

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/PRIVACY ACTS SECTION
COVER SHEET

SUBJECT: JESSE JAMES



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Excelsior Springs, Mo.
Jan. 15, 1931.

RECEIVED

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover,
Director of Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D. C.

62-26874

U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE
DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION
JAN 16 1931
RECORDED
INDEXED
62 78
JAN 28 1932
Div. Two
Div. Three
Div. Six
FILE

My Dear Mr. Hoover.

I am enclosing
you herewith the photograph of the
supposed Jesse James, the noted bandit.

No doubt, you have read the re-
cent stories in the newspapers of this
man. I was called in on this case
and was ask if I could identify this
man. They know that I am a finger
print expert, but they tied my hands
right on the start. They will not let
this man's finger prints be taken, that

1. end
alt.
Don
J. E. D.
1-23-31

26-13498

is, his Chief Council, [REDACTED] ^{b6}
criminal lawyer here and the city
magistrate [REDACTED] who is [REDACTED]
of the Elms Hotel. This man resides
at the Elms Hotel. You know it is
difficult to identify a man without
his finger prints. This man was
supposed to have served a term at the
penitentiary at Chester, Ill. for murder,
but it is my understanding that he was
paroled about the year of 1926, however,
I have no positive proof of this.
It occurs to me that if this man
has a recent criminal record, probably
you will have his finger prints. He
states that he entered the prison under
the name of William Jesse James ^{OK 1/21}.

I am enclosing these photographs because of your experience and knowledge along this line, you will probably render ^{me} your opinion as to the likeness of these photographs. I am aware of the fact that no one can positively identify a person by photographs for the fact that so many people look alike.

Trusting that I am asking nothing out of the ordinary and that I will hear from you in the near future,

Yours very truly,

[REDACTED]

b6

Residence [REDACTED]

Excelsior Springs, Mo.

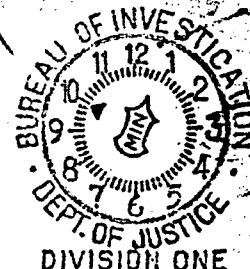


62-26471-1

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR

U. S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D. C.

RECEIVED



LCS:EPM

January 22, 1932. JAN 23 1932 AM

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

62-26471-1

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR:

JAN 28 1932

NATHAN
Tele. Rm.

Please refer to the letter I have prepared addressed to [redacted] Excelsior Springs, Missouri, concerning the claims of an individual now residing in that city, to the effect that he is the original Jesse James. 7

Of course, Jesse James' fingerprints never were taken. It follows that any identification would have to be made upon the basis of physical characteristics and photographs. The photograph of the younger person transmitted by [redacted] no doubt is a wood cut of the original Jesse James. After examining this photo, or cut, it is the opinion of [redacted], who has specialized somewhat in Portrait Parle, and the undersigned, that the person now claiming to be Jesse James is an imposter. It is realized, of course, that the wood cut may not have been a perfect likeness. It is realized further that the facial appearance of any individual changes with age, but we base our conclusion upon the following: 66

There is a marked dis-similarity in the appearance of the ears, particularly in the outer depression. In the case of the original Jesse James, this is very wide at the top, with the result that the inner depression is narrow. In the case of the person claiming to be James, both depressions are elongated. Other dis-similarities are that the original Jesse James seems to have an elevation over the eyes not noticeable in the photographs of the later James; that the nose of the individual claiming to be James is elongated and inclined to be humped, whereas the nose of the original James seems to be somewhat short and uplifted on the end giving a retrousse aspect; that the jaw of the original James is much squarer than that of the present claimant and that the bald spot on the head of the original Jesse James recedes to a point now covered by the hair of the present claimant. It is noticed also, that the claimants eyes are crossed.

COPIES DESTROYED
270 AUG 10 1964

Director,

- 2 -

1-22-32.

I am attaching a photostatic copy of the fingerprints and photograph of John James, alias John J. James, alias Jesse James, showing his receipt at the Southern Illinois Penitentiary, at Menard, Illinois, on June 9, 1926, to serve a term of one year to life for the crime of manslaughter. It will be observed that he gave his age as 83, and his birthplace as Missouri.

This memorandum is being sent you merely for completion of the file, and possibly for future reference in connection with this case.

Respectfully,

L. C. Schilder

L. C. Schilder

12.2
32
83
49

XXXXXX
XXXXXX
XXXXXXFEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

2 Page(s) withheld entirely at this location in the file. One or more of the following statements, where indicated, explain this deletion.

- ☒ Deleted under exemption(s) (b)(3) Title 28, United States Code, with no segregable material available for release to you. Section 534 and (b)(6)
- ☐ Information pertained only to a third party with no reference to you or the subject of your request.
- ☐ Information pertained only to a third party. Your name is listed in the title only.
- ☐ Document(s) originating with the following government agency(ies) _____, was/were forwarded to them for direct response to you.

_____ Page(s) referred for consultation to the following government agency(ies); _____ as the information originated with them. You will be advised of availability upon return of the material to the FBI.

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X NO DUPLICATION FEE X
X FOR THIS PAGE X
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62-26471-1

RECORDED

LCS:EPH

January 23, 1932.

[REDACTED]
Excelsior Springs, Missouri.

Dear Sir:

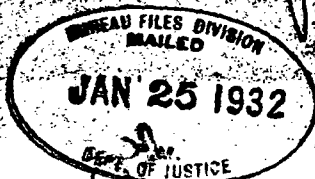
Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of January 15, 1932, concerning an individual claiming to be the so-called original Jesse James.

I am, of course, interested in this matter from an identification standpoint and appreciate your communicating with me relative thereto. I regret, however, that I am unable to furnish you with any advice concerning this case, since, under Congressional legislation the Bureau is restricted, in the exchange of criminal identifying data and information, to cooperation with officially constituted law enforcement officers and agencies only.

Any request from a law enforcement officer for fingerprints or other data in connection with this matter will be given appropriate consideration.

Very truly yours,

Director,



Black Joe Ky
Feb 23 1935

3/4/W
0

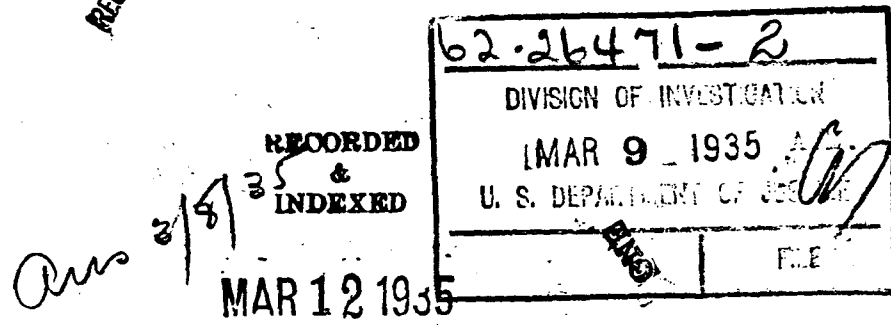
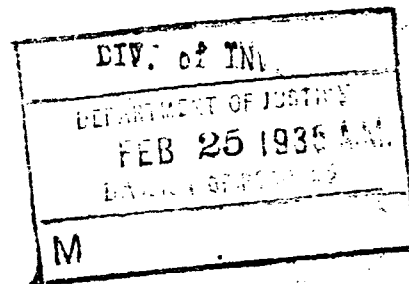
Department Of Justice,
Washington D.C
Gentlemen,

I am writing you to get the picture of Jessie James, are
any of his men are gang,
I think that I have one of his men spotted he is around
97 years of age and is in hiding here are near here
and any information that you might give me regarding him
will be appreciated,

thank you very much for this
Information, I am yours very truly

[REDACTED]
Black Joe Ky

b6



DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION

From IDENTIFICATION UNIT

3/4

1935

To: _____ Director
_____ Mr. Nathan
_____ Mr. Tolson
_____ Mr. Clegg
_____ Miss Gandy
* _____ Chief, Unit 1
_____ Chief Clerk
_____ Printing Section
_____ Files
_____ Mr. _____

Att. Mr. Berens

No record in Ident Unit

MS

L. C. Schilder.

RECORDED

62-26471-2

AGB:CSH

March 8, 1935

Black Joe, Kentucky.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to your communication of February 23, 1935, advising that you have information relative to Jessie James or some of his men.

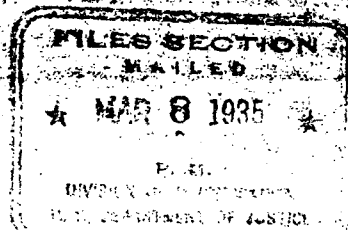
Please be advised that the files of this Bureau contain no information or photographs of this individual or any of his associates, although it is a matter of general knowledge that an outlaw by such name was killed many years ago. I am, accordingly, unable to furnish you with any additional information which might assist you in further identifying the subject of your communication.

I suggest that in the event you have information pertaining to the whereabouts of any criminals you communicate direct with Mr. E. J. Connelley, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U. S. Department of Justice, 426 U. S. Custom House and Post Office Building, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

1 copy



JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR

Federal Bureau of Investigation

U. S. Department of Justice

Washington, D. C.

JDR:LCB

January 29, 1936.

Mr. Nathan	✓
Mr. Tolson	✓
Mr. Baughman	✓
Chief Clerk	✓
Mr. Clegg	✓
Mr. Coffey	✓
Mr. Edwards	✓
Mr. Egan	✓
Mr. Foxworth	✓
Mr. Harbo	✓
Mr. Joseph	✓
Mr. Keith	✓
Mr. Lester	✓
Mr. Quinn	✓
Mr. Schilder	✓
Mr. Tracy	✓
Miss Gandy	✓

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. EDWARDS

On January 28, 1936, the fingerprints of one Jesse Woodson James were received in the Identification Division from the Dallas, Texas Police Department, which contained the following notation:

"Was brought to this bureau by local business man, claimed to be the original Jesse James, Missouri outlaw; recorded for identification purposes and released."

According to the information appearing on this fingerprint card this individual is at present 88 years old.

Respectfully,

L. C. Schilder
L. C. Schilder.

NOTE: The record of this individual, in duplicate, as contained in the files of the Identification Division, is attached hereto.

JDR

RECORDED

&

INDEXED

FEB -5 1936

62-26471-3	
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION	
FEB 4 1936 A.M.	
TOLSON	JOSEPH
LESTER	TAMM
EDWARDS	FILE

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one

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XXXXXX
XXXXXXFEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
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☐ For your information: _____

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X FOR THIS PAGE X
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Dallas Texas.

April 2nd 1937

Secret Service Department.
Washington D C

Gentlemen.

We Have a man appearing in person around through the country Pictures Shows & Say.s he is the real old time Jassie James & offers \$5.000. Reward to anyone that proves that he is not The out law Off old days.

I would like to know if he is or not.

Awaiting your Reply.

Yours Very Truly.

[REDACTED]

b6

RECORDED
&
INDEXED.

62-26471-4	
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION	
APR 6 1937 A. M.	
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	
TWO	FILE

4/12/37- Ack., cc-Dallas
WAC

Jessie James

RECORDED

WAC:LL
62-26471-4

April 12, 1937

[REDACTED]
Dallas, Texas.

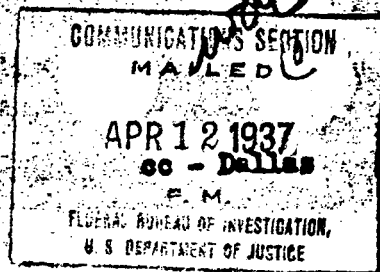
Dear [REDACTED]

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter dated April 2, 1937, requesting information concerning a person named Jessie James.

Please be advised that the files of this Bureau do not contain any information relative to the "real old time Jessie James" and, therefore, I am unable to furnish you with the information requested.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.



Magazine Ark.

July 3th 1937

62-26471-5

RECORDED & INDEXED

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

JUL 6 1937 P.M.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FILE

Dear Sir:- I am writing
you in regards to an affair that
came to Paris Ark. some time
ago and my Brother was in
from Little Rock Ark. and
he said the same affair was
there. it is this a Party of
three I believe with a sleeping
trailer to their Car seem to be
touring the State of ark Claiming
to be Jessie James and
cause quite a Confusion while
in town and people put me
up a hot argument about it
when I told them that it was
not the Original Jessie James so
Please let me hear from you

Yours Truly,

Justice of the Peace

b6



Mr. Edgar J. Hoover
Dept. of Investigation
Washington D.C.

UNBELIEVABLE BUT TRUE!

JESSE JAMES


NOTORIOUS MISSOURI OUTLAW

IS ALIVE!

Jesse James, the noted Clay County, Missouri, bandit, supposedly shot by Bob Ford on April 3, 1882, (for \$10,000 reward), has re-appeared after 51 years of hiding and is rapidly establishing his identity to a disbelieving world.

America's Original Public Enemy No. 1

Returns to tell the True
Story of his Early Life
of Banditry!



**JESSE
JAMES**
NOTORIOUS MISSOURI OUTLAW
ALIVE! IN PERSON!

Hear Jesse James tell the hair-raising story of how he and Bob Ford planned his own murder. Hear how Jesse changed clothes with the slain Charles Bigelow (also a wanted man) and made his escape only to return the next day to attend his own funeral and act as one of his own pall-bearers. Hear Jesse James tell how he helped bury himself outside his own mother's window! Hear him tell many other thrilling tales of his own exploits as America's Original Public Enemy No. 1.

\$5000⁰⁰

REWARD!

JESSE JAMES WILL PAY
\$5000 REWARD TO ANY
Man, woman or child who can



prove that is not the original Missouri Outlaw. He has been positively indentified by hundreds of early settlers everywhere, and cordially invites all old-time residents to meet him personally and discuss old times.

EXTRA!!

ON OUR STAGE

HANK FARRIS
Former Double for

**KEN
MAYNARD
IN PERSON**

and

Ann Alexander

Cowgirl Screen Star

in

The Most Sensational
Australian Whip-Cracking
and Fancy Roping Per-
formance Ever Seen on the
American Stage.

COMEDY! THRILLS!

**THE OLD WEST BLENDS
WITH THE NEW WEST
AS THE MISSOURI BAD
MAN MATCHES YARNS
WITH THE HOLLYWOOD
DAREDEVIL.**



JESSE JAMES

As He Appears Today

Age 89

To See Him is to Believe Him!

**PLUS: EPISODE No. 10, "THE LOST CITY" and NEWS
In Addition to Regular Screen Program!**

July 10, 1937.

RECORDED

62-26472-5
HES:YAN

Magazine, Arkansas.

Dear [REDACTED]

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter together with enclosures regarding an individual named Jesse James.

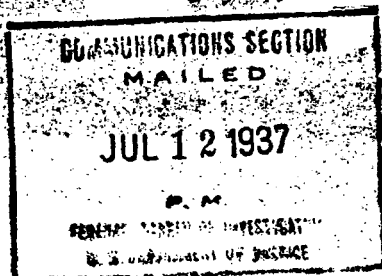
Please be informed that the files of this Bureau do not contain any information relative to the original Jesse James. Therefore, I am unable to furnish you with the information requested.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

CC LITTLE ROCK

Mr. Nathan
Mr. Tolson
Mr. E.A. Tamm
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Coffey
Mr. Downey
Mr. Egan
Mr. Foxworth
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Harbo
Mr. Joseph
Mr. Lester
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Quinn
Mr. Schilder
Mr. Tamm
Mr. Tracy
Miss Gandy



RECEIVED
JUL 12 1937

[Handwritten signature and initials]

August 10 1937

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D.C.

Dear sirs;-

Several days ago an aged man was in this locality who said that he was Jessie James. He said that he had recently reported to one of the U.S. law enforcement agencies and had been given a full pardon.

Now I have no personal interest in this case except that this man says he is getting theatre booking thru this territory, and I believe that he is a full-fledged liar as to his identity. Some friends have asked me to write you and see if you could give us some information as to whether this man is on the level.

Yours truly

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Earlington, Ky.

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

Ack. (cc Louisville) 8-18-37 N.E.L.

62-26471-5X
~~62-38875-6~~
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
AUG 13 1937
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
TWO

RECORDED
62-38375-6

62-26471-5X

August 18, 1937.

[REDACTED] b6
Earlington, Kentucky.

Dear Mrs. Cox:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter dated August 10, 1937, in which you request information as to whether an individual named Jessie James referred to in your letter is "on the level."

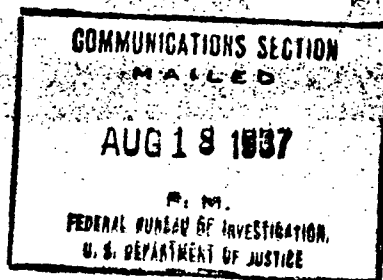
Kindly be informed that the files of this Bureau contain no information relative to the original Jesse James and, accordingly, I am unable to furnish you with the information requested.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

CC Louisville

Mr. Nathan
Mr. Tolson
Mr. Baughman
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Coffey
Mr. Dawsey
Mr. Egan
Mr. Foxworth
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Harbo
Mr. Joseph
Mr. Lester
Mr. Quinn
Mr. Schilder
Mr. Tamm
Mr. Tracy
Miss Gandy



2287 J. c
Hed

[REDACTED]
Oct. 27 1937.

b6.

7
Department of Justice
Washington D. C.

Dear Sir.

Will you please ~~write~~
inform me about Jesse James
whether he is dead or alive. In
one of our ~~Moving~~ Moving Picture
houses. It was advertised "The
famous Jesse James here in
person" I am a school girl
11 years old and know what you
write me will be true

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

62-26471- 6	
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION	
NOV 1 1937 A.M.	
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	
RECEIVED	FILE

Yours Truly
[REDACTED]

asked 11-24-37
LBW

b6