

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/17/68

AARON ISAAC LOFTON was interviewed at Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation, Pascagoula, Mississippi. He advised he has been employed there since July, 1965, and that he resided with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. AARON A. LOFTON on Martin Bluff Road, Gautier, Mississippi. He has long been interested in ballroom dancing and worked as a dancing instructor at the Arthur Murray Dance Studio in New Orleans, Louisiana from about January to July, 1958. He then went to Jacksonville, Florida, where he taught dancing at the Fred Astair Studio for about one year beginning about July, 1958. While in Jacksonville, he began a course in court reporting, but dropped out of this course and entered a school for hair styling. After completing this course, he worked as a professional hair stylist in Atlanta, Georgia from about 1959 to 1963 when he went to California. He worked at Anaheim, California and Los Angeles as a hair stylist until he returned to Mississippi and obtained employment at Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation in 1965.

LOFTON said the names JOHN WILLARD and HARVEY LOWMEYER or LOWMYER meant nothing to him. He was shown two artist's conceptions of two white males. He said he does not recall ever having known anyone who closely resembled either of these.

LOFTON was asked whether he had known anyone named GALT. He said he feels sure he has never known anyone by this name. He said the name is very familiar to him, as he is familiar with the character in the novel "Atlas Shrugged" who was called GALT, and he does not recall ever coming across that name again until very recently when the name appeared in the national press

On 4/16-17/68 at Pascagoula, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-542-92  
by SA'S JAMES J. FILES, and  
PETER H. CROOKS/JJF:brh Date dictated 4/17/68

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in connection with the murder of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

LOFTON advised that on the day KING was killed, he worked at Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation and went home at about 3:30 p.m. He first heard of the shooting on television that evening and later the same evening he went to the home of BEN WOOD, Gautier, Mississippi, to play poker. While there, he learned that KING had died.

LOFTON furnished the following details of his background:

He was born in West Lincoln Community, Lincoln County, Mississippi on [REDACTED]. During World War II, his father, AARON ALTON LOFTON, worked for the Ross Gravel Company near Pitkin, Louisiana, and he believes he went to the Sand Hill rural school.

Still during the War, his family moved to De Ridder, Louisiana where his father worked for a gravel company. He believes they moved back to Lincoln County for a short time. Then to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where his father worked for the Standard Oil Refinery from about late 1944 to early 1945.

The family moved to Natchez, Mississippi in about 1945 and stayed for about one year. They then moved to Summitt, Mississippi where they remained until AARON finished the eighth grade in the Spring of 1949. The family then moved to Hazelhurst, Mississippi, where his father worked as a mechanic in a clothing factory. AARON attended the Hazelhurst High School, graduating in May, 1953.

AARON left the family home in Mississippi in May, 1953 and moved to Jackson where he attended Draughn's Business College for six months. He lived then at the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), then at a rooming house near the YMCA. Then in the Fall of 1953, he moved back to Summitt, Mississippi and stayed with his parents until January, 1955, when he went into the United States Army. During this period from late 1953 to the Fall of 1954, he worked at the McComb Manufacturing Company, MC Comb, Mississippi. In the Fall of 1954, he entered Southwest Mississippi Junior College and attended one semester before going into the Army.

During his Army career, he first went to Fort Jackson, South Carolina from January to April, 1955. Then he went to Fort Devens, Massachusetts from April to October, 1955. Then to Brookley Field, Mobile, Alabama for about one week. Then to the Panama Canal Zone from October, 1955 to October, 1957. In October, 1957, he was transferred to the Walter Reed Army Hospital, Washington, D. C., where he stayed for two weeks being treated for a disease of the ear. He was then released to inactive duty and went to his parent's home, who had now moved to a residence near McComb, Mississippi. He was placed in inactive duty at this time and remained in the Reserves until he had completed a total of eight years service. He received an honorable discharge in 1962. He said this discharge was upon his completion of his military obligation and was not due to disability or disciplinary action. He said he was released from active duty a few weeks early because of his ear problem.

He stayed at his parent's home from October to November, 1957, then went to New Orleans, Louisiana, where he resided with a friend, JAMES VAN, an employee

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of WWL Television Station, on West Plum Street, from November, 1957 to January, 1958, and was employed as a sales clerk by D H HOLMES Department Store. He had met JAMES VAN through a mutual Army friend, ROBERT BARBER.

In January, 1958, he moved to a location on St. Ann Street in the French Quarter, exact address unrecalled and at about that time obtained a job teaching dancing in the Arthur Murray Studio. He left this job and this residence on about July 4, 1958 and moved to Jacksonville, Florida.

In Jacksonville, Florida, he rented a cottage with an old Army friend, ROBERT J. BARBER. This cottage, exact address unrecalled, was owned by an attorney named DOUGLAS. He went to work at Fred Astair's Studio in July, 1958 and continued there until November, 1958. From about March, 1958, he was part-time employed and attended school at the Stenographer's Institute for Court Reporting for about one month and then he transferred to the American Hair Styling Academy owned by MICHAEL ANGELO GAGLRANO until November, 1959.

In November, 1959, he moved to Atlanta, Georgia and again stayed with ROBERT BARBER, whose mother had purchased a house there. He stayed at this residence, 1164 Ogilvie Drive, for about two months. He said that BARBER is now manager of a prominent clothing store at Charlotte, North Carolina. This store, name unrecalled, has a principal branch or main store in Atlanta.

He lived at 343 8th Street, Atlanta from February, 1961 to the Fall of 1961 in an apartment he shared with JAMES LINDLEY who he met at this apartment building. Both he and LINDLEY moved to 1284 Piedmont in the Fall of 1961 and stayed until January, 1962. They then moved to 602 Ansley Forest

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Drive, where they lived from January, 1962 to September, 1962. LOFTON then went to California, but LINDLEY remained and probably still lives in the same apartment. LINDLEY was employed as an estimator for the Mead Company in Atlanta.

During the period LOFTON lived in Atlanta, he worked as a hair stylist for Ricardo's Beauty Salon, 1738 Peachtree Street for about one year. Then at Rich's Department Store Salon for about one year, then at the Chalet Salon, 2175 Cheshire Boulevard, for two or three months. Then back to Rich's Department Store from about March to October, 1962, when he moved to Los Angeles.

On arriving in Los Angeles, he lived in a motel for about three weeks while obtaining a beauty operators license, and received his mail at 8611 Truxton Avenue, Los Angeles, which was address of the Weschester International Beauty College, where he took a refresher course to obtain his license. He then lived at 103 Autumn Drive, Anaheim, California from about November, 1962 to July, 1963, and worked at a small shop owned by JAMES VICTOR, who operated the above mentioned school.

He then moved to Los Angeles, 924 Hancock Avenue, and worked for another shop owned by JAMES VICTOR.

He then moved to 1231 North Sweetzer Avenue, Los Angeles and lived there from October, 1964 to February, 1965, and worked in the beauty salon at May Company Department Store. Then in about February, 1965, he moved back to his parent's home at McComb, Mississippi. He noted that between his residence at Anaheim and Los Angeles, he went back to Atlanta for about six weeks and stayed at his old residence there.

At McComb, he worked for the Howell Motor Company selling Volkswagon from February, 1965 to April

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or May, 1965 and quit due to difficulty with ulcers. He said he was employed until about July, 1955 and he and his family moved to Pascagoula, Mississippi, where his parents had previously purchased property. They lived in a residence on United States Highway 90 in Gautier west of Pascagoula for about two months. Then the family moved to 1915 Ferry, Moss Point, Mississippi, until July, 1966, when they moved into a new home which they had built on their property at Gautier, Mississippi.

LOFTON was employed by Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation in July, 1965 and attended the Man Power Development and Training School operated by that company until November, when he went to work. He has continued his employment there to the present time and is employed in the testing laboratory in the welding department.

LOFTON said that he moved and changed occupations often between the time he was released from military service to 1965 because he was footloose and enjoyed moving around. He said he chose to go to Jacksonville, Florida because his friend, ROBERT BARBER, was there and that he moved on to Atlanta because BARBER had moved to Atlanta before him and had informed him that the hair styling field was good in Atlanta. He said while in Atlanta, he met JAMES VICTOR, who owns several beauty salons in California, at a hair dressing show in Atlanta and that VICTOR asked him to move to California. He said he left the hair styling occupation in 1965 for numerous reasons, some of which were it was an unstable business, he had developed ulcers, and from the tension of trying to please so many women and further that his family wanted him to return home.

LOFTON stated that during the periods he lived in New Orleans, Jacksonville, Atlanta and California, he could not recall knowing anyone well who was strongly racist or rabidly right wing. He said he is a member of the Young Republicans and while in Los Angeles, was actually working for GOLDWATER. In this capacity, he casually met numerous people who were rabidly anti-GOLDWATER and numerous other people who were rabidly anti-Communist,

but that he was never close to them and did not really know them. He said that he still belongs to the Young Republicans and is County Chairman of the organization in Jackson County, Mississippi. He said this is a small unit and he knows of no one connected with it who has radical or violent views. He said the only other organizations he belongs to are the American Welding Society and the Little Theater in Pascagoula.

Regarding his foreign travel, LOFTON advised that he visited Niagara Falls, Canada, from July 2-4, 1955. He went with some military friends to visit while assigned to Fort Devens, Massachusetts.

He took a vacation trip from April 15, to May 1, 1967 to Mexico. He drove by automobile with NORWOOD BROWN, who owns Norwood Music Store in Savannah, Georgia, BOB HOPPER, a casual acquaintance who worked for a railroad at Atlanta, and BILL (last name unknown), a friend of BROWN from Savannah. He said they entered Mexico at Brownsville, Texas, having obtained a passport in Atlanta. They traveled through the northern portion of Mexico visiting Tosco, Acapulco, Mexico City and some small towns. They left Mexico at Laredo, Texas and drove back to Atlanta. They traveled in a new Ford convertible owned by BOB HOPPER. He said in 1965 he made a one day trip into Encenado, Mexico from Los Angeles, a boarder town, just for a visit. He said he spoke some Spanish which he learned in the Canal Zone. He attended night school at Balboa Junior College there.

He said he had his Southwest Junior College credits transferred to this school. He also had his credits sent to Los Angeles City College where he enrolled, but did not complete three liberal arts courses. In August, 1967, he called CHARLES BRELAND, Registrar at Southwest Junior College and asked him to send his transcript to him, which he needed to attend Jackson County Junior College. He said he has not been on the campus of Southwest Junior College since 1965. LOFTON said he also had his credits sent to the Memphis

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Academy of Arts in about 1957 or 1958 on the recommendation of ROBERT BARBER who is originally from Jackson, Tennessee, but that he did not attend this school. He has passed through Memphis about three times, but has no contacts there and has no relatives there.

He said he traveled in Mexico and from Jacksonville to Atlanta and Los Angeles and then Jackson, Tennessee where BARBER had lived, in 1967 went to Omaha, Nebraska to attend a Young Republican convention.

He said that he owns a 1968 Volkswagon fast-back which he purchased in December, 1967, and he previously owned a 1967 Volkswagon Square-back. He owns no other cars.

He said he owns a .22 caliber revolver with a four inch barrel which he purchased at Gibson's Discount Center in McComb, Mississippi in 1968, but does not recall the brand name. He owns no other gun, but his father has several sporting guns including a shotgun and a .22 rifle, but no high powered rifle.

He said his hobbies are hunting, fishing, the Little Theater and dancing.

He said that his friends are Mr. and Mrs. JOHN GAUTIER, Mr. GAUTIER is an attorney in Pascagoula, and his wife is an officer of the Young Republicans; Mr. and Mrs. BEN WOOD, who live in Gautier, Mississippi, Mr. WOOD works for Phelps Jewelry Store; and also JIM and GRACE WILSON, WILSON is night superintendent of the Jackson Grain Elevator.

LOFTON listed the following relatives:

Father	AARON ALTON LOFTON, Sewing machine mechanic, BVD, Pascagoula, Mississippi
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Mother	AGNES LOU NUNNERY LOFTON, employed at BVD, Pascagoula, Mississippi
Brother	BILLIE JOE LOFTON, married, resides Gautier, Mississippi, and employed Student Director, Jackson County Junior College, No other brothers or sisters
Mother's sisters	Mrs. GEORGESPRING, McComb, Mississippi, Mrs. HARVEY COWART, Smith- dale, Mississippi
Mother's brother	H. G. NUNNERY, career air- man, United States Air Force, Wright-Patterson Field, Ohio.
Father's brother	CHARLES LOFTON, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Father's sister	Mrs. HORIS RUSHING, Brook- haven, Mississippi
Half-brothers	P. C. LOFTON, rural route, Brookhaven, Mississippi TOM LOFTON, rural route, Mc Comb, Mississippi
Half sister	EMMA PORTER, address unknown

LOFTON said he has never been arrested and has received only one traffic ticket in his life.

LOFTON stated that none of his associates resemble the artist's conceptions mentioned above which had been shown to him.

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The following description was obtained through observation and interview:

Name	AARON ISAAC LOFTON
Race	White
Sex	Male
Date of birth	[REDACTED]
Place of birth	Lincoln County, Mississippi
Height	5'11½"
Weight	165
Hair	Sandy-blond
Eyes	Hazel
Complexion	Fair-ruddy
Characteristics	Wears horn-rimmed glasses, smokes Spring or Kent Cigaretts
Army serial numbers	[REDACTED]
Social Security Number	[REDACTED]
Education	One year of college and trade schools
Residence	Martin Bluff Road, Gautier, Mississippi

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 19, 1968

JAMES AIKENS, Superintendant, Welding Department, Ingall's Ship Building Corporation, advised that AARON ISAAC LOFTON works under his direct supervision and that he sees LOFTON on a daily basis. He said that he can say positively that LOFTON has been to work each working day during the month of April. He said that to be even more positive of this he had checked with the Assistant Superintendant and the Assistant agreed with him that he had also seen LOFTON at work each working day this month and specifically on April 4 and 5, 1968.

On 4/17/68 at Pascagoula, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-93  
by SA JAMES J. FILES: yv Date dictated 4/18/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 20, 1968

Mrs. VIRGINIA RAY, home address 944 Inge Street, Jackson, Mississippi, furnished the following information:

On the evening of September 5, 1967, in the early evening hours, VIRGINIA UMFRESS (RAY), was at her place of employment, the Rainbow Inn, Saittillo, Mississippi, talking to the bartender, LAWRENCE WEBB and a customer whom she met for the first time by the name of JAMES RAY.

After drinking one and one-half Budweiser beers, VIRGINIA UMFRESS said the next thing she can recall is coming out of the Court House at Jasper, Alabama, the next day around noontime with a marriage license in her hand. She said she married JAMES RAY but does not recall any other details of the trip from the Rainbow Inn in Saittillo, Mississippi, to the Court House at Jasper, Alabama. For this reason she believes she was drugged or something. She could not recall any conversation with RAY.

VIRGINIA UMFRESS RAY stated that on the trip back to Mississippi she recalled sleeping most of the way and no conversation. She described the vehicle that they were riding in as a 1967 Malibu, white in color with red upholstery. She said the two front fenders had severe dents in them and RAY mentioned that he had hit a bridge. Upon returning to Mississippi they drove to Tupelo to the trailer which UMFRESS had been living in just South of Tupelo on Highway 45 South.

She advised that they arrived in Tupelo around 5:00 P. M., on September 6, 1967, and they stayed at her trailer for the night. The next morning around 10:00 A. M., on September 7, 1967, after much discussion they drove to

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Jackson, Mississippi, to pick up VIRGINIA UMFRESS RAY's two year old son.

At this point, VIRGINIA UMFRESS RAY advised that her maiden name is VIRGINIA JACO and that in January, 1964, she married JOHNNY WAYNE UMFRESS who is employed as a carpenter with a company in Itawamba County, Mississippi. She divorced this man in 1966 and he still lives in Fulton, Mississippi.

JAMES RAY at first refused to drive to Jackson, Mississippi, however, she convinced him to come along with her. They left Tupelo, Mississippi, around 10:00 A. M., on September 7, 1967, and drove straight down to Jackson, Mississippi, arriving in the middle of the afternoon. They went directly to her grandparents, F. A. and VERA JACO, with whom her two year old son had been boarding at 225 Oak Street, Jackson.

VIRGINIA RAY said she went into her grandparents' house by herself while JAMES RAY, her new husband, made a gasoline purchase at the Sinclair Service Station across the street from her grandparents house. She said JAMES RAY used a Sinclair credit card in making all gasoline purchases.

At her grandparents' home she introduced JAMES RAY to her cousin GEORGE JONES, his wife JOYCE JONES, and her aunt, MARIE JACO, as well as her grandparents. She explained that her grandparents' home has separate apartments and that her cousin MARIE JACO, GEORGE and JOYCE JONES have separate apartments.

They remained overnight at the Oak Street address and between 6:00 and 7:00 A. M., when she got up, JAMES RAY said they were leaving for California. She said she refused to go and that RAY picked up GEORGE JONES's shotgun, pointed

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it at her stomach and said he was going to kill her. At this point her cousin JOYCE JONES came into the room and stepped between them and told RAY that he would have to kill her first. JAMES RAY hesitated for a moment, turned and ran out of the house. He got in his car and drove away taking the shotgun with him. VIRGINIA RAY said she has not seen JAMES RAY since and has heard nothing about him or from him since that time.

A short while after this incident she realized that sometime during the night or early morning RAY had taken the marriage license out of her overnight bag which she had picked up the morning before at the trailer in Tupelo. He also took a bronze horse trophy from the mantle.

Upon seeing the photograph of JAMES EARL RAY in the Jackson newspapers on April 19, 1968, she immediately thought it strongly resembled JAMES RAY, her missing husband.

VIRGINIA RAY furnished the following information concerning the contents of the 1967 Malibu in the possession of JAMES RAY:

A large blue Samsonite type suitcase which appeared to be the largest size. She described it as a hard finish airplane type luggage.

A black cloth type bag with a zipper across the top and handles. The lining of the cloth bag appeared to be plaid. Inside the bag was a current Alabama license plate and a current Mississippi license plate. She then recalled that the Malibu had Tennessee tags on it all during the period she was with RAY. She said she recalled asking RAY why he had the extra license plates and he said he needed them in his business. He said his business was that of a musician and that he played a guitar.

He had numerous cosmetic type kits which only women would use. She was not able to further describe the cosmetics other than it struck her as odd that he would have these items.

In the trunk of the car he had the small bronze horse trophy and a pair of expensive looking lizard skin riding boots.

RAY claimed to have been associated with horse shows and won the trophy at a horse show.

VIRGINIA RAY furnished the following physical description of her husband:

Name	JAMES (no middle name) RAY
Age	41 years (according to RAY in September, 1967)
Sex	Male
Race	White
Height	5 feet 11 inches
Hair	Light brown, cut very short, less than ½ inches long.
Eyes	Bluish gray
Complexion	Light with ruddy or rough face.
Scars	Had severe scars across the back of each hand. Scars went across from one side to the other between the knuckles and the wrist.
	Had a small prominent scar on forehead to one side or the other in the center.
Tattoos	Had a large tattoo of a battleship across his upper back. The colors on this tattoo were very bright and not faded.
	Had a small tattoo on the calf of one leg reading "Hell Hole".

Could not recall which leg.  
This tattoo located just  
below the knee off to the  
side.

Other characteristics

Upper front teeth missing  
Had a full or partial upper  
plate.  
Drank continuously. Any kind  
but usually Four Roses, also  
had moonshine whiskey, white  
in color, smoking nothing  
but Pall Mall cigarettes.

Just prior to shaving his  
beard appeared to be medium  
to light in color.

Upon inquiry, Mrs. RAY said she noticed nothing  
peculiar about her husband's ears. She said his eyebrows  
were average and brown in color.

The most peculiar thing about him other than the  
tattoos, was the fact that he addressed everyone as "hoss".  
Numerous times while speaking he would use the word "hoss"  
to the person he happened to be speaking to.

The only thing she could recall about his facial  
expression was the color of his eyes, bluish gray, and the  
fact that his eyes frightened her more than anything else.  
She could not recall anything peculiar about his smile.  
She then added that she did not recall ever seeing him  
smile.

Mrs. RAY said that her grandparents, F. A. and  
VERA JACO, her cousin JOYCE and her husband GEORGE and  
her aunt MARIE JACO all saw JAMES RAY. She said they  
too feel there is a resemblance between the photograph of  
JAMES EARL RAY which appeared in the Jackson newspapers  
on April 19, 1968, and her husband. She said that the  
previous photograph which appeared in the Jackson newspapers  
prior to April 19, 1968, did not resemble her husband. It



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was the photograph which appeared on April 19, 1968, which prompted her to call the Federal Bureau of Investigation. She said she has no information concerning the whereabouts of JAMES RAY since she last saw him on September 8, 1967.

Mrs. RAY then added that on the morning of September 8, 1967, after JAMES RAY hurriedly left her grandparents' home her cousin JOYCE JONES and her husband GEORGE JONES drove her back to Tupelo, Mississippi, to her rented trailer home.

Upon arriving there shortly before 5:00 P. M., she noticed that the door of the trailer was ajar approximately three or four inches. She recalled that she had given the key to the trailer to her husband.

When she entered the trailer she noticed some items were missing. The first thing she noticed was that her portable record player and 50 or 60 albums, mostly country music were missing. She thought the record player was a True Tone portable model.

A portable radio, make unknown, described as one that played with batteries or plug-in type, was missing.

A Brownie Holiday Flash Camera was missing.

A Dominion Portable hair dryer was missing.

Several sweaters, three pairs of her shoes and six dresses just back from the cleaners were missing.

She said that a picture of her mother which she described as being in an elaborate frame was also missing and in addition, a picture album of the family was missing.

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Her cousin GEORGE, age 18 years, started her automobile, a 1955 Buick, blue and white in color in that she could not get it started herself. Her cousin GEORGE, discovered that some foreign substance had been placed in the gas tank causing the fuel line to be clogged.

After GEORGE JONES got her car started she drove it back to Jackson following GEORGE and JOYCE in their car.

She said they arrived in Jackson around 9:00 or 10:00 P. M., that night, September 8, 1967. She remained at her grandparents' house and lived there for a while.

The following description was obtained through observation and interview:

Name	VIRGINIA RAY
Sex	Female
Race	White
Date of Birth	[REDACTED]
Place of Birth	Clarksdale, Mississippi
Height	5 feet 7 inches
Weight	185 pounds
Hair	brown
Eyes	Blue
Previous address	Moved to Jackson in 1959, graduated from Central High School in 1961 and returned to Tupelo, Mississippi in 1962.
Marriages	Met JOHNNY WAYNE UMFRESS in Tupelo, January 1963, and married him 1964. Divorced him 1966. Married JAMES RAY, Jasper, Alabama, on September 6, 1967.

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Employment	Barmaid, Rainbow Inn, Saltillo, Mississippi, September 1967, National Industries, Jackson, Mississippi, from September 17, 1967, to April 1968.
Current employment	N. W. Manufacturing Company, Jackson, Mississippi.
Working hours	7:30 A. M., to 4:00 P. M. Monday through Friday.
Telephone	None

In further describing JAMES RAY, Mrs. RAY said the first time she met him he was wearing plaid type trousers and a brown shirt. She said he was just an average dresser, nothing peculiar, seldom wore suits during the three days she knew him.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/23/68

Miss MARIE JACO, 225 Oak Street, Jackson, Mississippi, advised that VIRGINIA RAY is her niece.

Several photographs were exhibited to Miss JACO and she commented she could not recall having met any of these individuals.

The photograph of JAMES EARL RAY was singularly exhibited to Miss JACO. She advised that this photograph was definitely not a photograph of the man that her niece, VIRGINIA RAY, introduced to her as her husband in September, 1967.

On 4/20/68 at Jackson, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-95  
by SA's JOHN L. PUDDISTER & JAMES W. AWE: JLP/cmb Date dictated 4/23/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/23/68

Mrs. GEORGE JONES (JOYCE), home address 225 Oak Street, Jackson, Mississippi, after viewing several photographs exhibited to her, commented that none of these photographs looked like the JAMES RAY whom her cousin, VIRGINIA, introduced as her husband.

The photograph of JAMES EARL RAY was singularly exhibited to Mrs. JONES. She commented that this was definitely not the man that VIRGINIA RAY introduced as her husband.

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On 4/20/68 at Jackson, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-96  
by SA's JOHN L. PUDDISTER &  
JAMES W. AWE: JLP/cmb Date dictated 4/23/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/23/68

Mrs. VERA JACO, home address 225 Oak Street, Jackson, Mississippi, advised that she is the grandmother of VIRGINIA RAY.

Mrs. JACO advised that in September, 1967, VIRGINIA RAY visited her home with a man whom she introduced as her husband, JAMES RAY.

Several photographs were exhibited to Mrs. JACO. She advised that none of these photographs resembled the individual introduced to her as JAMES RAY.

A photograph of JAMES EARL RAY was singularly exhibited to Mrs. JACO. She advised that this was definitely not the man who VIRGINIA RAY introduced to her as her husband.

On 4/20/68 at Jackson, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-97  
by SA's JOHN L. PUDDISTER & JAMES W. AWE: JLP/cmb Date dictated 4/23/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/23/68

Mr. F. A. JACO, home address, 225 Oak Street, Jackson, Mississippi, advised that he is the grandfather of VIRGINIA RAY.

Mr. JACO advised that in September, 1967, VIRGINIA RAY visited his home with a man whom she introduced as her husband, JAMES RAY.

Several photographs were exhibited to Mr. JACO. He advised that none of these photographs resembled the individual introduced to him as JAMES RAY.

A photograph of JAMES EARL RAY was singularly exhibited to Mr. JACO. He advised that this was definitely not the man who VIRGINIA RAY introduced to him as her husband.

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On 4/20/68 at Jackson, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-98  
by SA's JOHN L. PUDDISTER & JAMES W. AWE: JLP/cmb Date dictated 4/23/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/23/68

GEORGE JONES, 225 Oak Street, Jackson, Mississippi, advised that Mrs. VIRGINIA RAY is his wife's cousin and that Mrs. RAY told him that the photograph which appeared in the Jackson newspapers on April 19, 1968, appeared to look like her husband, JAMES (no middle name) RAY.

JONES said he was at the Oak Street address in September, 1967, when VIRGINIA RAY showed up with a man whom she introduced as her husband. JONES said VIRGINIA and her husband spent one day and one night at the Oak Street address and left early the following morning. RAY took GEORGE JONES' shotgun, pointed it at VIRGINIA, and said he was going to kill her. JOYCE JONES, wife of GEORGE JONES, stepped in between them and JAMES RAY fled the house and has not been seen since that time.

JONES said that the previous evening he accompanied RAY to a local beverage store where RAY obtained two or three pints of whiskey. He said that in his opinion, RAY was nothing but an alcoholic.

GEORGE JONES described RAY's vehicle as being a 1967 white Malibu with red upholstery and the two front fenders severely dented.

JONES furnished the following description of RAY:

Name	JAMES RAY
Sex	Male
Race	White
Height	6'
Weight	180 pounds
Age	Approximately 40 years
Characteristics	Had a red face and appeared to be an alcoholic.

On 4/20/68 at Jackson, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-99  
by SA's JOHN L. PUDDISTER and  
JAMES W. AWE: JLP/cmb Date dictated 4/23/68

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JN 157-9586

Numerous photographs were exhibited to GEORGE JONES, among which was a photograph of JAMES EARL RAY. JONES said none of the photographs exhibited appeared to look like JAMES RAY, VIRGINIA's husband.

The photograph of JAMES EARL RAY was singularly pointed out to JONES. He commented that this definitely was not VIRGINIA RAY's husband.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/10/68

Mrs. MARIAN LILLY, I.B.E.W. Local 605, 116 Clairborne, Jackson, Mississippi, advised BILLY D. MC GRIFF is a member of their local. She states that during the week April 1 - April 5, 1968, MC GRIFF and 33 other electricians were working for L. E. Myers Company in Sardis, Mississippi. She states MC GRIFF returned to Jackson, Mississippi, in the afternoon of April 5, 1968. She advised MC GRIFF is presently working on a job in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and the name of this job could be determined through Local Union 995, 405 St. Ferdinand Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Mrs. LILLY stated she had talked with MC GRIFF when he returned on April 5, 1968, and MC GRIFF had stated that he had been in Memphis on April 4, 1968, when Reverend MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., was assassinated. She stated MC GRIFF did not elaborate on what he was doing there, but understood that their job in Sardis, Mississippi, had been "rained out" and that MC GRIFF and some of the other electricians had driven to Memphis, Tennessee. She advised she does not know where MC GRIFF stayed, nor what he was doing, nor what he did in Memphis, Tennessee.

On 4/10/68 at Jackson, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-100  
by SA WILLIAM BLACKKETTER and *WB*  
SA ANTHONY E. DANIELS:WB:bal Date dictated 4/10/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/12/68

STANLEY E. SMYTHE was advised of the identity of the interviewing Agent. SMYTHE then furnished the following information at his place of employment, the Mississippi Power and Light Company in Fayette, Mississippi.

When asked about his activities on the night of April 3, 1968, SMYTHE stated that he got off work at about 5:30 and then went home. SMYTHE stated that he was home all evening and did not leave the house. He stated he does not remember being at Jack Wright's Cafe on this particular evening. When asked if he had made any kind of statement concerning Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., on this particular evening, SMYTHE advised that while he was at the town clerk's office he did make the statement that when MARTIN LUTHER KING went to Memphis on April 4, 1968, he would be killed. He said he made this statement only as a passing remark and did not intend it to be a threat. SMYTHE stated that in fact many people had been talking about the fact that MARTIN LUTHER KING someday would be killed due to his radical attitudes and activities. SMYTHE stated that the last time he was in Memphis, Tennessee, was sometime back in 1965.

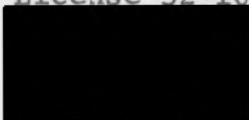
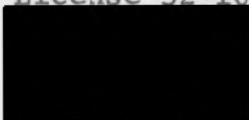
The following is a description of STANLEY E. SMYTHE obtained through interview and observation:

Name -	STANLEY E. SMYTHE
Race -	White
Sex -	Male
Date of Birth -	[REDACTED]
Place of Birth -	New Orleans, Louisiana
Height -	5'11½"
Weight -	197 pounds
Hair -	Curly, black, graying
Eyes -	Blue
Complexion -	Ruddy

On 4/8/68 at Fayette, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-101  
by SA MICHAEL J. O'NEILL/pac *mjo* Date dictated 4/9/68

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Build -	Medium to stocky
Address -	Post Office Box 296, Fayette, Mississippi
Marital Status -	Divorced
Automobile -	1966 Pontiac Executive four door, 1968 Mississippi License 32-109
Army Serial Number -	
Social Security Number -	
Weapons -	Smith and Wesson snub nosed .38 caliber

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/11/68

J. W. WARREN, Investigator, Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol (MMSHP), Holly Springs, Mississippi, furnished the following information to the interviewing Agents:

Investigator WARREN stated that one ROBERT OWEN SHERIDAN of Plain Field, Illinois, was arrested by the Holly Springs, Mississippi, Police Department on April 8, 1968 on a charge of suspicion.

WARREN stated that from the information he obtained SHERIDAN checked into the Holly Inn Motel, located on Highway 78 in Holly Springs, Mississippi on the evening of April 7, 1968. SHERIDAN'S arrest was the result of his, SHERIDAN'S, questionable actions. WARREN explained that SHERIDAN apparently attempted to rent his motel room at the Holly Inn Restaurant to two unknown truck drivers, after he, SHERIDAN, checked into the motel. WARREN explained that it was subsequently determined that SHERIDAN was without any type of funds and was driving a 1966 Cadillac, white over gold in color, bearing 1968 Illinois license HJ167, VIN J6263092.

WARREN stated that he initially interviewed SHERIDAN and determined that he was from Plain Field, Illinois, and was in the interior design business in that city. WARREN stated that he also determined that SHERIDAN had checked into the Rip Van Winkle Motel in Millington, Tennessee on April 4, 1968 and that he reportedly still maintained a room at this motel.

WARREN determined that SHERIDAN was known to the Aurora, Illinois, Police Department, and was apparently considered a mental case. WARREN further commented that he telephonically contact RICHARD BONYA of Plain Field, Illinois and determined that SHERIDAN was in fact, the owner of a 1966

On 4/8/68 at HOLLY SPRINGS, MISSISSIPPI File # Jackson 157-9586-542-102  
by SA RICHARD T. RABIDEAU and  
SA WILLIAM P. LAWLER, JR. RTR/jdh Date dictated 4/9/68

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JN 157-9586

Cadillac and further, that SHERIDAN had been hospitalized for a mental problem. BONYA reportedly advised WARREN that SHERIDAN left the hospital in Aurora, Illinois prior to actually being released. WARREN stated that SHERIDAN reportedly walked out of the hospital on April 2, 1968.

WARREN further stated that RICHARD BONYA was immediately leaving Plain Field, Illinois en route to Holly Springs, Mississippi to pick up SHERIDAN and transport him back to Illinois.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/8/68

MYRTLE CALDWELL, 319 Lynn Street, Clarksdale, Mississippi, registration clerk, Downtowner Motor Inn, Clarksdale, furnished the following information:

She recalled that she registered a guest using the name BILLY RAY KING in room 225 at the Downtowner Motor Inn, Clarksdale, at about 10:12 PM on April 4, 1968. She recalled that he paid for the room, cash in advance, in the amount of \$7.84. He claimed to be from Lake Providence, Louisiana.

He claimed that he had been put off the bus at Clarksdale and that he was trying to meet a boat. He did not say where he was to meet the boat. He stated that buses were not being allowed to enter Memphis, Tennessee.

Just after he registered he placed a long-distance collect telephone call through the pay telephone located in the lobby of the motel. He advised her that he was expecting the party whom he called to return his call. He did receive a long-distance person-to-person call shortly thereafter in his room, before 11:00 PM.

She described KING as a white male, in his twenties, six feet tall or slightly taller, 170 pounds, slender or medium build, dark hair, wearing a light shirt, open at the neck and several buttons open, exposing a portion of his chest and revealing no undershirt.

She stated that KING was a stranger to her, and she did not know of anyone who visited him in his room. She went off duty at 11:00 PM and stayed at the motel until midnight.

On 4/8/68 at Clarksdale, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-103  
by SA HAROLD LEO FABRIZ:mif Date dictated 4/8/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/8/68

J. LYNN PITTS, 1625 Herrin Street, registration clerk, Downtowner Motor Inn, Clarksdale, Mississippi, advised that he was on duty at the motel from 11:00 PM, April 4, 1968, to 7:00 AM, April 5, 1968. He did not observe BILLY RAY KING, who was registered in Room 225; however, he recalled placing a 5:00 AM telephone call to that room on April 5, 1968, and he believed that a man answered the room telephone.

He did not observe KING leave the motel, and KING did not check out at the desk while PITTS was on duty. He did not observe a blue Mustang with Louisiana license in the vicinity of the motel during the above period. He added that Room 225 is in the rear of the motel and is not visible from the lobby.

On 4/8/68 at Clarksdale, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-104  
by SA HAROLD LEO FABRIZ:mif Date dictated 4/8/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/8/68

RICHARD H. SIMS, 327 Elm, manager, Downtowner Motor Inn, Clarksdale, Mississippi, furnished the original registration card dated April 4, 1968, in the name of BILLY RAY KING, 102 Arlington Street, Lake Providence, Louisiana.

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On 4/8/68 at Clarksdale, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-105  
by SA HAROLD LEO FABRIZ:mif Date dictated 4/8/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/15/68

HOMER DENTON, Night Auditor, Holiday Inn, Highway 72, West, Iuka, Mississippi, advised that his records reflect a M. J. ENGLAND registered at the motel at 2:56 P.M., on April 9, 1968, and was assigned Room 232. Mr. DENTON stated that the motel registration records reflect that ENGLAND was driving a Buick, Texas license TWW235 and listed his name as M. JACK ENGLAND, 2616 Ryan Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas, employed, Westward Company. Mr. DENTON further stated his records reflect that a call was made from Room 232 to area code 901-234-0778 at 7:48 P.M. on April 9, 1968.

Mr. DENTON further stated that the reservation in the Holiday Inn, Corinth, Mississippi, was made from a Holiday Inn, Decatur, Illinois.

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On 4/10/68 at Corinth, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-106

*FR* SA FRANCIS G. HONAN

by SA JOHN S. CASTLES/FGH/bjk

Date dictated 4/11/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/15/68

MARION JACKSON ENGLAND, JR., after being advised of the nature of the inquiry, and the identity of the interviewing Agents, was interviewed in Room 232, Holiday Inn, Highway 72, West, Corinth, Mississippi, at which time he stated that he checked into the Holiday Inn, Corinth, Mississippi, approximately 3:00 P.M. on the afternoon of April 9, 1968. He advised that he is employed as a salesman by the Westward Company, Appliance Parts Manufacturer, 7400 St. Aubin Avenue, Detroit, Michigan.

Concerning his whereabouts on April 4, 1968, Mr. ENGLAND stated that on April 3, 1968, he stayed at the Stonewall Jackson Motel, Highway 80, West, Jackson, Mississippi, and while in Jackson, Mississippi, called on a Mr. BRUCE COLEMAN, who is the Manager of Appliance Parts Company, Jackson, Mississippi. He stated that he stayed in Jackson, Mississippi, over the evening of April 3, 1968, and on the early morning of April 4, 1968, left Jackson, Mississippi, and drove to Mobile, Alabama, where he stayed at the Travel Lodge Motel, located on Government Street. He advised that he stayed at the Travel Lodge Motel the evening of April 4, and April 5, 1968. Mr. ENGLAND stated he arrived in Mobile, Alabama, around lunchtime on the fourth of April, and had lunch with a JAMES HYBART, who is the owner of Appliance Parts and Supply Company, 805 Church Street, Mobile, Alabama. He stated that he had lunch at Wentzel's Seafood Restaurant, Mobile, Alabama. Mr. ENGLAND also stated that he saw FRED HYBART, on the afternoon of April 4, 1968, and further stated that he did not check

On 4/10/68 at Corinth, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-107  
by SA FRANCIS G. HONAN  
by SA JOHN S. CASTLES/FGH/bjk Date dictated 4/11/68

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JN 157-9586

into the Travel Lodge Motel until approximately 3:00 P.M., on April 4, 1968. He stated that he had dinner at approximately 5:00 P.M., at the Morrison's Cafeteria, Mobile, Alabama. Mr. ENGLAND further stated that due to severe sinus headaches that he has, he stayed in the motel all evening in Mobile, Alabama.

Mr. ENGLAND denied being in Memphis, Tennessee, on the evening of April 4, 1968. He further stated that he recalls on the evening of April 4, 1968, making a collect telephone call to his wife in Fort Worth, Texas, at approximately 8:00 P.M. He stated his home telephone number in Fort Worth, Texas is area code 817-Walnut 3-3688. ENGLAND stated that he drives a 1967 white Buick Le Sabre with Texas license TWW235.

The following description of ENGLAND was obtained from interview and observation:

Name:	MARION JACKSON ENGLAND, JR.
Race:	White
Sex:	Male
Born:	[REDACTED]
Place of birth:	Fort Worth, Texas
Height:	6' 1"
Weight:	175 pounds
Hair:	Brown
Eyes:	Blue
Marital status:	Married
Wife:	ERNESTINE FRANCES ENGLAND
Residence:	2616 Ryan Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas
Employment:	Salesman, The Westward Company, 7400 St. Aubin Avenue, Detroit, Michigan

JN 157-9586

Military service: U. S. Navy, 1945  
Serial number: Unknown  
Driver's license: Texas Department of  
Public Safety, license  
number [REDACTED] expires  
December 15, 1968  
Selective service  
number: [REDACTED]  
Registered: Local Board 113, Fort  
Worth, Texas  
Classification: 5A (September 11, 1962)

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/9/68

MAUDE ETHEL HART, Route 2, Canton, Mississippi, advised that her son, BEN HART, was at her home for breakfast at approximately 9:00 A.M., on April 4, 1968.

HART advised that she went to her son's apartment at approximately 1:00 P.M., on Thursday, April 4, 1968, and took her son soup, and that her son was in bed reading at the time.

HART advised that at approximately 6:30 P.M. to 7:00 P.M., on Thursday, April 4, 1968, her son telephoned her and asked her if she had heard the newscast of MARTIN LUTHER KING being shot.

HART advised the telephone call from her son was local, and when asked how she knew it was a local call she simply stated that it had to be a local call.

On 4/8/68 at Canton, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-108  
by SA JERRY R. PARKER and  
SA PETER J. RYAN:JRP:bal Date dictated 4/9/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/9/68

BETTY HART WATKINS, 207 East Peace Street, advised that BEN HART is her cousin.

WATKINS advised that she sees HART every morning as he leaves, probably to go to his mother's to have breakfast.

WATKINS advised that since she does see her cousin every morning, it would stick in her mind if for some reason she did not see him on a particular day.

WATKINS advised that she was sure, therefore, that her cousin, BEN HART, was at his apartment on Thursday, April 4, 1968.

WATKINS advised she could not pinpoint HART being at his apartment during the afternoon or the evening of April 4, 1968

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On 4/8/68 at Canton, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-872-109  
by SA JERRY R. PARKER and  
SA PETER J. RYAN:JRP:bal Date dictated 4/9/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/9/68

ETHEL RINGS, 213 East Peace Street, advised she is the landlady of BEN HART.

RINGS advised that HART is a good tenant and is very quiet when he comes and goes and has caused her no problems. RINGS advised she is sure she saw HART sometime on Thursday, April 4, 1968. RINGS advised it was in the afternoon that she was sure she saw him, but she is unsure about the evening.

RINGS advised she sees him everyday and it would be very unusual not seeing him sometime during the day, and she would definitely remember not seeing him. RINGS advised that as an example of this, HART was gone all day Saturday, April 6, 1968, and she remembered not seeing him that day.

RINGS advised that HART usually goes out around 9:00 P.M. in the evening, as RINGS is usually going to bed, and RINGS does not know when he returns.

On 4/8/68 at Canton, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-~~572~~-110  
by SA JERRY R. PARKER and  
SA PETER J. RYAN:JRP:bal Date dictated 4/9/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/9/68

EVA H. HARGIN, Route 3, Box 183, Canton, Mississippi, advised that she was home sick in bed all day, Thursday, April 4, 1968, and did not get out of bed until Friday morning, April 5, 1968.

HARGIN advised she was in the Ranch Restaurant purchasing coffee for everyone on Friday, April 5, 1968, at approximately 4:30 to 5:30 P.M.

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On 4/8/68 at Canton, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-111  
by SA JERRY R. PARKER and  
SA PETER J. RYAN;JRP:bal Date dictated 4/9/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/9/68

AFTON BOLDING, 213 Dinkins Street, and Manager of the Ranch Restaurant, advised that BEN HART is a good customer of his, and that BOLDING is sure that HART was at the restaurant on Thursday, April 4, 1968.

BOLDING advised that HART was there at approximately 5:00 to 5:30 P.M., and again approximately from 7:30 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. BOLDING advised this date sticks in his mind because EVA HARGIN was at the restaurant paying for everyone's coffee.

BOLDING was contacted later on the same day and advised that HARGIN had told the interviewing Agents she was at home sick in bed all day, Thursday, April 4, 1968, and bought the coffee at the restaurant on Friday, April 5, 1968.

BOLDING advised he would not take an oath whether HART was at the restaurant on Thursday, April 4, 1968. BOLDING advised that HART is in and out everyday, but BOLDING advised he could not swear to HART's being present on Thursday, April 4, 1968. BOLDING advised that HART had discussed the matter with him (BOLDING) the morning of April 8, 1968, concerning whether HART was in the restaurant on April 4, 1968.

On 4/8/68 at Canton, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-S72-112  
by SA JERRY R. PARKER and  
SA PETER J. RYAN:JRP:bal Date dictated 4/9/68

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## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/8/68

BEN LYNN HART appeared at the Canton Police Department with his attorney, W. S. CAIN.

CAIN was advised by the interviewing Agents that they wished to question HART concerning his whereabouts on Thursday, April 4, 1968, and that for the interviewing Agents to effect this interview, HART would have to be questioned without CAIN's interruption.

CAIN advised he had no objection to HART being questioned and said, "LYNN tell them what they want to know."

HART advised on Thursday, April 4, 1968, he remembered being on his father's farm working in the afternoon.

HART advised he might have had coffee with a SNOOKY RAY and a Mr. JAMES later in the afternoon, but he could not be sure about this. HART advised that he was home at his apartment at 213 East Peace Street watching the television program "Cimarron Strip" when the television announced the shooting of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HART advised he then telephoned his parents' home to determine if they had heard the announcement.

HART advised he left his apartment at approximately 9:00 to 9:15 P.M., and went to the Ranch Restaurant, Canton, Mississippi, returning home at approximately 10:00 P.M., where he retired for the evening.

The interviewing Agents asked HART if there was anyone who could physically account for his presence between 5:00 P.M. and 7:00 P.M., on Thursday, April 4, 1968, and HART advised that he could think of no one

On 4/7/68 at Canton, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-113  
by SA JERRY R. PARKER and  
SA ANTHONY E. DANIELS:JRP:bal Date dictated 4/9/68

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JN 157-9586

who was in his presence at that time who could vouch for his whereabouts.

The following description was obtained through observation and interview:

Name	BEN LYNN HART
Address	213 East Peace Street Canton, Mississippi
Race	White
Sex	Male
Height	5 feet, 10 inches
Weight	160-170 pounds
Hair	Black
Eyes	Hazel
Date of Birth	[REDACTED]
Place of Birth	Canton, Mississippi
Military	None
Occupation	Farms - self-employed
Marital status	Divorcee
Children	One
Wife resides in	Humble, Texas
Mother	MAUDE ETHEL HART
Father	GORDON HART
Parents reside in	Canton, Mississippi

At this point, Attorney CAIN stated that he could assure the interviewing Agents that HART was not of the caliber to do such a thing. SA JERRY R. PARKER advised CAIN that the interviewing Agents do not investigate calibers, but only carry out their job.

CAIN advised at this point that he understood that the Federal Bureau of Investigation was just doing their job, and rose and left with HART.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date April 17, 1968

ROBERT DUVAL ROGERS, 510 Spanish Main, Spanish Fort, Alabama, telephone Mobile, Alabama, 433-1307, telephonically contacted the Meridian Resident Agency of the FBI saying that he would like to meet an Agent at the Travel Inn Motel Restaurant, Tom Bailey Drive, Meridian, Mississippi, to relate some information concerning the murder of MARTIN LUTHER KING. Agents met ROGERS as requested, at which time he related the following information:

ROGERS stated that at about 2:00 p.m., on April 8, 1968, he left Spanish Fort, Alabama, en route to Morton, Mississippi, to visit relatives. He said that he traveled through Saraland to Citronelle, Alabama, and as he started to turn right on U. S. Highway 45 at the Rosa A. Lott Negro school at the Petroleum Club on Highway 45, he noticed a light blue or light green 1963 Rambler automobile traveling north on Highway 45. ROGERS said that he pulled in behind that Rambler automobile, at which time the driver sped off at an extremely high rate of speed (about 90 miles per hour). He related that he increased his speed to catch up with the Rambler automobile and followed that car on through Citronelle to a point about 11 miles north of Citronelle. ROGERS stated that the Rambler automobile then turned East on a dirt road about 150 yards south of the intersection of Highway 17 with U. S. 45. He said that he recalls having seen a highway sign near that dirt road which sign read "Mobile 43 miles". ROGERS stated that after seeing the Rambler turn on the dirt road, he turned around at the intersection of Highway 17 and went back to the dirt road where he observed the Rambler going east on the dirt road at a high rate of speed. ROGERS said that he thought that the car might have been going to a residence on that road. He said that the Rambler bore an unknown Georgia license plate.

On 4/17/68 at Meridian, Mississippi File # Jackson 157-9586-572-114  
by SA'S RICHARD L. BROCK and JOHN B. RUCKER, JR: JBR/cmb Date dictated 4/17/68

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JN 157-9586

ROGERS advised that just prior to his leaving Spanish Fort, Alabama, on the above-mentioned trip, he had observed a sketch of the suspect killer of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., in a Mobile, Alabama, newspaper and immediately felt that the driver of the above-described Rambler automobile closely resembled that sketch. He said that the driver of that car was about 35 years of age, had brown or black hair, with a receding hairline and had a thin face. He said that he noticed dark colored clothing hanging in the back seat of that Rambler automobile.

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 4/11/68

ROBERT OWEN SHERIDAN, 208 Joliet Road, Plain Field, Illinois, was located and interviewed at the Holly Springs, Mississippi, Police Department. SHERIDAN was immediately advised of the identity of the interviewing Agents. Present during the course of interview with SHERIDAN was Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol (MHSP) Investigator, J. W. WARREN, of Holly Springs, Mississippi. SHERIDAN was furnished, by SA RICHARD T. RABIDEAU, a warning and waiver form which he read. SHERIDAN orally indicated that he understood his rights, but he elected not to execute this form.

SHERIDAN stated that he is a partner in the interior design business in Plain Field, Illinois. SHERIDAN stated that the name of the firm is the Rabros and Associates and that his partner is RICHARD ALEX BONYA.

SHERIDAN stated that he departed Plain Field, Illinois on Wednesday, April 3, 1968, driving his 1966 Cadillac. SHERIDAN explained that he departed Illinois en route to Florida for a vacation. He stated that on April 2, 1968 he was released from the Mercyville Hospital in Aurora, Illinois. SHERIDAN stated that he has had trouble with his nerves and has been hospitalized since March 17, 1968 in conjunction with this nervous problem. SHERIDAN indicated that he was initially confined to the Manteno State Hospital located in Manteno, Illinois on March 17, 1968, however, was released from this institution after being confined approximately one week or less. SHERIDAN stated that he was thereafter taken to the Mercyville Hospital in Aurora, Illinois, a private institution where he was under treatment and care by a Doctor (First Name Unknown) UREBEE of Chicago, Illinois.

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On 4/8/68 at HOLLY SPRINGS, MISSISSIPPI File # Jackson 157-9586-872-115  
by SA RICHARD T. RABIDEAU and  
SA WILLIAM P. LAWLER, JR. RTR/jdh Date dictated 4/9/68

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SHERIDAN stated that after his release from the Mercyville Hospital in Aurora, Illinois on April 2, 1968, that he decided that he needed a rest and a vacation. SHERIDAN stated that he traveled from Plain Field, Illinois on April 3, 1968 and spent that night at the Holiday Inn Motel in Blytheville, Arkansas. He stated that on April 4, 1968, he traveled from Blytheville, Arkansas directly to Millington, Tennessee, where he immediately checked into the Rip Van Winkle Motel. SHERIDAN stated that he still maintains a room at the Tip Van Winkle Motel in Millington, Tennessee and that some of his clothing is still at this motel.

SHERIDAN stated that he went to Millington, Tennessee in order to see one STEVE FRY who is stationed at the Naval Air Base in Millington, Tennessee. SHERIDAN pointed out that STEVE FRY is a former employee of the Rabros and Associates and he, SHERIDAN, was interested in contacting FRY and visiting with him. He stated that he attempted to contact FRY at the Naval Station on Thursday, April 4, 1968, with negative results. He explained that he was unable to contact FRY on the afternoon of April 4, 1968 and that during the evening of April 4, 1968, there was a tornado that struck in the Millington, Tennessee area making it impossible to contact FRY.

He stated that he did, in fact, contact STEVE FRY on the following day, April 5, 1968.

SHERIDAN stated that he remained at the Rip Van Winkle Motel in Millington, Tennessee until Sunday, April 7, 1968, when he traveled to Holly Springs, Mississippi. SHERIDAN stated that he became extremely nervous because of the rioting and the demonstrations in Memphis, Tennessee and as a result elected not to travel anywhere, but remain in Millington, Tennessee.

SHERIDAN stated that he departed Millington, Tennessee for Holly Springs, Mississippi on Sunday, April 7, 1968 because he had been unable to complete long distance telephone calls that he had attempted to place to his partner in Plain Field, Illinois. SHERIDAN explained that he ran out



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of money and was attempting to contact his partner; however, the telephone circuits were constantly tied up and he was unable to make or complete these calls. As a result, he decided to travel to Holly Springs, Mississippi and check into a motel where he could successfully complete his telephone calls.

SHERIDAN stated that while en route to Holly Springs, Mississippi on April 7, 1968, he stopped at a Negro service station, which he was unable to further describe, and purchased gasoline for his automobile. He stated that after departing this service station he noticed that a suitcase was missing from his automobile. SHERIDAN could not describe the manufacturer of this suitcase, but indicated that it was tan in color. He stated that the following listed items were in the suitcase at the time it was stolen:

- Polaroid Camera
- Gideon Bible
- Two sets of underclothing
- One black pair of trousers
- A Norelco Electric Shaver

SHERIDAN stated that he checked into the Holly Inn Motel located in Holly Springs, Mississippi and remained at this motel until he was arrested by the Police Department on the morning of April 8, 1968.

SHERIDAN stated that the 1966 Cadillac that he was in possession of, is his automobile and that he purchased this Cadillac from RAY KINNEY Motors in Joliet, Illinois. SHERIDAN stated that the Illinois registration papers for this automobile had been lost or stolen.

SHERIDAN emphatically denied owning or purchasing any type of weapon. He further stated that the only occasion he had ever been through the city of Birmingham, Alabama, was on a train during the time he was in the military service.

The following description was obtained through observation and interview:

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Name	ROBERT OWEN SHERIDAN
Residence	208 Joliet Road Plain Field, Illinois
Race	White
Sex	Male
Age	32
Date of Birth	[REDACTED]
Place of Birth	Mount Vernon, Illinois
Height	6'
Weight	205
Hair	Brown
Eyes	Brown
Characteristics	Receding forehead
Selective Service #	[REDACTED]
Previous Arrests	Admits being arrested by the Aurora, Illinois Police Department in 1961 on a DWI charge. States charges were dropped and he was released. States he was fingerprinted by the Aurora, Illinois Police Department at the time of his arrest.
Employment	Partner in the Rabros and Associates, Plain Field, Illinois