

## ***LYMAN MAN RECEIVES TWO LIFE PRISON SENTENCES FOR DOUBLE MURDER***

A Lyman man received consecutive life prison sentences and a concurrent 30-year prison sentence today for stabbing two relatives to death.

Phillip Tapp, 55, was found guilty of two counts of murder and armed robbery at the conclusion of a four-day jury trial. Tapp will serve every day of Circuit Judge Derham Cole's prison sentence. He is not eligible for parole.

Sheriff's deputies found the bodies of 46-year-old Marshall Scott Tapp and 74-year-old Kenneth Leroy Tapp on June 12, 2008 at two different locations near Lyman. Both men sustained more than a dozen stab wounds.

The day after the murders, Nashville, Tenn. police stopped Phillip Tapp on suspicion of driving under the influence. During the traffic stop, police learned Phillip was driving a truck that belonged to Kenneth Tapp. Phillip Tapp confessed to the killings in a police interview conducted in Tennessee.

Phillip Tapp testified in his own defense. He portrayed the murders as self defense. Phillip told jurors an intoxicated Scott grew angry over the fact he let his two dogs inside their shared home on a rainy night. He accused Scott, his nephew, of attacking his dogs with a large stick. Phillip Tapp said he stabbed his cousin, Kenneth Tapp, in the driveway of the Jordan Road home. Phillip Tapp testified he stabbed his sibling because he thought he was reaching for a gun in his truck.

Investigators believe Phillip Tapp dumped Kenneth Tapp's body in a nearby field before he fled the state in the truck.

Solicitor Trey Gowdy and Principal Deputy Solicitor Barry Barnette reminded jurors that Phillip Tapp's argument couldn't be substantiated by any of the evidence involved in the case.

"Phillip Tapp's version of the events doesn't make any sense," Gowdy said. "We have two men who are in a graveyard and Phillip barely had a scratch on him."

"I hope today's verdict provides some much-needed closure for the Tapp family," Gowdy added. "They have endured a horrible ordeal."