

The Key Events in Ray's Case

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Memphis

Important dates in the James Earl Ray case include:

April 23, 1967: Ray escapes from Missouri state prison in Jefferson City.

April 4, 1968: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated outside the Lorraine Hotel in Memphis, where he had gone to support the city's striking sanitation workers.

June 5, 1968: Ray is arrested in London.

March 10, 1969: Ray changes his story and denies firing the shot that killed King. He later contends he was in Memphis at the time of the killing on the instructions of a man named "Raoul," who he thought was part of a gunrunning scheme.

May 3, 1971: Ray escapes from his cell at Brushy Mountain State Prison in Petros, Tenn., but is recaptured 15 minutes later.

Feb. 5, 1972: Ray attempts to escape from his work area at Brushy Mountain, but fails and is sentenced to 30 days in a disciplinary cell.

Feb. 27, 1975: Federal judge refuses to allow Ray to withdraw his guilty plea and denies his request for a trial in the King slaying.

Aug. 15, 1975: Ray, released from the Tennessee Penitentiary's maximum security unit, is assigned to a \$22-a-week job at the prison laundry.

Nov. 22, 1975: Ray's attorneys ask the U.S. Court of Appeals in Cincinnati to grant Ray a trial.

May 10, 1976: Appeals court unanimously rules Ray cannot repudiate his confession and cannot stand trial.

Dec. 13, 1976: U.S. Supreme Court denies Ray a hearing.

March 16, 1977: Ray says he may be willing to testify before a House committee investigating the assassinations of King and President John Kennedy.

March 28, 1977: Ray meets with House committee investigators at Brushy Mountain — the first of five such meetings.

May 4, 1977: Ray's lawyer says Ray gave House committee investigators the name of a man who can place him at a service station when King was shot. But the man, Willie Green, says only that his employer was the one who identified Ray as King's slayer.

June 10, 1977: Ray escapes from Brushy Mountain State Prison.