

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF ALABAMA
NORTHERN DIVISION

RICKY LEE TAYLOR,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
v.)
)
JEAN HARTZOG,)
)
Defendant.)

CIVIL ACTION NO. 2:09cv194-MHT
(LEAD CASE)

RICKY LEE TAYLOR,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
v.)
)
CALLIE HEATH,)
)
Defendant.)

CIVIL ACTION NO. 2:09cv195-MHT

RICKY LEE TAYLOR,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
v.)
)
GEORGE PARHAM,)
)
Defendant.)

CIVIL ACTION NO. 2:09cv196-MHT

RICKY LEE TAYLOR,)
)
 Plaintiff,)
)
 v.) CIVIL ACTION NO. 2:09cv197-MHT
)
)
 JOHNA COTTON,)
)
)
 Defendant.)

RICKY LEE TAYLOR,)
)
 Plaintiff,)
)
 v.) CIVIL ACTION NO. 2:09cv198-MHT
)
)
 MARSHALL WILLIAMS, JR.,)
)
)
 Defendant.)

ORDER AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE MAGISTRATE JUDGE

Upon consideration of the plaintiff’s motion for leave to proceed *in forma pauperis*,
it is

ORDERED that the motion be and is hereby GRANTED.¹

In this 42 U.S.C. § 1983 action, the *pro se* inmate complains that the defendants failed
to provide him with adequate medical care in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment to the

¹ The court has previously consolidated *Taylor v. Heath*, Civil Act. No. 2:09cv195-MHT, *Taylor v. Parham*, Civil Act. No. 2:09cv196-MHT, *Taylor v. Cotton*, 2:09cv197-MHT, and *Taylor v. Williams*, 2:09cv198-MHT. Consequently, the motions to proceed *in forma pauperis* pending in those cases (docs. # 2) be and are hereby GRANTED in these cases also.

United States Constitution.² Specifically, the plaintiff contends that, from August 30, 2003 until October 15, 2003, the defendants violated his constitutional rights by failing to treat him for injuries he suffered when he fell from a top bunk while incarcerated at the Barbour County Jail. The plaintiff names as defendants Jean Hartzog, Callie Heath, George Parham and Marshall Williams, Jr. – all employees of the Barbour County Jail. Upon review of the complaint, the court concludes that dismissal of this case is proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B).

The plaintiff alleges the following facts as the basis of his complaint. On August 30, 2003, he fell from the top bunk in his cell. His back struck the bottom bunk. He alleges that he was left lying on the cold concrete floor over three hours after which he was transported to the hospital by ambulance. After he had been treated at the hospital, he was returned to the Barbour County jail where he contends the defendants failed to treat him from that date until October 15, 2003. As a result, he is now paralyzed and suffers from hip and neck injuries as well as damaged eyesight and a torn heart valve. The plaintiff filed his complaints on March 9, 2009, seeking damages.

The law is clear that, in section 1983 actions, Alabama's two-year personal injury statute of limitations is applicable. *See Owens v. Okure*, 488 U.S. 235 (1989); *see also Jones v. Preuit and Mauldin*, 876 F.2d 1480 (11th Cir. 1989); *Dukes v. Smitherman*, 32 F.3d 535

² Although the plaintiff purports to pursue his claims under the Fourth Amendment, because he challenges his treatment while a pre-trial detainee, the appropriate analysis is under the Fourteenth Amendment. *See Danley v. Allen*, 540 F.3d 1298, 1310 (11th Cir. 2008).

(11th Cir. 1994). The plaintiff is proceeding in forma pauperis pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915. Under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2) and § 1915A(b)(1), the court shall dismiss a case if the court determines that an action is frivolous or fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted. In this circuit, claims barred by the statute of limitations may be dismissed under § 1915. *Clarke v. State of Ga. Pardons & Paroles Bd.*, 915 F.2d 636 (11th Cir. 1990). This is a paradigm of a case that should be dismissed without prejudice pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(i). The plaintiff's claims are barred by the statute of limitations.³ This lawsuit was filed on March 9, 2009. The plaintiff alleges that the deprivation of his constitutional rights occurred on August 30, 2003 and continued until October 15, 2003. The plaintiff's claims arose more than two years before the date he filed this complaint, and thus, his claims are barred by the statute of limitations.⁴

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, it is the RECOMMENDATION of the Magistrate Judge that this case be DISMISSED pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(d) and (e)(2)(i). It is further the RECOMMENDATION of the Magistrate Judge that costs be taxed against the plaintiff.

³ Unquestionably, the statute of limitations is usually a matter which may be raised as an affirmative defense. The court notes, however, that in an action proceeding under § 1983, it may consider, *sua sponte*, affirmative defenses that are apparent from the face of the complaint. *Clark v. State of Ga. Pardons & Parole Bd.*, 915 F.2d 636, 640 n.2 (11th Cir. 1990); *see also Ali v. Higgs*, 892 F.2d 438 (5th Cir. 1990). “[I]f the district court sees that an affirmative defense would defeat the action, a section 1915[(e)(2)(B)(i)] dismissal is allowed.” *Clark*, 915 F.2d at 640. “The expiration of the statute of limitations is an affirmative defense the existence of which warrants dismissal as frivolous.” *Id.* at 640 n. 2.

⁴ Moreover, the plaintiff is precluded from pursuing his claims in this litigation by the doctrine of estoppel. The plaintiff previously unsuccessfully litigated these claims against defendant Marshall Williams, Jr.. *See Taylor v. Williams*, Civ. Act. No. 2:05cv325-VPM (M.D. Ala. Aug. 3, 2006).

