

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM REGARDING ROBERT SEGEE

On 17-18-May 1950, Robert Segee returned to Ohio from East St. Louis, Illinois with Carl Radcliff, Deputy Sheriff, Pickaway County, R. Russell Smith of Ohio State Arson Bureau and Guy G. Cline, Prosecuting Attorney, Pickaway County, Ohio.

Robert Segee was questioned regarding implication in certain fires in Pickaway County and various other places. This investigation was held in cooperation and conjunction with Don Cook of the National Board of Fire Underwriter and Thomas Sides Lieutenant of the Fire Prevention Bureau for the City of Columbus. The apprehension and location of Segee was aided by Lamont Heidinger, of the National Board of Fire Underwriters of near East St. Louis, Illinois.

On the 18th day of May 1950 he admitted starting numerous fires to the aforementioned officers, specifically designating certain fires in Circleville, Ohio, Columbus, Ohio, Old Town, Maine, Portland, Maine. He stated that he was with the Ringling Brothers Circus June 6, 1944, when they had a large fire at Hartford, Conn. He stated that his starting of numerous fires was caused by his seeing a burning man which he called the redman and the redman would tell him to start fires and that if he did not start fires he would himself be burned and that the first appearance of the redman was immediately prior to the Hartford, Conn. fire while he was with the Ringling Brothers Circus. He stated that his first recollection at the Hartford fire was that he was awakened and came to himself and he was then at a tent near the place where the horses were kept but that the only thing he remembered prior thereto was the seeing the redman and seeing a man strike a match and set the wall tent on fire at a point where the tent had been soaked in oil to make it waterproof; that the flames shot on up to the large tent to the top of the big top. He stated that it could be that actually what he saw was himself starting the fire or it could have been a dream and the first appearance of the redman. He stated that after he had been awakened he recalled helping to get people out of the big tent.

On the 22nd day of May 1950 Judge and Mr. Redy of the law firm of Engle, Judge and Miller, General Counsel for Ringling Brothers Circus, 44th St., New York 17, N. Y., telephone Murray Hill 21700, called Guy G. Cline and he was informed that Segee was employed by Ringling Brothers Circus from June 30th until July 13th, 1944, having been employed at Portland Maine and hired to work for the Light Department. A foreman "Whitay" Versteen, is presently employed by the Ringling Brothers Circus now playing in Philadelphia. Segee stated that his foreman was Clyde Whitay-- he did not know his last name. He also named two other individuals with the circus;

On the 19th day of May 1950 Robert Segee was brought to Circleville by R. Russell Smith where he was taken around town by the Fire Chief, Talmer Wise and Deputy Sheriff Carl Radcliff when he pointed out three particular places where he had attempted to burn down garages and barns. These particular fires were specifically identified as having been June 2, 1947, having attempted to set fire to Leonard Morgan's barn on East Hill Street, Circleville, Ohio; June 2, 1947, having attempted to burn the barn and garage of T. K. Brunner on South Court Street, Circleville, Ohio; and August 27, 1947, having attempted to burn the garage of Leona Thornton on Western Avenue, Circleville, Ohio.

Robert Segee was then taken to the Justice of the Peace at Ashville, Ohio, where he was charged with one offense of Arson, one of attempted arson and one of malicious destruction of property. He was bound over to the Grand Jury on \$5,000.00 bond on the two felony charges and sentenced to \$500.00 fine and thirty (30) days in jail on the misdemeanor which sentence was suspended for ten (10) days for the purpose of physical and mental examination. A physical examination of Segee was conducted on the 22nd day of May 1950 by Dr. Rinalspach at University Hospital, Columbus, Ohio.

On the 22nd day of May 1950 Segee was taken for the first time to Dr. Higley a psychiatrist in Columbus, Ohio, for further examination. Dr. Higley estimated that it would take from one week to ten days to complete the examination. Segee has at all times been cooperative but stops short of giving all information which he knows.

During the course of the examination on the 18th day of May 1950 Segee described having set fire to a hotel in Columbus (possibly the Southern Hotel on South High Street, Columbus, Ohio) by going up on the elevator and getting off at a floor the number of which was not known and setting fire to a clothes hamper and waste basket. This specific fire has not been to date specifically identified. He also admitted and described starting a large fire at a garage and warehouse, presumably located at Chestnut Street, near the Uptown Theatre in Columbus, Ohio. This statement appears to be confused and perhaps involves facts pertaining to more than one fire not yet specifically identified.

He also described a fire along the docks and large garage at Portland, Maine and the house of another Indian boy at Old Town, Maine. The death of a girl appears to be involved in the fire at Old Town, Maine.

Segee described numerous methods of setting the fires, one of which involved the use of gasoline and kerosene which he obtained by purchase from a store near the junction of

161 and Cleveland Avenue, near his home and also obtained gasoline by the use of a syphon which he obtained from one of his neighbors near Cleveland Avenue, Columbus, Ohio, by having cut off the nozzle of a small flexible hose and then cutting off a length of about three or four feet which he carried with him in his pocket for sometime. The syphon was later burned in one of the fires.