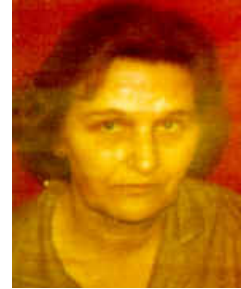


Margie Velma Barfield

“Death Row Granny”

“Mama Margie”



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Date	Age	Life Event
10/29/1932	0	Margie Velma Bullard was born in South Carolina to Murphy and Lillie Bullard. She was the oldest girl and second of a large family of nine children.
1934	0-2	She lived in Wade, NC on her father's small farm. Her home had no electricity or running water and no outhouse. She learned to take trips to the woods or use chamber pots to relieve herself.
1937	0-5	She slept in the same bedroom with her parents through high school. Her father physically abused her mother, was hot tempered, and went on "drinking binges." She feared him throughout her childhood.
1939	7	Velma begins first grade. She likes school and her teacher, working very hard achieving good grades.
1942	0-10	Her father worked late shift at a textile mill so she didn't see him much.
1943	11	Velma's chores included keeping the house, washing and ironing clothing, and mending for a family of 11. Her father would dismiss her from school early on days that she needed to do extra laundry because using the wash board took so long. Velma resented this.
1944	12	Velma begins cooking all of her family's meals, each day.
1945	0-13	Twice each summer her family sent her to Presbyterian Bible School.
1945	13	Velma's father surprises her and buys her an expensive pink, ruffled gown and it the happiest day that she can remember.
8/45	13	Velma's family moves to Robeson county where she meets Thomas Burke.
10/45	13	Velma stays home from school being ill with the flu and her father rapes her.
1947	15	Velma is chosen to be on her school basketball team but her parents do not allow it because she had too many chores. This angered her.
1948	16	She begins regularly attending the Baptist church and was baptized. She begins to date Thomas Burke after waiting many months for her 16 th birthday to arrive so her father would allow her to date.

1949	17	Thomas Burke proposes to Velma at a local movie theatre.
1949	17	She runs away and gets married to Thomas in Dillon, SC but only does this to get away from home.
1949	17	Thomas quits school and begins working at a textile mill in Red Springs.
1950	18	She moves in with Thomas and his parents, attending the Baptist church with them.
1951	19	Thomas quits his job and they move to Wade, near Velma's parents. There Thomas works for a soft drink company.
10/12/1951	19	Velma gives birth to a son she named Ronnie and moves back to Parkton where she and Thomas would rent a house for eleven years.
9/3/53	21	Velma gives birth to a daughter named Kim and she begins to go to church regularly with her children, even teaching a church Sunday school class.
1955	23	Velma is hit, as a pedestrian, by a drunk driver and is hospitalized. While in the hospital she went through a period of depression.
1958	26	Velma begins working a textile mill in Raeford causing her to see Thomas less often because of their conflicting work hours.
1962	30	Velma begins hemorrhaging and feeling tired so her Doctor performs a hysterectomy.
1963	31	Thomas' mother gives the couple one acre of land outside Parkton where Thomas builds a three bedroom house.
1963	31	She claims to begin having a "problem with her nerves" because of the surgery, causing her to constantly be "tense". She constantly felt nervous and afraid.
1965	33	Thomas begins drinking after joining a civil organization, the Jaycees. Velma abhors alcohol and is concerned about his drinking.
1966	34	Her husband drinks "regularly and heavily" as an alcoholic. It has caused a change in his personality. He hits Velma in a drunken rage and his drinking begins increasingly causing marital discord and arguments.
1966	34	Velma calls the police and has her husband sent to Dorothea Dix State Hospital for his excessive drinking. Thomas leaves the hospital three days later enraged at her for sending him there and embarrassing him.
1966	34	Thomas loses his job because of his absenteeism and alcoholism.
1967	35	Velma begins working two jobs to support her family. She is a clerk in a Department Store (Belk) and a machine operator in a cotton mill.
6/68	36	Thomas pins his son up against a wall threatening his child's life with a knife after an argument. This is particularly distressing to Velma.
11/68	37	Velma collapses in her kitchen and is taken to the hospital after having a nervous breakdown. She is medicated and given potent tranquilizers.
1969	37	Velma takes her prescribed tranquilizers but takes them three times a day instead of the prescribed dosage of 1x daily. She quickly runs out of medication and so she visits more Doctors for more prescriptions. She soon falls into deep depression and prescription drug abuse.
04/21/1969	37	Thomas Burke (WM, 36) supposedly drops a burning cigarette while in a drunken sleep and dies of smoke inhalation. The nurse at the hospital in Parkton, NC, gives Velma a shot to "ease her grief" and her drug abuse continues to escalate.
11/69	38	Velma's coworker at Belk introduces her to her brother Jennings Barfield who has emphysema and diabetes.
08/23/1970	38	She marries Jennings Barfield and begins to be his primary caretaker.
11/70	39	Velma overdoses on prescription medication and is hospitalized.
2/71	39	Velma overdoses again on prescription medication and is hospitalized again for one week. Jennings discusses with his family his regret in marrying the prescription drug abuser.
03/22/1971	39	She poisons Jennings Barfield (WM, 54) with arsenic poisoning. He had difficulty breathing, was vomiting and had diarrhea. She meant only to "make his sick" but he died (NC - Cumberland County - Fayetteville). She continues her prescription drug abuse.
10/71	40	Velma has a near fatal overdose, once again due to prescription medication and is

		hospitalized for three weeks.
12/71	40	She is fired from Belk and loses the house Thomas built because she doesn't pay her mortgage. She moves in with her parents.
4/72	40	Velma's father dies of lung cancer.
2/7/1973	41	Velma moves into her mother's home.
1973	41	Velma overdoses on prescription medication and is hospitalized for two weeks.
10/74	42	Velma takes out a \$1,000.00 loan in her mother's name, by using Lillie's home as collateral and forging her signature.
11/74	42	Velma takes out another loan in her mother's name for \$1,000.
12/74	42	Velma writes five bad checks on a closed out account of Jennings Barfield.
12/74	42	Lillie Bullard receives an overdue notice from the loan company.
12/74	42	A week after the overdue notice arrives; Velma purchases a bottle of poison in St. Paul, NC. She gives a dose to her mother who then begins complaining of vomiting, cramping and diarrhea. Velma phones the Doctor who calls in a prescription. By night, Lillie cannot hold herself up. Velma phones the doctor again and her brother calls the Rescue Squad. Velma rides in the ambulance. Her mother is admitted to the hospital.
12/30/1974		Lillie Bullard (WF, 64) declared dead in Fayetteville, NC hospital. Doctor claims cause of death was a heart attack.
1/74	42	Velma moves in with her daughter Kim and son-in-law Dennis at their mobile home.
2/74	42	Deputies from the sheriff's department warn Velma to pay back the bounced checks. Since she cannot repay them, she goes to her son's house and overdoses on prescription drugs, attempting suicide. She is not successful and breaks her collar bone, causing a three week hospitalization. The police inform Velma that she will be arrested when the hospital releases her.
3/74	42	Velma is arrested and placed into jail. She overdoses and is rushed to a nearby hospital where her stomach is pumped. She goes to court the next day where she pleads guilty and receives a six month sentence at the Correctional Center for Women in Raleigh, NC. She serves only four months because of good behavior.
3/74	42	Velma has agreed to an autopsy of her mother. Results come back with no indication of poisoning.
7/74	42	Velma steals a check from her son-in-law and forges it to purchase prescription medication. Kim calls Velma's doctors asking them to stop prescribing Velma pain medication.
11/1/75	43	Velma was hired as a live-in caretaker for 93-year old Montgomery Edwards because his 83-year old wife, Dollie, was too feeble. He was blind and an invalid. They agreed to pay Velma \$75 a week which included room and board. Velma resented Dollie's critical nature and began to hate her.
9/76	44	Velma meets Dollie's alcoholic nephew, Stuart Taylor, at the Edwards' home in Lumberton, NC. He and his wife were planning to Divorce.
01/29/1977	45	Montgomery Edwards (WM, 95) dies in Lumberton, North Carolina.
02/28/1977	45	Velma purchases poison and poisons Dollie Edwards.
03/01/1977		Dollie Edwards (WF, 85) dies in Lumberton, North Carolina.
4/77	45	Velma was hired as live-in caretaker for John Henry Lee and Record Lee. She would be paid \$50 a week.
06/04/1977	45	Velma forges one of John Henry Lee's (WM, 80) checks for \$50. She poisons him to prevent him from finding out what she had done. He experiences prolonged pain and dies in Lumberton, NC. The medical report found cause of death to be a heart attack.
10/77	46	Velma quits her job as caretaker for Record Lee and moves back to Lumberton where she would rent a trailer and work as a nurse's aid at a local nursing home. She begins a relationship with Stuart Taylor.
10/77	46	She moves some of her belongings into Stuart's home. He finds letters sent to her at Prison. He is enraged because he did not know she had been in prison.

11/77	46	Velma steals one of Stewart's checks and forges his name.
12/77	46	She undergoes breast surgery to remove a portion of her left breast. It was not malignant. She steals another check from Stewart and forges it.
12/77	46	Velma buys a bottle of poison. She plans to poison Stewart to prevent him from finding out what she had done.
12/77	46	Velma and Stewart attend the Rex Humbard gospel meeting. During the meeting Stewart fell very ill. When they return home, Velma phones Stuart's stepmother and daughter to inform them of his illness. After three days of pain and suffering, Velma calls the rescue squad and follows it to the hospital.
02/03/1978	46	Rowland Stewart Taylor (WM, 56) pronounced dead in Lumberton, North Carolina. Velma agrees with doctor's suggestion of performing an autopsy.
3/1978	46	Stuart Taylor's autopsy report reveals cause of death to be arsenic poisoning.
03/10/1978	46	Police arrive at Velma's home and bring her to the Robeson County Sheriffs Department for three hours of questioning.
03/13/1978	46	Velma attempts suicide by prescription drug overdose, but her son intervenes.
03/13/1978	46	Velma offers a confession without the presence of an attorney and is brought to the female section of the jail.
03/13/1978	46	Her attorney fills one of her prescriptions and brings her additional anti-depression drugs at her request. Two hours later the bailiff brought her more prescribed medication.
03/15/1978	46	Velma is sent to Dorthea Dix State Hospital in Raleigh NC for a psychiatric evaluation to determine her mental competency to stand trial. She is there for five weeks.
04/19/1978	46	She goes back to Lumberton jail where she experiences depression and often contemplates suicide.
7/78	46	While in prison, Velma heard a program by evangelist J. K. Kinkle. She accepted forgiveness and "found God".
11/23/1978	47	Velma's trial begins in Elizabethtown NC where she is charged with first-degree murder in the death of Stewart Taylor. She never confessed to poisoning Jennings, but did confess to poisoning her mother, Dollie Edwards and John Henry Lee.
11/30/1978	47	Jury reached verdict of murder in the first degree and recommended the death penalty. Velma was taken to the Correctional Center for Women in Raleigh and placed on death row.
02/03/1979	47	Velma's original execution date. She received a stay.
6/79	47	Reverend Hugh Hoyle becomes Velma's minister.
9/80	47	N.C. state supreme court refused to hear Velma's appeal.
9/80	47	New date set by state for Velma's execution. She received a stay.
10/17/1980	47	New date set for execution. She received a stay.
12/12/1980	48	New date set for execution. She received a stay.
1981	49	Velma began correspondence with Ruth Graham, Billy Graham's wife. Their daughter Anne Lotz would visit Velma in prison.
1981	49	Prisoners refer to Velma as "Mama Margie" because she was older and would mentor her younger, fellow prisoners. She called them her "adopted kids".
03/22/1982	49	New date set for execution. She received a stay.
10/03/1983	50	U.S. Supreme Court again refused to hear the case.
4/84	51	N.C. state appeal was denied and U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the case. Upon reconsideration, Chief Justice Warren Burger granted a stay of execution that was dissolved in August 1984. Her attorney's argued "not guilty by reason of insanity".
6/84	51	Velma is moved to Central Prison in Raleigh NC.
08/31/1984	51	New date set for Velma's execution. She received a stay.
09/18/1984	51	Velma's supporters appeared before Governor Hunt to plead for clemency.
09/27/1984	51	Governor Hunt denies her clemency.
10/20/1984	52	Ronnie and Kim brought their children to visit with their grandmother. She chooses

		lethal injection over the gas chamber.
11/01/1984	52	Velma writes letters to each victim's family asking for forgiveness. She asks Rev. Hoyle to distribute the letters upon her death.
11/02/1984	52	Velma was executed by lethal injection at the Central Prison in Raleigh NC and pronounced dead at 2:15 a.m.
12/15/1984	52	Rev. Hunt attempts to deliver Velma's letters to her victim's families. They refuse to accept them.

General Information

Sex	Female
Race	White
Number of victims	Suspected of 7, confessed to 3 (Dollie Edwards, John Henry Lee, and Lillie Bullard), convicted of 1 (Rowland Stuart Taylor)
Country where killing occurred	United States
States where killing occurred	North Carolina
Type of killer	Organized, Gain Killer (Black Widow and Lethal Care Taker)
Height	5'3"

Childhood Information

Date of birth	October 29 th , 1932
Location	Cumberland County, North Carolina
Birth order	2 nd of 9
Number of siblings	8
XYY?	No
Raised by	Both parents
Birth category	Second Oldest. 1 st oldest girl
Parent's marital status	Married
Family event	Feelings of not being wanted, crowded home life, fighting around house, seeing mother abused by father, being harshly punished while mother watched and did nothing, father abused alcohol
Age of family event	7-10 years old
Problems in school?	Dropped out junior year
Teased while in school?	Teased about clothes, called "knot head"
Physically attractive?	She was plump, gap between front teeth, short, bow-legged: overall unattractive
Physical defect?	Permanent knot located on her forehead
Speech defect?	No
Head injury?	Ran head-on into a boy at school and was knocked unconscious leaving a permanent contusion on her forehead. Velma lost control of her vehicle, careening through a gas station lot, clipping the pumps and came to a rest at a bridge railing while under the influence of prescription drugs. She experiences head trauma.
Physically abused?	Claimed father beat her and she received strap beatings when she talked back
Psychologically abused?	Yelled at a lot
Sexually abused?	Claims to be sexually abused by her father
Father's occupation	Tobacco and Cotton Farmer
Age of first sexual experience	13
Age when first had intercourse	17
Mother's occupation	Homemaker
Father abused drugs/alcohol	Seldom binge drinker
Mother abused drugs/alcohol	N/A

Cognitive Ability	
Highest grade in school	11 th
Highest degree	None she dropped out at age 17
Grades in school	Good grades until high school where they suffered
IQ	No Record of an IQ test being performed
Work History	
Served in the military?	N/A
Branch	N/A
Type of discharge	N/A
Saw combat duty	N/A
Killed enemy during service?	N/A
Applied for job as a cop?	No
Worked in law enforcement?	No
Fired from jobs?	Yes
Types of jobs worked	Textile mill, Live-in Maid, Salesperson at Belk, room mother for her kids school
Employment status during series	Caretaker for the Elderly
Relationships	
Sexual preference	Heterosexual
Marital status	Married
Number of children	2
Lives with his/her children	Yes
Living with	Family and later with husbands
Triad	
Animal torture	No
Fire setting	Yes, suspected of involvement in 3 home fires
Bed wetting	No
Killer Psychological Information	
Abused drugs?	Yes, Tranquilizers, Antidepressants, Narcotics, Sleeping Pills, and Stimulants
Abused alcohol?	No
Been to a psychologist?	No
Time in forensic hospital?	None prior to conviction of murders
Diagnosis	N/A
Killer Criminal History	
Committed previous crimes?	Stole money from father and elderly neighbor, Forgery of prescriptions, Check Fraud
Spend time in jail?	No
Spend time in prison?	6 months for forging bad checks
Killed prior to series? Age?	Not indicted for murder of 1 st husband
Serial Killing	
Number of victims	Suspected of 7, confessed to 3 (Lillie Bullard, Dollie Edwards, & John Henry Lee), convicted of 1 (Rowland Stuart Taylor)
Victim type	Family
Killer age at start of series	37
Gender of victims	4 male, 2 female
Race of victims	White
Age of victims	36, 54, 56, 64, 80, 85, 95
Method of killing	Poisoned with arsenic
Type of serial killer	Organized, Gain Killer (Black Widow and Lethal Care Taker)
How close did killer live?	Lived with her victims
Killing occurred in home of victim?	Yes
Killing occurred in home of killer?	Yes

Weapon	No weapon, poison was used and was found at scene
Behavior During Crimes	
Rape?	No
Tortured victims?	Victims suffered prolonged illness
Stalked victims?	No
Overkill?	No
Quick & efficient?	No
Used blindfold?	No
Bound the victims?	No
After Death Behavior	
Sex with the body?	No
Mutilated body?	No
Ate part of the body?	No
Drank victim's blood?	No
Posed the body?	No
Took totem – body part	No
Took totem – personal item	No
Robbed victim or location	Yes
Disposal of Body	
Left at scene, no attempt to hide	No
Left at scene, hidden	No
Left at scene, buried	No
Moved, no attempt to hide	Took victims to hospital
Moved, buried	No
Cut-up and disposed of	No
Moved, too home	No
Sentencing	
Date killer arrested	March 13, 1978
Date convicted	November 1978
Sentence	Death Penalty
Killer executed?	Yes
Did killer plead NGRI?	Yes
Was the NGRI plea successful?	No
Name and state of prison	Central Prison in Raleigh, NC
Killer committed suicide?	No
Killer killed in prison?	No
Date of death	November 2, 1984

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