am guilty and I want to prove to everybody how and why I did this. I wanted a trial so the state attorney can present all the evidence against me. I want the death penalty. I have no remorse whatsoever for what I've done."

"The only sort of acts I'm interested in

is sexually molesting young boys. I want a chance to express to society how I feel about what I've done. I want to prove I am the murderer."

The judge told reporters he had granted the press conference because Goode is "entitled to freedom of speech just like you and me."

When Goode's newsboy captive of nine days took the witness stand for the prosecution, Goode tossed him a candy bar. As the youngster left the courtroom, the defendant cried out, "I love you! Bye!" Then to the judge, "I love that boy."

In the taped confession played for the jury, Goode said, "I wanted to get me a kid his age and take him into the woods... I told him I wanted him to take me to see his mother. That was an excuse for getting him away from the bus stop. He went with me voluntarily... I made him promise not to scream. I showed him a razor blade and told him I wanted to be his friend. I was explaining sex to him. I asked him to take off his clothes..."

When he molested the boy, Jason pulled away and started getting dressed.

"I got real upset. I put my belt around his neck. He was crying. I swung him around about 30 seconds. I threw him on the ground and put the belt around his neck again and yanked him up."

"I put him on the ground and put my belt around his neck and took his belt and beat the hell out of him. I told him before I was going to murder him. He's in such pain he can't do anything. He was face down. I pushed his face down with my right hand, put my knee on the back of his head for leverage and pulled the belt with my left hand. Then I put my ear to his head. I knew he was dead."

Goode was convicted and the jury recommended the death penalty. In sentencing, Judge Shearer said:

"Why should I invoke the awesome punishment of death? Could not some-

thing be learned from Arthur Goode? I not doing as I have seen and heard me do, merely so outraged by the atrocity that he has done that possibly reason-judgment are blunted? I believe not."

"If organized society is to exist with the compassion and love we all espouse there comes a point when... we can longer help. We can no longer rehabilitate... all we can do is exterminate..."

"In this past case, that is my opinion and that is my order and the only answer that will once and for all guarantee society... that he will never again harm, torture, or harm another human being. As you said in the trial, Arthur, maybe I don't know who we blame. G, forgive you for those desires or something in your environment that has me you have them. Whoever is to blame beyond the power of this court."

"You have violated the laws, you have had your trial, and I am convinced punishment is just and proper. Airtight! I wish, may God have mercy on you soul!"

A State Supreme Court review is automatic with a death sentence in Florida.

Waiting on Death Row in the State Penitentiary at Raiford, Goode has written dozens of letters to the judge, to the state attorney, to the governor. None express remorse. All beg for execution, some he writes he has murdered several children for thrills and would kill again freed.

"I have absolutely no remorse whatsoever for any of the boys I murdered their parents either," said one letter to the governor. "I don't desire to change my mind committing my dire sexual murders on little boys. I am fully satisfied now knowing their (sic) dead because I, A.F.G.III, murdered them for fun!"

"I rejoice every time I hear a little boy getting murdered! I have the desire to continue doing my thing if I could."

A Wild Week For Rapists In Tacoma

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Henning, an 18-year-old soldier who was AWOL from Fort Lewis.

Justice and Marr were charged with first degree murder, rape and burglary. Henning was charged only with burglary.

Allegedly, Henning told the officers that he had met Justice and Marr and they told him that they planned to burglarize a house that was loaded with loot. Henning went along only as a lookout.

"I saw the woman go into the house while they were carrying out the stuff," Henning was quoted as saying. "I gave them the signal but they didn't come out. I didn't know until afterward that they

DISCOVER
AMERICA

Arthur Code: (From SP Times files)

4/5/84 - Skene: Quotes AFG in press conference:

"I know I will never be a free person again, & I know that I will never be able to have sex w/ any young boys." -
(so wished to be executed)

"I consider myself competitor for \$ execution.
I'm not completely comp. No one's completely comp. I am aware what I've done is wrong."

Sed Dugger: "Let's face it, A.G. is not going to get much sympathy."

Held his final press conference in the canteen, held w/ travel posters. He carried a packet of papers, inc. a picture of Jesus, news clippings abt missing children, & a newspaper photo of Ricky Schroder.

"I am proud of the fact I murdered those two boys because of society being prejudiced against me. ... My main goal is child molesting, pedophilia, having sex w/ boys 7 to 14 years old."

Stane (exit) \$1/84

Judge Wm Terrill Hodges called Baker suit
"trivial" and an "abuse" of the writ →
SH found Baker bec. Parker Thomson one
of the state's top mental-health care ppl...

"I believe the Lord understands my enjoying
doing sxt w/ children."

Requested lunch meal of: Sicilian steak w/ gravy,
battered broccoli, cole slaw, corn on the cob,
battered cauliflower, 2 pts of milk,
1/2 gal Breyers ice cream, drs choc-clip
cookies... "I would like to invite some
young boys in for ice cream."

Burger: "an absurd list... Will pick reasonable
items out of that. I'll give him his ice
cream. It may not be Breyers, but he'll
have ice cream."

Trade warrant his second - signed 3/7/84

11th Cir. vacates death sentences bec. Shearer
considered rehabilitation & said: "There are
certain cases & certain times when we can
no longer help, we can no longer rehabilitate...
all we can do is exterminate."

State persuaded USSC to reinstate, arguing that
his statement was "telling philosophically" -
not explaining sentence... had already weighed
the egg limits...

Goode to FITD: "I love publicity. I want all
I can get" - 3/14/84 int.

#

3/18/77 Jory deliberated 26 minutes before receiving death...
AFG told them: "I am guilty & I want to
die."

Jory took 2 1/2 hours the day before to decide
guilt - during trial, Goode interrupted
proceeding to announce his guilt & desire
to die... St. Pete Times headline: "He's
right, he's guilty." (3/18/77)

3/21/77 - John Sheerer sentences: "We can no longer
help or rehabilitate A.G. All we can do
is extrajudicially kill. He will never again kill,
murder or harm another human being."

#

AFG wrote 11 letters to Askew demanding
execution: "as soon as possible to be
right w/ the Lord Jesus and let him take
care of me."

Write Graham: "I love committing cruel murder on
little boys after sexually molesting them for 10."

But before his Mar. 1, '82 execution date, he said:
"I never wanted to be executed."

1st stay: 2/28/82...

? Goodie was first since Spelke to request
a press conference - that after spending
numerous hours w/ individual reporters...

#

Ken White's petition got more than 1,500 sigs
in May of '83: "I am not a blood-thirsty
villante. But A.G. is an imperfect creation.
He kills a little boy & he shall die for that."

#

USSC ~~Over~~ reversed 11th Cir. 7-2, saying
court failed to give proper deference
to the FSC's ruling on aqqs/units

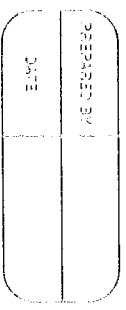
#

Wiedinger quoted 3/83 saying "AFG has
written gov's office a couple of letters
a week over the last 5 years...
also harassing 11th Cir. demanding
the court get out of his way..."

Reasons for wanting to die, need to Wiedinger:

" One time, he complained that his television
set wouldn't work. Another time, he said the
guards on DR hated him and harassed
him. One time, he complained that there
were no windows and he wasn't getting
enough air."

"Everybody ignores my need to be executed."



12/15/77 - Prison confirms it is covering AFG's mail...
#

At trial, 3/16/77, AFG allowed to hold a
press conference during trial to
say "I am guilty" & "I want to prove to
everybody how and why I did it." -

Shover: "He has the same right to freedom of speech
as any one else."

AFG "assisted his atty in questioning witnesses..."
quitting Cape Coral Detention at the murder
scene...

LOVE picketed the Pinellas County Courthouse 3/1/82
after Goode execution was stayed...
He ppl carried signs & passed petitions -
brought their children...

When AFG & Elmo Patricia Somier of La. exec'd
4/4/84, first time 2 on same day...

NAME <u>GOODE, Arthur Frederick III</u>		PLACE - CITY OR COUNTY <u>Lee County</u>		DOB & MEANS <u>5-1-1961</u>
DOB OR AGE <u>20</u>	RACE <u>White</u>	OCCUPATION <u>Escaped mental patient.</u>	RESIDENCE <u>Matlacha, Fla. (Formerly Prince Georges Co., Md.)</u>	EDUCATION <u>5th grade dropout.</u>
RECORD From STARTLING DETECTIVE: Chief White had obtained Goode's history from the Prince Georges (Md) Police. Now almost 20, Goode had first been arrested when he was 18 on charges of assault and bat-				
CRIME <u>Murder</u>	DATE <u>March 5, 1976</u>	OTHER TRYP of a 10-year-old boy in July, 1972... He had been arrested a number of times for sex offenses. In 1973, he		
VICTIM <u>Jason Steele VerDow</u>		AGE <u>10</u>	RACE <u>White</u>	METHOD <u>Beaten and strangled</u>
MOTIVE <u>Sexual assault (anal)</u>				

SYNOPSIS

From original appeal report: "On the morning of 3-5-1976, a 10-year-old child, whom we shall refer to as 'Jason', waited for a school bus with other children near his home. A young man, identified by the children as defendant, approached them and began a conversation. Defendant eventually left the bus stop with Jason and walked into a wooded area. A search began when Jason failed to return from school. The next day Jason's nude and beaten body, almost concealed under walnut fronds, was found in the woods near Jason's home. Jason suffered an anal sexual assault before his death. The defendant went to Maryland where he had previously escaped from a mental hospital. In Maryland, he kidnapped two young boys and killed one of them in Virginia. Defendant admitted to the survivor that he had murdered Jason. He was tried in Virginia and convicted of murder, receiving a life sentence. Defendant gave a statement in which he demanded his return to Florida so that he could be convicted of Jason's murder and executed. Upon his return to Florida, defendant gave a full confession to the state attorney. At his trial he again gave a detailed confession and expressed a desire to be convicted and executed. Prior to the trial defendant was represented by privately retained counsel. A motion suggesting insanity was filed and heard by the court. Four psychiatrists testified. All of them agreed that defendant suffered from a mental disorder, but only one concluded he was incompetent to stand trial or assist in his defense. (Dr. testifying he was unable to stand trial was George W. Barnard; the other three were Drs. Lin Myo Than, Robert J. Wald, and Mordecai Haber.)...After this (sanity) hearing, the defendant discharged his privately retained counsel and asserted his right to represent himself...The court then discharged the privately retained counsel and relieved him of all further responsibility except to fully advise and assist court appointed counsel in turning over the evidence, files, information, theories of defense and anything else that would be of assistance to the court appointed counsel...The defendant also testified and stated that the deceased went with him voluntarily. He stated, 'I am extremely proud of ~~myself~~ myself knowing that I murdered the victim for the fun of it, so to speak.' 'Also I had absolutely no feeling of remorse toward the victim.'

*pleaded guilty to such charges, and, as condition of parole on a five-year sentence, voluntarily entered the Spring Grove, Md., Medical Hospital at Catonsville, a Baltimore suburb. Also from STARTLING DETECTIVE, May, 1978: "...Freddie Goode had a psychiatric history dating back to the time he was five. He had been in the Grove Spring Mental Hospital several times. At 12 he had been the victim of sodomy by an older youth. Since the age of 14 he had been molesting younger boys. He threatened them with 'a razor, knife, piece of glass,' after taking them into a secluded wooden area. The first time he was hospitalized was after he had been caught in his room with a child. He was violence prone, anti-social and had a predilection for pedophilia and sadism. While at the hospital he had sexually assaulted other patients several times." Had escaped from hospital on February 10, 1976, arriving ~~XXXXXX~~ at Port Myers, Fla., on Feb. 11. After return to Maryland following VerDow murder, had abducted a 10-year-old school boy from Maryland who remained with him until arrest. Had then, on March 20, abducted 11-year-old Kenneth Allen Dawson from Falls Church, Va., and raped and murdered him. When arrested, the newsboy told police he had witnessed the rape and killing. Dawson had also been raped and strangled (Goode led police to body.) "A Virginia jury found Goode guilty of first degree murder in August, 1976" - life imprisonment.

TRIAL

(Over)

APPEALS

365 SOUTHERN (2) 381; ~~XXXX~~ Cert. den. 99 SUPREME COURT 2419; 403 SOUTHERN (2) 931.

LAST WORDS

EXECUTION

SOURCE

STARTLING DETECTIVE MAGAZINE, May, 1978, page 40 "Child Slayer Begs to be Executed!"
ALSO May, 1972, page 2. - FLORIDA BOOK AND MAGAZINE EXCERPTS.

CASE BRIEF

Re: Goode, Arthur F., III, DOC# 058781
DOB: 3-28-54

I. LEGAL DATA:

3-5-76 - Jason Verdow, an 8-year-old schoolboy, was lured from a school bus stop into the woods near his house, was repeatedly sexually abused, and strangled to death.

3-6-76 - About 8:00 a.m., victim's body was discovered in the woods.

10-10-76 - Arthur Goode gave a taped confession of this offense.

10-11-76 - Grand Jury, Lee County, indicted subject for Murder in the First Degree.

3-15-77 - Trial by jury commenced in the Circuit Court, Lee County, before the Honorable John H. Shearer, Jr. State represented by Joseph P. D'Alessandro, State Attorney, and Darryl Casanueva, Assistant State Attorney. Defense represented by Joseph A. Simpson and Robert K. Good, Assistant Public Defenders.

3-17-79 - Jury returned verdict of guilty of Murder in the First Degree.

3-17-79 - Court adjudged subject guilty of Murder in the First Degree.

3-18-79 - Jury advised and recommended that the death penalty be imposed.

3-22-79 - Court imposed the death penalty.

II. CIRCUMSTANCES OF OFFENSE:

On 3-5-70, just before 8:00 a.m., a group of children were waiting for their school bus near their house. Subject approached the group and asked each child his or her name. He then lured Jason Verdow, 8 years old, into the woods. The other children got on the school bus when it arrived and did not report the incident.

Once in the woods, subject forced the child to disrobe, after which he was repeatedly abused sexually. Finally subject strangled him to death.

The trial transcript is not clear under what circumstances subject was taken into custody.

At his trial, the Court allowed him to assist in his defense. Over the strenuous objections of his counsel, subject took the stand and gave a detailed report of how he lured the child into the woods, abused him and killed him, then hid the body in a palmetto patch.

III. CODEFENDANTS:

None

(over-enlarged)

Goode enjoyed his role of fiend

By FRANK DAVIES
Herald Staff Writer

Arthur Goode relished his role as every parent's worst nightmare — from the first day of his trial to the last day of his life.

On the eve of his execution, the murderous child molester again demonstrated his ability to provoke outrage and disgust, as he told re-

porters he was proud he had tortured and killed two young boys.

His performance should have surprised no one who witnessed his trial in March 1977. For four days, Goode turned a staid Fort Myers courtroom into shock theater, after Lee County Circuit Judge John Shearer allowed the then-23-year-old former mental patient to stage

his own defense with the advice of an appointed attorney.

Strutting around the courtroom, Goode crossexamined psychiatrists about his sanity, described in grisly detail how he killed nine-year-old Jason VerDow and mused about how he wanted to experiment with cannibalism. After his conviction, he begged for his own execution and sternly lectured the jurors about their responsibility to protect their children "from cold-blooded murderers like me."

At press conferences during breaks in the trial, Goode said he had written the victim's parents "almost daily for two months," advising them to teach children not to talk to strangers.

Shearer, now in private practice in Lee County, acknowledged at the trial that he received "a great deal of scorn from my brothers on the bench and the bar" for allowing Goode to conduct his own defense. Shearer told the jurors that the case "possibly demanded more from you than from any jury to date."

After the trial, two jurors said they had felt physically ill during Goode's summation. One day after convicting Goode, the jurors took 20 minutes to recommend the death penalty.

Sentencing the murderer to death, Shearer said: "We can no longer help or rehabilitate Arthur Goode. All we can do is extinguish him. He will never again kill, maim or harm another human being."

The focal point of the trial was the legal and psychiatric battle over Goode's sanity. At one bench conference, Shearer told him, "I don't have the intelligence to tell you what makes you tick — I just don't."

A battery of psychiatrists and lawyers tried. While Goode urged that he was sane and should be put to death, his appointed attorney used an insanity defense and pleaded for life: "He's a little man who's trying to be self-important, and that's why he's trying to shock you."

Three psychiatrists testified that Goode knew right from wrong at the time of the crime — and that finding has been upheld by several courts — but they disagreed about the meaning and sincerity of

Victim's father forgives son's doomed murderer

SONNIER / From 1A

said, "I feel fine. I'm just a witness."

The fathers stood with their arms crossed, remaining expressionless during the execution, which took about one minute.

"Mr. LeBlanc, I can understand the way you feel," Sonnier said in his final statement in the death chamber. "I have no hatred in my heart. As I leave this world, I ask God to forgive my brother for what he has done, and me for what I have done. I ask to have your forgiveness."

LeBlanc nodded and said, "Yes."
Bourque made no comment.

As Sonnier was strapped into the electric chair at 12:03 a.m., he looked at Sister Helen Prejean, his spiritual adviser and a witness, and said, "I love you." She responded, "I love you, too."

A white puff of smoke rose in the death chamber as one of a series of electrical shocks shook Sonnier and an electrode on his left leg caused a large blister. He was pronounced dead at 12:15 a.m.

Sonnier and his younger brother, Eddie, then 17, abducted the teenagers, drove them to a remote area, raped Bourque while her fiance was handcuffed to a tree and then shot the teenagers, investigators said.

Elmo was convicted of shooting the victims and was sentenced to die. Eddie was given a life prison sentence. Defense attorney William Quigley asked for a stay based on Eddie Sonnier's claim that he pulled the trigger.

A state district judge, a federal district judge and the Louisiana Supreme Court rejected the argument Wednesday as did the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans and the Supreme Court. Gov. Edwin Edwards declined to intervene.

Sonnier, who was served steak for his final meal, spent the day "in pretty good spirits" and seemed "resigned to the fact" he was going to die, said Warden Ross Maggio.

It was the state's third execution in four months. Louisiana electrocuted Robert Wayne Williams in December and Johnny Taylor Jr. Feb. 29.

A second execution took place shortly after 7 a.m. in Starke, Fla., where Arthur Frederick Goode III was electrocuted