

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR

Federal Bureau of Investigation

U. S. Department of Justice

Washington, D. C.

April 13, 1936

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Mr. Nathan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Tolson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Baughman	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Clerk	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Clegg	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Coffey	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Edwards	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Egan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Foxworth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Glavin	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Joseph	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Keith	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Lester	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Quinn	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Neill	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Tamm	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Tracy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miss Gandy	<input type="checkbox"/>

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

Re: Capture of George
"Machine Gun" Kelly.

The apprehension of George R. Kelly and his wife, Kathryn Thorn Kelly, at Memphis, Tennessee on the morning of September 26, 1935, was brought about through information obtained by Special Agents of this Bureau. Members of the Memphis, Tennessee Police Department were asked to assist Agents of this Bureau in the apprehension of Kelly. The following will show the facts leading up to the arrest and the persons who participated therein. In addition thereto, letters of appreciation were written the various police officers who assisted the Bureau in effecting the apprehension of Kelly.

A report of Special Agent [redacted] covering the investigation leading up to the arrest as a result of information furnished the Birmingham Office, reflects that about midnight on Monday, September 25, 1935, Assistant Director Harold Nathan telephonically informed Special Agent in Charge W. A. Rorer from Oklahoma City that George Kelly and his wife, Kathryn, were then at Memphis, Tennessee and that Kelly had dyed his hair yellow, while Kathryn Kelly was wearing a red wig. In addition, the Kellys had with them two revolvers and were living at the home of one J. C. Tichenor, which was located in a small brick house about one block off Speedway Drive at Memphis. It was further related that Tichenor was partially paralyzed and was said to operate a used car department. Instructions were given by Mr. Nathan to Special Agent in Charge Rorer and Special Agent [redacted] to make immediate plans to proceed to Memphis by plane and to effect the apprehension of the Kellys before daybreak. Shortly thereafter [redacted] related that the Director telephonically informed Mr. Rorer, from Washington, confirming the information that the Kellys were in Memphis and instructed that airplanes be immediately chartered for immediate travel to Memphis to effect the apprehension of the Kellys before dawn. The director further stated that Special Agent in Charge D. M. Ladd, of the St. Louis Office, had likewise been instructed to proceed to Memphis, together with Agents of this Bureau.

In accordance with these instructions, arrangements were immediately made at the National Guard Flying Field at Birmingham, known as Robert's Field, for transportation to Memphis, inasmuch as no commercial

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planes were available at the Birmingham, Alabama airports. Two planes were prepared, piloted by Lieutenants [redacted] and [redacted], upon instructions of Colonel Smith.

Special Agent [redacted] who was then Resident Agent at Memphis, Tennessee, was advised of the plans made by Mr. Rorer to proceed to Memphis and in addition thereto was requested by Mr. Rorer to obtain the necessary assistance from reliable members of the Memphis Police Department to locate Kelly's hideout and to prepare the mode of procedure for the execution of the apprehension at approximately 5:00 A.M., September 26, 1933, when it was expected that Agents Rorer and [redacted] would arrive at Memphis.

Upon receiving these instructions from Mr. Rorer, Agent [redacted] attempted to locate Chief of Detectives W. T. Griffin, of the Memphis Police Department, and being unable to contact him then communicated with Police Headquarters, where [redacted] was unable to obtain immediate assistance; however, Agent [redacted] communicated with Detective Sergeant [redacted] who was known personally to [redacted] as an efficient and reliable police officer. [redacted] immediately contacted [redacted] at a designated time and place and was furnished with the information which had been received from Special Agent in Charge Rorer. Together with [redacted] Agent [redacted] located the Tichenor residence and then proceeded to make arrangements for additional police assistance at Memphis.

Mr. Rorer and Agent [redacted] departed from Robert's Field, Birmingham, Alabama, in two Army planes at approximately 5:20 A. M., September 26, 1933 and landed at the Memphis Airport at 5:30 A.M., where they were met by Special Agent [redacted] and Sergeant [redacted] of the Memphis Police Department. Detectives [redacted] and [redacted] together with uniformed officers [redacted] and [redacted] were requested by telephone to meet the Agents of this Bureau and Sergeant [redacted] at a point between the airport and Kelly's hideout, but were not informed of their mission.

Upon the arrival of Detectives [redacted] and [redacted] and Officers [redacted] and [redacted] in two cars, they proceeded to 1408 Rayner Street, which is located approximately one block from South Parkway. Upon arrival at the house in which Kelly and his wife were supposed to be hiding, Special Agent in Charge Rorer, Agent [redacted] and Detective Sergeant [redacted] entered the house from the front door.

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Agent [redacted] remained outside and was assisted by [redacted] and [redacted] to cover the sides of the house. Patrolmen [redacted] and [redacted] were instructed to cover the rear of the house. The front door was found open and Rorer, [redacted] and [redacted] immediately entered the front living room. Upon entering this room it was observed that a door on the right led to a bedroom. Rorer and Sergeant [redacted] reached this door first and Sergeant Raney covered Tichenor and Travis who were asleep in this room. According to Agent [redacted] Special Agent Rorer observed that neither of the men asleep in this room was Kelly and therefore instructed Agent [redacted] to remain at this point. Rorer rushed to the back of the house through the kitchen and as he proceeded to the back of the house, Kelly came into view, having approached from the back bedroom. He was immediately covered by Sergeant [redacted] who was nearest to him and [redacted] had covered Tichenor and Travis. At about this time, Agent [redacted] glanced into the back bedroom and saw Kathryn Kelly in bed, noticing Agent Rorer had entered the back bedroom and was covering Kathryn Kelly. Handcuffs were placed on Kelly and soon thereafter Sergeant [redacted] obtained a .45 Colt automatic which was lying on a sewing machine in the hall and stated to Agent [redacted] that he believed Kelly had placed it there when he realized that the house was surrounded and that he had no chance to escape. Kelly, according to [redacted] did not offer any resistance, nor did he have an opportunity to shoot. However, [redacted] did not observe any firearm on Kelly at the time he took him into custody. Mr. Rorer did not observe Kelly until the time he was covered by Sergeant [redacted].

Information was further obtained after the apprehension of Kelly to the effect that Sergeant [redacted] entered the house immediately after Agent Rorer, Sergeant [redacted] and Agent [redacted] and it was further observed that Sergeant [redacted] placed the handcuffs on Kelly while Kelly was covered by Sergeant [redacted]. At the time the apprehension of Kelly was first reported to the Bureau, there was some discrepancy as to the actual facts relative to the person who took Kelly into custody and the facts were subsequently clarified after the raid and are substantially as set out hereinbefore.

The apprehension of Kelly occurred at approximately 6:45 A.M., September 26, 1933. The prisoners were registered at the Memphis City Jail at approximately 7:15 A.M. Mr. Ladd arrived later in the morning and was not present at the time of the raid. Seymour Travis, who was taken into custody with Tichenor, is a brother-in-law of Tichenor and had been living at this home for the past two years.

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Subsequent to the apprehension of Kelly, numerous correspondence was had with persons who were interested in the reward offered for the apprehension of the Kellys and in addition thereto, letters of appreciation were written the various police officers who assisted the Bureau in effecting the apprehension of Kelly.

A letter was addressed to Mr. C. F. Colcord on November 17, 1955 under personal and confidential cover, relating the facts relative to the apprehension of Kelly and in addition to the facts concerning the apprehension of Kelly, a statement was made to the effect that the apprehension of the Kellys was effected with the assistance of Detective Sergeant [redacted] of the Memphis, Tennessee Police Department, together with the assistance of Detectives [redacted] and [redacted] and uniformed officers [redacted] and [redacted]. Colcord is President of the Oklahoma Biltmore Hotel, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and on November 7, 1955 had furnished the Bureau with the names of the claimants to the reward which he had offered for the apprehension of "Machine Gun" Kelly and his wife, Kathryn.

In answer to a letter addressed by the Bureau under date of October 2, 1955 to Chief Inspector W. T. Griffin, of the City of Memphis, Tennessee, expressing the appreciation of the Bureau for assistance received relative to the apprehension of Kelly and his wife, Kathryn, Mr. Griffin took this occasion to thank the Director for the Bureau's expression of the assistance and performance which were rendered by members of his police department. Griffin said "I beg to assure you it was a genuine pleasure to have an opportunity to work with your Agents in this case and trust we may again be in the position to serve you".

Under date of September 30, 1955 a letter of appreciation was addressed to [redacted] and [redacted] Detective Sergeant [redacted] W. T. Griffin, [redacted] and [redacted] for the splendid and courageous assistance which they had rendered to Special Agents of this Bureau.

On the same date a letter was addressed to Mr. Will D. Lee, Chief of Police, Memphis, Tennessee, wherein the Bureau's appreciation was expressed to him for the assistance which members of his police department had rendered to the Bureau.

Respectfully,

A. Rosen

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