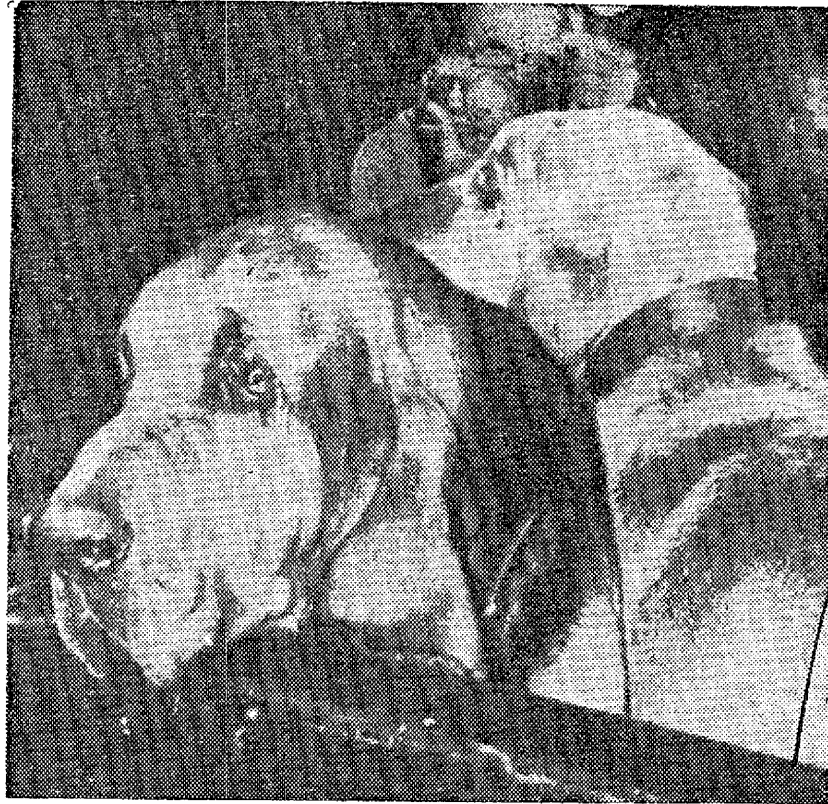


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Two of the bloodhounds used in the tracking of James Earl Ray

Bloodhounds Track Ray for 3 Hours

By WAYNE KING

Special to The New York Times

PETROS, Tenn., June 13—"They run him hard for three hours," said Tennessee's Safety Commissioner, Joel Plummer. Standing before a battery of microphones at the gates of Brushy Mountain Penitentiary, he was clearly exultant.

It had been a massive manhunt, bristling with firepower and electronics. For 54 hours, big Huey helicopters beat the air over the blue and misty mountains of east Tennessee by day; radios crackled through the night, and the alert spread as another name was added to the list of the 10 most wanted fugitives in America.

But in the end, it was dogs and men who ran down James Earl Ray.

He was wet, hungry and bone weary,

and he gave up quietly after trying to hide beneath last fall's decaying leaves on the forest floor.

"James, are you hurt?" asked Sammy Joe Chapman, captain of the six-man bloodhound team that had sent Mr. Ray crashing through ravines of saw-briars and clutching underbrush for three exhausting hours.

"No," he quietly replied. "I'm O.K."

"It's mostly common sense and knowing the woods," said Donald Daugherty, a corrections officer. "You need to know the dogs," he said, smiling slowly, "and it helps if your handlers are smarter than the dogs."

The 44-year-old officer was among

Continued on Page 28, Column 2



The New York Times/D. Gorton

A weary Warden Stonney Lane, lower left, describing capture of James Earl Ray at news conference in Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary in Petros, Tenn. Behind him

were C. Murray Henderson, left, Tennessee Commissioner of Corrections, and Col. Richard Dawson of the state police. The man at lower right was not identified.

Continued From Page 1

the mountain men who helped Warden Stonney Lane in the closing hours of the search.

He accompanied Mr. Ray, the warden, and the assistant warden, Clayton Davis, in the car that took the bedraggled prisoner back to the prison gate.

"Just a tired, exhausted James Earl Ray," said Mr. Daugherty. "He doesn't talk much anyway, and he didn't have much to say on the ride."

The warden asked Mr. Ray on the swift eight-mile drive to the prison gate if he had eaten in the long hours he had struggled through the brush. Mr. Ray, pale and waxy, a sheen of moisture on his face, replied simply, "No."

"The mountains tricky?" Mr. Daugherty asked. "Not necessarily," said Mr. Ray.

A Touch of Humor

But by the time the car had reached the prison gate, Mr. Ray had regained some touch of bitter humor. "You James Earl Ray?" a reporter asked. "I'm not

his mother," he shot back.

For those outside the mountain reaches, the search for Mr. Ray and his escaped companions seemed like a James Cagney scenario of dogs baying wildly through the hills in hot pursuit of desperate and fleeing men. But it was more than that. There was waiting and watching, road blocks were set up and there was endless repetition of the phrase, "Some identification, please" on the black-top roads leading away from the prison.

At the little police department at Oliver Springs, population 500, 20 miles from the prison, Grant L. Lowe, the 34-year-old police chief, lamented the man who got away.

"We set up on Highway 62 outside town in response to the alert on Caylor, six minutes after midnight last night. Anybody who's got a driver's license, we let through. Use common sense.

"It was a 1970 Chevy pick-up truck, green; later Donald Ray Caylor stole it and changed the plates. The officer asked for his license, and, my opinion, he was trying a poker bluff, you know, reached for the glove compartment,

thinking he'd wave him on because he was reaching for his license. The officer put his hand on his gun.

"He floored it, busted away, went straight up White Gap road into town and crashed into a bank. He fled the scene before we could get to it. But we knowed he was in town."

Some seven hours later, a stranger walked up to a town gasoline station and asked an attendant for a cigarette and a light. The attendant called the police, and an alert went out. Donald Ray Caylor, serving 51 years for assault with a deadly weapon, armed robbery and escape, was picked up on a roadside by the Oak Ridge police a few miles away.

"What I think is that the other one is back out there," said the chief. "Tonight, I'm going to get him."

"We wanted to get 'em back," said the State Commissioner of Prisons, C. Murray Henderson, a lanky, droll man with the aspect of a church deacon. He spoke at a midday news briefing after six of seven attempted escapees were back in custody. "We didn't want

'em to feel unwanted," he said.

And what of disciplinary action against James Earl Ray?

"Well, we can take away his good time [off for good behavior], which would really upset him, since he's serving 99 years already. He could get another five years added to his sentence, and that would really upset him, too. I don't think there's really a lot we can do. We will isolate him for a time, but I don't think Ray will change; I'm not expecting any dramatic change."

New Fence May Be Built

The commissioner conceded that changes would have to be made to forestall recurrences of the bold dash over the 14-foot prison wall. He noted that the escaped men had avoided the 2,300-volt high-tension wires topping the wall by snaking under them at a point where a rock cliff abutted the prison wall. And a depression in the cliff had allowed enough space for the convicts to avoid the wires.

The depression, the warden said, will have to be filled in, and rubble—which could have provided a hiding place for the makeshift ladder used—cleared away.

He said that another fence, outside the present stone wall, would probably be erected, and a guard tower moved closer to the break point and kept manned at all times.

The closest tower to the break was unmanned at the time of the escape.

Asked why the men would have gone over the wall with no provision for a pickup outside, the warden replied,

"These particular inmates are not here for exhibiting good judgment."

Thirty-one-year-old Garry Hodge, a Vietnam veteran who piloted Cobra gunships in the war there, sat at the controls of a hulking, black-and-white state police helicopter, the kind they call a Huey in Vietnam, and reflected on the differences between the air war and the search for escaped prisoners in the mountains of Tennessee.

"It's basically the same," he said, glancing up at the mountains, already misting over. "The cover is different; here it's one layer of trees, there you had three. Basically the same, though; you got the rough terrain, and you got to play your cool."

Mr. Hodge had made a score of sweeps over the mountains, ranging over a 25-mile radius, sweeping low to peer into the dense foliage, rising up again in the updrafts to clear the peaks.

The choppers, used only in the daytime and grounded in a downpour yesterday, played a direct role in the capture of only one of the escaped men, flushing out David Lee Powell, the only black among the escapees and the first captured.

The helicopters were considered vital to the search effort, however, prison officials said. The copters kept the convicts pinned down in the woods during the day and narrowed the scope of the

night search with bloodhounds.

"I've worked the dogs four years," said Mr. Daugherty, the corrections officer, "and I've never scented a dog, given him clothes or whatever to sniff. That's for show dogs."

"I don't know what it is, but a dog can tell when a man's running. The dog strikes the right man."

"It's kind of like a baseball player when he hits a home run. He gets adrenalin or something. A dog will drag you down. You spend as much time on the ground as on your feet."

Three Men Sighted

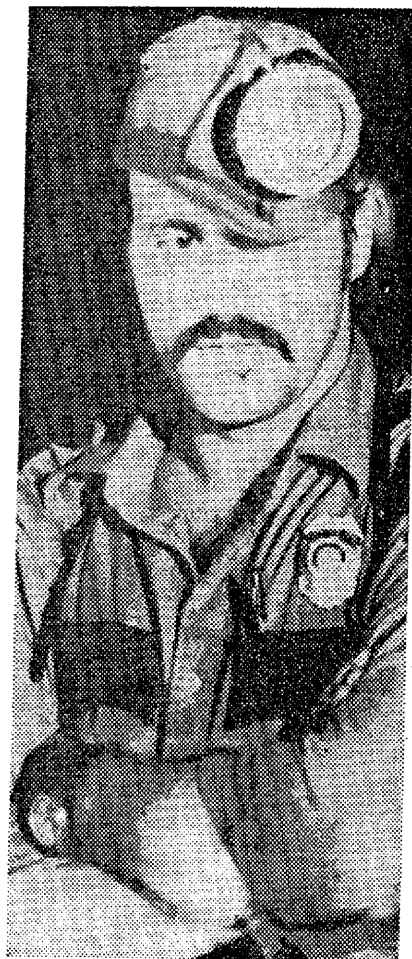
Officer Daugherty was one of those who followed bloodhounds through the brush on the trail of James Earl Ray. A mountain resident had sighted three men in the New River area eight miles from the prison. Dogs were rushed in.

"We struck a track that turned out to be James Earl Ray; I was handling one dog," said Mr. Daugherty. "And we run it across a bluff, down to a highway, across another bluff. We trailed down New River, and the dogs turned down the river instead of up."

"What happened is that when a man hits water, a creek, his scent trails down the river. We went down, and we didn't see anything or strike a scent. We radioed the warden the dogs wasn't running right."

"What happens is when a dog is cast on one man's scent, he won't go on another's. The dogs had been running Hill, run him down, and they wouldn't run Ray. They're trained not to switch off."

The first team of dogs had started trailing Mr. Ray about 11 P.M. The scent lost, another team, eager female



Associated Press

Sammy Joe Chapman, handler of the bloodhound that sniffed out James Earl Ray in a leaf pile.

hounds named Sandy and Little Red, rushed to the visible sign of Mr. Ray, some tracks on the river bank.

With Mr. Daugherty in radio contact with a dog team, the dogs coursed through the woods in pursuit, at times so close that Mr. Ray could be heard crashing through the brush.

For three hours he ran, the dogs bay-ing in close pursuit, six armed men behind them. Other officers, moved by radio, shuffled to likely exit points.

"It's like running a rabbit," said Mr. Daugherty. "You try to go where the rabbit will run, or if you want a shot at him—or in this case, to capture your man—you go where there are chances of him coming out."

Finally, exhausted, scratched from the brush and the briars, without food for 54 hours, James Earl Ray could run no longer. He fell to earth but would not relent. He covered himself with leaves.

Soon, the dogs came, and then the men. They asked him if he was hurt, and he said he was not. They put the handcuffs on him, arms in front in case he fell, and James Earl Ray, assassin and escapee, was marched slowly down the mountain.