

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Detective Wins Fee From Ray

But Renfro Hays May Find Collection Difficult On \$6,625 Judgment

By CHARLES EDMUNDSON

Renfro Hays, a private investigator once employed to gather evidence to defend James Earl Ray in the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was awarded a judgment of \$6,625 yesterday in Chancery Court for his services.

In the Courthouse corridor immediately afterward, Richard Ryan, Ray's attorney, taunted Hays, "Now try to collect!" Ray is serving a 99-year term in the state penitentiary at Nashville after pleading guilty.

Charles M. 'Pat' Murphy, Hays' attorney, conceded that the only immediate chance of collecting is to attach the 1966 white Mustang Ray drove to Memphis and escaped in the night of April 4, 1968, just after Dr. King was slain.

Mr. Murphy delayed asking Chancellor Charles Nearn for an attachment order, saying he wanted to see if Mr. Ryan appeals. Mr. Ryan did not say last night whether he would. He indicated he would first need to get in touch with Ray in his maximum security prison cell in Nashville.

The court record yesterday showed Ray claims only a minor share in the Mustang. But no evidence was brought out to show who owns the rest. A handwritten affidavit from Ray says he paid a small part with proceeds from the sale of a cheap used car he bought while working in a Winnetka, Ill., restaurant a few months before Dr. King was killed.

Ray says he does not know who owns the rest of the Mustang, for which he paid \$1,995 in Birmingham in August 1967. But he has been quoted by reporter William B. Huie of Hartselle, Ala., as saying most of the purchase price was advanced by a Latin-looking man known to him only as "Raoul."

The only other known property Mr. Hays might try to attach is a 30.06 Remington pump action rifle, which police say is the murder weapon. It was found on the sidewalk near 422½ South Main a few minutes after the slaying.

Chancellor Nearn indicated he would refuse an attachment order for the gun. A Tennessee law, he pointed out, leaves such a weapon in the custody of the Criminal Court clerk, who has the right to destroy it when it is no longer needed as evidence.

"My client and I contend this is not the murder weapon, but a decoy," Mr. Murphy said after the hearing. "At the proper time we will ask for a hearing to present evidence that this is not the murder weapon and is subject to attachment."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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