

## Raymond Thorne ( - 16 Jul 1950)

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*The Evening Star*

### **Inmate Held in Slaying of Boy**

#### **Victim Was Killed In January After Escape at Laurel**

A mentally deficient youth with a reputation for telling "tall tales" today faced murder charges in the fatal shooting of a fellow inmate at the District Training School, Laurel, Md.

He is Arthur Swann, 16, who had been hinting for some weeks that Raymond Thorne, 17, whose body was found on the Fort Meade reservation yesterday, was shot fatally on January 14 -- the day both boys ran away from the Laurel school.

Arthur returned to the school on the same day. His first story was that Raymond had decided to remain away. Dr. Kenneth B. Jones, school superintendent, said tests had given both boys I.Q. ratings of 76.

After his first account Arthur began telling about a rifle he and Raymond had stolen (one had been taken about that time from a carpenter shop), Dr. Jones related.

#### *Always Telling Stories*

Then he told of the Thorne boy being shot when the gun went off during a fight.

These at first were not believed. He was always telling stories, Dr. Jones said. Dr. Jones did search the area for several hours with Arthur, however, but found nothing.

Recently, however, the story was embellished. There were some specific details on how the rifle operated. And how he became scared and ran off when the other boy was shot and hid the gun.

And then there were the details of where the body could be found.

Putting them all together, authorities at the school decided that the tale was "more than fantastic" and reported the boy's story to state police.

They called in the FBI.

#### *Rifle a Mile Away*

The body was found yesterday approximately where the boy said it would be: On the Fort Meade reservation, near Laurel. About a mile away, the military police and FBI agents found a rifle.

M.W. McFarlin, chief of the Baltimore FBI office, said the body was tentatively identified as the Thorne boy's but that dental charts would be checked to make certain.

He said the boy apparently had been shot once in the front and once in the back. An autopsy is to be performed.

#### *Inmates for Four Years*

Mr. McFarlin said the story the Swann boy told of the shooting was this:

Swann dropped the .22 rifle and it hit the Thorne youth in the foot. Next Swann picked it up, reloaded it and it dropped again, hitting Thorne in the back. He then reloaded it and threw the gun away.

Mr. McFarlin said charges of murder on a Government reservation would be placed against the Swann boy.

Dr. Jones said both boys had been inmates of the institution for about four years.

Arthur is the grandson of Mrs. Frances Brown, first block of Fourth street, Takoma Park, Md., and Raymond was the son of Mrs. Alice Thorne, 500 block of Cove street S.E., according to Dr. Jones.