

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

Date: November 6, 1996  
 Edition: The Journal-Patriot,  
 North Wilkesboro, NC

Title: "Victim in Ricky Bright  
 case testifies as trial  
 moves quickly"

Character: 7A-CE-75960  
 or 88A-CE-75569 (Top Ten  
 Classification: Fugitive)  
 Submitting Office: Charlotte

Indexing:

## Victim in Ricky Bright case testifies as trial moves quickly

By **CHUCK HUBBARD**

The rape and kidnapping trial of Ricky Allen Bright in Wilkes Superior Court has proceeded quickly since jury selection was completed Tuesday morning.

The state, represented by District Attorney Randy Lyon, contends that Bright, 42, kidnapped a 9-year-old Mountain View girl from a mobile home on the DAV Road and sexually assaulted her near Charleston, W.Va., in the early morning hours of Oct. 8, 1995.

Bright was captured at a motel in Nashville, Tenn., by FBI agents on Jan. 7.

Bright, who has a previous conviction on his record for sexually assaulting a young Gastonia girl, is charged with multiple counts of first-degree rape, first-degree sexual offense, first-degree kidnapping and first-de-

gree burglary.

He is facing a possible sentence of a total of more than 200 years if convicted on all charges.

The girl, now 10, testified quietly Tuesday afternoon that he assaulted her in the back seat of a gray Chevrolet Cavalier. She said Bright sexually assaulted her with the handle of an umbrella and raped her vaginally and anally, also forcing her to perform oral sex on him.

The child said she was asleep when she was kidnapped and awoke in the front seat of Bright's car with duct tape across her mouth.

She testified that Bright pulled her panties off and spanked her 15 to 20 times on her bottom and slapped her once in the mouth.

She said Bright, who told her to call him "daddy," also

threatened to sexually assault her with a flashlight.

During the assault, "he told me if I wanted him to take his private (part) out of my private, I'd better call him daddy."

The little girl, who was found walking home by her mother after being released at Mountain View Elementary School, said the sexual assault left her with blood on her dress and legs.

Bright released her only after she agreed to tell authorities that her father had sexually abused her, she said. He told her that he would kill her and cut off her head with a saw if she told anyone that he had done it, the child testified.

The incident occurred over about an 11-hour period, testi-

(Continued On Page 16)



# Victim, 10, in Bright case testifies in court

(Continued From Page 1)

mony showed.

Bright, wearing a pink dress shirt, blue jeans, tennis shoes and wire-rim glasses, showed no emotion and occasionally made notes as the girl testified.

He is being defended by attorney William F. Brooks of Wilkesboro.

Testimony showed that Bright had gotten to know the child's family while living in a nearby mobile home.

He and that family all attended Bible Believers Baptist Church. The little girl's mother testified that Bright once took the girl and her three brothers to church and that he had paid them to clean up his yard.

She testified that her daughter, when located after the assault, said, "Ricky Bright done this to me."

On the night of Oct. 7, Bright had called the Wilkes Sheriff's Department to report that Joey Carrico and the girl's older brother, also a minor, had broken into his home, the mother said.

After reporting the incident, Bright, who was intoxicated from beer, came to the nearby mobile home of Carrico's girlfriend where the family was staying that night and threatened to beat up the child's brother.

The girl yelled at Bright and

told him to leave, the mother said.

The kidnapping occurred sometime after 3 a.m., when her mother went to bed, testimony showed.

The girl, after being found, was taken to Wilkes Regional Medical Center, where she was examined by Dr. Marshall Odum in the emergency room. Odum, who noted that the girl had been sexually abused, testified that his examination was limited because the child was in extreme pain.

Dr. Thomas Frazer, a North Wilkesboro family doctor, was notified of the situation and examined her the next day.

He noted that both the girl's vagina and anus were torn and scraped and that she had a number of bruises on her buttocks, legs, pelvis and thighs.

Frazier, who showed the jury members photos of the injuries, said he found an adult pubic hair inside the girl.

Sources close to the investigation have said this is a key piece of evidence.

The mother testified that Bright showed up at another friend's mobile home where they were staying the next day and denied sexually assaulting the child. He said that if she believed he had done it he would turn himself in to the

authorities. This was the last time he was seen until his arrest.

This morning, Deputy Mike Farrington of the Wilkes Sheriff's Department testified that a search of Bright's trailer turned up a pair of young girl's panties near a washing machine, with several bottles of cleaning solution found in the yard.

Newspaper clippings were located in a photo album in Bright's trailer showing photos of 9 and 6-year-old girls in beauty pageants, including one from the town of Belmont, not far from Gastonia, Farrington said. A Bible was also found containing a photo of a young child, he said.

The deputy testified that he contacted FBI Special Agent Martin D. Rearden of Charlotte.

Rearden testified that he arranged for surveillance to be done on the home of Bright's mother in Charleston, W.Va.

Reader also said he contacted two nationally-syndicated television programs, America's Most Wanted and Unsolved Mysteries. The FBI, after the third airing of the Bright case on America's Most Wanted, received information that he was working as a drummer in a lounge in Nashville, Tenn.

Trooper Jimmy Hester of the Tennessee Highway Patrol tes-

tified that Bright was located at the Continental Inn on Murfreesboro Road. Hester and FBI agents found him during an ice storm Jan. 7 after searching 17 parking lots.

FBI Agent J. Steven Dickey said he received the information about Bright on Jan. 6 and that the search for him was carried out by the FBI's Violent Crime Task Force.

They surrounded the motel and staged a fake accident by moving one of their vehicles up against Bright's Chevrolet.

Bright was notified that his car had been in a parking lot accident and was arrested when he came out of the motel room.

Identification found in his wallet showed him to be Eric Finninger, a name the FBI had been aware he'd been using, Dickey said.

Bright's appearance was very different than the short, brown hair, clean-cut appearance he has in court, the agent said. He was wearing a hairpiece and contact lenses instead of glasses.

He said that at first they weren't sure it was him.

Dickey said that on the way to FBI headquarters, he asked Bright if he knew he'd been on America's Most Wanted. He said the man replied, "That's not the first time."