

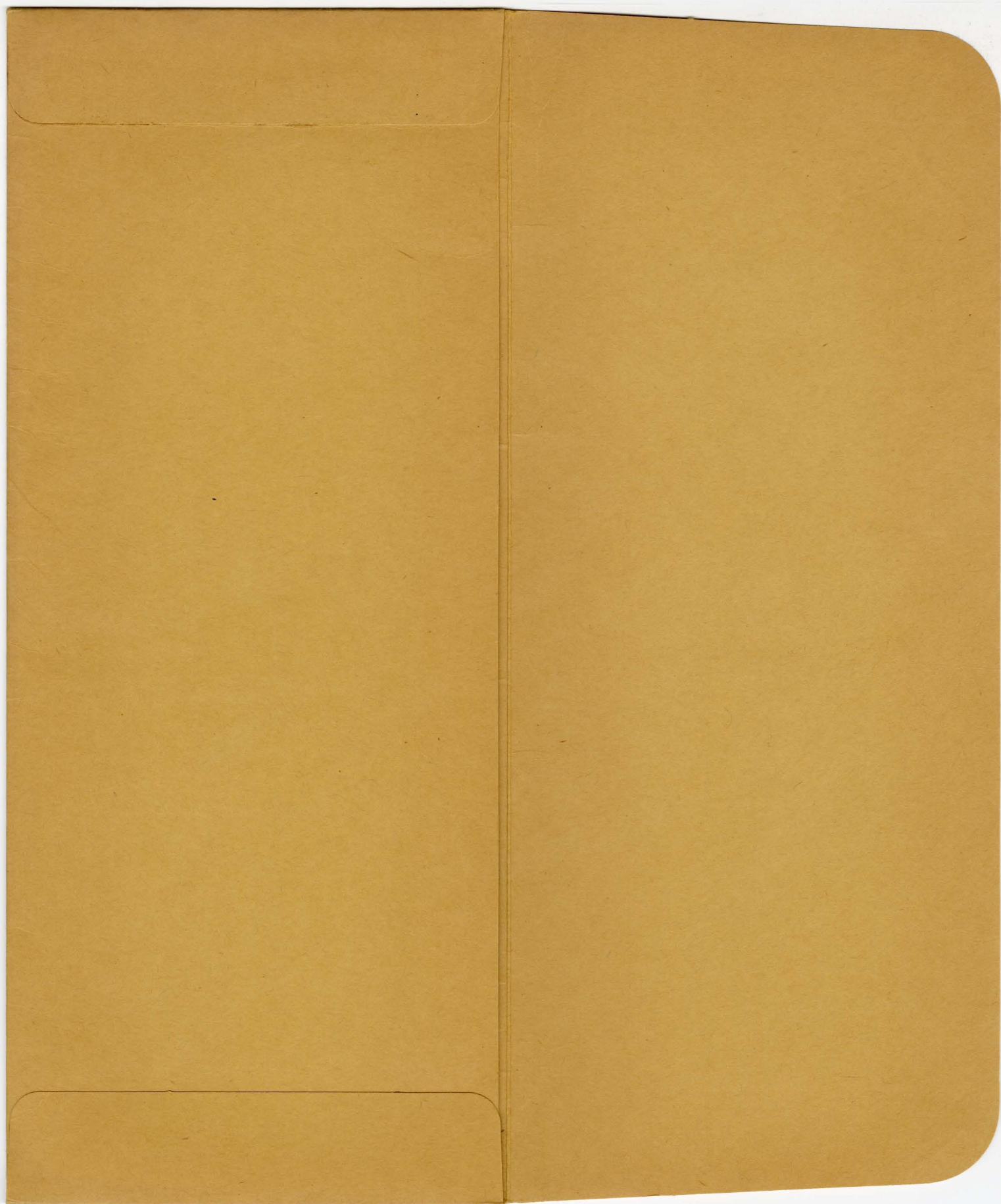
PROPST, DENNIS

(15)

statutory rape

DDL

8/15/61 - treated as juvenile -  
committed to welfare Dept. -  
but placed on probation -





## PRE-TRIAL REPORT

ROCKINGHAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

August 15, 1961

Name: Dennis Propst	Parents: Ivan Propst Ferne Propst
Address: Route 1 Bridgewater, Va.	Address: Route 1 Bridgewater, Virginia
Age: 15, born 8-21-45	
Attorney: Donald Litten	Trial Date: 8-15-61

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This report, as ordered by the Court, is being made to help determine whether this juvenile should be tried as a juvenile or as an adult.

Present Problem:

See the warrant filed against Dennis Propst by the officer of Bridgewater, E. E. Harrison, stating that "Dennis Propst on the 13th day of July, 1961, did ravish and carnally know one Betsy Whetzel, a minor female child, to-wit: the age of 11 years, in violation of Section 18.1-44 of the Code of Virginia against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth of Virginia." Similar charges were made against Donnie Andrews and Jerry Craun. Another boy, Bobby Neale, was involved, but his charge was reduced to contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Previous Problems:

As far as we know, Dennis Propst has not been before Court before. The only difficulty that we understand Dennis has had has been in regard to school. It has not been a matter of attendance, but his behavior in school has not been as it should have been. Although Dennis has never gotten into any trouble over sex or theft, he did admit that he has had relations with a number of other girls around his general community.

Statement and Reaction:

Dennis admitted that on the night of July 13, 1961, he had relations with Betsy Whetzel. Dennis said that Bobby Neale was the one who had first known the Whetzel girl when he had been working at construction work near Betsy's home. On this particular night, Dennis and Bobby Neale were together at the lawn party at Bridgewater. They met Betsy and asked her if she wanted to go for a ride. Betsy consented to do so, but after they rode a short distance from the carnival grounds, Betsy was afraid to have anything to do with the boys because it was not dark enough. Dennis stated that they then returned to the lawn party and later in the evening, Jerry Craun and Donnie Andrews joined Bobby Neale and Propst and took Betsy for another ride. Dennis said that he had relations with Betsy first and afterwards Donnie Andrews did and then Jerry Craun. He said that Bobby Neale did not have relations with Betsy because he seemed to be afraid because someone had hollered at the



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group before they left the lawn party. They then took Betsy back to the lawn party and left her there. Dennis said that Betsy wanted to have relations again with the boys, but they did not want to. Dennis made it very clear that he did not have any idea how old Betsy was and guessed her age to be about 15 or 16. He said that after the boys had relations with her, she told them that she was 11 years old. Dennis said that he would not have had anything to do with her had he realized that she was this young.

Family Background:

Dennis is the third from the oldest child born in the marriage of Ivan Propst, age 40, and Ferne Propst, age 36. With the exception of two years when Dennis lived with his family in Washington, he has lived his entire life near Sangersville in Augusta County. Other siblings are: Jimmy, age 21, who is married, but lives at home; Larry, age 18, in the Navy; Dennis; and Michael, age 2 weeks.

Education:

Dennis has failed three years in school and will be in the 8th grade this coming year at North River High School.

Religion:

Dennis stated that previous to this difficulty, he had not attended church very much, but he has gone every Sunday for the last three weeks. He said that all four of the boys had been going to church together at the Brethren Church near Dennis' home.

Employment:

Dennis stated that he has been working at Cross Keys where he is employed by Charlie Owens and earns \$1 per hour for mixing cement. Dennis' father, Ivan, is employed as a bricklayer and works in Washington, D. C. where he earns \$4.75 per hour.

Interests and Activities:

Dennis said that he enjoys hunting and in past summers has played baseball.

Home and Community:

The Propst family lives about a mile and a half south of Sangersville in Augusta County. They live in a six room house with bath which is of brick construction, and appears to be very new. The community seems to be a respectable one.

Health:

Dennis said that as far as he knows he is in good health.

Summary:

Due to the fact that the case of Betsy Whetzel was recently in Court, the Court knows that there was a considerable amount of difficulty with this child, although she is only 11 years of age. Betsy was committed to the State Department of Welfare and Institutions.

From our investigation in the community where Dennis Propst <sup>lives</sup> and associates with others, we learned that he seems to have a very good reputation and the places where he spends a great deal of his time are respectable places



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of business where other individuals also loaf in the evenings. The owners of these businesses all stated that Dennis does not cause any trouble and is considered to be a quiet type boy. People in the community seemed to be quite shocked that Dennis was involved in this trouble.

We feel that this is a very serious situation, especially in view of the fact that the girl involved was so very young. We do not feel that any of the boys molested the girl by force, but we feel that there was some willingness on her part.

Plan:

Taking all facts into consideration in this case, that Dennis Propst has not been in previous difficulty, and the fact that the girl was not reluctant to have relations with the boys, we feel that Dennis Propst should be tried as a juvenile.

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Kenneth E. Frank, Court Social Worker

KBF/hh  
CAC/Supt.

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KBF/ah  
CAC/strf.



STATE OF VIRGINIA  
COUNTY OF **ROCKINGHAM**

To-Wit: No. \_\_\_\_\_

TO ANY SHERIFF OR POLICE OFFICER:

Whereas, **E. E. Harrison**

has this day made complaint and information on oath before me, **Donald S. Evans**  
(Name)

**Justice of the Peace**  
(Title) of the said County, that

**Dennis Propst** in the said County

did on the **13th** day of **July**, 19**61**: Unlawfully **and feloniously**  
**did ravish and carnally know one Betsy Whetzel, a minor female child,**  
**to-wit: the age of 11 years, in violation of Section 18.1-44 of the**  
**Code of Virginia, against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth of**  
**Virginia.**

These are, therefore, to command you, in the name of the Commonwealth, to apprehend and bring before the County Court of the said County, the body (~~body~~) of the above accused, to answer the said complaint and to be further dealt with according to law. And you are also directed to summon:

- \_\_\_\_\_ color \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ color \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ color \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ color \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ color \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

as witnesses.

Given under my hand and seal, this **14th** day of **July**, 19**61**

**Donald S. Evans** (Seal)  
(Title of Issuing Officer)  
**JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.**



STATE OF VIRGINIA—COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_, to-wit:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ a Judge of the County Court Justice of the Peace in and for the County aforesaid, State of Virginia, do certify

that \_\_\_\_\_

and \_\_\_\_\_, as his suret \_\_\_\_\_, have this day each acknowledged themselves indebted

to the Commonwealth of Virginia in the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ Dollars

(\$ \_\_\_\_\_), to be made and levied of their respective goods and chattels, lands, and tenements to the use of the Commonwealth to

be rendered, yet upon this condition: That the said \_\_\_\_\_, shall appear before the \_\_\_\_\_ Circuit Court

of \_\_\_\_\_ County, on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_,

at \_\_\_\_\_ M., at \_\_\_\_\_, Virginia, and at any time or times to which the proceedings may be continued

or further heard, and before any court thereafter having or holding any proceedings in connection with the charge in this warrant, to answer

for the offense with which he is charged, and shall not depart thence without the leave of said court, the said obligation to remain in full force

and effect until the charge is finally disposed of or until it is declared void by order of a competent court; and upon the further condition that

the said \_\_\_\_\_ shall keep the peace and be of good behavior for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ days

from the date hereof. Nonappearance shall be deemed to constitute a waiver of trial by jury.

Given under my hand, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_.

Judge. J. P.

DOCKET NO. \_\_\_\_\_

COMMONWEALTH

vs.

WARRANT OF ARREST  
*DENNIS PROBST*

Executed this, the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_

Upon the examination of the within charge, I find the accused

The following witnesses were recognized to appear before the \_\_\_\_\_ Circuit Court of \_\_\_\_\_ County, Virginia, at \_\_\_\_\_ M., on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_, under penalty of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**COSTS**

Warrant \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Trial \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Bail \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Arrest \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mileage \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Clerk \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Jail Fee and Board \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Attendance \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Summoning Witnesses \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Commonwealth Attorney \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Costs \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Fine \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Fine \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Costs \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_