

HOLED UP—OR BURIED

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# The Ray Mystery Deepens

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James Earl Ray, sought as the slayer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., has disappeared as effectively as if the earth had swallowed him, and that may well have been the case.

"If he was the hired trigger-man of a conspiracy, the chances are very good that he has been killed to silence him forever," said one official who has been close to the international manhunt for Ray. "But if he conceived and carried out the plot alone, he is probably holed up somewhere. But where?"

Whether he was a paid gunman or a loner, the last trace of Ray goes back to the morning of April 5, less than 15 hours after Dr. King was shot to death by a sniper in Memphis, Tenn.

Mrs. Ernest Payne, who lives in a low-rent housing project called Capitol Homes in Atlanta, Ga., peered out her window



JAMES EARL RAY

sometime between 7 and 9 a.m. that day and saw a man believed to be Ray park a white 1966 Mustang. Two Atlanta cab drivers believe they saw

have given Ray a short ride that same morning.

Beyond that point, Ray has vanished.

The FBI has said nothing about the progress of its investigation and has issued only three terse press releases along with several photos of the wanted man. But from a number of sources it has been possible to amass a considerable amount of information about Ray's life prior to last April 4.

Ray was penniless when he escaped from the Missouri State Penitentiary at Jefferson City, Mo. on April 23, 1967.

On Aug. 30, 1967, he turned up in Birmingham, Ala., rented a safety deposit box in the Birmingham Trust National Bank and began spending large amounts of money — estimated to total up to \$10,000 — over the next seven months.

Where he obtained the money See RAY, Page A-1

Continued From Page A-1 that he spent on the car, his 19,000 miles of travel to Canada, Mexico and the West Coast, and on wine, women and bartending lessons is one of the mysteries of the case.

FBI agents have located some persons who describe Ray as a Negro-hating racist and others who say he never mentioned race over long periods of time.

If he has a profession, it is that of a notably unsuccessful small time hoodlum. So far as the records indicate, every hold-up or robbery he ever tried ended in disaster for him. He was, as the convicts say, a three-time loser.

Investigators trying to trace the source of his money have been unable to connect him with any robbery that occurred in his year of freedom since his Missouri prison escape.

The basic federal charge against Ray is conspiracy to violate the civil rights of Dr. King, while the Tennessee charge against him is murder. The conspiracy charge was based on a remark attributed to Ray himself. He is said to have told a Birmingham gun dealer that his brother had told him to buy the .30.06 Remington gamemaster

pump gun which has been tabbed as the murder weapon.

Ray's brothers have been checked out and officials say they have not been linked with the crime.

- But investigators have not ruled out the possibility
- That Dr. King's murder may have been ordered and paid for by extremists of the right or the left.
- That these plotters may have been either white or black.
- That they could have been either domestic or foreign.

The FBI, on orders from Director J. Edgar Hoover to break the King case at any costs, has traced Ray's life from his birth on March 10, 1928 in Alton, Mo. up to the morning of April 5, 1968.

A ninth-grade dropout, he eventually joined the Army and served the better part of three years in the West German cities of Bremen, Bremerhaven, Nuernburg and Frankfurt. He was tried in a refrigeration company, the military police and the infantry, but the Army finally gave him a general discharge for ineptness.

### Arrests Mount

Soon after his release, Ray

turned to crime and was arrested many times from 1940 until his last sentencing in 1968. His life pattern was fixed. He became a loner whose amusements centered on bar girls and prostitutes. He rarely worked. When he needed money for vodka and beer, he stole or took it by force. He never married.

Fellow prisoners knew him as a man addicted to amphetamines or "pep" pills, an avid reader of "Life" magazine, a heavy smoker.

When he was in prison, he was in the "hard" men's group and offered \$50,000 bounty for the death of Dr. King, Ray said. "I'll get out of here, I believe I'll collect that."

On Aug. 30, 1967, Ray answered an ad placed in a Birmingham newspaper by William E. Paisley, who wanted to sell his 1966 Mustang. Ray paid \$1,995 in cash for the car.

At that time, Ray was going under the name of Eric Starvo Galt and it was by that alias he was known to his Birmingham landlord, Peter Cherpes, and to Alabama authorities who issued him a license on Sept. 6, 1967. This was the start of his heavy spending, although he continued to live in cheap rooming houses and rundown hotels.

### Trip to Canada

For reasons unknown, Ray drove to Canada and spent a few days in Montreal. He lived in an old hotel and passed himself off as an employe of Expo-67.

While living in Cherpes' house in Birmingham, Ray received a large box of expensive camera equipment from a mail order firm in Chicago.

Cherpes said Ray left his place on Oct. 7, 1967. He drove to Mexico, where he passed some time in places like Jalisco and Puerto Vallarta. He became well known in the casinos there and even had his picture taken with a Mexican prostitute. (That picture, showing Galt wearing sunglasses, was released by the FBI this week.)

Investigation believes his motive for going to Mexico was to buy marijuana but Ray apparently also liked the country. He told one acquaintance: "When I make my big score, I'm going to come down here and live on beans and beer."

He next turned up in Los Angeles where he checked into

St. Francis Hotel and became a regular habitue of the Sultan Room bar of the hotel and other saloons. The barkeeps and girls around the Rabbit's Foot Club grew to know him as a man with a thirst and a bankroll.

Still as Eric Starvo Galt, he remained in Los Angeles until March 27, 1968, and left a broad trail. There was one side trip from Los Angeles to New Orleans with a man named Charles Stein, a bearded songwriter. Stein reported that his friend required him, his sister and his cousin to sign a petition for third party presidential candidate George Wallace in North Hollywood, Calif. as the price for taking him to New Orleans and back.

Stein recalled that Ray made one long-distance call from somewhere in Texas but did not know who he called. Stein also does not know why Ray went to New Orleans, nor who he saw there.

While in Los Angeles, Ray advertised in the L. A. Free Press, a "hippie tabloid," for a contact with a "passionate married woman." He signed the ad "Eric S." but Free Press records show that he used the full alias, "Eric S. Galt" in paying for the ad. He also bought a list of five female names from the Swinger's Club of Downey, Calif. for \$1 and sent a letter and picture of himself to a Los Angeles girl on Feb. 17. She gave the Polaroid picture to the FBI and it, too, was made public this week.

Using his "Galt" pseudonym, Ray paid more than \$400 for dancing lessons in Long Beach and more than \$200 for a course in bartending during his Los Angeles stay. He paid cash for both.

#### Birmingham Story

Ray left Los Angeles on March 27 and drove to Birmingham arriving there on March 29, the day he made the first of two visits to the Aeronarine Supply Co.

On the first visit he gave his name as Harvey Lowmyer and bought a Remington .243 caliber rifle, telling the salesman he wanted to go deer shooting in Wisconsin. On March 30, "Lowmyer" returned to the shop and said his brother had told him he had gotten the wrong kind of gun. What he wanted, he said, was a Remington 30.06 Game-master with a telescopic sight.

From there, the deduction is that Ray went to Atlanta and got a room in a boarding house inhabited largely by hippies. Here he was once again Galt. The FBI did not find the boarding house until several days after Ray's abandoned car was reported parked in the Atlanta housing project on April 11.

In the vain hope that Ray might still be hiding inside, the FBI raked out the house and searched it for more than 24 hours. That search yielded a map of the area around the housing project from the room after ditching his car April 5. The map had not returned there at all.

But the agents found key evidence in the room — a television set that "Galt" had stolen in a trade with a girl in Los Angeles and a city map of Atlanta.

#### Map Delineated

The map had four circles drawn around four significant locations: Dr. King's Atlanta residence; the office of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; the "hippie" housing project; and the spot where the car had been abandoned on April 5.

Even more important was a well-defined fingerprint found on the map. FBI fingerprint experts were able to determine that the print was from a right thumb, whereas all other prints were fingerprints from Ray's rifle, car, binoculars and map. He had been very cautious for classification.

The decision was made to compare the map fingerprint with the equivalent prints of white male fugitives in the normal age range of the man known as "Galt." An exhaustive finger-by-finger comparison revealed that Eric Starvo Galt was the man who had ditched the car and the crime and the investigation was launched.

#### House Takes Sling At College Unrest

The House has voted to support national Science Foundation funding for research on the causes of college violence and unrest. The bill is expected to pass in the next few days. The House also has passed a bill to support the White House plan for the study of the causes of college violence and unrest.