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16 Pages

Victims describe murder plot, lurid sexual details

By Ed Galucki

The words "Let me tell you about that man..." ended with Charles A. "Jack" Walls III, 51, of Lonoke standing convicted in Lonoke County Circuit Court of raping six boys. Each of the victims was a former member of the Boy Scout troop Walls had led.

A father's persistence and a son's frustration combined in late July 1997 to bring years of sex abuse to an end.

"He'd lost interest in everything, but I kept after him," the father testified about his son. "When I asked him how he could throw away everything he and Jack had done on his Eagle scout work, he turned to me and said, 'Let me tell you about that man...'"

Thursday, Circuit Chancery Judge Lance Hanshaw heard the testimonies of victims and their families during the penalty phase of Walls' sentencing. On Jan. 6 Walls pled guilty to five counts of rape; on Jan. 8 he pled "no contest" to a sixth charge. After the no contest plea, Hanshaw handed down a sixth guilty finding.

YELLOW RIBBONS

Family and friends of the victims, all wearing yellow ribbons in support of the victims, packed the court gallery to listen to the testimonies. All but one victim took turns on the witness stand. The father of one of

the victims delivered his son's written statement to Hanshaw.

Two victims have ended up in the Arkansas Department of Corrections on other charges. One has served his time and been released. The other, Heath Stocks, is serving three consecutive life sentences for the shooting deaths of his father, mother and sister.

Hanshaw warned at the beginning of the proceedings that outbursts would not be tolerated, and on-lookers maintained a quiet decorum. But a shocked murmur rippled through the crowd when Stocks testified that Walls had directed the shooting.

Another victim told of being involved with a plot to kill Cledis and Doug Hogan. In 1993, the Hogans brought charges of third degree assault and contributing to the delinquency of a minor against Walls, who was found innocent in Carlisle Municipal Court.

Along with death plots, former members of the Boy Scout troop led by Walls told of sex, alcohol, marijuana, pornographic material, and gun and explosives training.

LOVE-HATE

Another common thread in the testimonies was a love-hate type of relationship. "Did I like him [Walls]? Yes," one responded. "But I was afraid of him, too. He said he'd kill me if I told what was going

on."

Yet another said he "had a great time at Jack's — when nothing sexual was involved." Three-wheelers, motorcycles and hunting were made available to those who "hung-out" at Walls' shop or went on camping trips to his farm, victims recounted.

Stocks was present to tell of his relationship with Walls.

Stocks, 21, said he was 11 or 12 years old the first time he was raped by Walls. The relationship continued to the time of his arrest in 1997 for the shootings of his family, he stated.

Stocks' testimony of camp outs led by Walls told of sex, alcohol and use of weapons. Other training included the use of guns and how to kill people.

"[Walls] said I had to be prepared to kill people," Stocks retold. "He told us if you have a problem — kill it."



In earlier testimony, Annie Mae Harris, mother of the late Barbara Stocks (Heath Stocks' mother), told of her daughter's discovery of Walls and Heath Stocks in bed together sometime before the shootings. Afterward, Barbara Stocks sought the counsel of the Rev. Robert Marble, pastor of Concord United Methodist Church at Furrow.

Heath Stocks said his mother confronted him shortly after Christmas in 1996 about his relationship with Walls. Afterward, he said, he told Walls of his mother's knowledge.

TAKE CARE OF PROBLEM

"What did Jack Walls tell you to do?" Special Prosecutor Betty Dickey asked.

Pausing slightly, Stocks replied, "Take care of the problem."

Dickey pressed for more detail, "What does that mean?"

"If you have a problem — kill it," Stocks said.

Defense co-counsel Gus Allen produced a letter written to Walls by Stocks. The letter was written in March 1997 while Stocks was awaiting trial.

Stocks said the letter was to ask what Walls planned to do with "our guns." At Allen's request, Stocks read the letter aloud.

In the letter, Stocks referred to Walls as "old friend," and said he had no one else to turn to.

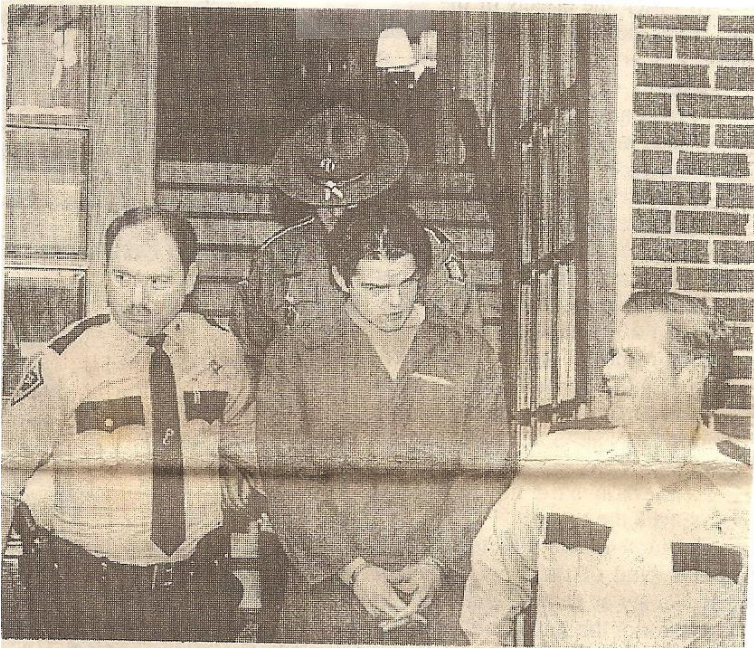
Allen asked how Stocks now felt about Walls. "Words cannot describe how I feel now. I still love Jack, at least part of me does. Part of me is part of him," Stocks replied.

CONFIDENTIALITY

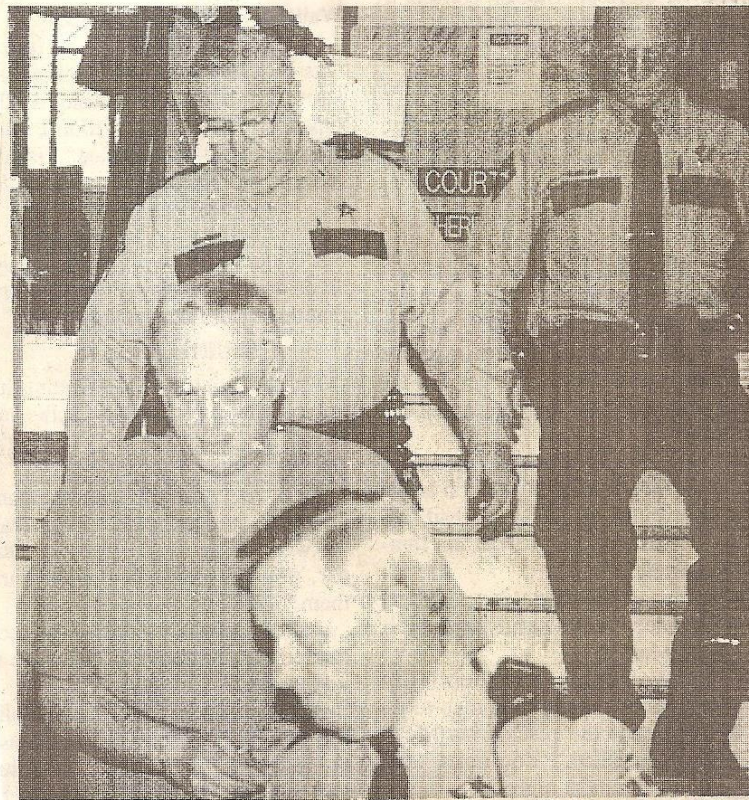
Rev. Marble was subpoenaed by

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HEATH STOCKS is taken from the Lonoke County Courthouse after telling of the effect Walls had on his life.



TESTIMONY GIVEN: Heath Stocks leaves Lonoke County Circuit Court after testifying during the penalty phase for the sentencing of Charles A. "Jack" Walls on six counts of rape.



Photos by Mark Buffak
Sheriff's deputies escort Walls from penalty hearing on Thursday.

Hearing

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Dickey to testify, though against his will. "Until 5:15 last night, all I was going to do was show up. To do otherwise would have been contempt of court," he told this newspaper's reporter after the hearing. The decision to testify came after conferring with his bishop, he said.

That decision had been a difficult one, Marble said, and had hinged heavily on Heath Stocks' consent. A letter giving that consent had been written Jan. 15, 1998.

"Confidentiality of what you tell your pastor is all important, and sometimes keeping it isn't popular. People have to know that they can trust their pastor," he explained.

In his testimony, Marble said Barbara Stocks had spoken to him of the relationship between Heath Stocks and Walls just before Christmas 1996. On Jan. 8, 1997, she requested to speak with him again about Heath. "But we never had the chance, and nine days later she was dead."

Later, in jail after the shootings and while awaiting evaluation at the state hospital, Heath Stocks had said that Walls told him to kill his family, Marble said.

In cross examination, Hubert Alexander, Walls' attorney, challenged Marble.

"Do you think confidentiality goes to allowing a young man to go to prison for the rest of his life?" Alexander asked. "You must have trouble sleeping at night."

MITIGATION

To soften the effects of the years of rapes, defense co-counsel Allen asked Larry P. Henderson, a counseling expert for the prosecution, read an excerpt from a study published in 1997 in *The Journal of Sex Research*.

The excerpt stated that in the general population "[child sex abuse] is not associated with pervasive harm, and that harm, when it occurs, is not typically intense...that [compared to females] a substantially lower proportion of males report negative effects..., and, no causal link between CSA and later psychological maladjustment in the general population cannot be safely made..."

Henderson said he could not agree with the excerpt.

Contacted later by telephone, Bruce Rind of the Department of Psychology at Temple University, a co-author of the study, said applying the study to an individual case may not be valid.

"Read the last line of the abstract," he said, "this was an analysis of the general population." There are too many factors to consider for individual cases, he explained.

The last line in the abstract warns that "When CSA is accompanied by factors such as force or close familial ties, it has the potential to produce significant harm."

PARENTS BITTER

Perhaps the most bitter testimony of betrayal was presented by parents of the victims. "This hurt us badly," a father said. "You trust a man and he does this. I won't be trusting many people, especially when it comes to my kids."

Another father testified saying, "I don't think anyone can tell the damage that's been done. My son has lost his childhood. We lost five years of his life; that can never be replaced."

"Jack Walls' life has been a lie. I never want to see him in society again — ever!" he said in closing his testimony.

A mother's testimony related special pain and frustration. "I handed my boys over to him time and time again. My children were a gift from God, and [Walls] did this to them," she said with a quivering, cracking voice.

Years of fruitless efforts to deal with behavioral problems, and the mystery of why many times friends of the boys never returned, were finally explained in July 1997, she said. "I had thought something was wrong with us," she said.

After she learned of the abuse, she said she confronted Walls. "I asked him, 'Jack, why my boys?'"

Pausing as if to gather strength, she continued, "'I like the outdoorsy kind,' that's what he told me."

Initial willingness for Walls to "get help," changed as she learned the extent of what he had done. "There are many, many more [victims]," she said.

NOT NORMAL TEENS

During questioning, parents noted most of the changes in their sons came around the time they joined the Boy Scout troop led by Walls. However, most believed they were experiencing the rebelliousness of

adolescence, though particularly severe.

"He just stopped talking to us, any news of school came from the teachers," one mother related. A father told of a son who could not be in the same room as his mother "for more than five minutes" without flying into a rage.

One victim, now 23, told of "crossing over" from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts, and being raped the evening of the ceremony.

Another said he was introduced to alcohol by Walls. Though he was able to cut the association with Walls, he continued to drink.

"I had two DWIs by the time I was 18," he recounted. "I drank because I felt guilty. I thought [the rapes] were my fault. I didn't think it happened to anyone else." Having moved from the area, he said, he did not hear of the Hogan trial.

"Just being able to talk about it has lifted a burden off me," he said. "Knowing other people knew, and that there were others, helped me."

MURDER PLOT

Another victim told of being involved with a plot to kill Cledis and Doug Hogan after they brought charges against Walls in 1993.

"We were going to use stun guns on them," he recounted. "After that, we were going to put them in their car, pour gasoline in it, and burn them."

Asked why the plan was not carried out, he replied, "Because it was wrong."

Stocks in his testimony said Walls had provided lists containing license numbers of the Hogans' vehicles and places frequented by Doug Hogan. Various means considered for the killing were cutting brake lines on their vehicles; shooting, and stunning then burning the Hogans.

For another parent, finally getting the matter into the open was important. "It's almost a relief to find this out," he said. "Now we can deal with our problems."