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Man Who Confessed to Shooting Death of Keith Jennings Appears in Court, Claims Self-Defense

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Mugshot of Richardson Dangleben. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. THOMAS — The man who confessed to the shooting death of 68-year-old Keith Jennings last week is claiming to have done it in self-defense.

Richardson Dangleben appeared in court on Monday following his arrest on Friday.

According to the VIPD, when officers responded to the location in Hospital Ground where shots were reported to have been fired, they found Dangleben standing near a green vehicle with his hands in the air. There was blood on the vehicle, police say, and a black handgun resting on the hood, “with the magazine removed and the slide locked to the rear with a single round.”

Dangleben was taken to the Richard Callwood Command police station for questioning, where he agreed to provide a statement.

As per his statement, he had been looking after the particular property in Hospital Ground for some time, and around 8:00 a.m. that morning, he was doing some farming on the property. While he worked, he says he spotted a man he had never seen before approaching him. Dangleben said the man, with a rock in his hand, threatened his life. "I'm going to kill you for my sister," the man reportedly told Dangleben. In response, Dangleben told police that he first asked the man to leave, then drew his firearm and fired one shot in the man's direction.

Police investigations found that Jennings was in the company of two other family members shortly before his death, one of whom was reportedly going to feed dogs in another apartment in the building. That person said Jennings told them that he was going to talk to Dangleben, but they cautioned him against it. "Leave him alone he is ignorant," they reportedly told him as they headed upstairs. While in the second-floor apartment, the relative heard a single gunshot ring out, but says they heard no prior verbal altercation. That individual characterized Dangleben as dangerous, and said that several police reports had been filed against him.

The other relative of the deceased that was there that day was also interviewed by police. That individual reportedly did not exit the vehicle the three of them arrived in, and says they saw the door of the unit Dangleben was living in open before hearing two shots being fired. They said they saw their relative bleeding from his throat.

Neither relative said they saw anything in Jennings's hands before he was shot and killed, nor did they hear any verbal altercation prior to the shooting.

VIPD Detectives found one spent .40 caliber casing on the porch of the unit where the shooting took place.

Investigations also found that Dangleben is licensed to carry a firearm in the territory.

Dangleben was arrested and charged with a multitude of offenses, including first and second-degree murder, first and third-degree assault, voluntary manslaughter, first-degree reckless endangerment, and seven counts of using a firearm during a crime of violence.

In court on Monday, the presiding judge set bail at \$250,000 fully secured, and approved the 3rd party custody of Dangleben's parents. He will have a final opportunity to retrieve his belongings from the property at which the incident took place. He must stay at least 100 feet from any witnesses in the matter. Dangleben must surrender his driver's license and passport, and will remain restricted to the St. Thomas-St. John district while the case is pending. His next court appearance is scheduled for March 17, 2023.