

Ray Came Here With Brother-- Gretna Woman

A Gretna woman who saw the man sought in the killing of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on his December, 1967, visit to New Orleans described the accused slayer today as a shy, slight man and a big spender.

Mrs. Leroy Lee, the former Marie Stein, first saw James Earle Ray the evening of Dec. 17 when he drove in from Los Angeles with her brother, Charles Stein, 38.

He was introduced to her as Eric Starvo Galt, which the FBI says is the alias Ray frequently used.

In other developments today in the investigation of the assassination of the civil rights leader:

—A mysterious Hollywood

blonde sought for questioning in the case disappeared from her Milwaukee hotel room, the North American Newspaper Alliance reported.

—Mexican authorities questioned a U.S. citizen they said resembles Ray, the object of

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a continent-wide search, but released him without pressing any charges.

Mrs. Lee, who then lived in the French Quarter, said her brother brought Ray into the apartment and said:

"This is Marie. Say hello to Eric."

She said they arrived the evening of the 17th and were supposed to leave the next

day but stayed another day because of what Ray called "business."

RAY STAYED at the Provincial Motel, 1027 Chartres. Charles Stein stayed with Mrs. Lee.

Describing Ray's actions, Mrs. Lee said:

"He kind of hung his head. He just stood there and didn't say anything."

She described him as "skinny, with light hair. I think his eyes were light colored."

SHOWN A PICTURE of Ray, she said the man she knew as Galt "doesn't even look like the guy." However, Charles Stein has reportedly

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identified Ray and Galt as the same and the FBI has tied them together through fingerprints.

Mrs. Lee said her brother described Ray as "a god-send. He's a swell buy. He won't let me pay for anything."

Charles Stein told his sister he left California with a \$20 bill and still had it when he reached New Orleans.

MRS. LEE said both her brother and their cousin, Marie Martin, work at the Sultan Room, a Los Angeles bar. She said Ray agreed to drive Charles to New Orleans if he, Marie and another sister, Rita Rosas, would sign a petition to get Alabama ex-Gov. George C. Wallace on the California presidential ballot on the American Independent Party ticket.

They agreed and Ray agreed to bring Stein and his two nieces, (Rita Rosas' daughters) ages 7 and 8, to Los Angeles from New Orleans.

Mrs. Lee said she last saw Gault the morning of the 19th when he drove the Mustang to her Burgundy st. apartment and honked the horn. She looked out and said:

"Charlie, there's that guy."

They loaded the car and Charles and Ray picked up the girls from Mrs. Lee's mother, who also lives in the French Quarter. The four then left for Los Angeles.

Mrs. Lee said the mother, Mrs. Clovina Alonzo, has been questioned several times by the FBI, first on Easter Sunday, then again several days ago. (Personnel at the Provincial motel were also questioned on Easter Sunday.)

But Mrs. Lee, the only member of the family besides Charles to actually see Ray here, has never been questioned.

Mrs. Lee is an attractive brunette, with a dark complexion and brown eyes.

The disappearance of the Hollywood blonde, identified only as "Jerri," was reported by Louis Lomax, a writer for the North American Newspaper Alliance. Yesterday, Lomax identified the woman as a close confidante of Ray. Today, he said she vanished from her Milwaukee hotel room after he placed a long

distance telephone call to her.

Lomax said the woman moved into the hotel three weeks ago with a man whose description is similar to that of Ray.

Lomax today continued to follow the trail between Los Angeles and New Orleans, the path which he says Ray followed late last year. In his story, datelined Yuma, Ariz., he reported, "It becomes increasingly certain" that a Dec. 16, 1967, phone call Ray made from Houston to New Orleans "will provide the clue" as to who paid for King's assassination.

IN WASHINGTON, the FBI said it has been swamped with "rumor stories" about the assassination and is checking them out.

Lomax reported yesterday that Ray met a man Lomax identified only as "a major New Orleans industrialist" at the Provincial Motel on Dec. 17.

In the dispatch from Yuma, today, Lomax reported that the search for the person or persons involved in the assassination has closed in on the mystery blonde who knew Ray better than anyone else and the equally mysterious New Orleans industrialist with whom Ray "maintained constant telephone contact."

Although the FBI investigation seems to be stymied, Lomax yesterday wrote, "These facts can be reported as a result of this reporter's efforts":

"JAMES EARL RAY spent considerable time as a resident of the St. Francis hotel along Hollywood Blvd. in Los Angeles. Each evening at approximately 6 o'clock he entered a public telephone booth in the hotel lobby and made long-distance, pre-paid calls.

"The number of this booth is known and an intensive investigation is under way to discover whom Ray was calling.

"According to people who knew Ray, he had a doodling habit and the walls of the phone booth involved reveal that someone had written 'death before dishonor.' This is a slogan often used by Southerners who resent having lost the Civil War."

The writing on the phone booth wall is surrounded by

drawings of swastikas and the Maltese Cross. Yet another doodling on the wall reads "Down with Mexicans,

Niggers and Martin Luther Coon."

It is believed that Ray, then known as Galt, made the doodlings.

But this could be certified only when the FBI fingerprint experts match the writing on the wall with that on the back of a TV set known to have belonged to Ray.

THE MYSTERIOUS blonde friend of Ray has been traced first to Cincinnati and then to Milwaukee. It is certain that Ray purchased her ticket to visit her parents in the Midwest.

It is also certain that she left her parents three weeks ago and moved into a Milwaukee hotel under an assumed name and with a man who said he was her husband. The woman in question is not married.

On April 22, the woman wrote a Los Angeles friend a letter. The letter indicated that Jerri had moved into the motel a few days after King was assassinated and that she planned to return to Los Angeles in two weeks.

The woman is not a suspect in the case. Investigators hope she can give additional details about Ray's activities and contacts.

Lomax said Ray made contact with a man "who is probably an industrialist and a builder" in New Orleans shortly before last Christmas. Lomax' story continued:

"DURING THE trip Ray made several telephonic efforts to reach his New Orleans contact. The first three efforts resulted in a 'no answer.' On the fourth try, Ray got an answer but the evidence suggests that the party he wished to contact was not there.

"It is further evident that Ray, during the fourth phone call, made a date to call his contact at 9 o'clock the following evening. This particular call was made from a phone booth near Yuma. At approximately 9 p. m. Dec. 16, Ray contacted his New Orleans ally from a phone

booth in Houston.

"LATE YESTERDAY afternoon, another startling development occurred. The woman known as Jerri, along with her 'husband,' suddenly vanished from the Royal Hotel, 435 Michigan st., Milwaukee.

"Shortly after a long distance call from this reporter, the woman and the man alleged to be her husband suddenly checked out of the motel," Lomax wrote.

"According to the relief clerk who works only on Wednesday, the description of the woman's husband is similar to that of James Earle Ray. This disclosure adds understanding to the FBI press release that they were searching for Ray near the Canadian border which is not too far from Wisconsin.

"Even so, the search for the bankrollers of Ray concentrates on New Orleans and it becomes increasingly certain that Ray's phone call from the phone booth in Houston will provide the clue."

The American questioned by Mexican authorities today was Daniel David Kennedy of Baltimore, who said he was on a walking tour of the state of Sonora. He denied any connection with King's death.

An FBI agent, identified only as Mr. Smith, said there was no resemblance between Kennedy and Ray.

Lt. Roberto Fletcher of the judicial police in Caborca, Sonora, had taken Kennedy into custody from a Caborca hotel.

In Baltimore, Mrs. Pearl E. Kennedy said an FBI agent told her Mexican authorities were holding her son, Daniel David, because a Mexican police officer said he resembled Ray.

"It was impossible for him to do it," said Mrs. Kennedy. "He wouldn't hurt a fly, let alone kill a human being."

FLETCHER SAID he picked up Kennedy about 6 p.m. yesterday in a cafe in Caborca, about 80 miles southwest of Nogales, Ariz.

The FBI announced April 17 it was seeking a man identified as Eric Starvo Galt in connection with King's slaying in Memphis April 4. Two days later, it said fingerprints revealed Galt and Ray, a 40-year-old drifter and prison escapee are the same man.