

Friend of Jackson Slain in San Jose

By Don West
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SAN JOSE — A former prison friend of slain "Soledad Brother" George Jackson was gunned down by shotgun and rifle fire today as he left the two-story home where he had been living with his wife.

James E. Carr, 29, whose wife's mother is a close friend of Angela Davis, died within minutes as a Ford LTD with two gunmen sped away.

A car matching that description and reportedly containing two men, a shotgun, a rifle and "a bucket of Molotov cocktails," was halted 15 minutes later in Morgan Hill, about 20 miles away.

Occupants Held

The occupants, Richard Rodriguez, 24, of Baldwin Park, and Chester D. Ligon, 48, of Los Angeles, were booked on murder charges.

Carr, who once moved in the top circles of the Black Panther movement, had been living at 795 Morse St., in the north central residen-



JAMES CARR
Slain by gunmen

tial section of the city, with his wife, Betsy.

Her mother, Mrs. Joan

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Hammer, has often been seen strolling in the neighborhood with Angela Davis, currently on trial here for her alleged role in the Marin County courthouse shootout of 1970.

Mrs. Hammer is believed to be the "Dear Joan" in George Jackson's book, "Soledad Brother," and she and Betsy testified before a special session of the Marin County grand jury last November.

Jackson was slain last August, along with three prison guards and two trustees, in an attempted jailbreak.

Carr, who was bodyguard

to Black Panther founder Huey Newton when the two were at Men's Colony East at San Luis Obispo, was shot down in the rear of the Hammer home at 7:10 a.m.

He was approaching his car and was on the dirt driveway of the three-car garage when the two assassins opened fire. Police said they found a revolver at the scene, half buried in the dirt, but they could not immediately establish ownership.

Asked Protection

In the kitchen of the Carr home when the shooting started were Mrs. Carr, 20, their seven-month-old daughter, Gea, and Mrs. Hammer.

In the living room was Elizabeth Coby, 28, an attorney working in the Angela Davis defense team. She is associated with John Thorne, who represented George Jackson.

She told reporters that 10 days ago a neighborhood youngster, while walking his dog, spotted a pair of shadowy figures next to the Carr residence. When he shouted, they dashed into an auto and disappeared, she said.

Found where they had been standing was a large paper bag with two bottles containing gasoline. In the bag was a diagram of the Carr home and an adjoining home, she said, with marks showing where a person could stand without being observed from the house.

Police were asked to place the home under their protection after the incident, but there was no response to the request, she said.

An officer did advise them

to pour out the flammable liquids, she said. The family kept the bag and the diagram and they were turned over to police this morning after the shooting.

Car's police record began at the age of 9, and he had served time at San Quentin and Chino. It was at San Quentin that he met George Jackson, and the two were involved in a knifing attack on fellow inmates, according to prison records.

A school dropout at the

age of 15, Carr had a natural talent for electronics and took courses at San Luis Obispo. He completed a vocational electronics course at the Men's Colony in October, 1968, and a year ago he was a student and salaried reader at the University of California's Santa Cruz campus.

Carr was investigated as the alleged triggerman who killed Fred Bennett, 25, at a remote "bomb factory" in the Santa Cruz Mountains in January, 1970.

He was so named in testimony by Thomas Mosher, a former pre-legal student at Stanford University, before the U.S. Senate Committee on Internal Security.

Bennett, who held the rank of captain in the Black Panthers, was supposedly executed because of a romance with the wife of a high-ranking Panther.

Carr, however, was never charged in connection with his death.

Controversial

The FBI said at the time that Carr had sent a pair of pants to the cleaners, and that a map of an escape plan for Jackson, then at San Quentin, was found in a pocket and turned over to authorities.

Carr's lawyer, Richard Hodge, described Carr and Jackson as extremely good friends.

"I can think of lots of reasons why someone would want to kill him, people from the far left, the far right, and in between, because he was a very controversial leader in prison.

"Some people thought he was a CIA agent, others thought he was super radical," he said.

Another observer speculated that Carr may have been killed by hired guns who didn't even know him, who were sent in vengeance

by political partisans of Bennett.

He was arrested a year ago to the day when he and two others staged a demonstration in the Hall of Justice courtroom during routine pre-trial proceedings in the case in which George Jackson and two other defendants were accused of the murder of a guard at Soledad.

Carr pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of assaulting a peace officer, was sentenced to 120 days, given credit for the fact that he had already served more than that, and placed on parole for two years.

In Angela Trial

It was at Mrs. Hammer's home that the Soledad Brothers Defense Fund began its drive in August, 1970.

Prosecutor Albert Harris Jr., in the Angela Davis trial, has indicated that he intends to produce as evidence a letter Carr had written to Jackson asking what he could do to help.

Mrs. Hammer's name also figured in that trial when Harris declared, in his opening argument, that she had lent a Volkswagen to Jonathan Jackson two days before Jackson invaded a Marin County courtroom on Aug. 7, 1970.

The automobile was located at the San Francisco Airport, Harris said, after Jackson's mother called Mrs. Hammer and told her where it was.