

Donald Gaskins Biography

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Biography

South Carolina's most notorious criminal, Donald "Pee Wee" Gaskins was put to death in 1991 after being linked to the murders of 14 people, but in an autobiography released after his death, he claimed to be responsible for over 100 deaths. He also gained notoriety as the first white killer of a black person in South Carolina to be executed in over a century, and the first white man to be executed in the United States for killing a black man in over half a century.

Various birth dates ranging from 1931 to 1937 are given for Donald Gaskins. He was nicknamed "Pee Wee" because of his short stature. Throughout most of his life, he was in and out of reform school and prison, and when he was not incarcerated he was a drifter who spent most of his time in South Carolina.

In 1975, investigation into the disappearance of 13-year-old Kim Ghelkins led South Carolina police to property owned by Gaskins. They discovered eight bodies there. Gaskins was charged and convicted in the death of one of them and sentenced to die. Later, five more bodies were found and linked to Gaskins, including Ghelkins and Gaskins' niece. Gaskins was saved from the electric chair when South Carolina's death penalty was ruled unconstitutional, and he later confessed to eight of the murders. He was sentenced to ten consecutive life terms.

Gaskins went back on death row after being convicted for murdering fellow inmate, Rudolph Tyner, whom he killed with a homemade bomb. He was executed for that crime on September 6, 1991.