

1216 Smith Young Tower
San Antonio, Texas.
August 19, 1936.

OTJ b7c

Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D. C.

Re: KATHRYN KELLY,
CHARLES F. URSCHEL, Victim
Kidnaping.

Dear Sir:

Kathryn Kelly was the daughter of J. E. and Ora L. Brooks. Her father and mother were divorced about 1927. Her mother later married R. G. Shannon, a prosperous farmer and rancher at Paradise, Texas. This union resulted from a correspondence courtship started by the fact that the present Mrs. Shannon was writing articles for some Oklahoma Farm Magazine, R. G. Shannon being a subscriber thereto. ✓

Up to that time R. G. Shannon was a rather well respected citizen of Wise County, Texas. However, it appears that the mother of Kathryn Kelly brought certain Oklahoma connections with her at the time she took up her domicile at Paradise, Texas, as the wife of R. G. Shannon. ✓

Kathryn Kelly was first married to a man by the name of Fry. Nothing is known concerning this individual or what became of him. She later married a bootlegger by the name of Charles G. Thorne, who was in the wholesale bootlegging business at Fort Worth, Texas. Charles Thorne bought the house and furnishings at 857 E. Mulkey Street, Fort Worth, which was later known as the home of Kathryn Kelly. While Kathryn and Charles Thorne still maintained the house at Fort Worth, Texas, they did live for a time at Coleman, Texas, where Thorne, assisted by Kathryn, pursued his bootlegging vocation. ✓

About 1927 or 1928 Charles Thorne was found dead in the bedroom of their home at Coleman, Texas, shot through the head, a revolver laying by his side, and a typewritten note stating in substance, "I could not live with or without Kathryn consequently I am departing this world." A verdict of suicide was rendered although it was commonly talked at Coleman, Texas, that there was a possibility that Charlie Thorne had not committed suicide. ✓

As a sidelight concerning this episode, an informant, who was a relative of Kathryn Kelly, advised the writer during the investigation of the Urschel kidnaping case that one day Kathryn Kelly and another woman stopped at his filling station between Fort Worth and Coleman, Texas, and upon asking Kathryn where she was going she said, "I am going to Coleman and kill that s-o-b Charles Thorne." A couple of days later informant noticed in the press that Charles Thorne had committed suicide. He stated at that time Kathryn was drinking. ✓

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After the death of Charles Thorne Kathryn made her headquarters at the Mulkey Street house at Fort Worth, Texas. It is known that she was a woman of easy virtue and made her livelihood in any manner she could other than by physical labor.

Through the fact that she had a nephew in the U. S. Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, at the time George Kelly was incarcerated in that institution, she somehow came to know Kelly, who after his discharge teamed up with her and later they were married. It is known that she would make long trips sometimes of weeks and months duration with Kelly and no doubt she participated in many of his unlawful ventures.

It is a conceded fact by everyone who knew both Kathryn and George Kelly that she was the dominating factor in this combination. She had more nerve and wisdom in the matter of law violations than George Kelly. It is not known whether she actually participated in any bank robberies with Kelly or any of his gangster associates, however, she was fully capable of doing so and had no scruples whatever along that line. Their home at Fort Worth, Texas, was not a pretentious place, however, it was a very comfortable six-room bungalow located in a very nice residential section of the city. Kathryn Kelly had no connections at Fort Worth, Texas, or any other place with any socially reputable people. It seemed to be her ambition to associate herself with high-class gangsters and it is firmly believed that it was her brain and ability that placed George Kelly in big-time gangster circles.

The reason that Detective [redacted] (not [redacted]) of the Fort Worth, Texas, Police Department was in her confidence and why she did so much talking to him was due to the fact that [redacted] had for a year or two prior to the Urshel case, been on very intimate terms with Kathryn. He likewise personally knew George Kelly. I know this to be a fact as [redacted] so intimated and on more than one occasion said that he did not desire to appear as a witness in the Urshel case.

Kathryn Kelly, after she found out that [redacted] had been associated with Bureau Agents in the Urshel investigation, became very bitter toward [redacted] and made many statements and insinuations that George Kelly, Albert Bates, and herself had paid off [redacted] on more than one occasion. This is partly borne out by the fact that at the time of his arrest in Denver, Colorado, Albert Bates smuggled a telegram out of the Denver City Jail addressed to [redacted] Detectives, Fort Worth, Texas, requesting them to come to Denver after him on a bank robbery charge in Texas. This telegram was no doubt sent thinking to avoid possible implication in the Urshel case on the part of Bates and disclosed that he and George and Kathryn were probably on very friendly terms with [redacted]. The man [redacted] mentioned in the telegram, was also a City Detective in Fort Worth, Texas, working as a partner with Detective [redacted].

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Investigation in the Urschel case failed to develop that Kathryn Kelly took any part in the Indiana Kidnaping case which Kelly and Eddie Doll admitted they perpetrated. It was always believed by the writer and other Agents connected with the Urschel case that either Kathryn Kelly or her mother, Ora L. Shannon, actually typed the Urschel kidnaping notes as both of them were above the average typist. In fact, Mrs. Shannon, had at one time held a position as a typist. This, however, was never proved as we were never able to locate the typewriter on which the notes were written.

The writer has always been of the opinion that Kathryn Kelly is one of the most cold-blooded dangerous women that he has ever contacted. She would, in my opinion, commit murder with the slightest provocation and in the search for her and George Kelly I always had in mind, in case the pair were located, to pay more attention to Kathryn than George Kelly while an arrest of the pair was being made. She is a consummate actress and possessed of an absolute dual personality.

According to the Arnold child, who was with them on part of their frantic effort to evade arrest, Kathryn and George with the Arnold child made their way from Coleman, Texas, to Chicago, Ill., where they rented an apartment and the first evening that they occupied the apartment George observed two men standing on the sidewalk in front of the apartment building and immediately had a first-class case of the "jitters" and insisted to Kathryn that they abandon their apartment immediately. According to the Arnold girl Kathryn gave George a first class "cussing" and stated that in her opinion he had no intestinal fortitude. The upshot of it was that Kathryn took George and planted him in a picture show that evening and proceeded to rent another hideout.

The Arnold girl advised the writer that on many occasions during the time she was with the pair George Kelly would walk the floor and rave, "I am the biggest fool that ever lived. I was making about fifty grand a year knocking off tin-can banks and now I have been inveigled into this thing. I wouldn't have this government heat on me for a million dollars." Even the Arnold child while with them reached the opinion that Kathryn Kelly had far more brains and nerve than did her husband George.

Kathryn Kelly had an obsession for fine clothes, fine jewelry, and expensive automobiles and apparently set her goal to the end that she would participate in anything to keep herself supplied with luxuries of this kind.

Very truly yours,

Gus F. Jones,
Special Agent in Charge.