

U. S. Department of Justice

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44
940 SUB A

FEDERAL BUREAU

of

INVESTIGATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
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Transfer-Call 421

From THE BRUNSWICK NEWS, Brunswick, Ga.

October 10, 1944

- Mr. Tolson
- Mr. E. A. Tamm
- Mr. Clegg
- Mr. Coffey
- Mr. Glavin
- Mr. Ladd
- Mr. Nichols
- Mr. Rosen *✓*
- Mr. Tracy
- Mr. Egan
- Mr. Gurnea
- Mr. Harbo
- Mr. Hendon
- Mr. Jones
- Mr. Quinn Tamm
- Mr. Nease
- Miss Gandy

Hittelson

(Continued On Page 3)

POLICE CHIEF SAYS HE KILLED NEGRO IN SELF DEFENSE

Summit, Ga., Oct. 10. (AP)—Police Chief James M. Bohannon, charged by the U. S. Department of Justice with violation of the civil rights statutes in the killing of a negro soldier, contended today that he shot the soldier in self-defense.

An information charging Bohannon with civil rights violation in the death of Willie L. Davis was filed yesterday in U. S. District Court at Dublin, Ga., the Justice Department announced in Washington.

*File
for*

44-940-A

87 OCT 30 1944

To B

55 NOV 1 1944 *325*

**CHIEF BOHANNON
UNDER CHARGES**

**FEDERAL INFORMATION
FILED FOR DEATH OF
NEGRO SOLDIER**

A criminal information has been filed in United States District Court at Dublin, charging James Mitchell Bohannon, chief of police of Graymont-Summit, with a violation of the civil rights statutes in the killing of Willie L. Davis, a negro soldier, and the police chief will go on trial before Federal Judge A. B. Lovett of Savannah, at the next term of court in Dublin which opens January 15, it was stated in the office of Judge J. Saxton Daniel, United States district attorney here, today.

The information was filed against Mr. Bohannon by the Department of Justice following telephone communication between the department in Washington and the district attorney's office here about the case.

An Associated Press dispatch from Washington said Bohannon, on the night of July 3, 1943, killed the soldier near a negro road house. He was called there to restore order and after so doing and while still acting as chief of police "wilfully, unlawfully and without provocation shot and killed Davis with a pistol," said the A. P. dispatch quoting a Department of Justice release on the case.

Henry Durrence, assistant United States district attorney here, said that a coroner's jury exonerated the police chief afterward. The jury concluded Davis had come to his death from wounds received from a pistol in the hands of Bohannon who "was justifiable in his act," Mr. Durrence said.

The A. P. dispatch said the Department of Justice in Washington stated there was no action by state authorities after the coroner's inquest and the case was referred to it by the War Department for action.

The soldier was home on furlough from an army post where he was in a medical detachment.

Handwritten signature

file from

Mr. Tolson	.....
Mr. E. A. Tamm	.....
Mr. Clegg	.....
Mr. Coffey	.....
Mr. Glavin	.....
Mr. Ladd	.....
Mr. Nichols	.....
Mr. Rosen	.....
Mr. Tracy	.....
Mr. Mohr	.....
Mr. Carson	.....
Mr. Hendon	.....
Mr. Mumford	.....
Mr. Quinn Tamm	.....
Mr. Nease	.....
Miss Gandy	.....
Miss Kirtland

SAVANNAH EVENING PRESS
Savannah, Georgia

Dated *Oct. 10, 1944*

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44-940-A
NOT RECORDED
87 NOV 3 1944

T. B.

58 NOV 4 - 1944 824

Information Against Chief at Summit

WASHINGTON, Oct. 9 (AP).—The Justice Department said an information was filed today in United States District Court at Dublin, Ga., charging James M. Bohannon, chief of police of Summit, Ga., with a violation of the civil rights statutes in the killing of Willie L. Davis, a negro soldier.

The department's announcement said Bohannon on the night of July 3, 1943, was called to a negro road house on the outskirts of Summit to restore order, and after so doing and while still acting as chief of police, he "wilfully, unlawfully and without provocation shot and killed Davis with a pistol."

State authorities took no action after a coroner's inquest, the department said, adding the War Department referred the case to it for action.

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over*

SAVANNAH MORNING NEWS
Savannah, Georgia

Dated *Oct - 10 - 44*

Mr. Tolson
Mr. E. A. Tamm
Mr. Clegg	.....
Mr. Glavin	.....
Mr. Ladd	.....
Mr. Nichols	.....
Mr. Rosen	.....
Mr. Tracy	.....
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Carson
Mr. Hendon
Mr. Mumford
Mr. Jones
Mr. Quinn Tamm
Mr. Nease
Miss Gandy
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T. B.

SELF-DEFENSE PLEA MADE BY BOHANNON

SUMMITT POLICE CHIEF SHOT AND KILLED NEGRO SOLDIER

SUMMIT, Ga., Oct. 10 (AP).—Police Chief James M. Bohannon, charged by the U. S. Department of Justice with violation of the civil rights statutes in the killing of a negro soldier, contended today he shot the soldier in self-defense.

An information charging Bohannon with civil rights violation in the death of Willie L. Davis was filed yesterday in U. S. District Court at Dublin, Ga., the Justice Department announced in Washington.

The announcement said the killing

occurred July 3, 1943, after the police chief was called to a roadhouse on the outskirts of Summit to restore order. The information charged Bohannon shot the negro "wilfully unlawfully and without provocation."

Bohannon said late yesterday he had received no notice of the Justice Department's action. He said he killed a negro soldier named Davis while investigating a report of trouble at a roadhouse, but he had been cleared by a coroner's inquest.

"I felt a knife in his pocket and he hit me under the chin and tried to

take my gun," the police chief related. "He then went around the house and said he would get something that would make it possible for him to take the gun. When he came back I told him to stop and he came on. I shot him."

The Justice Department said it took the case at the request of the War Department after Georgia state authorities took no action.

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Mr. Tolson	
Mr. E. A. Tamm	
Mr. Clegg	<i>[Signature]</i>
Mr. Coffey	
Mr. Glavin	
Mr. Ladd	
Mr. Nichols	<i>[Signature]</i>
Mr. Rosen	
Mr. Tracy	
Mr. Mohr	
Mr. Carson	
Mr. Hendon	
Mr. Mumford	
Mr. Jones	<i>[Signature]</i>
Mr. Quinn Tamm	
Mr. Nease	
Miss Gandy	
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Kittelson	<i>[Signature]</i>

T. B.

SAVANNAH EVENING PRESS
Savannah, Georgia

Dated *Oct. 10, 1944*

Mr. Tolson _____
 Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
 Mr. Clegg _____
 Mr. Ladd _____
 Mr. Nichols _____
 Mr. Rosen _____
 Mr. Tracy _____
 Mr. Mohr _____
 Mr. Winterrowd _____
 Mr. Hendon _____
 Mr. [unclear] _____
 Mr. [unclear] _____
 Mr. [unclear] _____
 Miss Gandy _____
 Files _____

SUMMIT CHIEF FACES CHARGE

An information was filed yesterday in United States District Court here charging James M. Bohannon, chief of police at Summit, Ga., with a violation of the civil rights statutes in the killing of a Negro soldier at Summit.

The Justice Department in Washington, agents of which filed the action, said that Chief Bohannon on the night of July 3, 1943, was called to a Negro road house on the outskirts of Summit to restore order, and after so doing and while still acting as chief of police, he "wilfully and unlawfully and without provocation" shot and killed Willie L. Davis with a pistol.

State authorities took no action after a coroner's inquest, the Justice Department said, adding that the War Department referred the case to the Justice Department for action.

Chief Bohannon had not been taken into custody today, so far as could be learned here

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DUBLIN COURIER HERALD
 Dublin, Ga.
Oct - 10 - 44

To B.

- Mr. Tolson
- Mr. E. A. Tamm
- Mr. Clegg
- Mr. Coffey
- Mr. Glavin
- Mr. Ladd
- Mr. Nichols
- Mr. Rosen
- Mr. Tracy
- Mr. Mohr
- Mr. Carson
- Mr. Hendon
- Mr. Mumford
- Mr. Jones
- Mr. Quinn Tamm
- Mr. Nease
- Miss Gandy
- Files

W. J. R. [unclear]

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** Police Department
Summit, Ga*

Information Against Chief at Summit

WASHINGTON, Oct. 9 (AP).—The Justice Department said an information was filed today in United States District Court at Dublin, Ga., charging James M. Bohannon, chief of police of Summit, Ga., with a violation of the civil rights statutes in the killing of Willie L. Davis, a negro soldier.

The department's announcement said Bohannon on the night of July 3, 1943, was called to a negro road house on the outskirts of Summit to restore order, and after so doing and while still acting as chief of police, he "wilfully, unlawfully and without provocation shot and killed Davis with a pistol."

State authorities took no action after a coroner's inquest, the department said, adding the War Department referred the case to it for action.

SAVANNAH MORNING NEWS
Savannah, Georgia

Dated Oct-10-44

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- Mr. Tolson.....
- Mr. E. A. Tamm.....
- Mr. Clegg.....
- Mr. Coffey.....
- Mr. Glavin.....
- Mr. Ladd.....
- Mr. Nichols.....
- Mr. Rosen.....
- Mr. Tracy.....
- Mr. Carson.....
- Mr. Hendon.....
- Mr. Mumford.....
- Mr. Jones.....
- Mr. Quinn Tamm.....
- Mr. Nease.....
- Miss Gandy.....
- Files.....

OFFICER PLEADS SELF-DEFENSE

Police Chief James M. Bohannon, of Summit, charged by the U. S. Department of Justice with violation of the Civil Rights statutes in the killing of a Negro soldier, contends that he shot the soldier in self defense.

An information charging Bohannon with Civil Rights violation in the death of Willie L. Davis, has been filed in U. S. Federal District Court here, the Justice Department in Washington announced.

The announcement said the killing occurred July 3, 1943, after the police chief was called to a roadhouse on the outskirts of Summit to restore order. The information charged that Bohannon shot the soldier "wilfully, unlawfully and without provocation."

Chief Bohannon said he had received no notice of the Justice Department's action up until late yesterday. He said he killed a soldier named Davis while investigating a report of trouble at a roadhouse, but that he had been cleared by a coroner's inquest.

"I felt a knife in his pocket and he hit me under the chin and tried to take my gun," the police chief declared. "He then went around the house and said he would get something that would make it possible for him to take the gun. When he came back I told him to stop and he came on. I shot him."

The Justice Department said it took the case at the request of the War Department after Georgia State authorities took no action.

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Dublin Courier Herald
Dublin, Georgia
10-11-44

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Mr. Tolson
 Mr. E. A. Tamm
 Mr. Clegg
 Mr. Glavin
 Mr. Ladd
 Mr. Nichols
 Mr. Rosen
 Mr. Tracy
 Mr. Egan
 Mr. Gurnea
 Mr. Hendon
 Mr. Mumford
 Mr. Jones
 Mr. Quinn Tamm
 Mr. Nease
 Miss Gandy
 Files

**GRAYMONT-SUMMIT
 CHIEF POSTS BOND**

**Police Officer Charged With
 Civil Rights Violation**

Bond in the sum of \$500, required of Police Chief James M. Bohannon of Graymont-Summit, against whom charges have been filed by the United States Department of Justice, in connection with the shooting of a negro soldier by the police chief at a negro roadhouse, has been posted by the officer.

Chief Bohannon is charged with a violation of the civil rights statutes in the slaying of Private Willie L. Davis in July, 1943. The officer said he shot the man in self-defense as the negro advanced on him in a menacing fashion. Chief Bohannon had been investigating a disorder at the roadhouse.

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To B.

SAVANNAH EVENING PRESS
 Savannah, Georgia

Dated Oct-12-44

Mr. Tolson
 Mr. E. A. Tamm
 Mr. Clegg
 Mr. Glavin
 Mr. Ladd
 Mr. Nichols
 Mr. Rosen
 Mr. Tracy
 Mr. Carson
 Mr. Egan
 Mr. Gurnea
 Mr. Hendon
 Mr. Jones
 Mr. Quinn Tamm
 Mr. Nease
 Miss Gandy

**Summit Chief
 Pleads Self-Defense**

SUMMIT, Ga., Oct. 11 (INS).— Police Chief James M. Bohannon of Summit, contended self-defense today in the slaying of Willie L. Davis, a negro soldier.

The Federal Department of Justice has filed an information against Bohannon in the United States District Court in Dublin, Ga., charging that the slaying which took place July 3, 1943, in a roadhouse outside of Summit, was "willful, unlawful, and unprovoked."

The Justice Department took up the case at the request of the War Department when Georgia authorities took no action.

The police chief remembered the killing but said that he had been cleared by a coroner's inquest.

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 9/24/44*

SAVANNAH MORNING NEWS
 Savannah, Georgia

Dated Oct - 12 - 44

To B.

CLIPPING FROM SWAINSBORO "FOREST BLADE"

Dated October 12, 1944

OFFICER CLAIMS SELF DEFENSE

Police Chief James M. Bohannon, charged by the United States Department of Justice with violation of the civil rights statutes in the killing of a negro soldier, contended Tuesday that he shot the soldier in self-defense.

An information charging Bohannon with civil rights violation in the death of Willie L. Davis was filed Monday in U. S. District Court at Dublin, the Justice Department announced in Washington.

The announcement said the killing occurred July 3, 1943, after the police chief was called to a roadhouse on the outskirts of Summit to restore order.

Bohannon said late Monday he had received no notice of the Justice Department's action. He said he killed a Negro soldier named Davis while investigating a report of trouble at a roadhouse, but that he had been cleared by a coroner's inquest.

"I felt a knife in his pocket and he hit me under the chin and tried to take my gun," the police chief related. He then went around the house and said he would get something that would make it possible for him to take the gun. When he came back I told him to stop and he came on. I shot him."

The Justice Department said it took the case at the request of the War Department after Georgia state authorities took no action.

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- Mr. Nease
- Miss Gandy
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Mr. Tolson
Mr. E. A. Tamm
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Coffey
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Mr. Tracy
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Carson
Mr. Hendon
Mr. Mumford
Mr. Jones
Mr. Quinn Tamm
Mr. Nease
Miss Gandy	.....

Kittling
John Strickland

Justice Department Takes Action Against Georgia Police Chief Who Killed Soldier

Special to Journal and Guide
 DUBLIN, Ga.—James Mitchell Bohannon, chief of police in the town of Summit, Ga., has been charged with a violation of the civil rights statutes in the killing of Willie L. Davis, a Negro soldier, on July 3, 1943. The charges were filed by the United States Department of Justice in the district court here on Oct. 9.

after the shooting, but no prosecutive action was taken by state authorities. The case was then referred for action to the Department of Justice by the War Department. The federal government takes jurisdiction because the slain man was deprived of his life without due process of law in violation of

the 14th Amendment, and charges the defendant, Bohannon, under Section 52, Title 18, U. S. Code.

The legal action was authorized by Assistant Attorney General Tom C. Clark in charge of the criminal division, after investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Army authorities.

The information, filed on behalf of the government by U. S. Attorney J. Saxton Daniel, alleges that Bohannon, "acting under the color of law," shot Davis without provocation on the night of July 3, 1943.

The police official had been called to a Negro roadhouse on the outskirts of Summit to restore order, the information states. After order had been restored, but while still acting as chief of police, Bohannon "wilfully unlawfully and without provocation" shot and killed Davis with a pistol, according to the information.

STATE DROPS CASE

A coroner's inquest was held

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NORFOLK " JOURNAL AND GUIDE" 10/21/44

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