

# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1  
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

FILE NO. **62-2108**

REPORT MADE AT <b>CHICAGO, ILLINOIS</b>	DATE WHEN MADE <b>11/12/35</b>	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE <b>11/6,7/35</b>	REPORT MADE BY <b>W. J. DEVEREUX</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>WJD:RP</b></span>
TITLE <b>JOHN HERBERT DILLINGER, with aliases: John Hall, John Donovan Hall, Clarence Cruse, Joseph J. Harris, J. H. Donovan, Kirtly, Frank Sullivan, Carl T. Hellman - DECEASED.</b>			CHARACTER OF CASE <b>DEATH MASK OF DILLINGER.</b>

**SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:**

Officials Coroner's office, Chicago, deny any permission given anyone take death mask Dillinger, County Morgue, July, 1934. Information that embalming school, Chicago, attempted to take mask, but ousted from Morgue and mask confiscated. Other information that Deputy Coroner then in charge of Morgue may have permitted death mask made without Coroner's knowledge. Such Deputy subsequently discharged because of dishonesty. Chicago undertaker denies masks taken at his parlors.

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**REFERENCE:**

Bureau letter dated October 24, 1935.  
(File No. 62-29777).

**DETAILS:**

At the Cook County Morgue, West Polk Street near Wood Street, Chicago, Illinois, Agent interviewed several office attendants regarding the identity of any Chicago person or firm who may have been permitted to make a death mask of John Dillinger when his body was at the Morgue on July 23 and 24, 1934. The individuals interviewed professed ignorance of any mask being taken excepting what they had read in the newspapers during July, 1934.

APPROVED AND FORWARDED: <i>[Signature]</i> SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES	
COPIES OF THIS REPORT  2 - Bureau 2 - Chicago  COPIES DESTROYED 40 SEP 2 1964	62-29777-6531	NOV 15 1935
	NOV 1935 FBI - CHICAGO ONE APPROVE CRIME SECT.	DEC 2 1935

Dr. C. W. Muehlberger, Coroner's chemist at the County Morgue, with whom reporting Agent had become acquainted in another case, advised Agent confidentially that at the time that John Dillinger's body was brought to the County Morgue on the night of July 22, 1934, every politician and his friend in Chicago crowded into the morgue for the morbid purpose of viewing Dillinger's remains; that as a result, the officials having to do with the Coroner's office at the morgue, were practically ousted from their offices and were not in position to properly conduct their work. He stated that great confusion existed at the morgue several days, inasmuch as there were thousands of people who attempted to gain admission to view Dillinger's body, and that almost anything could have happened. He stated that he did not know of his own knowledge as to any persons or organizations who may have taken a death mask of Dillinger at the morgue, although he did advise that newspaper stories in July, 1934, carried the name of Professor D. E. Ashworth, of the Worsham College of Embalming, 620 South Lincoln Street, Chicago, had gained access to Dillinger's body under a pretext of making a mask for a crime laboratory and had offered the explanation that Coroner Walsh and former Special Agent in Charge Melvin H. Purvis of the Chicago Bureau Office had given him permission to enter the morgue and take the death mask. Dr. Muehlberger further advised that it was his understanding that Police Officer Alfred Mulvaney, now attached to Captain Shoemaker's Squad of the Detective Bureau and assigned at the Marquette Police Station, and who in July, 1934, had been assigned to the Coroner's Office, had checked up on Professor Ashworth's story and had ascertained from Coroner Walsh that he had given no one permission to take a death mask, thereupon Officer Mulvaney ousted Professor Ashworth and his students and confiscated the mask which he had partially completed.

Dr. Muehlberger furnished the information that Mr. Jacob Schewel, who was Deputy Coroner, in charge of the County Morgue in July, 1934, had since been fired by Coroner Walsh for dishonesty in office, such dishonesty, according to Dr. Muehlberger, being the accepting of gratuities and/or the demanding of gratuities for certain privileges at the morgue.

Coroner Walsh was interviewed by Agent under the supposition that Agent was trying to [REDACTED]

b7E [REDACTED] and he stated that he had positively not given anyone permission or any organization permission

to take a death mask of Dillinger while Dillinger's body was in his possession. He stated that he had heard that a teacher at the Worsham College of Emblaming at Chicago had been caught in the act of making a death mask at the morgue, but had been ousted and the mask confiscated. He also stated that a man whom he believed to be named Mr. May or Mays, and whom he believed to be connected with a dental laboratory in Chicago, had tried to reach him fifteen or twenty times during the day of July 23, 1934, and when he, the Coroner, finally telephoned Mr. May to ascertain what he wanted, it was ascertained that this person desired permission to enter the morgue and take a death mask of Dillinger's face. Coroner Walsh stated that he told this person that he would not be permitted to make any mask and several days later, this person came to his office and presented him with a plaster of Paris copy of a death mask, which this person stated he had taken even though Coroner Walsh refused to let him have permission. The Coroner further advised that as he remembered this person's conversation, he gathered that the individual had been given permission by John Dillinger's father to make the mask after Dillinger's body had been released by the Coroner's office.

Coroner Walsh exhibited the mask which had been given to him to Agent and it was noted that the mask bore an impression at the corner of the right eye which Coroner Walsh stated had been caused by the bullet which had entered Dillinger's neck and came out at that point. It was evident from the view of the mask that same was not taken after the body had been embalmed inasmuch as the impression was a perfect replica of the wound as it appeared on Dillinger's face before his body was embalmed.

Mr. Donahue, an investigator in Coroner Walsh's office, and Mr. Whalen, first assistant to the Chief Deputy, Coroner, both advised Agent that they knew nothing of any mask being taken at the County Morgue, except what they had read in the newspapers in July, 1934, to the effect that the embalming school on the west side had tried to take a mask, but had been ordered out of the morgue before they could complete the same.

Agent interviewed Officer Alfred Mulvaney, who had been attached to the Coroner's office in July, 1934, he now being attached to the Marquette Station, Chicago Police Department, and he advised that he had noticed that a Professor of the Worsham College of Embalming was engaged in taking a death mask of Dillinger's face when Dillinger's body was at the County

Morgue and he had asked this person who had given him permission to take the mask and had been advised that Coroner Walsh had authorized such procedure. Officer Mulvaney stated that he got in touch with Coroner Walsh and ascertained that no permission had been given to anyone to take a death mask and he thereupon ordered the person from the embalming college out of the morgue and confiscated the mask which was in the process of being completed.

Officer Mulvaney inquired of Agent the reason for the inquiries at this time and he was advised that Agent was trying to locate the organization in Chicago who had had permission to enter the morgue and take a death mask of Dillinger. He thereupon stated that if Agent desired he could interview an official at the Worsham College of Embalming at 620 South Lincoln Street, Chicago, and there learn the name of the man whom Officer Mulvaney had given permission to make a mask.

This Officer further advised that all that Agent need do would be to mention his name as having been the Officer on duty at the morgue at the time the mask was made by the officials of the Worsham College of Embalming.

Agent gathered from Officer Mulvaney's attitude that notwithstanding his statement that Coroner Walsh had not permitted anyone to take a death mask of Dillinger, yet such a mask was obtained, although he stated that no dental laboratory in Chicago had made such a mask.

Agent interviewed Mr. McCready of McCready's Funeral Home, 4506 Sheridan Road, Chicago, and was informed by him that no one had made any death mask of Dillinger while Dillinger's body was in his possession. He stated that he had been authorized by the Dillinger family to obtain possession of John Dillinger's body and prepare the same for burial and that he had gone to the County Morgue and had embalmed the body at the morgue. He stated that at the time he arrived at the County Morgue he had to wait about one hour until certain individuals who were there and who were then taking a death mask of Dillinger had completed their work, after which the body was turned over to him and he prepared the same for burial, later removing it to his Funeral Home. He stated that when he obtained possession of the body, the face was very much lacerated by the material which had been poured on the face and which had been taken off in a rough manner so as to tear certain parts of the face, the mustache and the hair.

Mr. McCready stated that when he did obtain possession of Dillinger's body for the purpose of embalming same he asked persons in charge at the morgue whether it was a practice to permit death masks to be taken of bodies in the charge of public officials and he was informed that it was not the practice and seemingly no one knew by what right the persons who were then making the mask were doing so.

Agent questioned Mr. McCready as to whether it was some person from the Worsham College of Emblaming who was taking the death mask at the time he was there waiting for the body and he stated that he was later given to understand that it was someone from an embalming school who was making the mask. He reiterated his statement to Agent that no one made any mask of Dillinger's face after he had embalmed the body and removed it to his Funeral Home, although he would not state whether such mask had been made after the body had been taken from his Funeral Home to Mooresville, Indiana, by John Dillinger's father.

Agent reviewed the newspaper files for July, 1934, and in the Chicago Evening American, under date of July 24, 1934, the following news article was noted:

**"DILLINGER DEATH MASK ATTEMPT HALTED"**

"There will be no death masks of John Dillinger.

Six men invaded the county morgue early today, began work on two masks, and almost got away with the enterprise before authorities discovered they had been given no permission for their plan.

The group was led by a man who said he was Professor D. E. Ashworth of the Worsham College of Embalming, 620 S. Lincoln St. He named his companions as students and said Coroner Walsh and Melvin Purvis had said he could make the masks.

Deputy Coroner Jacob Schewel ordered Dillinger's body removed to a side room, where the work was started, while a crowd, anxious to view the body, waited impatiently.

Then along came Policeman Albert Mulvaney, gun expert of the coroner's office. Suspicious of the strangers, he called and learned that Coroner Walsh had given nobody permission to make masks. Mulvaney seized the nearly completed mask, believed to have been intended for commercial use, and ejected the "professor" and his students from the morgue."

A four-column picture accompanied the above quoted newspaper story, showing Professor Ashworth in the act of lifting the plaster cast from the face of John Dillinger's body which was also present in the picture and four or five persons were surrounding the Professor and presumably were the students of the embalming college.

No other reference was made in the newspapers during the month of July, 1934, to any death mask taken of John Dillinger.

No attempt was made to interview Mr. Jacob Schewel, former Deputy Coroner in charge of the County Morgue and who, according to information furnished, was discharged from this position because of dishonesty in the conduct of his office, inasmuch as it is not believed that he would give any information as to who took any death mask of Dillinger, since such a mask was taken, he probably was given a substantial sum of money to look the other way.

Likewise, no inquiries were made of the Reliance Dental Corporation, Chicago, which organization is mentioned in the Bureau letter of reference as being the sender of the complimentary copy of the death mask of John Dillinger to the Bureau. It is not believed that any discreet investigation or inquiries could be made at the Reliance Dental Corporation without the purpose of such inquiries or investigation being apparent.

- C L O S E D -

KRM:CJ

-6531

November 26, 1935

RECORDED

62-29777

Special Agent in Charge,  
Chicago, Illinois.

RE: JOHN HERBERT DILLINGER with  
aliases: John Hall, John Donovan  
Hall, Clarence Cruss, Joseph J.  
Harris, J. H. Donovan, Kirtly,  
Frank Sullivan, Carl T. Hallman,  
(Deceased) - Death Mask of Dillinger

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to the report of Special Agent W. J. Devereux, dated at Chicago, Illinois November 12, 1935 reporting efforts to obtain information as to the organization which prepared the death mask of John Herbert Dillinger.

The Bureau does not feel that this matter has been pursued properly and you are, therefore, authorized to immediately institute further investigation through the Worsham College of Embalming, 620 South Lincoln Street, Chicago and through the Reliance Dental Corporation. The reference report indicates very definitely that Officer Alfred Mulvaney of the Chicago Police Department granted permission to a representative of the Worsham College of Embalming to prepare such a mask. It would, therefore, appear that an interview with proper representatives of said College should be in order.

It is desired that the requested interview be conducted in a discreet and diplomatic manner. Please submit a report on this investigation in the immediate future.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,  
Director.

