



# PRESS RELEASE

## **Jury Sentences Bank Robber to 70 years in Prison**

**June 12, 2014**

On Thursday, June 12, 2014, a Brazos County jury sentenced James Graham, 62, to 70 years in prison after finding him guilty yesterday of Aggravated Robbery. Graham was being tried for a May 2013 bank robbery at the former First Victoria Bank in Bryan.

On May 31, 2013, Graham walked into the First Victoria Bank and asked a personal banker to see the manager. When he got the manager alone, he showed her what looked like a bomb, and told her to get all the money from the vault. While she was doing this, Graham took out a nail gun used to fasten wood to concrete and pointed it at the manager and in the direction of an assistant manager. Graham got away with \$80,000.00 in cash. While trying to get out of town, Graham's vehicle was spotted by a DPS Trooper on the lookout for him based on descriptions received from the bank employees. The Trooper pulled Graham over at the intersection of Boonville and Copperfield Road in Bryan. Because Graham had threatened with a bomb, the College Station bomb squad was called to investigate. On investigation, bomb techs felt like the device could possibly be capable of explosion and the surrounding area was evacuated. In the defendant's testimony, he stated that he had created the hoax bomb to look like the real thing using materials he bought from a store.

In punishment, prosecutors presented evidence that Graham had robbed the Guaranty Bank in Bryan in May of 2009, with a gun, and had not been apprehended. Graham admitted on the stand that he was responsible for the 2009 bank robbery. Additionally, prosecutors presented evidence that the teller he robbed in 2009 was the same woman he first contacted in 2013 at a different bank to ask for the manager. Prosecutors asked for no less than 60 years in their closing arguments, while Graham's defense counsel asked for probation.

**“Bank Robbers don't rob banks; they rob the people who work there. 70 years is a just sentence for what he put the victims through.”**

**- Jason Goss, Assistant District Attorney**

