

Brewer	48	} Only - and unofficially
Amickatz	49	
Stephan	49	
Campbell	50	

Los Angeles 54-566 Ray left hand

Atlanta 57 "

family surveillance 59

Resident 60

Section 3 has irrelevant ~~combine~~ on wrong rifle but
under "tracking" of "physical" volume no mention
of absence ballistic proof.

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B. The FBI Investigation Of The Assassination

1. The Department of Justice Response and FBI Performance

a. The Murder. At approximately 6:00 p.m. on April 4, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was standing on the balcony outside of his room at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. Moments later, Dr. King was shot by a high power rifle and then rushed to St. Joseph's Hospital. At 7:05 p.m. he was pronounced dead. The cause of death was a bullet wound which tore the major neck blood vessels and severed the spinal cord at the root of the neck (Memphis 44-1987 Sub sec. 1-13, and see autopsy report, App. A, Ex. 3).

b. Top Priority Investigation Ordered. The Memphis Police Department was immediately aware of the King assault and promptly notified the FBI Memphis Field Office headed by SAC Robert G. Jensen. SAC Jensen telephonically relayed the information to Washington where Director Hoover and Attorney General Clark were informed. The Memphis Field Office was directed on the evening of April 4, 1968 to immediately conduct a full investigation of the matter as a possible violation of 18 U.S.C. 241, the civil rights conspiracy statute (HQ 44-38861-109).

This directive soon became national in scope with SAC's in all FBI Field Offices being ordered by teletype on April 7, 1968, to participate and conduct a top priority investigation under their personal supervision. This meant all leads were to be afforded immediate, thorough and imaginative attention and all possibilities from such leads exhausted. Also, 24 hours was set as the period after receipt of a lead within which the investigation and reporting must be completed. All SAC's were to bear personal responsibility for any failure to handle the investigation (HQ 44-38861-153).

c. Progress of the Investigation. The breadth of this top priority investigation is repeatedly evidenced in the Murkin files. All informant sources - racial, security and criminal - were immediately alerted and contacted for information. The KKK and other hate groups as well as individuals known to have violent proclivities were checked. The files were checked for prior threats against Martin Luther King, Jr. (HQ 44-38861-2649). Name checks were continuously being made on Selective Service records, city and telephone directories, drivers license bureaus, motor vehicle divisions, financial institutions, credit records, criminal and civil records, marriage licenses, public utility rolls, unions, common carrier passenger lists and more (e.g. HQ 44-38861-233).

(1) Bessie Brewer's Rooming House. Key information was developed early at Bessie Brewer's Rooming House whence

the shot was fired. Bessie Brewer, Charles A. Stephens and William C. Anchutz were interviewed and a physical description of a suspect was obtained.

Bessie Brewer, resident manager of the rooming house, explained that a "John Willard" registered with her April 4, between 3:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. He was first directed to Room 8, but rejected it because it had a stove and refrigerator. Instead, he asked for a sleeping room only and accepted Room 5-B in the rear of the hostelry. This room provided a window with a view of Dr. King's room at the Lorraine Motel. Mrs. Brewer described the new tenant as a white male approximately 35 years of age, 5'11" to 6' tall, weighing 180 pounds with a medium build and presenting a neat clean appearance (Memphis 44-1987 Sub Sec. 1-15).

Stephens, who was in his room on the afternoon of April 4, remembers hearing footsteps between Room 5-B and the bathroom. He also remembers the bathroom being occupied for considerable periods of time - 20 to 30 minutes - without water running or the toilet being flushed except for the last visit. This last visit ended when he heard what he is certain was a gun shot. Interrupted by the shot, Stephens opened his door to the hallway to see a man running down the hallway carrying a large wrapped bundle. As this man ran down the hall in the direction of Anchutz, Stephens

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recalls believing that he had seen this person earlier that afternoon with Mrs. Brewer. Stephens described him as a white male of average build, in his 30's, 5'10" to 11" tall, weighing 165 pounds and wearing a dark suit presenting a neat clean appearance (Memphis 44-1987 Sub A sec. 1).

Like Stephens, Anchutz was a resident of the rooming house and in his room at the time of the shooting. Also like Stephens, Anchutz occupied a room adjacent to "John Willard." He recalls watching television in his room that afternoon when he heard a gun shot. Immediately, he went to the door and as he opened it saw a man running toward him. This man covered his face as he ran and carried a blanket wrapped bundle. Anchutz addressed the man, saying: "I thought I heard a shot." The man responded: "Yeh, it was a shot." Anchutz described the man as 6' tall with a slim build and in his 30's (Memphis 44-1987 Sub A sec. 1).

(2) Canipe Amusement Company. The Canipe Amusement Company is located at 424 South Main Street and is just a short distance from Bessie Brewer's Rooming House at 422½ South Main Street. In the recessed entrance to Canipe Company a blanket wrapped bundle (presumably the bundle Stephens and Anchutz saw) containing valuable pieces of physical evidence was recovered shortly after the shooting.

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The store owner, Guy W. Canipe, and two customers, Bernell Finley and Julius L. Graham, were in the store at the time of the assassination. Each was interviewed by the FBI and described hearing a "thud" which drew their attention, and as they looked to see what had happened, they observed the blanket wrapped bundle in the entrance. At the same time, they saw a man dressed in a dark suit walking rapidly south on the sidewalk away from the bundle. A few moments later, they said, a white compact automobile - possibly a Mustang - proceeded north on South Main Street at a high rate of speed. The male was described as white, approximately 30 years of age with a medium build, 5'10" to 6' tall and weighing 160 to 180 pounds. (Memphis 44-1987 Sub A sec 1).

The bundle, after being discovered at Canipe's doorway by a member of a Memphis Police Department Tactical Squad, first came into the custody of Inspector Zachary of the Memphis Police Department's Homicide Bureau. Later in the evening of April 4, 1968, between 9:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., Inspector Zachary delivered the bundle to SAC Jensen who immediately had it flown by agent courier to Washington for laboratory examination (Memphis 44-1987-610). The bundle contained a Model 760 Remington Gamemaster rifle, 30-06 Springfield caliber, and a blue zipper bag. The bag contained various toilet articles along with a pair of men's underwear

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from back?

with laundry tags, a pair of binoculars, two cans of beer, and a paper bag bearing an advertisement for York Arms Company, Memphis, Tennessee, with a York Arms Company cash sales receipt dated April 4, 1968 (Memphis 44-1987 Sub A sec 1).

(3) Information and Physical Evidence Tracked. The investigation continued with emphasis on tracing all physical evidence and information received. To this end a search of all Memphis area hotels and motels was initiated for the source of the blanket and bar of soap found in the blue zipper bag. Also, registrations at area inns were examined for the unknown suspect who fled the rooming house and who might be driving a white compact automobile. At the same time, the rifle, scope, binoculars, cans of beer, laundry tags and other items were tracked (HQ 44-38861-139).

The rifle and scope were quickly traced to the Aero Marine Supply Company in Birmingham, Alabama. The rifle was sold to a "Harvey Lowmyer" March 30, 1968. The scope, along with a second rifle, was purchased March 29, 1968, but "Lowmyer" exchanged this rifle the following day for the one recovered at the Canipe Amusement Company. According to the Aero Marine salesman, "Lowmyer" explained that he talked with his brother and was advised a more powerful rifle was necessary for deer hunting in Wisconsin. However,

a laboratory examination of this returned rifle revealed that it was clogged with cosmoline (a heavy grease firearm preservative) and could not be loaded and readied to fire (HQ 44-38861-432). The salesman also provided a physical description of "Lowmyer" which matched those previously obtained (HQ 44-38861-180).

The paper bag and the sales receipt from York Arms Company led agents to the Memphis store where the binoculars were purchased. The York Arms salesman explained that he sold the pair of binoculars at approximately 4:00 p.m. April 4, 1968, to a white male matching the descriptions previously obtained (Memphis 44-1987 Sub A sec. 1). By checking the manufacturer's can codes and distribution records, the two beer cans were traced to Southaven Mirror Shop, Southaven, Mississippi (HQ 44-38861-1360).

The center of the investigation shifted from Memphis to Birmingham on April 9, when the search of Memphis irms focused on the Rebel Motel and the April 3 registration record of an Eric Starvo Galt. It was already known that the rifle and scope were purchased in Birmingham and the Galt registration also pointed to Birmingham. The registration record aroused interest because Galt registered for the night of April 3 only, listed a Birmingham address and drove a Mustang with Alabama license plates, (HQ 44-38861-1180).

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The possibility of a link between Eric Starvo Galt and the unknown subject was pursued in Alabama by the Birmingham and Mobile offices. In their pursuit they learned that on August 29, 1967, Galt purchased a 1966 white Mustang automobile. The Bureau agents also learned that the State of Alabama issued a motor vehicle operator's license in October 1967 to Eric Starvo Galt, 2608 Highland Avenue, Birmingham, Alabama. The physical description obtained from this license matched those previously received: white male, born July 20, 1931, 5'11" tall, 175 pounds with blue eyes and brown hair (HQ 44-38861-1180).

When the investigation moved to Galt's Birmingham address it was learned that Galt lived there in late August until early October 1967. Because of the length of this contact, emphasis was placed on developing information on Galt's background. Significantly, it was learned that during his Birmingham sojourn Galt expressed an enthusiastic interest in dancing and attended dancing school there (HQ 44-38861-607).

(4) Los Angeles. Soon after the Birmingham connection was uncovered Los Angeles became a focal point in the investigation. The significance of Los Angeles became apparent April 11, with the knowledge of four facts.

One, when on April 11, 1968, the Bureau located Galt's abandoned Mustang in Atlanta a search of it indicated that

Galt had had it serviced twice in the Los Angeles area (HQ 44-38861-989).

Two, also incident to the search of the Mustang a fragment of cardboard torn from a Kleenex box was found. On it were the names and Los Angeles addresses of Anita Katzwinkel and Ginger Nance (HQ 44-38861-989).

Three, laundry markings from the recovered underwear were tracked to Home Service Laundry and Dry Cleaning, Hollywood, California (HQ 44-38861-885). The following day agents learned that the name Eric Starvo Galt appeared in the laundry's records.

Lastly, a pair of pliers recovered from the blue zipper bag were traced to the Rompage Hardware Store which is within five blocks of Home Service Laundry and Dry Cleaning (HQ 44-38861-1174).

Since it was known that while in Birmingham Galt pursued an interest in dancing, all dance schools in the Los Angeles area were checked. Galt's name appeared in the records of the National Dance Studio, Los Angeles. (44-38861-1293).

Eventually, the dance studio contact proved to be most important because it was through an interview with the dance studio owner that a photograph of Eric Starvo Galt was finally obtained. The owner keyed the agents to an interest

Galt had expressed in attending a bartending school (HQ 44-38861-1066). Checking the area, the International School of Bartending was located and it provided Galt's graduation photograph. For the first time, agents were able to see and distribute a photo of their subject. To be sure of maximum dissemination, the photo was circulated among the news media (HQ 44-38861-967).

While in Los Angeles Galt first lived at the Serrano Apartments and later at the St. Francis Hotel. Persons contacted at these locations called him a "loner" and described him as a person who kept to himself. A departure from this characterization, however, was reported by Charles Stein who, at no expense to himself, rode with Galt in the Mustang from Los Angeles to New Orleans and return.

Stein explained that he and his sister Rita Stein met Galt through their cousin Marie Martin who was working as a bar maid at the Sultan Bar located in the St. Francis Hotel. Galt had mentioned to Martin that he was planning to drive to New Orleans and she asked if he would be willing to give her cousin a ride there in order to pick up her children. He agreed, but it was Charles and not Rita who went along with Galt (HQ 44-38861-1117).

Notwithstanding the information Stein provided, the investigation moved no closer to locating Galt. New Orleans

was scoured for clues and although Galt's hotel and room were located the effort was fruitless (HQ 44-38861-1197). Stein also stated Galt made several telephone calls from pay telephones along the way but an exhaustive search of countless telephone records, numbers and subscribers produced nothing (e.g. HQ 44-38861-3857). Lastly, Stein explained that Galt conditioned the ride to New Orleans on Charles Stein, Rita Stein and Marie Martin joining George Wallace's American Independent Party. Each joined but again the ensuing investigation of this lead learned nothing (HQ 44-38861-1003).

(5) Atlanta. On April 11, 1968, a citizen call came through to the Atlanta Police Department reporting the missing white Mustang. According to this caller and another person, both interviewed by the FBI, the abandoned Mustang was parked shortly before 9:00 a.m. April 5, 1968, by a lone man matching Galt's description. The discovery of Galt's Mustang immediately caused agents to seek out any additional contacts by Galt in Atlanta (HQ 44-38861-989).

Because Galt was believed to use low cost rooming houses all such establishments were contacted for any sign of him. Success was found at Jimmie Dalton Gardner's Rooming House where Galt registered March 24, 1968. Although Galt was nowhere to be found, he had left evidence behind. Found

in his room were a booklet, "Your Opportunities in Locksmithing" and a collection of maps. One of these maps was of the city of Atlanta with the residence of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the headquarters of SCLC circled (HQ 44-38861-967).

Other evidence of Galt's presence in Atlanta was received from the Piedmont Laundry where records showed he picked up laundry April 5, 1968 (HQ 44-38861-3627).

(6) Galt Identified as James Earl Ray. Knowing that Galt returned to Atlanta after the assassination all conceivable modes of transportation in, around and out of Atlanta were checked (HQ 44-38861-907). However, Galt's trail was cold; there was no evidence as to where he fled from Atlanta.

The Bureau became worried because with each passing hour Galt's chances of avoiding capture became better and better. Therefore, the investigative emphasis shifted from following Galt's trail to identifying Galt. In an effort to accomplish this the Bureau initiated a comparative search of three identical latent fingerprints believed to be Galt's (one fingerprint was recovered from the rifle; a second from the binoculars; and a third from the map of Atlanta found in Galt's room) against fingerprints of white male fugitives. To be sure, the limitation to fugitives was purely speculative.

However, the speculation paid off when on April 19, 1968, James Earl Ray's fingerprint card compared identically (HQ 44-38861-1575).

With the discovery that Eric Starvo Galt was James Earl Ray, the investigation was redirected to a search of Ray's whereabouts since the time of his April 23, 1967, escape from Missouri State Prison. Through the months of April and May the Ray-Galt steps were traced. Eventually, the Bureau was able to account for Ray's whereabouts almost continuously since his escape. Nevertheless, his trail remained cold beyond Atlanta on April 5, 1968 (HQ 44-38861-3509; and see Chronology infra).

In connection with their search, Ray's family was identified, located, physically surveilled and periodically interviewed for information (E.G., HQ 44-38861-3987). Also, prison inmates and associates were queried (e.g. HQ 44-38861-3502) as well as his military record perused (HQ 44-38861-1616). But, no clues developed. Ray's family said they knew nothing; they had not heard from nor been in contact with James and did not know of his whereabouts (Chicago 44-1114-27). Prison inmates and associates told tales of bounties offered for the death of Dr. King but exhaustive investigations could not substantiate their claims (e.g., HQ 44-38861-3767).

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Frustrated, the Director prepared a memorandum for the

Attorney General dated May 13, 1968 in which he explains that extensive investigation has not resulted in any new developments beyond Atlanta, April 5. Therefore, the Director requested authorization for telephone and microphone surveillance on Ray family members. The request, however, was never acted upon (HQ 44-38861-3509).

(7) Passport Search. From an interview with a former cellmate of Ray's at Missouri State Prison it was learned that Ray appreciated the ease with which a person living in Canada could obtain a false passport (HQ 44-38861-3889). Though it is not clear that the cellmate's comments precipitated a search of Canadian passports issued since Ray's April 23, 1967 escape, it is known that on the request of the FBI Legat in Canada such a search was conducted by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. A passport search was also conducted in Mexico and the United States (HQ 44-38861-4445).

Though the search went through a staggering number of applications and was based on the comparison of Ray's photograph to those submitted with the application, it proved to be the necessary break in picking up Ray's trail. At 9:30 p.m. June 1, 1968, The Legal attache, Ottawa, Canada, called the Bureau to advise that after reviewing some 175,000 applications the RCMP located a passport issued

April 24, 1968 under the name Ramon George Sneyd which contained a photograph very definitely similar to Ray (HQ 44-38861-4190).

The passport was filed by the Kennedy Travel Agency in Toronto, Canada. Incident to their investigation, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police contacted the travel agency and obtained a hand printed note from Sneyd concerning his application. The note together with the passport photo and a latent palm print were forwarded to the Bureau for laboratory examination which concluded that Ray and Sneyd were the same person (HQ 44-38861-4262, 4263).

(8) Ray Apprehended. The Kennedy Travel Agency also provided information that Sneyd purchased a round trip air ticket from Toronto to London departing May 6 and returning May 21, 1968. But New Scotland Yard determined that Sneyd turned in the return portion of the fare and received a May 7, 1968 ticket to Lisbon, Portugal plus a \$14.60 voucher (HQ 44-38861-4319).

Immigration authorities in Lisbon were immediately contacted. It was learned that Ray had entered Lisbon May 7 but had exited for London May 17, 1968 (HQ 44-38861-4725).

Stops were issued by New Scotland Yard for Sneyd. At 11:15 a.m., June 8, 1968, Ray was apprehended by officers of New Scotland Yard while he was passing through British immigration offices in the London Airport. At the time he was planning a flight to Brussels, Belgium (HQ 44-38861-4616).

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