

COLLETON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION



INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

CONFIDENTIAL

INVESTIGATOR:	Captain J.W. Chapman
CASE NUMBER:	21-2008
INC. DATE:	06/07/2021
INC. TYPE:	Double Homicide
INC. LOC:	4147 Moselle Road, Islandton, SC 29929
SUBJECT:	Unknown
VICTIM:	Margaret Murdaugh / Paul Murdaugh

32°56'44"N 80°59'58"W, 79 degrees, 89% humidity, winds 5 mph/12 mph gusts S, light rain

On June 7, 2021, at 2207 hours, I heard the Colleton County Dispatch Center giving out a call of two people shot at 4147 Moselle Road in the Islandton area of Colleton County, SC. I immediately sent notification out to the CCSO Detectives. At 2219 hours I checked "on-duty" and in-route to the call. While in route, I was advised by Sheriff Hill that the caller was Alec Murdaugh and the deceased parties were reported as his family members. Sheriff Hill stated that once we assessed the scene that he would likely call SLED for assistance. The first unit (Sergeant Daniel Greene – CCSO) arrived on scene around 2226 hours. I contacted Sgt Greene via radio and expressed that I wanted a secure crime scene with only essential personnel. I arrived on scene around 2237 hours.

Initial Observations:

I turned on a dirt driveway with a mailbox marked "4147." Approximately 375 feet down, the driveway split and circled a large shed. Road Patrol had already taped off the scene and were controlling the entry points. The inner perimeter was empty of individuals and personnel with the exception of CCSO units (Sgt Greene, Deputy Buford McDowell, Deputy William Pruitt). CCFR Chief Barry McRoy had already done a visual assessment and requested the Coroner. Sgt Greene advised that he had a camouflage shotgun secured in his patrol vehicle that was surrendered by the caller upon Greene's arrival. It was starting to rain and I advised Lieutenant David Long (CCSO) to pick up a tent on the way to the scene.

The body of an adult male was observed face down in the open doorway to a feed room that was positioned at the end of a long run of dog kennels. The male, identified by the caller as Paul Murdaugh. The male's feet were just inside the plane of the door with the remainder of the body stretched out the door, across a small concrete sidewalk and onto the gravel driveway. The male was covered by a pink sheet placed there by CCFR personnel. The sheet was raised briefly for the purpose of determining if a firearm was visible on or near the body. Paul had on a t-shirt, shorts and shoes. His hands were underneath his body. Paul had a traumatic open wound to the head and the majority of Paul's brain was lying on the ground to his left side. There were also pieces of his skull cap on the ground. Additionally, there was high-velocity blood splatter on the upper half of the open door and ceiling area just inside the doorway. 4 to 5 holes were also visible in the window and the opposite end of the feed room that appeared to be new damage. An Apple iPhone was lying on top of Paul's body. The phone did not appear to have any blood on it and the screen was blank.

The body of an adult female was observed faced down near the edge of a large covered shed. Her head was pointed toward the direction of the dog kennels and she was approximately 30 feet from Paul's body. She was identified by the caller as Maggie Murdaugh. Maggie was wearing a blue patterned romper and shoes. She too had a traumatic head injury, along with what appeared to be gunshot wounds to the upper right back, lower left back and right leg. There was a small piece of brain matter a few feet from her head and two large clumps of hair on her right side. CCFR had also placed a pink sheet over Maggie's body.

Next to Maggie's body and strewn along the gravel driveway between the Maggie and Paul were multiple large caliber rifle casings. With no weapon visible, evidence supporting that both victims were shot and/or killed by gunfire and confirmation from caller Alec Murdaugh that the deceased were his family, Sheriff Hill made the official call to SLED for assistance. Detective Laura Rutland (CCSO) was re-routed and instructed to obtain a search warrant for the location. Lieutenant Long arrived on scene and a tent was placed over Maggie's body to preserve evidence from the rain. Deputy Pruitt maintained a crime scene log while other deputies assisted with holding the crime scene perimeter.

Once SLED personnel arrived on scene, they were briefed on the circumstances and the fact that the search warrant process was already underway. Detective Rutland arrived at the scene with a signed search warrant prior to the arrival of SLED Crime Scene Units. Detective Rutland was assigned as a CCSO liaison to assist SLED in the investigation. A portion of the 911 call was played for the Agents to hear and Rutland and S/A David Owens then conducted an interview of Alex Murdaugh. The interview was conducted inside S/A Owen's vehicle due to the rain.

When CSU personnel arrived, Detective Rutland and I assisted in processing the scene. A shotgun taken from Alex by responding Deputies was turned over to CSU technicians. With Paul's body, I observed at least two gunshot wounds. Blood patterns on the wall of the feed shed and projectile trajectory indicated that Paul was standing when he sustained both shots. One trajectory path suggested an upward pattern and one suggested straight through the feed room and exiting through a rear window in a tight group. Shot was located in pine trees along the rear of the shed. Paul's phone was lying on top of his buttocks and there was no signs of a weapon around the body or shed. Two spent 12 gauge shell casings were located near the body.

Near Paul was an indentation in the ground, characteristic of a projectile impact. Eventually, a rifle projectile was located in the dirt of the impression. Multiple .300 blackout spent casings were located between Paul's body and Maggie's body. There were also several near and underneath Maggie's body. Maggie appeared to have several gunshot wounds, including one to a lower leg and one to the back of the head area. At least one impact from a rifle round was found in the side wall of an enclosed barn adjacent to the bodies and at least one rifle round was dug out of a nearby dog

house. There was a clear set of tire impressions passing underneath the covered portion of the barn towards the road. These tracks were later determined to belong to a caretaker that was feeding the dogs earlier in the day. On the opposite side of the enclosed barn was a pattern of small shoe impressions, characteristic of flats or flip flops. The impressions appear to have been “pacing” the barn wall. Paul’s truck was parked 40-60 yards away, adjacent to a separate tractor shed. Maggie’s vehicle was not observed at the scene and Alex was driving his Chevrolet Suburban.

Scene integrity was maintained well into the daylight hours as CSU technicians processed and was never compromised. The scene was eventually released by SLED and CCSO personnel were cleared.

Items of evidence mentioned in this report were based on visual observations only. SLED CSU collected all evidence and CCSO Detectives, including myself, merely assisted. Exact numbers, descriptions, measurements and/or identifications of potential evidence should be deducted from SLED CSU reports only.