

Clipping in Space Below

Just Another Prisoner An Interview With James Earl Ray

By WILLARD YARBROUGH
News-Sentinel Staff Writer

PETROS, March 26 — Why does James Earl Ray avoid reporters? "Because," he told this reporter late yesterday, "my lawyer told me interviews could jeopardize my appeals to overturn my conviction, since something I might say could be misinterpreted or lifted out of context."

Then why did the convicted assassin of Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King in Memphis some three years ago grant me an exclusive interview for this newspaper? The first one, incidentally, since his apprehension in England as he attempted to board a plane to Spain in his flight from America.

He permitted the interview, as some 20 newsmen and television cameramen on annual open house day at Brushy Mountain State Prison here gnashed their teeth outside, because I asked him. It was a simple thing.

PULLED COVER OVER HEAD

Earlier, during a special visit here by this writer and WBIR-TV newsman Carl Warner, Ray lay on his cot behind his locked door in Cellblock B and pulled covers over his head. He feigned sleep, but even then I spoke to him and got silence in return.

This time, as others of the media interviewed his cellblock mates about the most celebrated inmate among the 360 here, I merely knelt at his cell, told the again-covered form who I was, that I would like to interview him now or later, and to check with others about my credentials.

Fifteen minutes later, Chaplain Herbert Carlock Jr., who pastors Oak Ridge's First Cumberland Presbyterian Church, sought me out in the prison yard, said Ray wanted to talk with me and nobody else. Rev. Carlock obtained a master key and we were in Ray's cell within a minute.

WORKS SIX HOURS EACH DAY

Here's what Ray had to say:

"I decided to trust you so that I could let

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

— PAGE 1

— THE KNOXVILLE
NEWS-SENTINEL

— KNOXVILLE, TENN.

Date: 3-26-71
Edition: HOME
Author: Willard YARBROUGH
Editor: RALPH L. MILLETT
Title: MURKIN

Character:
or
Classification: KX 44-696
Submitting Office: KNOXVILLE
☐ Being Investigated

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAR 27 1971	
FBI - KNOXVILLE	

1 - MEMPHIS (44-1987)

1 - BUREAU (44-38861)

44-1987-Sub C-423

A News-Sentinel Exclusive

people outside know that I wasn't crazy. Some people have thought so, since I always hide when the press come around.

"I do not cause trouble here. I work six hours a day, seven days a week. My job is serving food to my cellmates, which requires two hours at each meal, and to housekeep in our cellblock.

"Once a day I get outside the cellblock—our doors to individual cells are always open—and go to the gymnasium for exercise. I do this soon after arising around 5:30 a.m."

What does he do in-between?

"I write memos to my lawyer, Bernard Finsterwald, in Washington. He was down to see me about appeals of my conviction two weeks ago. I read Knoxville newspapers. I read magazines. I watch television."

ASLEEP BY 8 EVERY NIGHT

His 11-inch set is suspended above his cot, and lights and electricity are turned off at 11 p.m. weekdays, later on weekends. Ray couldn't care less.

"I'm in bed and asleep by 8 every night," he said. "I must sack in early because I'm up at 5:30 a.m. next day, and when I finish working and exercising I'm beat."

Warden Robert Moore and Ray's cellmates term him a "model prisoner." One longtimer in Cellblock B said cellmates don't ask Ray about the assassination that rocked the world. "We don't pry into his affairs, he doesn't talk about the slaying, and he doesn't pry into our personal affairs," said a Ray next-door neighbor.

On one cot in Ray's cell was a portable typewriter, furnished by lawyer Finsterwald. Ray is sparing with stamps and paper, since he earns only 35 cents daily for his six-hour work

chores. But he insists he wants for nothing, points out he doesn't smoke, and that he is "just another prisoner and am treated as one." He gets no special favors, expects none.

HAS GAINED SINCE TRANSFER

Now 42 and weighing around 175 pounds, he said he had gained 20 pounds since being transferred to Tennessee's maximum security prison here a year ago from the main penitentiary at Nashville.

Ray is supremely confident that his lawyer will win his case eventually, whether exoneration via a new trial or whatever, but he steadfastly declines to discuss his predicament on advice of counsel.

He is, nonetheless, somewhat nervous but quite calm when he explains he has no fear of bodily harm from fellow inmates—even the blacks whose onetime hero he stands convicted of slaying.

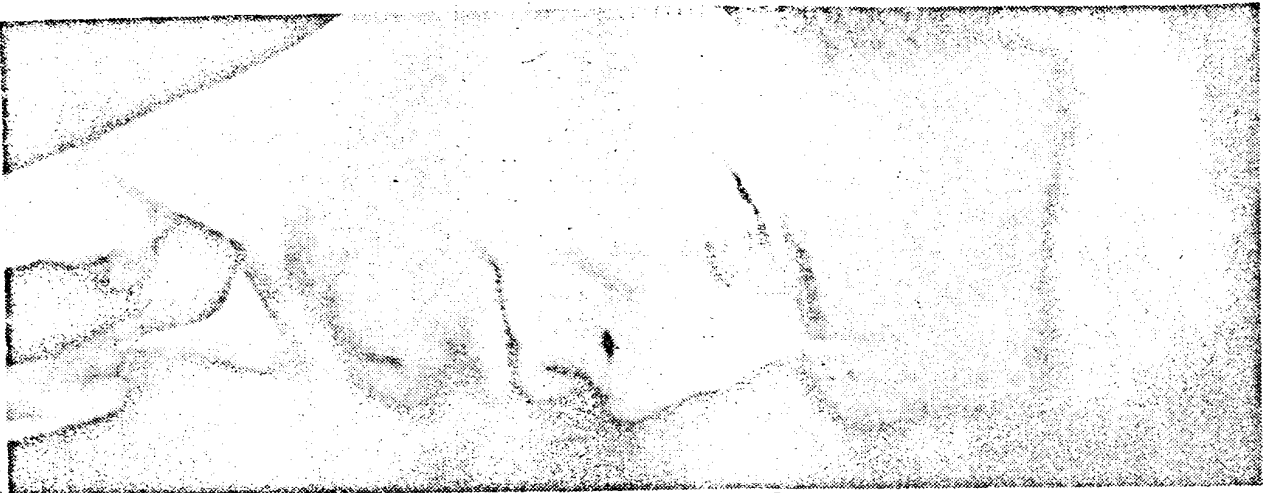
"Prisoners here, white or black, aren't concerned about such things," Ray said. "All of us are concerned about day-to-day existence and perhaps the day when we won't be locked up anymore."

URNS BACK ON NEWSMEN

By now prison guard Richard Davis, who had carried the message that Ray would talk with me, entered the cell and sat down. Behind him came the press. And Ray's only media interview was over.

He rose slowly and turned his back on them. TV cameraman Warner got one answer to one question: "I cannot talk with you because my lawyer said I could not discuss the case with the press."

State Corrections Commissioner Mark Luttrell suggested the jammed cellblock hallway be cleared, since Ray didn't want to be interviewed, and that's what happened. But earlier, Warner and a Nashville television crew let their cameras whirr as Ray lay under the covers. WBIR-TV will show its strip at 6 p.m. Saturday.



JAMES EARL RAY



WILLARD YARBROUGH

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Appeal Possible By Ray's Attorney

Richard J. Ryan, attorney for James Earl Ray, said yesterday he probably would appeal to the United States Supreme Court the lower court dismissals of a civil suit by Ray against his former defense attorneys and writer William Bradford Huie.

His statement came on the heels of an announcement by the Sixth United States Circuit Court of Appeals that it had dismissed 2-1 Ray's appeal to try to void contracts between himself and Percy Foreman, of Houston, Arthur Haynes Sr. of Birmingham and Mr. Huie.

Ray contended in the suit that the three fraudulently "took him in" when he signed the contract and he added that they were more interested in getting him to plead guilty to the April 4, 1968, slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and obtaining the royalties from Mr. Huie's book that they were in giving him an adequate defense.

Circuit Judges Wade McCree Jr. of Detroit and Henry L. Brooks of Louisville said that "there are no grounds . . . for a claim that . . . an attorney accused of taking unfair advantage of a client in business deal . . . was evi-
den-
ty

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 12

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 4-30-71

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

GORDON HANNA

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office:

MEMPHIS

Being Investigated	
SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
APR 30 1971	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

44-1987-Sub-C-484

Ray Nabbed In Jailbreak

*Plan Includes Dummy,
Chisel, Hacksaw, Tunnel*

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE /

NASHVILLE BANNER

NASHVILLE, TENN.

Date: 5-3-68

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

Title:

ALVAND C.
DUNKLEBERGER

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office:

44-1987
MEMPHIS

SEARCHED	Being Indexed
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAY 5 1968	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

44-1987-Sub-C-425

Plot Said — Given Aid By Plumber

By LARRY BRINTON

James Earl Ray, convicted slayer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was nabbed early today during a bold and elaborately planned attempt to escape from Brushy Mountain State Prison at Petros.

The 40-year-old Ray, serving a 99-year term, used a hacksaw blade, an assortment of tools and a "life-like" dummy in his desperate—and almost successful—attempt to break out of Tennessee's maximum security penitentiary.

Brushy Mountain Warden Robert H. Moore said Ray was helped in the escape plot by the prison's plumber, Roy Morelock, 49, serving a life sentence as an habitual criminal.

'Awfully Lucky'

"I'm lucky, awfully lucky," Moore told THE BANNER, who he said was the first news media to learn of Ray's would-be escape.

"He came darn close to leaving here," the warden declared.

Ray had chiseled his way from his cell by removing one and one-half concrete blocks from a wall near the ceiling, then sliced through an air corridor cell bar with a hacksaw blade, making his way to an underground tunnel.

Moore said guards heard the noise of Ray leaving the air corridor and immediately began a search of the cell block, apparently causing Ray's alleged escape companion to return to his cell and feign sleep.

Previous Escape

Ray, who was an escapee from the Missouri State Prison when he killed the civil rights leader in April 1968 at Memphis, apparently chose the wrong tunnel and was forced out by steam.

"It must have been 400 degrees in that tunnel," the warden reported, "and Ray couldn't stand the heat."

Minutes later the convict, cowed against a cyclone fence outside the penitentiary's



This is the official Tennessee State Prison photograph of James Earl Ray who attempted to escape from Brushy Mountain State Prison.

maximum security building, was spotted by guards and surrendered without offering any resistance.

Ray, who several months ago had been turned out of the maximum security cell building and given a cleanup job, was returned to the closely guarded security building after being caught, Moore said.

Morelock also has been confined to a maximum security cell, he said.

Disciplinary Hearing

The two convicts are slated to appear Tuesday before the prison's disciplinary board as a result of the freedom bid.

Moore said he was notified of the breakout about 3 a.m. and within 15 minutes Ray had been spotted, still within the compound walls.

"Ray must have been working on this escape for six months or more," Warden Moore told THE BANNER.

The official said Ray, transferred from the maximum security building at Nashville to Brushy Mountain Prison in March 1970, apparently had used the assortment of tools allegedly furnished him by Morelock to work on removing the mortar from between the concrete blocks in his cell.

Ray's cell was painted a green color, the warden said, and to prevent guards from noticing where he had been chiseling the blocks from above a ventilator, Ray had painted a piece of cardboard the same color and kept it over the chiseled blocks during daylight hours.

Removing the concrete blocks from the wall during the pre-dawn hours, Ray left in his bunk a dummy, complete with hair obtained from the prison's barbershop.

"If you'd walked by his cell and looked in, that dummy would have looked just like a man," Moore asserted. He said the bedcovers had been pulled up to the "forehead" of the dummy, revealing only the "top of the head." The dummy was made from bath towels and a pillow and had arms and legs.

After leaving his cell, Moore said, Ray made his

way inside the narrow air chamber and then used the hacksaw blade to slice one side of a horizontal metal bar, using a heavy pipe wrench to twist the bar and allow him enough space to crawl through.

Once outside the air corridor, Moore stated, Ray entered a manhole into a steam tunnel which provides the hot air from the prison's steam plant to the cells and dining hall.

Recently Blocked

The tunnel leads beneath the prison wall and recently the end of it had been blocked to prevent escapes.

It also goes underground

"There was another tunnel and comes out outside the wall in a drainage ditch and that apparently is the tunnel he had hoped to enter," the warden reported. He said that tunnel also had been concreted, but that Ray had left chisels, a screwdriver and other tools in the steam tunnel. "Apparently he knew about the concrete blocking the outside end of the tunnel, but was going to chisel his way to freedom," Moore stated.

With guards closely behind him, Ray fled the steam tunnel and headed across the compound towards the maximum security building.

"We found the manhole cover off the steam tunnel and evidence that he had been inside it," Moore said. "We knew it was just so hot in there that he couldn't stand it and we began looking for him inside the walls."

Two Hours To Cool

"It would have taken two hours for the steam tunnel to have cooled down so that Ray could have made it through there," Moore explained.

He said Ray had chosen Morelock as his companion apparently hoping that the prison's convict-plumber could get the steam turned off and also furnish the tools needed to make his getaway from the cellblock.

The steam plant is located about one-eighth mile from the main prison at the remote mountainous prison located in East Tennessee.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

James Earl Ray Draws 30 Days In Punishment Cell For Escape Attempt

By ROBERT KELLETT

James Earl Ray, whose reputation as an escape artist diminished this week, was stripped of his "honor prisoner" status yesterday and ordered to spend 30 days in a disciplinary cell.

The convicted killer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was taken before a three-man disciplinary committee for his abortive Monday morning escape attempt from Brushy Mountain Penitentiary near Petros, Tenn.

He declined to discuss the attempt and told the board: "You already know what happened. There's no point in me saying anything."

The committee at the prison handed out punishment that Warden Robert H. Moore said was standard for unsuccessful escape attempts.

Ray will be in the disciplinary building for 30 days and will lose his job serving meals and cleaning up in Building C, where he had lived, and will lose all privileges for 30 days.

After 15 days he will get an hour a day to exercise in the corridor of the cell block. After

the second 15 days he will be moved to the administrative area of the prison with some of his privileges — such as radio and television in his cell — restored.

"In about 90 days, the case will be reviewed and if his attitude and conduct warrant, he might be released back into contact with the other men," said Warden Moore.

In Building C, where cell block doors remain unlocked most of the time, the 43-year-old Ray had the freedom to associate with about 30 to 35 men, the warden said, but usually "was a loner."

One man who Ray had associated with recently, Roy Morelock, 49, was accused of helping Ray in his escape attempt and was assigned similar punishment yesterday.

Serving a life term from Greene and Sullivan counties as a habitual criminal, Morelock reportedly moved into Ray's cell Sunday.

"He was able to do this because the regular assigned officer to that area was off Saturday and Sunday and the relief man in there was not fa-

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 15

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 5-5-71

Edition:

Author: GORDON HANNA

Editor:

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

44-1987-Sub-C-486

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAY 5 1971	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

Hester

miliar with cell assignments," Mr. Moore said. "That's just another indication to us that this thing had been planned for a long time and that Morelock planned to go with him.

"He needed this guy because he was assigned to this (plumbing and maintenance) inside detail."

Prison officials theorized that Morelock furnished Ray the tools he used to loosen concrete blocks and slip into an air chamber behind his cell, and to break off a bar at the end of the chamber after bending a fan blade.

From the ventilation system, Ray went to a steam tunnel where guards later found a crowbar, two or three chisels and hacksaw blades. Tunnel temperatures up to 400 degrees forced him back into the prison yard where he was captured. Morelock did not leave the cell, officers said.

In Ray's cell, guards found a "quiet effective" dummy formed by stuffing "some insulated underwear with towels and socks and other clothing he had, and spreading a blanket over the whole thing," said Mr. Moore.

The dummy was topped by a homemade wig of pasted hair clippings which Ray gathered in the Building C barbershop where he had worked, the warden said.

Had Ray been able to endure the heat of the steam tunnel, he would have found it blocked by concrete at the other end, Mr. Moore said.

"It would have taken him some time to dig around it or bust the concrete out, but he had some tools to do it."

Beyond the tunnel and the wall which surrounds the cell blocks, Ray would have been among other prison-related buildings surrounded on three

sides by high mountains and rough terrain.

"He's always had the ability and the reputation of a fast track man," said Mr. Moore. "At his age and all the time he's been in a cell, I don't know if he could have made it over one of these mountains at all. Brother, it's rough."

The escape attempt, he said, will prompt "some changes in the cell blocks and some lock changes. Some maintenance equipment that has been kept in some of the blocks is going to be moved out. You always profit by your mistakes."

The unsuccessful escape attempt marked the fourth time Ray has tried to break away from a major penal facility. His one successful attempt was in April 1967, when he hid in the back of a bread truck at the bakery of the Missouri State Penitentiary, where he was working while serving 20

years for armed robbery. He was still at large when Dr. King was murdered April 4, 1968.

Two escape attempts at the Missouri prison ended in clumsy failure.

In one, Ray attempted to scale a prison wall with an improvised pipe pole. The pipe broke, leaving Ray slightly injured and with six months to serve in solitary confinement.

His other attempted escape shared some characteristics with this week's failure. Ray reportedly put a dummy in his bed on that occasion, used a transom pole to climb to a window 12 feet above his cell and used a pair of wire cutters to cut a 12-by-14-inch hole in the metal mesh. He then crawled along the top of an interior wall and hid in a fan ventilator. When he walked out of the ventilator the next night, a guard was waiting to greet him.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray's Escape Attempt From Petros Fails

PETROS (AP) — James Earl Ray, serving 99 years for the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., made what the prison warden termed a well-planned but unsuccessful attempt Monday to escape.

Ray got out of his cell at Brushy Mountain Prison, Tennessee's maximum security facility, but was turned back by heat in a steam pipe tunnel.

"It was a well-conceived escape attempt and one he obviously had planned a long time," said Warden Robert H. Moore.

"First, he removed a concrete block in his cell and got out into an air chamber — a ventilating area behind the cellblock. He crawled along the air chamber to the end and sawed one bar and broke another with a crowbar.

"He pulled himself through the hole and got out into the prison yard behind the cellblock. Then he went to the steam tunnel which leads to our steam plant about 100 yards outside the prison.



Ray

"He obviously got too hot for him in the tunnel — our engineer tells me it gets up to 400 degrees fahrenheit in there — and he had to come back out.

"Some guards in the cellblock next to Ray's heard the noise when he was sawing through the bar, checked and found Ray missing and sounded an alarm."

Moore said guards notified him at 3 a.m. of the escape attempt and that Ray was found in the prison compound yard at 3:15.

Even if Ray had gotten to the end of the steam tunnel, Moore said, he would have run into more trouble.

"There is concrete and bars at the end of the tunnel and if he could have stood the heat he would still have had to saw his way through the bars," Moore said.

Moore said Ray, who pleaded guilty to the sniper slaying of

King outside a Memphis motel on April 4, 1968, got help in his escape bid from his cellmate, Roy Morelock, 44, of Greene County.

Moore said Morelock, serving a life term as an habitual criminal, was a prison maintenance man and apparently supplied Ray with a hacksaw, crowbar, hammers and chisel he use in the escape bid.

"Morelock had access to such tools as these and he obviously intended to escape with Ray," Moore said. "Our guards caught up with the attempt so fast he didn't have time to get out of the cell."

"You know, Ray escaped from the Missouri State Prison before he was arrested for the King murder," the warden recalled. "I think he escaped through a tunnel there."

Moore became warden of Brushy Mountain prison in East Tennessee in early March. About two weeks later he held an open house for newsmen and at that time he described Ray

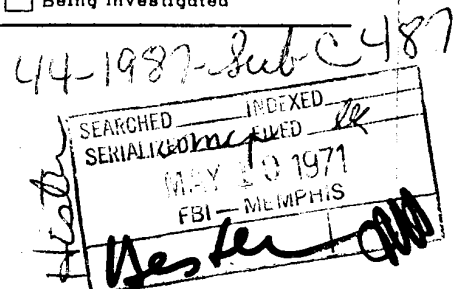
(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

The Knoxville Journal

Knoxville, Tenn.

PAGE 1

Date: 5-4-71
Edition: CITY
Author:
Editor: W. F. CHILDRESS
Title: MURKIN
BUFILE 44-38861
Character: ME 44-1987
or KX 44-696
Classification:
Submitting Office: KNOXVILLE
☐ Being Investigated



Brushy's most famous inmate,
as a "model prisoner."

Ray himself granted the first
interview since his arrest and

conviction in Memphis in March
1969 for the King killing.

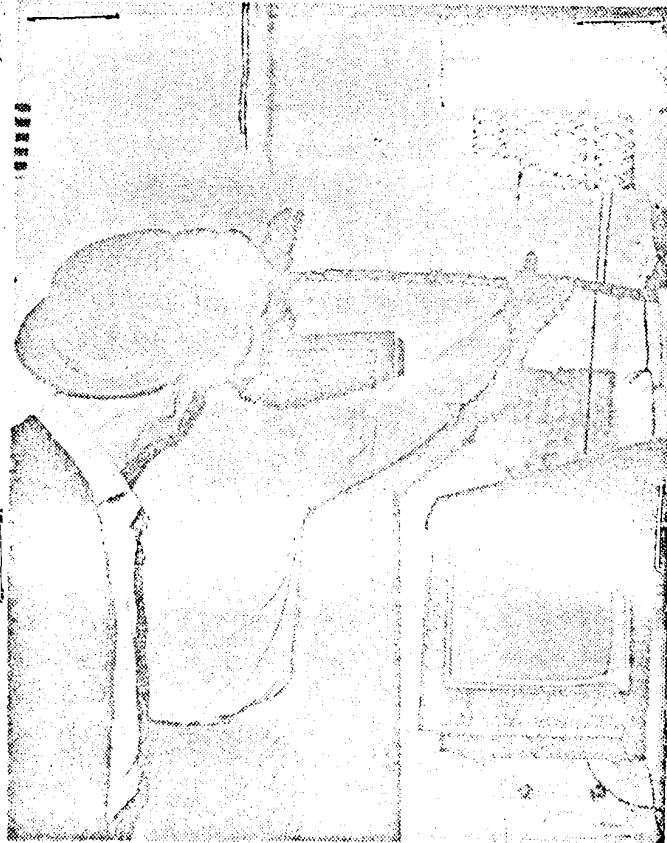
"I do not cause trouble here,"

Ray told a reporter. "I work six
hours a day, seven days a week.
My job is serving food to my
cellmates, which requires two
hours at each meal."

He said he had gained 20
pounds since being transferred
from the main prison in Nash-
ville 14 months ago to Brushy
and now weighed 175 pounds.

Moore said both Ray and
Morelock had been moved from
what he called a working area
of the prison to its maximum
security section. They were put
in separate cells.

Ray has sought several times
to obtain a new trial in the King
killing, contending he was pres-
sured by his lawyer into plead-
ing guilty. Each time he has
lost, the latest rejection coming
in Memphis Feb. 27.



Over And Out

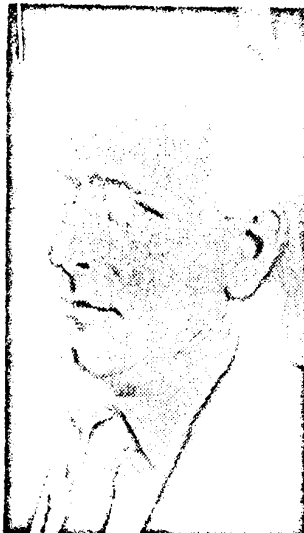
Brushy Mountain State Prison Warden Robert H. Moore holds a piece of concrete J a m e s Earl Ray chipped through the wall of his cell to gain access to a heating vent through which he attempted to escape Monday morning. The convict was recaptured in the compound at the maximum security prison at Petros shortly after climbing through this hole above his bunk.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Steam Heat Thwarted Plan**'Impatience'
Foiled Ray's
Escape Bid**

Compiled From Press Dispatches

PETROS, Tenn., May 4—James Earl Ray, termed by Brushy Mountain State Prison Warden Robert Moore and cellmates as a "model prisoner" just a month ago, failed in an escape attempt yesterday at the maximum security prison.



JAMES EARL RAY
Too hot in tunnel

News-Sentinel staff writer Willard Yarbrough quoted Ray in an exclusive interview March 25 as saying he was "just another prisoner" at Brushy Mountain, and was treated like one. It was the first interview with the convicted slayer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. since Ray's arrest and conviction.

Ray was housed in a "minimum security" cellblock, and was allowed the run of the block as much as other prisoners held there, working as a meal server for other men in the block.

Ray tried to flee the prison at about 3 a.m. yesterday, but was caught in the prison yard about 20 minutes after he broke out of his cell.

Went Through Tunnel

Had he waited a few weeks, he might have been successful in his escape attempt.

His carefully-planned escape route was to be through a huge concrete steam tunnel that runs about 100 yards outside the prison walls. But the 400-degree heat in the tunnel drove Ray back and he was captured while trying to find some other route of escape.

The tunnel carries 10-inch steam lines to various parts of the prison for heat and the steam will be shut off for the summer in several more weeks.

No Chance in Tunnel

"He didn't have a chance in that tunnel," said Warden Robert Moore. "Apparently he found it too hot in there for comfort and backed out. That steam

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

**THE KNOXVILLE
NEWS-SENTINEL**

KNOXVILLE, TENN.

PAGE 1

Date: **5-4-71**
Edition: **HOME**
Author:
Editor: **RALPH L. MILLETT**
Title:

MURKIN

BUFILE 44-38861

Character: **ME 44-1987**
or **KX 44-696**

Classification:

Submitting Office: **KNOXVILLE**

☐ Being Investigated

44-1987-Sub E 488

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAY 10 1971	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

Hester *Bester* *gmk*

tunnel about 400 degrees Fahrenheit."

Even if Ray had gotten to the end of the steam tunnel, Moore said, he would have run into more trouble.

"There is concrete and bars at the end of the tunnel and if he could have stood the heat he would still have had to saw his way through the bars," Moore said.

"He was in the tunnel for only about 10 minutes," Moore said, "and he had a few burns but they didn't appear to be serious."

Moore said it would have been impossible for Ray to have reached the end of the tunnel without being scalded to death in the 400-degree heat. The tunnel, which leads to the prison steam plant outside the prison walls, supplies steam to the prison mess hall and is in use year round.

Well-Planned Effort

Otherwise, it was a "well-conceived escape attempt," Moore said.

"I believe that he had his plans ready, and you know, he recently lost an appeal for a new trial. That probably set him off," Moore said.

"First, he removed a concrete block in his cell and got out into an air chamber, a ventilating area behind the cellblock. He crawled along the air chamber to the end and sawed one bar and broke another with a crowbar.

"He pulled himself through the hole and got out into the prison yard behind the cellblock. Then he went to the steam tunnel which leads to our steam plant about 100 yards out to the prison."

Offers No Resistance

Ray, who came here about a year ago to serve his 99-year prison term for the King slaying, offered no resistance when he was found by prison guards, crouching in shadows of another building on the grounds—the maximum security building.

"I believe he was looking for some place to hide until he could find another way out," Moore said.

But getting out of here isn't easy. There's a 20-foot concrete block wall carrying an electric charge of 2300 volts in wires at the top. Some have made it, but not often. The wall is guarded by eight guard towers manned night and day.

Ray is no stranger to escapes and was, in fact, a fugitive from Missouri at the time King was slain.

Escaped in Missouri

Ray had served seven years of a 20-year armed robbery sentence when he escaped from the Missouri State Prison at Jefferson City on April 23, 1967.

He made good his escape by hiding in a bread truck that was leaving the prison after boasting, according to fellow prisoner Raymond Curtis, that he would collect a reported bounty of \$1 million that had been offered for King.

During the intensive manhunt for Ray after the assassination of King, Curtis, then serving time at Dalton, Ga., told newsmen that Ray never talked about his plans.

Called a 'Loner'

"He was a loner," said Curtis, "but if he was planning something, you could bet they'd be thorough plans."

His arrest record before he entered the Tennessee prison system shows he first was booked on suspicion of burglary in Los Angeles and was placed on two years' probation. He had been in and out of various jails and prisons on various charges until he was sentenced to the Missouri prison in 1967.

Ray apparently had been working on the escape for months, with his cellmate, a lifer named Roy Morelock.

Aide Is a Plumber

Morelock, a plumber on the inside maintenance crew, is believed to have supplied the tools from the shop that Ray needed to make the break attempt.

"Morelock had access to such tools as these and he obviously intended to escape with Ray," Moore said. "Our guards caught up the attempt so fast he didn't have time to get out of the cell."

"We knew something was wrong when a guard found the bar cut away from the ventilation fan at the back of the cell block," Moore said. "Then the manhole cover (to the tunnel) was found lying on the ground. We made a quick bed check and discovered Ray missing."

Ray had set up a dummy in his bunk in an attempt to fool the guards.

Board Meeting Due

Ray's future here will be determined by a disciplinary board made up of three members of the prison staff. They will decide on punishment and where he will be housed in the future.

Moore became warden of Brushy Mountain Prison in East

Tennessee in early March. About two weeks later he held an open house for newsmen and at that time he described Ray, Brushy's most famous inmate, as a "model prisoner."

Ray himself granted the first interview since his arrest and conviction in Memphis in March 1969 for the King killing.

"I do not cause trouble here," Ray had told Yarbrough. "I work six hours a day, seven days a week. My job is serving food to my cellmates, which requires two hours at each meal."

He said he had gained 20 pounds since being transferred from the main prison in Nashville 14 months ago to Brushy and now weighed 175 pounds.

One thing is for certain, Ray's stay here won't be quite as relaxed as it has been.

Surveillance Vowed

Up to now he has been housed in a cellblock, along a corridor with 10 cells which have little confinement in the individual cells.

The inmates of this section are able to visit from cell to cell during their leisure time. Ray was assigned to a cleanup detail, and carried food to other prisoners in the section.

"I don't know what punishment Ray will get for this," said State Correction Commissioner Mark Luttrell, but he said he would be under closer surveillance from now on.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

James Earl Ray Caught in Effort To Flee Brushy Mountain Prison

PETROS, Tenn. (AP) — James Earl Ray, serving 99 years for killing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., made an unsuccessful attempt Monday to escape from prison.

Ray sawed and hacked his way out of his cell in Brushy Mountain prison, but guards recaptured him in less than a half hour before he could find a way to get over the prison wall.

The 42-year-old Ray pleaded guilty to the sniper slaying of King outside a Memphis motel on April 4, 1968.

Warden Robert H. Moore said Ray used a hacksaw, apparently slipped to him by his cellmate, Roy Morelock, to cut through one bar of his cell.

"He sawed through the bar and got a clearance of 18 to 24 inches," Moore said. "Then he crawled out and got into a heating tunnel where the temperature sometimes gets up to 400 degrees.

"It apparently got too hot for him in there and he came out. Our guards apprehended him."

Moore said Morelock, serving a life term as an habitual criminal from Greene County, worked as a prison maintenance man and had access to such tools as hacksaws.

"I figure Morelock slipped the hacksaw to Ray and they both intended to escape," Moore said. "But guards heard a noise, checked Ray's cell and discovered him missing. Morelock didn't have time to try and get out."

Moore became warden of Brushy Mountain prison in early March. About two weeks later he held an open house for newsmen, and at that time he described Ray as a "model prisoner."

Ray himself granted the first interview since his arrest and conviction in Memphis in March 1969 for the King killing.

"I do not cause trouble here," Ray told a reporter. "I work six hours a day, seven days a week. My job is serving food to my cellmates, which requires two hours at each meal."

He said he had gained 20 pounds since he was transferred from the main prison in Nashville 14 months ago to Brushy and now weighed 175 pounds.

Moore said Ray and Morelock had been moved from what he called a working area of the prison to its maximum security section. They were put in separate cells.

Ray has sought several times to obtain a new trial in the King killing, contending he was pressured by his lawyer into pleading guilty. Each time he has lost, the latest rejection coming in Memphis on Feb. 27.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

THE CHATTANOOGA TIMES
CHATTANOOGA, TENN.

PAGE 1

Date: 5-4-71

Edition: 3 STAR

Author:

Editor: NORMAN BRADLEY,

Title: Acting Editor

MURKIN

BUFILE 44-38861

Character: ME 44-1987

or KX 44-696

Classification:

Submitting Office: KNOXVILLE

☐ Being Investigated

44-1987-Sub-C 489

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
MAY 10 1971	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

Hester

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Court Rejects Hays' Claim

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — (AP) — The State Supreme Court today affirmed a lower court ruling prohibiting a special investigator hired by James Earl Ray from possessing a rifle and automobile belonging to Ray.

Renfro T. Hays, one-time investigator for the confessed slayer of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, alleges two officials of Shelby County refused to return to Hays a 1966 Ford Mustang and a 30.06-caliber rifle used by Ray.

The county's law court earlier had granted a demurrer in Hays' suit against county attorney general Phil

M. Canale and county criminal court clerk J. A. Blackwell.

The State Supreme Court ruled that Hays' attorney failed to file an appeal bond after the demurrer was sustained, thereby precluding grounds for an appeal to the state high court.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 14

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 7/7/71

Edition: FINAL

Author:

Editor: CHARLES H.
SCHNEIDER

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

44-1987-Sub C-490

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUL 8 1971	
FBI — MEMPHIS	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Court Rebuffs Detective's Bid For Ray Items

NASHVILLE, July 6. — An investigator in the James Earl Ray case was turned down by the state Supreme Court Tuesday in connection with his bid to get the rifle and car Ray used in the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The court found no merit in Renfro Hays' arguments and refused to overturn a Circuit Court dismissal of a request that Shelby County Dist. Atty. Gen. Phil Canale and his lawyer, James H. Allen, be held in contempt and disciplined.

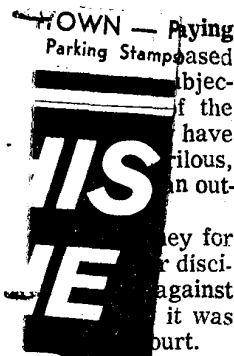
Hays, a private investigator who worked for Arthur Hanes, Ray's former attorney, filed suit in Memphis to recover the Remington pump rifle and the 1966 Mustang.

He claims he got a judgment in Chancery Court against Ray for \$6,000, that Ray assigned to him title to the rifle and auto in satisfaction of the judgment and that Canale and others have the items but refuse to deliver them to him.

Apparently the weapon and car are being held as evidence should it ever be necessary to try Ray for murder. Ray pleaded guilty to the slaying of

the civil rights leader and is serving a 99-year sentence in state prison.

Hays claimed Canale and Criminal Court Clerk James Blackwell had "conspired and connived to deprive plaintiff of his properties, for some evil and malicious purpose."



(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 3

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 7/7/71
Edition: FINAL

Author:
Editor: GORDON HANNA
Title:

Character: 44-1987-Sub C-491
or

Classification:
Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUL 8 1971	
FBI — MEMPHIS	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

At Brushy Mountain Prison**Ray to Mingle With Others**

PETROS, Tenn. — (AP) — James Earl Ray, convicted slayer of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who just spent 30 days in solitary confinement for attempting to escape, will be allowed for the first time to mingle with both black and white inmates at the state's Brushy Mountain Prison near Petros, Tenn.

Warden Robert H. Moore said he discussed the move with Ray.

"He just said he didn't feel like he would have any trouble with other prisoners as a result of the charge on which he was convicted," Moore said. "I wouldn't have forced him out into the population if Ray had felt like he was endangered."

Ray pleaded guilty to the April 1968 slaying of the Negro minister and received a 99-year sentence.

His new privileges will include "mixing and mingling" with 343 other convicts at the maximum security prison, about 40 per cent of whom are black.

Ray tried unsuccessfully to break out of the prison May 30, but was trapped in a steam tunnel and wound up in the prison yard where he was captured.

He completed 30 days in isolation as punishment for the abortive escape attempt Tuesday.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 4

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 7-8-71

Edition:

Author:

Editor: CHARLES H.

Title: SCHNEIDER

44-1987-Sub C492

Character:

or

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUL 12 1971	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Was it the FBI ~~or the local~~
 police who captured the convicted
 killer of Martin Luther King
 Jr.?—Arturo S., Little Rock.

Neither. The Canadian Mount-
 ed Police recognized a photograph of the suspect, James
 Earl Ray, in a passport application submitted under the
 alias Eric Starvo Galt. By transmitting photos and finger-
 prints to London, the Mounties' alertness led to the capture
 of the killer just as his plane was about to take off from
 Heathrow Airport to Brussels, thus helping to break one
 of the most headlined assassinations in history.

(Indicate page, name of
 newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 8

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 9-27-71

Edition:

Author:

Editor: GORDAN HANNA

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
SEP 27 1971	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

Hester

44-1987-Sub-C-493

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Court To Hear Appeal By Ray

From The Commercial Appeal
Jackson, Tenn., Bureau

JACKSON, Tenn., Oct. 4. — James Earl Ray, serving 99 years in prison for the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, will make his latest bid for freedom later this week in an appeal before a three-judge state Court of Criminal Appeals panel here.

Ray, who was sentenced after pleading guilty before the late Criminal Court Judge W. Preston Battle March 10, 1969, is asking for a new trial or a full hearing in the case. The case is expected to begin late Wednesday or early Thursday.

His attorneys, Robert I. Livingston of Memphis and Bernard Fensterwald of Washington, will appeal the Feb. 26 decision of Criminal Judge William H. Williams of Memphis, who denied a petition for a new trial.

Criminal Appeals Court Judges Mark Walker, William S. Russell and Charles S. O'Brien will hear the lengthy appeal. A decision is not expected for months.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 4

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 10-8-71
Edition:
Author:
Editor: GORDAN HANNA
Title:

44-1987-sub C 494
Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 5 1971	
FBI — MEMPHIS	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray's Attorneys to Ask New Trial or Full Hearing

Special to The Press-Scimitar

JACKSON, Tenn. — Attorneys for James Earl Ray will ask the three-judge Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals here tomorrow to either grant Ray a new trial or a full hearing.

The convicted killer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is presently serving a 99-year prison sentence after pleading guilty before Judge W. Preston Battle on March 10, 1969.

"We want the man to have a trial, which he never had," said Robert I. Livingston of Memphis, one of Ray's attorneys. "At the very least, we want an evidentiary hearing."

Attorneys are appealing a decision by Criminal Court Judge William H. Williams last Feb. 26 in which Williams dismissed an appeal

by Ray for a trial or hearing in the case under Tennessee's "post-conviction relief" law.

Williams was appointed, then elected, to fill a vacancy on the Shelby County Criminal Court bench when Battle died a short time after the Ray trial.

Among a number of contentions rejected by Williams were that Ray:

- Was coerced and pressured into pleading guilty by Percy Foreman, his attorney.

- Was not identified by Charles Quitman Stevens, the state's chief witness.

- Was subjected to unfair treatment by the state while he waited trial, and was incapable of coming to a decision on his defense.

The petition also charges that no identifiable bullet

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 13

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 10-5-71

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

CHARLES H.
SCHNEIDER

Title:

Character: 44-4987-Sub C 495
or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
OCT 5 1971	
FBI - MEMPHIS	
Hester	OK

was ever removed from King's body after he was slain at a Memphis motel on April 4, 1968.

Criminal Appeals Judges

Mark Walker, William S. Russell and Charles S. O'Brien are scheduled to hear Ray's plea from Livingston and Bernard Finsterwald, a Washington, D.C., attorney.

Ray, now 41, is confined at the maximum security Brushy Mountain State Prison at Petros, Tenn. He will not appear for the hearing.

A decision on the case from the appeals court is not expected for several months.

The petition claims Ray "was told by Foreman 'the only way he could save petitioner's life was by pleading guilty'".

"Foreman told petitioner

(Ray) that the chances of conviction were '100 per cent' and the chances of the electric chair were '99 per cent'," the petition added.

The appeal also charges that Foreman, in order to keep Ray from changing his guilty plea decision, threatened at the last minute to tie up a half-million dollars in Ray's future literary and other earnings if he did not plead guilty.

Livingston said he visited with Ray at the prison last week and that "he looked just fine."

"He smiles and keeps his sense of humor," Livingston said.

Ray tried to escape through a steam pipe last March but was captured in the prison yard. He was put

in solitary for a period and then released, Livingston said.

"When I saw him," the attorney said, "he was on what he called 'limited privileges' for refusing to go on a work detail with another man as ordered. He said the other fellow was a 'stool pigeon' who would have been used to keep watch over him."

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray's Attorneys to Ask New Trial or Full Hearing

Special to The Press-Scimitar

JACKSON, Tenn. — Attorneys for James Earl Ray will ask the three-judge Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals here tomorrow to either grant Ray a new trial or a full hearing.

The convicted killer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is presently serving a 99-year prison sentence after pleading guilty before Judge W. Preston Battle on March 10, 1969.

"We want the man to have a trial, which he never had," said Robert I. Livingston of Memphis, one of Ray's attorneys. "At the very least, we want an evidentiary hearing."

Attorneys are appealing a decision by Criminal Court Judge William H. Williams last Feb. 26 in which Williams dismissed an appeal

by Ray for a trial or hearing in the case under Tennessee's "post-conviction relief" law.

Williams was appointed, then elected, to fill a vacancy on the Shelby County Criminal Court bench when Battle died a short time after the Ray trial.

Among a number of contentions rejected by Williams were that Ray:

- Was coerced and pressured into pleading guilty by Percy Foreman, his attorney.

- Was not identified by Charles Quitman Stevens, the state's chief witness.

- Was subjected to unfair treatment by the state while he waited trial, and was incapable of coming to a decision on his defense.

The petition also charges that no identifiable bullet

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 13

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 10-5-71

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

CHARLES H.
SCHNEIDER

Title:

Character: 44-1987-sub C 496
or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

mp mp

Hester

Hester

was ever removed from King's body after he was slain at a Memphis motel on April 4, 1968.

Criminal Appeals Judges

Mark Walker, William S. Russell and Charles S. O'Brien are scheduled to hear Ray's plea from Livingston and Bernard Finsterwald, a Washington, D.C., attorney.

Ray, now 41, is confined at the maximum security Brushy Mountain State Prison at Petros, Tenn. He will not appear for the hearing.

A decision on the case from the appeals court is not expected for several months.

The petition claims Ray "was told by Foreman 'the only way he could save petitioner's life was by pleading guilty'."

"Foreman told petitioner

(Ray) that the chances of conviction were '100 per cent' and the chances of the electric chair were '99 per cent'," the petition added.

The appeal also charges that Foreman, in order to keep Ray from changing his guilty plea decision, threatened at the last minute to tie up a half-million dollars in Ray's future literary and other earnings if he did not plead guilty.

Livingston said he visited with Ray at the prison last week and that "he looked just fine."

"He smiles and keeps his sense of humor," Livingston said.

Ray tried to escape through a steam pipe last March but was captured in the prison yard. He was put

in solitary for a period and then released, Livingston said.

"When I saw him," the attorney said, "he was on what he called 'limited privileges' for refusing to go on a work detail with another man as ordered. He said the other fellow was a 'stool pigeon' who would have been used to keep watch over him."

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Court Panel Hears New Trial Request For James Earl Ray

By KEMP WARD

From The Commercial Appeal
Jackson, Tenn., Bureau

JACKSON, Tenn., Oct. 6. — Attorneys for James Earl Ray, who is serving 99 years for the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, made a 15-minute appearance before a three-judge Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals panel Wednesday to argue for a new trial.

"That man (Ray)," claimed attorney Robert Livingston, has never had a hearing. The public deserves an explanation of the murder of Dr. King, he said.

"James Earl Ray wants the public to have that explanation," the Memphis attorney told an almost-empty courtroom. Ray's other attorney is Bernard Fensterwald of Washington.

A decision from the appeals court panel — composed of Judges Mark Walker, William S. Russell and Charles O'Brien — as is customary, will not be returned for months.

None of the judges questioned Ray's attorneys or the state, represented by Asst. State Dist. Atty. Gen. Robert H. Roberts, on any points of their presentations during the brief hearing.

"There has got to be a finality to these things some time," Roberts said, "and this case should have reached that end."

Ray's attorneys are appealing the Feb. 26 decision of Memphis Criminal Court Judge William H. Williams, who denied a petition for a new trial.

Ray, 41, who was sentenced after pleading guilty before the late Criminal Court Judge W. Preston Battle March 10, 1969, feels the trial court should have granted him an evidentiary hearing or new trial on his petition for post conviction relief on grounds his guilty plea was not freely and wilfully given.

In Tennessee, a guilty plea waives the right to plea on procedural errors in a case. The attorneys feel that if they can have the guilty plea overturned, then they can appeal the case on alleged procedural errors, which now are inadmissible.

Ray contends his right to an unbiased jury was denied by pretrial publicity and the state violated his rights by withholding information from his defense, refusing to furnish his defense with a list of prospective witnesses and by his extradition proceedings.

Ray also contends his right to effective counsel was negated because he was prevented from having private conversations with his attorneys as a result of microphones and guards in his cell and the censorship of all his written communications, as well as by a

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 2 C

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 10-7-71

Edition:

Author:

Editor: GORDAN HANNA

Title:

Character:

or 44-1987-Sub C 497

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

series of conflicts of interest among his attorneys and author William Bradford Huie. tionally negotiating the guilty plea directly with Judge Battle.

Ray also contends his agreement to plead guilty was the result of duress and bribery by a former attorney Percy Foreman. He contends Foreman did not conduct an adequate investigation into the state's case against him and Judge Battle entered a judgment without making a sufficient inquiry into the factual basis for the plea.

Ray contends that Foreman violated legal ethics and Ray's legal rights by unconstitutionally negotiating the guilty plea directly with Judge Battle.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Brother To Visit James Earl Ray At Prison Today

MARIETTA, Ga., Oct. 31. — (AP) — The convicted slayer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., James Earl Ray, will be visited in Tennessee's Brushy Mountain Prison Monday by his brother, Jerry Ray, who now lives here.

It will be the first time the brothers have met since James Earl Ray had Jerry Ray taken off his visitors list in 1969.

Ray had Jerry removed from the list after the brother said the convict was "the fall guy" for federal agents when the civil rights leader was gunned down in Memphis in 1968.

Jerry Ray is now serving as body guard to attorney J. B. Stoner, who has headed various anti-Negro and anti-Jewish groups over the past 30 years. Stoner is presently national chairman of the States Rights Party and ran for governor last year under the party label in Georgia.

Jerry Ray said his brother did not "pull the trigger" and a new trial would clear him.

"I understand if they get the writ, they have to put him on stand," said Jerry Ray. "And once he gets on the stand, he can really lay it to them."

James Earl Ray, serving 99 years for the slaying of King, pleaded guilty to the shooting. Almost immediately after the trial, however, Ray tried to reverse his plea and has been carrying on appeals since then.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 3

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 11-1-71

Edition:

Author:

Editor: GORDON HANNA

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44-1987-Sub C

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS 498

☐ Being Investigated

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
NOV 2 1971	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Escape Attempt By Ray Disclosed

PETROS, Tenn., Feb. 14. — (UPI) — James Earl Ray, the convicted slayer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., bungled another escape attempt landing him back in a disciplinary cell at the maximum security Brushy Mountain State Prison.

The attempt, revealed by Corrections Commissioner Mark Luttrell late Monday, was made Feb. 5.

"He was found crawling to or from a place where he could work and not be seen," Luttrell said.

Warden Robert Moore said Ray had acquired a makeshift handsaw and was attempting to saw a hole through the ceiling of a room adjoining an auditorium where inmates were watching a movie.

The lights came on too soon, Moore said, and the guards saw Ray slipping out of his secluded work area.

Last May, Ray concocted an elaborate plan to escape that would have led him through a maze of steam tunnels to freedom.

But that attempt also went sour and nearly ended in death for the confessed killer of the civil rights worker. The tunnel Ray chose was heated to 400 degrees by the pipelines.

The warden said that even if Ray had been successful in his attempt to saw his way through the ceiling, he faced several more obstacles in his route to freedom. Ray would have had to then punch a hole through the roof of the building, Moore said, then there is a 40 foot drop to the ground that would have deposited Ray within feet of a guard tower.

"We think there might have been someone else in the population working with him," Moore said. "But there is no way to implicate another prisoner. Ray was caught alone and he's not telling anything."

When Ray was confined in other prisons, he managed several escapes. One of those escapes set him free shortly

before King was killed in Memphis in April, 1968.

Moore said Ray went before the prison's disciplinary board on Feb. 9 and was sentenced to 30 days in a disciplinary cell. That means Ray will have no privileges other than to receive his meals and mail.

"Then depending on his behavior," Moore said, "he faces up to another 30 days in administrative restriction." Administrative restriction restores an inmate's privileges

with the exception of freedom of the institution.

"This is his own thing," Moore said. "I don't think he'll ever quit trying to figure a way out of here. You know he escaped four times from the Missouri prison."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 26

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 2-15-72

Edition:

Author:

Editor: GORDON HANNA

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

44-1987-Sub C 499

SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED
FEB 15 1972
FBI - MEMPHIS

[Handwritten signature]

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Escape Attempt By Ray Disclosed

PETROS, Tenn., Feb. 14. — (UPI) — James Earl Ray, the convicted slayer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., bungled another escape attempt landing him back in a disciplinary cell at the maximum security Brushy Mountain State Prison.

The attempt, revealed by Corrections Commissioner Mark Luttrell late Monday, was made Feb. 5.

"He was found crawling to or from a place where he could work and not be seen," Luttrell said.

Warden Robert Moore said Ray had acquired a makeshift handsaw and was attempting to saw a hole through the ceiling of a room adjoining an auditorium where inmates were watching a movie.

The lights came on too soon, Moore said, and the guards saw Ray slipping out of his secluded work area.

Last May, Ray concocted an elaborate plan to escape that would have led him through a maze of steam tunnels to freedom.

But that attempt also went sour and nearly ended in death for the confessed killer of the civil rights worker. The tunnel Ray chose was heated to 400 degrees by the pipelines.

The warden said that even if Ray had been successful in his attempt to saw his way through the ceiling, he faced several more obstacles in his route to freedom. Ray would have had to then punch a hole through the roof of the building, Moore said, then there is a 40 foot drop to the ground that would have deposited Ray within feet of a guard tower.

"We think there might have been someone else in the population working with him," Moore said. "But there is no way to implicate another prisoner. Ray was caught alone and he's not telling anything."

When Ray was confined in other prisons, he managed several escapes. One of those escapes set him free shortly

before King was killed in Memphis in April, 1968.

Moore said Ray went before the prison's disciplinary board on Feb. 9 and was sentenced to 30 days in a disciplinary cell. That means Ray will have no privileges other than to receive his meals and mail.

"Then depending on his behavior," Moore said, "he faces up to another 30 days in administrative restriction." Administrative restriction restores an inmate's privileges

with the exception of freedom of the institution.

"This is his own thing," Moore said. "I don't think he'll ever quit trying to figure a way out of here. You know he escaped four times from the Missouri prison."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 26

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 2-15-72

Edition:

Author:

Editor: GORDON HANNA

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

44-1987-Sub C 499

SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED

FEB 18 1972

FBI - MEMPHIS

Hester

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray Fails Again— In Escape Try

PETROS, Tenn. — (UPI) — "I don't think he'll ever quit trying to figure out a way out of here."

Those are the words of Warden Robert Moore at remote Brushy Mountain State Prison describing James Earl Ray's latest bungled escape attempt. For the second time in less than a year the man convicted of assassinating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., lost in a bid for freedom.

Unlike his final successful escape from prison in Missouri, Ray has botched both of his attempts with what one biographer calls his "born loser image."

Corrections Commissioner Mark Luttrell disclosed Monday that Ray had attempted to saw his way to freedom through the ceiling of a room adjoining the prison movie theater on Feb. 5.

Even if Ray, who pleaded guilty to the sniper slaying of the civil rights worker in Memphis, had managed to hack his way through the ceiling with his makeshift handsaw, he had, Moore said, several other obstacles to face.

The warden said Ray would have had to punch a hole through the roof of the building, hoist himself onto the roof, withstand a 40 foot drop to the other side of the prison walls and escape detection from a nearby guard tower.

All that Ray's efforts did net was an appearance before the prison disciplinary board. The board handed down 30 days detention in a disciplinary cell. "He loses

all his privileges except for food and mail," Moore said. "He doesn't have any commissary, no library, no tobacco or anything else.

"Then, depending on his behavior, he faces up to another 30 days in administrative restriction." When an inmate is under restriction, Moore said, he has all his regular privileges except freedom of movement within the prison walls.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE //

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 2-15-72

Edition:

Author:

Editor: CHARLES H.

Title: SCHNEIDER

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
FEB 16 1972	
FBI - MEMPHIS	

Hester

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Escape Attempt Denied by Ray

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (UPI) — James Earl Ray has denied trying to escape from Brushy Mountain State Prison earlier this month, his second attempt from the maximum security facility near Petros.

In a letter to the Knoxville News-Sentinel, Ray says he was asleep in his cell when he was awakened and accused of attempting to escape.

But Prison Warden Robert H. Moore today reaffirmed that the escape attempt had been made and that Ray was caught in the act by correction officers Troy Dyer and John Owens.

Ray was accused of trying to cut his way through the ceiling of a small room off the prison's movie projection facility.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 1

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 2-22-72

Edition:

Author:

Editor: CHARLES H.
SCHNEIDER

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

mcp ltr

Hester - 4/8