ERNEST WILLIS

CAMERON TODD WILLINGHAM

JUNE 11, 1986
Willis House Fire in Iraan, Texas

SEPTEMBER 1986
Ernest Willis charged with arson and murder.

1987
Ernest Willis convicted & sentenced to death.

1989-1995
Willis loses direct appeal and habeas corpus petition.

DECEMBER 23, 1991
Willingham house fire in Corsicana, TX

JANUARY 8, 1992
Willingham charged with murder.

AUGUST 1992
Willingham convicted & sentenced to death.

1995
Latham & Watkins takes on case pro bono. Attorneys reinvestigate. Team finds inmate David Long who confessed in 1990 to a prison psychiatrist. Attorneys bring case back to Texas Court of Criminal Appeals with new evidence.

OCTOBER 1995
Willingham direct appeals to Texas Court of Criminal Appeals and US Supreme Court denied.

1996
Texas CCA rules that trial judge should hold hearings to determine if Willis deserves a new trial.

JUNE 2000
Willis wins new trial based on ineffective assistance of counsel, a withheld psychological profile and evidence that Willis was given anti-psychotic drugs during the trial by local police.

JULY 2000
Willingham federal habeas relief denied.

NOVEMBER 2003
US Supreme Court denies Willingham's final petition.

JANUARY 2004
Hurst reviews original arson report used at trial. Dismisses all original indicators of arson as invalid.

FEBRUARY 13, 2004
Willingham attorney submits petition to CCA and Gov. Perry with Hurst report.

FEBRUARY 17, 2004
CAMERON TODD WILLINGHAM EXECUTED

AUGUST 2004
Judge Royal Ferguson orders the State to either release or retry Willis.

FALL 2004
Pecos County DA Ori White asks Hurst to review arson evidence. He concludes there was no arson.

OCTOBER 6, 2004
ERNEST WILLIS EXONERATED