

Confession on 'Hughes Will'

Los Angeles

Melvin Dummar, 31, who was cut in for a share of the late Howard Hughes' fortune under a "will" found at Mormon Church headquarters in Salt Lake City, now has admitted delivering the document there, an attorney said yesterday.

Dummar also confessed during a closed meeting with five lawyers in Ogden on Wednesday that he wrote a note accompanying the so-called "Mormon Will" when it turned up last April 27, said Harold Rhoden, attorney for former Hughes aide Noah Dietrich.

Dummar, who previously had insisted he knew nothing of the

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purported will before it surfaced, still denies forging it or having anything to do with its production, Rhoden said at a press conference.

Although Dietrich was named executor under the supposed will and stands to earn vast amounts of money if it is declared legitimate, Rhoden said, "He has given me carte blanche to withdraw the petition (for probate) if at any time I believe that will is a phony." He added, "We don't want to be parties to a fraud on the court."

In Ogden, attorney John Sampson, one of Dummar's representatives, confirmed that his client finally broke down and admitted delivering the envelope that already has been found by the FBI to bear his thumbprint.

Sampson said Dummar's various stories of how he happened to obtain the "will" in the first place are being checked.

Rhoden told reporters that Dummar continues to insist he doesn't know who wrote the will — if, indeed, Hughes did not.

"He's lying like hell," said Rhoden. "I'm going to move to get him on the witness stand in Nevada to testify under oath. He'll go to jail if he persists in his story."

Dummar, supposedly bequeathed a one-sixteenth share of the recluse industrialist's billions, has agreed to renounce all financial interest in the estate even if the questioned will is admitted to probate, Rhoden said.

During the Ogden meeting,

Rhoden said, Dummar offered at least two bizarre versions of how he happened to obtain the envelope for delivery to Mormon headquarters.

One involved a series of mysterious notes left in his parked car and a telephone call directing him to a Las Vegas casino where a mysterious man gave him the envelope to take to Salt Lake City, Rhoden said.

The other scenario had an equally mysterious stranger suddenly appearing at Dummar's gas station in Willard, Utah, and giving him the sealed envelope with instructions for delivery.

Dummar, according to Rhoden, said he burned the instructions, which he had violated by secretly opening the envelope and reading the supposed last will and testament of Hughes, written in ink on three sheets of plain white paper.

Because he had seen his own name in the document, Dummar reportedly explained, he covered up his own role in the delivery, knowing people would think he was a forger.

Rhoden said Dummar told him that because he steamed open the envelope and read the contents, "his fingerprints will probably be all over that will."

Rhoden said he was not yet ready to declare the will itself a forgery. The FBI is still checking it for fingerprints and for the ages of the paper and ink, since it purportedly was written in 1968.

"What if the FBI says Hughes' prints are on the will, or that the paper and ink are eight to ten years old?" Rhoden asked.

But the lawyer said his own experts — who previously said the will itself was written by Hughes — have concluded that the writing on the outer envelope was done by Dummar.

The outer envelope, stationery from the visitors center of Mormon Church World Headquarters, bore the address: President Spencer W. Kimball, Church of Jesus Christ, Salt Lake City.

Inside was another envelope containing the three-page "will"



MELVIN DUMMAR
He said he delivered the will

and a slip of paper with the scribbled words:

"This was found by Joseph F. Smith's house in 1972. Thought you would be interested."

On December 28, Nevada Attorney General Robert List told a Las Vegas court hearing that when FBI testing on the suspect document is complete, he will decide on whether to proceed with criminal prosecution.

List disclosed that in the library of Weber State College at Ogden, which Dummar attended, investigators found various Hughes biographical materials including publications with samples of Hughes' handwriting.

Those materials, too, were being examined. Dummar and his principal attorney, Roger Dutson, have said Dummar examined such materials out of curiosity after being named in the "will," thus explaining the reported presence of his fingerprints on a book and a magazine.

Dummar, who in one version given Rhoden actually held the mysteriously received envelope for years until Hughes died, has claimed that in 1968 he gave a ride and a quarter to a disreputable-looking old man he found in the desert near Las Vegas.

And that man was ...

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