

3 plead guilty to roles in slaying
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By Robert Behre
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Three co-defendants whose testimony helped convict William Dickerson of the 2006 murder of Gerard Roper pleaded guilty Wednesday to related crimes, and each received a sentence of at least five years in jail.

W. Dickerson

Ninth Circuit Chief Deputy Solicitor Bruce DuRant said there was no prior agreement with any of the three defendants before they testified against Dickerson.

"All three of those people helped us out in the trial, and I think the judge (Circuit Judge R. Markley Dennis) understood that and gave them some consideration," DuRant said.

Armon Rashad Dickerson, 29, originally was charged with murder but was allowed to plead guilty to voluntary manslaughter.

He received an 18-year sentence with credit given for 22 months already served. He is William Dickerson's half-brother.

Selana Kerise Rouse, 31, pleaded guilty to her original charge of being an accessory after the fact. She was sentenced to five years. She will get credit for 374 days already served.

Rashad Abdullah Malik, 34, also was originally charged with murder but pleaded guilty to being an accessory after the fact and of assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature.

Read more about the case

[Two more arrested in torture slaying](#), published 02/28/08

[Dickerson sentenced to death](#), published 05/08/09

He was sentenced to seven years on both charges with credit for 22 months already served. Both sentences will be served at the same time, and he also will be subject to five years of probation.

DuRant said it has been clear that William Dickerson was the prosecutors' prime target.

"He was the one who started it and did most of the damage and kind of drew these people in. These people were in a position where they could have stopped it. They just didn't do it," he said.

A jury sentenced William Dickerson to death in May, the first time that had happened in Charleston County in 13 years. His sentence is undergoing an automatic appeal.

Roper was kidnapped, sexually assaulted, tortured and murdered in a Fleming Road apartment on James Island.