



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

# **OSAGE INDIAN MURDERS**

## **PART 18 OF 19**

### **BUFILE NUMBER: 62-5033**

**FILE DESCRIPTION**

**BUREAU FILE**

**SUBJECT** Page Indian Murders

**FILE NO.** 62-5033

**SECTION NO.** 20

**SERIALS** 771-797

pages 2966-3137

1 Cover Page → 173

ED AT

# Telegraph



There is full rate Telegram or Cablegram unless otherwise indicated by signal in the check or in the address.

BLUE	DAY LETTER
NL	NIGHT LETTER
NITE	NIGHT MESSAGE
LCO	DEFERRED CABLE
NLT	NIGHT CABLE LETTER
WLT	WEEK END CABLE LETTER

STANDARD TIME  
INDICATED ON THIS MESSAGE

SM 19 COLLECT GOVY TEX  
ANTONIO TEX NOV 9 29  
DIRECTOR BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

*Handwritten signature*

INVESTMENT  
10TH & 11TH STS. N.E.  
PHONE MAIN 6800 BR. 1929

DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON

ANTS J V MURPHY AND C R DAVIS LEFT THIS AFTERNOON FOR TULSA OKLAHOMA  
IN RAMSEY CASE

LAWRENCE ACTING

RECORDED

62-5033-771

62-5033  
NOV 13 1929



5:30 P.M.  
RCR



2966

# Radio Telegram

TYPE OF SERVICE DESIRED	
TELETYPE	CABLE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FULL RATE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DEFERRED	
<input type="checkbox"/> NIGHT CABLE LETTER	
<input type="checkbox"/> WEEK-END CABLE LETTER	

1. check class of service desired, otherwise  
2. transmitted as a full-rate communication



RECEIVER'S NUMBER
Govt pd
TIME FIELD
STANDARD TIME

and the following Message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

EL PASO TEX NOV. 6, 1929

BRENTIAN

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE FEDERAL BLDG. OKLAHOMA CITY OKLA.

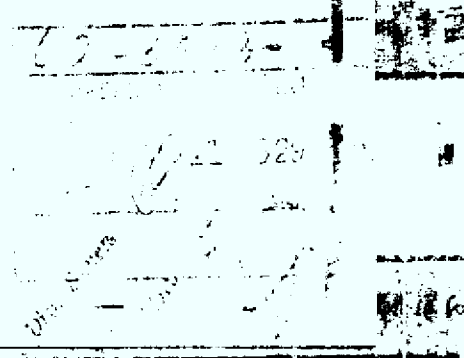
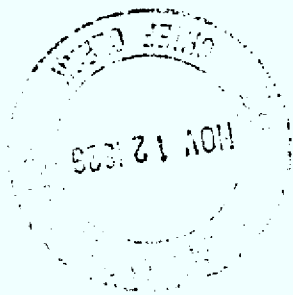
REFERENCE YOUR LETTER NOVEMBER FOURTH AGENTS STREET AND WREN WILL REPORT TULSA

CHUCKLE TO UNITED STATES ATTORNEY TULSA NOVEMBER TENTH IN JOHN RAMSEY OSAGE

INDIAN CASE

DE NETTE

OFFICIAL BUS. GOVT RATE  
REG DEPT JUSTICE.



2967

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

November 12, 1929.

62-5033-772

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR.

NOV 14 1929 P. M.

A review of Bureau File #62-5033, pertaining to the murder of one Henry Roan, a full-blooded Osage Indian who was murdered between January 24, and February 6, 1926, and his body found in the Osage Country in the State of Oklahoma, same being an Indian allotment and under the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States Government, reflects that:

At the conclusion of the Bureau's investigation in this matter, subjects W. K. Hale and John Ramsey were jointly indicted for this offense, in the Western District of Oklahoma, at Guthrie, during the January term of 1926; subject Ramsey being charged with the direct killing of Henry Roan for the consideration of a Ford automobile and \$500 which was alleged to have been paid to him by subject Hale. Subject Hale was charged with aiding, abetting and protecting subject Ramsey in the commission of said crime.

Both subjects stood trial in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on October 20, 1926, and a verdict of guilty without the death penalty was returned by the jury on October 29, 1926. Both subject were immediately sentenced to serve periods of their natural lives in the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. An appeal from the charge and conviction was duly noted to the Circuit Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, which court reversed the ruling of the lower court and granted a new trial as to both subjects. Subject W. K. Hale was again placed on trial at Pawhuska, Oklahoma, and a jury returned a verdict of guilty on January 26, 1929, and subject Hale was sentenced on the same date to serve life imprisonment in the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas.

Further investigation was made as to the case pending against subject Ramsey and several new witnesses were located who will testify in behalf of the U. S. Government as to certain declarations against interest made by subject Ramsey as to the murdering of Henry Roan shortly after the commission of the act, admitting that he killed Henry Roan at the solicitation of subject Hale. The trial as to subject Ramsey is scheduled to take place on November 12, 1929 at Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

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Another investigation was made relative to the activities of one I. C. Hale, half-brother of subject Hale, who subsequently was charged with contempt of court in that he, I. C. Hale, attempted to bribe a prospective juror. He was found guilty and sentenced to serve a period of sixty days.

Further, one John Duke was investigated by the Bureau and was thereafter charged with intimidating a Government witness, and upon a plea of guilty was sentenced to serve a period of thirty days in the Osage County Jail at Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

Respectfully,

A. D. Quinn

2960

HN:CAJ

November 15, 1929.

Mr. C. E. Brennan,  
P. O. Box 1535,  
Oklahoma City, Okla.

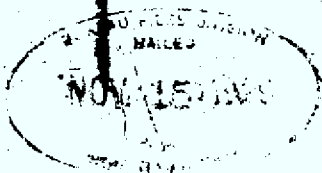
Dear Sir:

Please refer to Bureau  
telegram of October 25, 1929 author-  
izing an investigation of the jury  
panel for the trial of John Ramsey,  
Osage Indian Murder, November 12, 1929.  
A report in the matter has not been  
received to date and it is desired  
that same be promptly forwarded.

Very truly yours,

Director.

62-5033-773



2970

El Paso, Texas,  
November 13, 1929,

Mr. G. E. Cronman,  
P. O.-Box 1336,  
Oklahoma City, Okla.

Dear Sir:

Reply is made to your letter of November 4 in which you state that a letter to me advising that Special Agent J. A. Street would be needed at Pawhuska on November 10 in the trial of John Ramsey, Osage Indian Murder case, had not been replied to by me with advice that he would be there.

I wish to advise that Special Agent J. A. Street since about August 15 has been on special detail with Agent in Charge Jones at Phoenix, Arizona, investigating the murder of Special Agent P. E. Reynolds and has not been under my direction. Immediately upon receipt of your letter I transmitted it to Agent in Charge Jones and assured that he had notified you that Special Agent Street would be available at the time and place required. This would account for the non-receipt by you of any reply from me.

Very truly yours,

DeH/ly  
CC-Bureau.

Louis DeHette  
Special Agent in Charge.  
E. P. No. 70-25.

2971

U. S. Department of Justice  
Bureau of Investigation

P. O. Box 1535,  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

November 18, 1929.

CES:p

Director,  
Bureau of Investigation,  
Department of Justice,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Answering Bureau letter dated November 15, 1929, which has reference to the investigation of the jury panel in the case of United States versus John Ramsey, Osage Indian Murder, you are advised that on November 4th Special Agents Kiely and Flood, on duty in the Northern District of Oklahoma, were assigned to conduct this jury investigation under the direction of Special Agent John Burger and with his assistance.

United States Attorney Goldesberry, of the Northern District of Oklahoma, had issued instructions to Agent Burger with reference to conducting the investigation.

The investigation was commenced during the week beginning November 4th and completed the first two days of the week beginning November 11th. Data concerning the prospective jurors were furnished to the United States Attorney in charge of the prosecution of the Subject. The trial is now in progress.

Very truly yours,

*C. E. Brennan*

C. E. Brennan,  
Special Agent in Charge.

62-5033-774

RECORDED

NOV 23 1929

2972

RECEIVED AT

STANDARD TIME  
INDICATED IN THIS MESSAGE

TELEGRAMS  
TO ALL  
AMERICA



CABLEGRAMS  
TO ALL  
THE WORLD

This is a full-rate Telegram  
gram, unless otherwise in-  
dicated in the check or on the

BLUE	DAY LETTER
NL	NIGHT LETTER
NITE	NIGHT TELEGRAM
LCO	DEFERRED
NLT	CABLE LETTER
WLT	WEEK END LETTER

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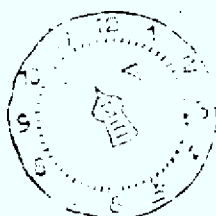
DIRECTOR BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHDC.

JOHN RAYSEY OSAGE INDIAN MURDER CONVICTED RECEIVED LIFE SENTENCE

BRENNIMAN

One 1150AM



NOV 20 1929



NOV 20 1929

RECORDED

62-5033-775

NOV 21 1929

2973

RECEIVED AT

STANDARD TIME  
INDICATED ON THIS MESSAGE

# Postal Telegraph

(THE MACKAY SYSTEM)



ALL AMERICA  
CABLES

COMMERCIAL  
CABLES

This is a full rate Telegram or Cablegram unless otherwise  
indicated by signal in the check or in the address.

BLUE	DAY LETTER
NL	NIGHT LETTER
NITE	NIGHT MESSAGE
LCO	DEFERRED CABLE
NLT	NIGHT CABLE LETTER
WLT	WEEK END CABLE LETTER

Form  
1800a

3 62-5033-20 COLLECT GOVT  
SAN ANTONIO TEXAS 912AM 21 20  
DIRECTOR BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON.

SPECIAL AGENTS C R DAVIS AND J V MURPHY RETURNED LAST NIGHT EIGHT THIRTY  
FROM PANHUSKA OKLAHOMA RAMSEY CASE

LAWRENCE ACTING

11AM



NOV 21 1920

NOV 23 1920

NOV 24 1920

62-5033

62-5033-776

2974

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

REPORT MADE AT: Oklahoma City, Okla.	DATE WHEN MADE: 11-22-29	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE: 11/6-21/29	REPORT MADE BY: P. S. Smith
TITLE: JOHN RAMSEY			CHARACTER OF CASE: Murder of Henry Roan, Osage Indian.

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

(O. C. #70-1)

Subject convicted by Jury in the U. S. District Court, Northern District of Oklahoma, at Pawhuska, November 20, 1929, who recommended life imprisonment. Subject sentenced at Pawhuska on November 21, 1929, by Judge Franklin E. Kennamer presiding, to serve a life sentence in the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. Notice of appeal given by Defendant. Parole report submitted 1-5-27 on former conviction in this case.

REFERENCE:- Report of Special Agent John R. Burger, Oklahoma City, November 1, 1929.

DETAILS:-

- At Pawhuska, Oklahoma -

Agent was assigned jointly with Special Agent John R. Burger to assist the United States Attorney for the Northern District of Oklahoma in the preparation of the trial of Subject, who stood charged in that district with the murder of Henry Roan, a full-blood Osage Indian, which was committed on a restricted Osage allotment. Said trial began on November 12, 1929, at Pawhuska, Oklahoma and terminated November 20, 1929, with a jury verdict of guilty, recommending life imprisonment. Subject was thereafter, on November 21, 1929, sentenced by Judge Franklin E. Kennamer, presiding, to serve a life sentence in the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. Notice of appeal was given by Subject.

A parole report was submitted under date of January 5, 1927 for Subject on a former conviction in this case, which was reversed, remanded and re-tried and terminated as stated herein.

CLOSED.

APPROVED AND FORWARDED: <i>E. R. [Signature]</i>	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES 62-5033-777	RECORDED INDEXED
COPIES OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO: -Bureau -U.S. Atty. Tulsa -U.S. Atty. Oklahoma City 2-Oklahoma City		BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION NOV 25 1929 A.M. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	CHIEF CLERK JACKSON
ROUTED TO:		FILE	

2975

Department of Justice  
Bureau of Investigation

P.O. Box 1535,  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

NOV 26 1929  
November 22, 1929.

CEB:S  
70-1

62-5033  
Director,  
Bureau of Investigation,  
Department of Justice,  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir: Re: JOHN RAMSEY, Murder of  
Henry Roan, Osage Indian

I am submitting herewith report of Special Agent F. S. Smith, Oklahoma City, dated November 22nd, 1929, in the above entitled case, in which it is set forth that Subject was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment. I have not recorded for statistical purposes this conviction and sentence for the reason that this trial was the result of a reversal of the former conviction, at which time it is presumed the Bureau recorded the proper statistical data.

Very truly yours,

C. E. Breniman  
C. E. Breniman,  
Special Agent in Charge

62-5033-777  
DEC 2 1929

NOV 25 1929

2976

JJW:  
62-5-777

RECORDED

November 29, 1929.

Mr. C. E. Breniman,  
P. O. Box 1535,  
Oklahoma City, Okla.

Dear Sir:-

There is attached hereto, the report of Special Agent F. S. Smith, dated November 22, 1929, in the case entitled: - JOHN RAMSEY - Murder of Henry Bean, Osage Indian, which was forwarded to the Bureau without your signature.

If this report is approved by you, please sign the same and return it to the Bureau as soon as possible.

-Very truly yours,-

Enc. #637440

Director.

NOV 28 1929

2977

November 29, 1929.

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL LUHRING:

With further reference to the case entitled: - JOHN RAMSEY - Murder of Henry Hoan, Osage Indian, there is transmitted herewith, for your information, a copy of a report of Special Agent F. S. Smith, dated November 22, 1929, at Oklahoma City, Okla.

Very truly yours,

Enc. 537439

Director.

NOV 19 1923

4. 145710

2978

P. O. Box 1535,  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma,

Mr. T. George Wright, Capt.,  
Osage Indian Agency,  
Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

Re: Earl Savage, et al,  
Murder of Charles Whitehorn.

If your informants and the Indian Agency are in possession of any facts that would appear to require a further investigation of the case and such facts are submitted to this office or the United States Attorney at Oklahoma City, it will be appropriate for this office to conduct a further investigation. This Bureau will be pleased to cooperate with you to the fullest extent.

C. E. Brennan,  
Special Agent in Charge

cc Bureau

297A

CLASS OF SERVICE	
DOMESTIC	CABLE
TELEGRAM	FULL RATE
DAY LETTER	DEFERRED
NIGHT MESSAGE	CABLE LETTER
NIGHT LETTER	WEEK END LETTER

Patrons should check class of service desired; otherwise message will be transmitted as full-rate communication.

# WESTERN UNION

NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT

J. C. WILLEVER, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

NO.	CASH OR CHG.
CHECK	
TIME FIL D	

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

CXB:h

Okla City Okla Oct 25 1930

Warden T B White  
United States Penitentiary  
Leavenworth Kans

Agent Frank Smith states Ike Ogg likely located at Artesia New Mexico and in event not located there his exact location can be obtained from Alex Street at Bureau office El Paso

Breniman

Official Business  
Gov't. Rate - Paid  
Chg. Bureau Inves.

62-5023

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1930

THE QUICKEST, SUREST, AND SAFEST WAY TO SEND MONEY IS BY TELEGRAPH OR CABLE

2980

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WHR:JEN

29415

APR 18 1932 P.M.

April 14, 1932.

Herbert K. Hyde, Esq.,

United States Attorney,

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Sir:

In answer to your letter of the 26th ultimo, you are authorized to dismiss indictments Nos. 5659 and 5660 in which John Ramsey and William E. Hale are defendants, charged with the murder of one Henry Roan, an Osage Indian.

Respectfully,

For the Attorney General,

MUGENT DOELS

Assistant Attorney General.

INDEXED

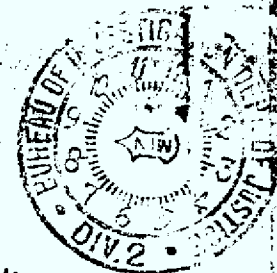
NOT RECORDED

5033

2981

P. O. Box 1535  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
April 27, 1932

EMB.VFP  
70-1



Hon. Herbert K. Hyde,  
United States Attorney,  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Attention: Mr. Wagoner

Dear Sir:

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter  
in the case titled United States, vs. John Ramsey,  
and William E. Hale, Murder. Thank you very kindly  
for the information furnished therein.

Very truly yours,

Earle M. Black, Acting  
Special Agent in Charge.

cc: Bureau

2 - 66331  
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RECEIVED  
DIV. 2  
MAY 11 1932  
DIV. 2

2982

HHC:HCB

November 2, 1932.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR.

Attached hereto is a copy of a write-up of the Osage Indian Murder cases, which is being sent today, air mail, special delivery, to Mr. Zimmer in accordance with his request.

In the same mail, there is being sent to Mr. Zimmer the music and words for the Indian chant which is to be used in connection with the Sufynamic case, which has previously been furnished Mr. Zimmer.

Respectfully,

H. H. Clegg.

2983



JOHN EDGAR HOOVER  
DIRECTOR

U. S. Department of Justice  
Bureau of Investigation

Washington, D. C.

November 2, 1931.

ENC:ENC

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR.

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Respectfully,

H. E. Clegg.

NOV 5 1931

2985

UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WILLIAM KING HALE;  
JOHN RAMSEY

MURDER ON INDIAN RESERVATION

The Osage Indian country lies in the Osage hills, situated in the northeastern part of Oklahoma, a beautiful rolling country covered with tall, green limestone grass, and considered the finest cattle grazing country in the world.

The Osage Indian Reservation, which is identical with Osage County, Oklahoma, consists of a million and a half acres of Indian allotted land, is the largest county in the State, being larger in area than the entire State of Delaware. It is bounded on the southwest by the Arkansas River, and reaches from Tulsa, Oklahoma, on the south to Ponca City on the north, a distance of approximately sixty miles. It is also sixty miles in width at its widest point. To give an additional idea of its immensity, it contains over sixteen hundred public schools.

This reservation was acquired by the Cherokee Treaty from the Cherokee Indians July 9, 1866.

The county seat at the time of the events related in this report was Pawnee, now a population of eight thousand. The population of the county at the time of the events related in this report was about twenty thousand.

villages in the county are Fairfax, Grayhorse, Hominy, Wynona, Pershing, Skiatook and Melagoney.

The Osage Indian Agency, with headquarters at Pawhuska, superintends the affairs of the Osage Indians, and attends to the disbursing of amounts due them. The agency is in turn under the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, handling the affairs of all Indian tribes under the protection of the United States Government, this Commission being under the direct supervision of the Department of the Interior.

By an enactment in 1907, 2,229 head rights for duly enrolled members of the Osage tribe were created. This number of head rights remains stationary, although the actual number of the tribe may increase or decrease, and various Osage Indians draw revenue from or are allotted tracts of land based upon their head rights. The original allotment to each Osage Indian consisted of 160 acres as a homestead, which was supplemented subsequently by various other land grants until each head right allotment consisted of approximately 657 acres.

To give an idea of the wealth of the Osage Indians in former times as compared with the large amounts of money received by them after oil was struck on the reservation, the following net per capita payment to each Osage Indian entitled to receive income from the common fund is set out:

Net Per Capita Distribution

1880	\$ 10.50	per year
1900	200.00	per year
1910	250.00	per year
1915	221.31	per year
1920	8,090.00	per year
1921 (the year of the first murder)	8,600.00	per year
1923 (the year of four murders)	12,400.00	per year

To give an additional idea of the enormous wealth of the Osage tribe at this period of time, this tribe, consisting of approximately 2,000 Indians who enjoyed head rights since the discovery of oil on the reservation until June 30, 1951, were paid a total net revenue of \$241,546,289.82, in addition to various other expenditures made in their behalf.

The tribal officers of the Osage Indians are elected every two years, and consist of a Chief and Assistant Chief, and of a Tribal Council of eight.

Certificates of competency were issued to Indians deemed to be able to handle their own financial affairs, the recipients being permitted to dispose of their head rights and allotted land holdings as they saw fit.

The number of actual producing oil wells on the reservation as of June 30, 1950, was 5,855, and had increased to 6,579 as of June 30, 1952. Practically all of the land contained in the reservation is now being produced.

Distribution of the funds to the Osage Indians differed somewhat from that of other tribes in that a common pool was made of all earnings derived from the territory which was divided among all the Indians of the tribe entitled to allotment rights, which at no time during the last decade has totaled more than two thousand.

To illustrate the profligacy of the majority of these Indians, they owed at the end of the fiscal year 1921 \$691,000 to various individuals.

It was no uncommon thing from 1920 to 1925 for the grocery bills of numerous Osage Indians to run from \$500 to \$1,000 per month.

Stomp dances are still indulged in several times a year by the tribe, at which time members of other Indian tribes are invited to attend as guests, and gifts are exchanged between the various tribes and individuals. These stomp dances are the occasion for all night and all day feasts, during which the members of the Osage tribe, as well as visiting tribes, clad in picturesque costumes, dance in a circular formation to the rhythmic beat of the tom-tom. Under the stimulating influence of the dance, which begins in a more or less orderly fashion, the dancers soon wax more enthusiastic and "paw the ground like a bunch of wild steers", after which they will retire for further feasting, during part of which professional Indian dancers will amuse the assembled audience. This dance is participated in not only by the young and enthusiastic members of the tribe, but also by the elder men and women of the tribes, who, perhaps, are remembering the feasts of earlier years and are trying to bring back to their memory

recollection by participating in these native dances.

Marriage by full-blood Osage Indians, whose number constitute between one-fourth and one-third of the total number on the tribal rolls, are still solemnized according to tribal customs.

Osage County and the surrounding territory contains very wild stretches of country, thickly wooded with timber unsuited for commercial purposes, but affording excellent concealment in addition to its almost inaccessible canyons which served as hide-outs for notorious criminals.

At the time of the murders from 1921 to 1923, this country was a haven for all types of desperate criminals who flocked there from all parts of the country due to the nature of the country itself, affording such excellent hiding places for wanted criminals. This criminal element to a large extent was attracted by the enormous wealth of the Osage Indians.

Bandits and robbers abounded. The notorious Al Spencer gang of bank robbers used this country for their hide-out. This particular robber was at one time approached by W. K. Hale, who attempted unsuccessfully to hire him to murder Indians.

Dick Gregg, a member of the Al Spencer gang, and his father, John Gregg, testified against Hale at his murder trial to the effect that Hale tried unsuccessfully to hire Al Spencer, as well as both of the Greggs, to murder certain Indians.

"Curly" Johnson, another notorious bank bandit, was also active in this country, and was at one time approached by a nephew of

William Hale at Hale's instigation, for the purpose of hiring Johnson to murder certain Indians. Johnson was later killed under mysterious circumstances, and the rumor was common that he had been killed at the instigation of Hale, who feared that he might talk.

Another notorious character who shared honors with W. K. Hale as boss of the criminal element of Osage County was Henry Grammer, notorious bad man who had complete control of the Osage liquor traffic, and who was reputed to keep certain woods surrounding his land lighted up by means of a privately owned power plant, where he worked a gang of criminals who had fled from all over the United States day and night in making illicit liquor.

Grammer died in an automobile accident prior to the investigation of the murder cases, and at the time of his death had on his person \$15,000 in cash. He is supposed to have been murdered by a notorious bandit who was with him at the time of the accident, but no investigation was ever made by local authorities as his death was considered a good riddance. There was a gapping wound under his left arm pit.

A bandit who was serving time in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary, recalled while being interviewed by a Special Agent of the United States Bureau of Investigation that during the period of the murders he attended a gathering of thirty-two nationally known bank bandits and train robbers in a group of woods in the Osage country, where they were in hiding as fugitives from justice, and during their sojourn they often engaged in pistol practice, skill in the use of pistols being

absolutely necessary to their profession at this time.

Prior to the Osage Indian tribe becoming immensely wealthy over night through discovery of oil on the reservation, William K. Hale, known as "Bill" Hale and sometimes dubbed "King of the Osage", drifted into this territory from Texas, an uneducated, more or less uncouth cow puncher and cattle thief, but possessed of a dominating personality.

He finally succeeded in controlling 45,000 acres of select Osage grazing land by means of leases, and acquired 5,000 acres outright. Eventually he became a millionaire, who dominated local politics and seemingly could not be punished for any of the many crimes which were laid at his door.

His method of building up power and prestige was to put various individuals under obligation to him by means of gifts or favors shown to them. Consequently, he had a tremendous following in the vicinity composed not only of the riffraff element which had drifted in, but of many poor and substantial citizens.

The various characters concerned in this story were the following:

**WILLIAM ("BILL") KING HALE**, master mind behind the murders investigated, 55 year old typical westerner of medium stature, black hair, turning gray, brown eyes, prepossessing figure, neat dresser, ruddy complexion, who affected a military air with a soldier's bearing, short cut, well-groomed hair, the owner of a fine automobile, a fine house in Osage, a fine horse, a fine dog, a fine cat, a fine bird, a fine fish, a fine snake, a fine spider, a fine insect, a fine animal, a fine plant, a fine mineral, a fine fossil, a fine meteorite, a fine comet, a fine galaxy, a fine universe.

2992

-1-

in the middle of his immense holdings.

**JOHN RAMSEY**, bootlegger, fifty year old typical rough type western criminal, who had served a penitentiary term for rustling cattle, former member of the notorious Henry Grammer gang, actual murderer of William E. Smith, Rita Smith, Nettle Brookshire, and Henry Roan.

**ERNEST BURKHART**, "squaw man" in his early thirties, nephew of W. K. Hale, completely dominated by Hale, a weak-willed individual who did his uncle's bidding, married to Mollie Burkhart, full-blood Osage Indian, daughter of Lizzie Q, wealthy in her own right. A very friendly person, who seemingly thought he had done no wrong in participating in the crimes he admitted. Implicated in the murder of Henry Roan and of the W. E. Smith family. He was the first to confess the true state of affairs, giving Special Agents of this Bureau their first real lead in the case implicating Hale and Ramsey.

**KELSEY MORRISON**, "squaw man" 35 years old, a neat appearing man of very bad reputation, married to a full-blood Osage Indian woman named Katherine Cole. Admitted murder of Anna Brown, with help of Bryan Burkhart at instigation of W. K. Hale.

**BRYAN BURKHART**, a "squaw man," younger brother of Ernest Burkhart, who turned State's evidence in the State courts.

**DEVEY SELPH**, "squaw man" former husband of Cecilia Hicheart, full-blood Osage woman, who was hired by W. K. Hale to murder

2993

Indian, but who lost his nerve and later confessed.

LIZZIE Q, also known as Lizzie Kile, full-blood Osage Indian between 70 and 80 years of age, immensely wealthy in her own right, mother of Anna Brown, Mollie Burkhart, wife of Ernest Burkhart, and Rita Smith, wife of W. E. "Bill" Smith. This Indian woman and her three daughters were all immensely wealthy, each being the owner of Osage head rights, and receiving royalties from oil and gas wells.

The Government theory in the investigation of the murder cases was that W. K. Hale dominated his nephew, Ernest Burkhart, the husband of Mollie Burkhart, and planned to do away with Lizzie Q and her remaining two daughters, and finally Burkhart's own wife, so that Burkhart would fall heir to the head rights of all four, Burkhart being under the domination of Hale, who would, if necessary, eventually have killed Burkhart, and as a result, acquired the wealth of these four Indian women.

Just prior to the investigation of the Osage Indian Murder Case by the United States Bureau of Investigation, two dozen Osage Indians died under suspicious circumstances, and the entire Osage Indian Tribe, as well as the white citizens of that locality, were terror stricken and in fear of their lives. This made the task of this Bureau's Agents extremely difficult because law-abiding citizens actually feared to converse with them relative to the recent killings.

MURDER OF ANNA BROWN.

Anna Brown, divorced daughter of Lizzie G., was murdered on May 22, 1921, three miles from the town of Fairfax, on the pasture lands of W. K. Hale, in the bottom of a small ravine. Bureau Agents found from investigation that she was murdered by Kelsey Morrison and Bryan Burkhardt, who had driven her to this lonely spot. Bryan Burkhardt held her after she had been gotten into a drunken stupor, while Kelsey Morrison shot her in the back of the head with a .32 automatic pistol which had been furnished him for this purpose by W. K. Hale a few hours prior to the actual murder. These facts were developed by confession of Kelsey Morrison himself, who testified to these facts at the trial of W. K. Hale for murder, and was substantiated by the confession of his wife, Katherine Cole Morrison, a full-blood Osage Indian. Mat Williams, a bootlegger, substantiated these facts also on the witness stand, stating that he saw her murdered while delivering whiskey ordered by Morrison and Burkhardt.

2995

MURDER OF HENRY ROAN

Henry Roan was a picturesque full-blood Osage Indian, six feet tall, and fine looking specimen. He wore his hair in plaits down his back, and was an inveterate drunkard who stayed away from his home for weeks at a time. William K. Hale, about a year prior to the murder of Roan, had taken out a \$25,000 life insurance policy on Roan. John Ramsey made friends with Roan by means of Roan's fondness for whiskey, and took him out several times, ostensibly to furnish him whiskey, but in reality to murder him. Upon each occasion, Ramsey lost his nerve, but finally persuaded Roan on one of these trips to drive to the bottom of a canyon out of sight of the road, and proceeded to shoot Roan through the back of the head with a .45 automatic pistol, which he had obtained from the arsenal of Henry Grammar. This occurred on January 26, 1923. It was developed by Bureau Agents that Hale hired Ramsey to commit this murder, buying him a \$500 Ford automobile prior to the murder, and paying him \$1,000 in cash after the murder had been committed. It developed also that Henry Grammar had furnished John Ramsey to Hale as the killer. Roan was found several days later sitting upright in his car, frozen stiff. The facts surrounding the murder of Roan were proven by John Ramsey's own confession, as well as a confession of Ernest Burkhart, nephew of William Hale, who was present at all negotiations relative to the murder of Roan. John Ramsey did not even know Roan's name at the time he murdered him, but had simply had Roan pointed out to him as the

2996

Indian who was to be "bumped off", by William K. Hale, on the streets of Fairfax, Oklahoma. Henry Roan was the only one of the five persons proven to have been murdered at the instigation of W. K. Hale, who was killed on restricted Indian land, thereby giving the United States jurisdiction over the crime. Roan's murdered body was found upon the restricted homestead allotment of Rose Little Star, whose Indian name was Tom-Pah-Pe.

MURDER OF WILLIAM E. "BILL" SMITH;  
his wife, RITA SMITH, Osage Indian;  
NETTIE BROOKSHIRE, their white servant.

William E. "Bill" Smith stated openly that he believed W. K. Hale had killed Henry Roan and Anna Brown, and would not hesitate to kill the last of Lizzie Q's children. In addition to this fact, William E. Smith and W. K. Hale had had an argument about \$6,000 which Smith claimed Hale owed him. On the night of March 10, 1923, the house of William E. Smith was blown up, having a five-gallon can of nitro-glycerin exploded under it, blowing the house to atoms and killing Rita Smith and Nettie Brookshire instantaneously, while mangling the body of William E. Smith horribly. He lived a few hours and stated his belief that Hale had had him killed.

It was developed through investigation by Bureau Agents that W. K. Hale had hired John Ramsey and Asa "Ace" Kirby to murder William E. Smith, and had subsequently paid Ramsey approximately \$1600. These

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TFB: SK

October 13, 1932

R E VETTERLI  
UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
905 FEDERAL RESERVE BANK BUILDING  
KANSAS CITY MISSOURI

DESIRE YOU OBTAIN FROM AGENT BURGER AND FORWARD SPECIAL DELIVERY AIRMAIL  
ANY INTERESTING DETAILS AND SIDELIGHTS FOR RADIO BROADCAST OF OSAGE  
INDIAN MURDERS WILLIAM K HALE ET AL

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER DIRECTOR

RECORDED  
&  
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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FILE

2998

October 18, 1932

DESIRE YOU OBTAIN FROM AGENT FRANK SMITH AND FORWARD SPECIAL DELIVERY  
AIRMAIL ANY INTERESTING INFORMATION AND SIDELIGHTS FOR RADIO BROADCAST  
OF CERGE INDIAN MURDERS WILLIAM K HALE ET AL ALSO DESIRE OBTAIN STATUS  
ANY APPEALS STILL PENDING

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER DIRECTOR

100-27534-1034  
BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
OCT 19 1962 A.M.  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FILE

2000

October 18, 1932

GUS T. JONES  
UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
1916 SMITH-YOUNG TOWER BUILDING  
SAN ANTONIO TEXAS

DESIRE YOU OBTAIN IMMEDIATELY FROM AGENT STREET AND FORWARD SPECIAL  
DELIVERY AIRMAIL ANY INTERESTING SIDELIGHTS AND FEATURES FOR RADIO  
BROADCAST ON GEORGE INDIAN MURDERS WILLIAM K HALE ET AL

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER DIRECTOR

RECORDED

62-27334-122  
BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
OCT 19 1962  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FILE

2000

INVESTMENT BLDG.  
14th & K STS., N.W.  
Phone National 6600 BR.7

STANDARD TIME  
INDICATED ON THIS MESSAGE

# Postal Telegraph

## THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM



This is a full rate Telegram, Cablegram or Radiogram unless otherwise indicated by signal in the check or in the address.

DL	DAY LETTER
NL	NIGHT LETTER
NM	NIGHT MESSAGE
LCO	DEFERRED CABLE
NLT	NIGHT CABLE LETTER
WLT	WEEK END CABLE LETTER
	RADIOGRAM

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1932 OCT 19 PM 5:48

*W.H.D.S.*  
*4*

OUR TELEGRAM EIGHTEENTH OSAGE INDIAN MURDERS WILL ENDEAVOR MAIL  
MATERIAL TOMORROW NIGHT IMPOSSIBLE TO DO SO EARLIER=

COLVIN.

*62-27334*

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OCT 21 1932

*62-5483-782*  
*62-27334-141*

BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION	
OCT 20 1932 P.M.	
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	
For File	FILE

Telephone Your Telegrams to Postal Telegraph

3001

U. S. Department of Justice  
Bureau of Investigation

P. O. Box 1835  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
October 21, 1932

927224331

RHC:MCE

Director,  
United States Bureau of Investigation,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

In response to your telegraphic request for information from Special Agent F. S. Smith on the Hale-Ramsey Osage Indian Murder Cases, please find inclosed data furnished by Agent Smith, which was gotten up hurriedly and in rough form. Owing to the apparent necessity for getting this to you quickly, I am not taking time to revise same.

I trust that the information furnished will enable the preparation of suitable material for broadcasting. We would be very grateful if you would advise us when to expect the broadcast on this matter.

Very truly yours,

*R. H. Colvin*

R. H. Colvin,  
Special Agent in Charge.

62-5033-783

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OCT 25 1932

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SUBSTANTIAL EVIDENCE	
OCT 24 1932	
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# U. S. Bureau of Investigation

Department of Justice

905 Federal Reserve Bank Bldg.,

Kansas City, Missouri.

AIR MAIL.

October 21, 1932.

SPECIAL DELIVERY.

Director,  
United States Bureau of Investigation,  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

OCT 27 1932

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62-5033-7831  
62-5033-7831  
BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
OCT 23 1932  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
Div. Four  
FILE

Reference is made to Bureau telegram of October 18, 1932, directing that this office obtain from Agent J. R. Burger, and forward, any interesting details and sidelights for radio broadcast on Osage Indian Murders, W. K. Hale, et al. Attached hereto is the memorandum, dictated today by Agent Burger, requested in Bureau telegram of reference.

In connection with the unreasonable delay in submitting this information, it is stated that upon receipt of the telegram of October 18th, the writer endeavored to communicate with Agent Burger, who was then on sick leave and thought to be confined to his home. It was discovered upon investigation that Agent Burger had left Kansas City and his exact location was not known until sometime later, he being located by this office the night of October 20th. Agent Burger provided this office with no address during his absence from home, and the writer believes that appropriate explanation should be made by Agent Burger, and will, therefore, request that he prepare such statement as he may have and furnish the same to the Bureau upon his return to duty on Monday, October 24th.

It is the writer's impression at this time that Agent Burger did not intentionally fail to furnish an appropriate address and that probably his failure to do so was to some extent attributable to his illness. This, however, will probably be gone into more in detail by Agent Burger when his explanation is submitted to the Bureau.

Very truly yours,

*Chapman Fletcher*  
Chapman Fletcher

Acting Special Agent in Charge.

CF-ebc

Encl. *un*

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QIA: RAN

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4 & 8 OCT 27 1932  
5 INDEXED

Special Agent in Charge,  
United States Bureau of Investigation,  
900 Federal Reserve Bank Building,  
Kansas City, Missouri.

Dear Sir:

The Bureau has received your letter of October 21st, transmitting the memorandum of Special Agent J. R. Barger, concerning the  
XOgea Indian Murders.

While the Bureau appreciates the information furnished by Special Agent Burger, it is desired to obtain from the Special Agent some of the details of investigative methods and experiences with which he came in contact during the investigation. There must be any number of small details of human interest, such as the peculiar language used during some interview, the appearance of some lucky coincidence which enabled some important piece of information to be obtained, the details of pretense which were used to elicit from witnesses information without their knowledge, and similar things.

The Bureau has the formal information included in the reports, but it is this informal descriptive data, or so-called human interest, which is needed. If he can furnish such information, please see that this is forwarded immediately by air mail, special delivery.

Very truly yours,

Director.

**AIR MAIL**  
**SPECIAL DELIVERY**

MAILED  
OCT 24 1932

3004

U. S. Department of Justice  
Bureau of Investigation

1218 Smith Young Tower Bldg.,  
San Antonio, Texas,  
October 23, 1932.

62-5033-784

Director,  
United States Bureau of Investigation,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Complying with your telegram of October 18th,  
there is attached hereto a statement giving the interest-  
ing sidelights and features for radio broadcast of Osage  
Indian murders - W. K. Hale, et al.

This matter has been delayed on account of Agents  
being absent from headquarters in the field.

Very truly yours,

*Gus T. Jones*

Gus T. Jones,  
Special Agent in Charge.

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INTERESTING SIDELIGHTS AND FEATURES IN CONNECTION WITH  
OSAGE INDIAN MURDER CASES, IN STATE OF OKLAHOMA.

As furnished by Special Agents C. R. Davis, J. A. Street and  
J. V. Murphy.

During the investigations of the murders of Osage Indians in the State of Oklahoma, and the trials of the defendants, a prominent cattleman, his nephews and a cowboy employee of the cattleman (W. K. Hale, Ernest and Byron Burkheart and John Ramsey), in connection with the employing of persons by this cattleman to kill an Indian woman and her white husband, this cattleman contacted with a notorious bank robber (Al Spencer) and his gang (Dick Gregg, et al) and promised this bank robber \$5000 to do this job. The cattleman was to meet the Bank Robber and his gang in a pasture and deliver the \$5000 in cash. Thru investigation it was learned that the bank robber planned meeting the cattleman in the pasture and relieve him of the \$5000 without doing the killing, well knowing that the cattleman would be in a position where he could not very well report the robbery. However, upon meeting the cattleman at the agreed place, the cattleman, being aware of the reputation of the bank robber, did not bring the \$5000 with him, but brought with him a henchman (Fred Rowe). The cattleman stated to the bank robber that he would place the \$5000 in a bank in the name of his henchman, to be delivered to the bank robber when the job was done. The bank robber, upon learning the cattleman was too wise to bring the \$5000 in cash with him, told the cattleman that he "may rob a bank or a train, but he has never fallen so low to murder a woman for money, even though she be an Indian." This closed the incident with the bank robber. Later the cattleman secured the services of his cowboy John (John Ramsey) and a different bank robber (Asa Kirby), who placed several quarts of nitroglycerine (called "soup" by bank robbers) in the basement of the home of the Indian woman at night, and blew up the house, killing the Indian woman, her white husband and a servant girl.

Some time after this murder was committed, the cattleman, believing that "dead men tell no tales", ribbed this bank robber to commit a robbery by telling him where he could secure some diamonds by robbing a grocer residing near the Oklahoma-Kansas State line, and then informed the grocer that he overheard a robber planning to rob him on a certain date, resulting in the grocer killing the bank robber when he called to rob the grocer of his diamonds, and forever closing the mouth of the bank robber regarding the blowing up of the home of the Indian woman.

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Frank  
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An inmate of the Oklahoma State Penitentiary (Bert Lawson) made a confession that he had been employed by the Cattleman to place nitroglycerine in the basement of the Indian woman's home (Rita Smith) and blow it up, killing the Indian woman, her white husband and their servant girl. This confession, corroborates in some of its details, was the result of the State authorities filing murder complaints against the Cattleman (W. K. Hale and his Nephew (Ernest Burkheart)). While the Cattleman and his nephew were in custody of State authorities, they were interviewed by Agents of the United States Bureau of Investigation and the nephew made a confession, revealing the names of the persons who had actually committed these murders, one of which was his Uncle, the Cattleman. After considerable investigation by Agents of this Bureau the confession of the Oklahoma State Penitentiary was found to be false, and to have been made by the inmate for the sole purpose of securing a pardon or parole from the Oklahoma State Penitentiary, where he was serving a seven year sentence, and to be given immunity for his participation in this murder case, as well as obtain a better bill of fare than what he had been receiving in the State penitentiary. This inmate, while out of the Oklahoma State Penitentiary, in custody of State and Federal officers, had a weakness for T-bone steaks and French fried potatoes three times daily, at the expense of the Federal officers.

Shut  
down

On one occasion while this inmate was in a Y. M. C. A. cafeteria for dinner, he stated he had never been in a cafeteria before, and he was informed to take a tray and place on it whatever he wished to eat as he passed down the food counter. Upon arriving at place where the meats were obtained, the inmate called attention to fact that he did not have room enough on his tray to place his meats and vegetables, and it was found that he had four pieces of pie and three pieces of cake on his tray. He was requested to remove all but one piece of pie.

After continuous search for an important witness in the George Indian murder cases, this witness (Dewey Selph) was located in Syracuse, Kansas, jail, where he was being held for passing a bad check. This witness was released by the Syracuse authorities to a Federal officer in order that he might be taken to Oklahoma to testify in the Indian murder cases, and upon getting ready to depart from the Syracuse jail it was found that the witness had no shoes, as the ones he had were worn out, and it was necessary for the Federal officer to purchase a pair of shoes for the witness before departing from Syracuse.

While this same witness was being held at Guthrie, Oklahoma, with inmates of the Kansas State penitentiary, also witnesses in the Indian murder cases, information was received that an escape was being planned by the Kansas State penitentiary inmates, and they were removed from the Guthrie jail, and examination revealed that some of the cell bars had been partly sawed. The witness from Syracuse was allowed to remain in the Guthrie jail, he being the only occupant. After a day or two it was discovered that this witness had escaped from the Guthrie jail, by removing the partly sawed bars of the cells, and had left town.

3007

0 This witness was located by a Deputy United States Marshal and an  
1 Agent of the United States Bureau of Investigation the following day  
2 while he was standing in a barrel at a tailoring shop in Pawhuska,  
3 Okla., about 120 miles from Guthrie, to where he had gone to have  
4 his suit pressed before calling on his lady friend. (This witness  
5 stated he was lonesome by himself in the Guthrie jail and he wanted  
6 to see his lady friend, and that after he had called on her he intended  
7 returning to Guthrie.

8 During the course of the trial of the Osage murder cases at  
9 Oklahoma City, this same witness was being held at a hotel in the  
10 custody of a Guard from the Federal Penitentiary. One night, during  
11 the trial, this witness was seen and recognized by an Agent of this  
12 Bureau, on the street in Oklahoma City about midnight a considerable  
13 distance from his hotel and by himself. Upon noticing that the  
14 Agent recognized him, the witness hurriedly returned to his hotel,  
15 followed by Agent. It was learned that this witness had walked away  
16 from his guard while the guard was indulging in a little party.

17 A day or so later, while this same witness' guard was indulging  
18 in another party at his hotel room, this witness took French leave,  
19 purloining the guard's pistol, stole an automobile from the streets  
20 and made his escape from Oklahoma City. This witness was taken into  
21 custody by Arkansas State authorities when they recognized him as  
22 being an escapee from the Arkansas State Penitentiary, prior to his  
23 apprehension at Syracuse, and the witness was returned to the Arkansas  
24 State Penitentiary to complete his sentence, from which institution  
25 he subsequently attempted to escape and was killed.

26 During the trial of the defendants in the Osage Indian murder  
27 cases, one Matt Williams, a native of Northern Oklahoma cattle country  
28 and formerly closely associated with the King of the Osage Hills and  
29 the Master Mind of the murders (W. K. Hale), while testifying for the  
30 Government, was asked by defense attorney on cross examination - "Isn't  
31 it a fact, Mr. Williams, that you have stole cattle while in the cattle  
32 business at Halston, Okla.?" To which witness Williams replied -  
33 "When I first entered the cattle business it was on an honest basis,  
34 but after Bill Hale and other cattle thieves stole me out, I realized  
35 that I could not succeed, so I put in with Lill and his gang."

36 At another time while this witness Williams was testifying, upon  
37 cross examination, the defense attorney asked him if he had ever been  
38 married, to which he replied that he had been married three times.  
39 The defense attorney asked him if he contemplated marriage again, and  
40 the witness stated that he did just as soon as the opportunity presented  
41 itself.

42 During the trial of these cases, a witness for the defense, who  
43 resided near Ripley, Okla., the same town where the cowboy employee  
44 of the cattleman resided, offered testimony in an effort to prove that  
45 the cowboy did not murder Henry Roan, Osage Indian, in Osage County.

3008

as the witness saw him in Ripley on the date Roan was murdered. This witness stated that he recalled seeing the cowboy on this date and introduced in substantiation of his statement, a calendar sheet on which was marked the date that Roan was murdered, and the date he claimed he saw the cowboy in Ripley. Upon cross examination this witness further stated that the marking of the date on the calendar represented the date on which his wife had set a hen, and it was also the same date he had seen the cowboy (John Ramsey) in Ripley. However, the witness was unable to recall any other dates that his which had set hens. The witness was subsequently convicted for perjury.

While a witness from Osage County, Oklahoma, was testifying for the Government in the Osage Indian murder cases, the defense attorney, upon cross examination, accused this witness with having committed the murder of Henry Roan, Osage Indian, which statement was made by defense attorney with idea of confusing the jury. Some time after the trial was over, this witness met the defense attorney in the witness' home town in Northern Oklahoma, and gave him a severe beating, for which the witness was arrested and paid a fine of \$10.00 for assault and battery. The townspeople remarked that the witness was fined the same amount that a man would be fined for whipping a mule.

3009

AUG -6 1932

Hon. Jos. K. Moyer,  
Chairman, Special Advisory Committee,  
Internal Revenue Bureau,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Moyer:

In connection with the refund claim of Charles Tinker, an Osage Indian, local counsel representing Osage Indians in income tax matters have asked that we write you a letter giving certain information relative to Osage mineral rights, the disposal of leases of same, division of receipts therefrom, etc., including the amount of bonus money received for leases from the year 1924 to the year 1928, inclusive. The following is submitted:

The oil, gas, coal and other minerals underlying the Osage Reservation were reserved to the Osage tribe in common when provision was made for allotting the surface of their lands, by provisions contained in section 3 of the act of June 26, 1906 (34 Stats. L. 539-543), for a period of twenty-five years from and after April 8th, 1906; and the leasing and development of the mineral rights were to be accomplished through the Osage tribal council with the approval of the Secretary of the Interior under such rules and regulations as he might prescribe. The provisions of said act affecting the mineral estate were amended by the act of Congress, approved March 3, 1921 (41 Stats. L. 1249) and the period of reservation of the minerals for the benefit of the Osage tribe was extended until April 7, 1946, with a continuation of the authority in the Secretary of the Interior to approve leases and prescribe necessary regulations to govern mineral leasing activities. A further extension of the reservation of the mineral rights for the communal benefit of the tribe, with a continuation of authority thereunder in the Secretary of the Interior, for leasing, until April 8, 1958, was effected by the act of March 2, 1929 (45 Stats. L. 1478). The last mentioned act provides "and the royalties and bonuses arising therefrom shall belong to the Osage tribe of Indians and shall be disbursed to members of the Osage tribe or their heirs or assigns, as now provided by law, after reserving

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such amounts as are now or may hereafter be authorized by Congress for specific purposes."

The Secretary of the Interior by regulations prescribed that the method of leasing for oil and gas mining purposes on the reservation should be by public auction; and auction sales have accordingly been regularly held on the reservation, through which the leases have been acquired. The areas advertised for lease sales are selected by the Superintendent of the Osage Indian Agency, Pawhuska, Oklahoma, with the aid of oil and gas engineers or field employees under his jurisdiction. The selection of lands to be offered are made with a view, of course, for best serving the interests of the Osage tribe and of attracting the highest possible bonus price, and to the eventual leasing and developing of the entire reservation in a manner most profitable to the Indians. As a rule the lands are offered in 160 acre tracts. No tract is developed to the point of actual production prior to offering it for lease but in many instances such tracts are known to be in producing areas, proven by tracts previously leased and drilled. The plan of selecting the lands and leasing the reservation has been with a view to developing the entire reservation in such a way as to prove the oil value of the lands as far as possible prior to advertising them for lease; thus to a large extent the checker-board method of offering alternate tracts has been followed, and as wells have been drilled adjoining tracts have been offered as conditions justify.

The bonus receipts from lease sales beginning with the year 1924, and ending with the year 1928, were as follows:

<u>Dates of sales.</u>	<u>Bonus received.</u>
March 18-19, 1924,	\$14,144,000.00
June 30, 1924,	2,249,613.75
December 18, 1924,	1,035,875.00
March 18, 1925,	667,450.00
March 17-18, 1926,	3,990,355.00
September 30, 1926,	2,116,850.00
March 28, 1927,	2,421,650.00

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3 December 12, 1927, 2,267,550.00  
4 March 26-29, 1928, 2,427,850.00  
5 September 27, 1928, 974,293.75  
6 December 11, 1928, 431,785.00.  
7

8 The receipts from Osage mineral leases are divided per  
9 capita among the individuals, or their heirs, whose names appear  
0 upon the approved Osage tribal rolls, pursuant to the requirements  
1 of existing law.  
2

3  
4 For your further information there are enclosed several  
5 copies of the leasing regulations applicable to oil and gas mining  
6 leases on the Osage Reservation; and also copies of advertisements  
7 used in connection with auction sales.  
8

9 Sincerely yours,  
0

1 C. J. RHOADS  
2

3 Commissioner.  
4

5 8WL-2-21a)  
6

7 Inclosure 162882  
8

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0 APPROVED: AUG 9 1932  
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2 (SIGNED) J. M. DIXON,  
3

4 Acting Secretary.  
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PER CAPITA PAYMENTS

Annual Report, Osage Indian Agency, Oklahoma, for fiscal year, 1931.

All revenues received from any source for the Osage Tribe, including moneys received for tribal grazing leases prior to allotment, in 1907, together with all revenues from tribal mineral leases to date, have been collected through the Osage Agency, deposited in the United States Treasury and after reserving and expending necessary amounts for administration purposes, balances remaining each year have been distributed equally in periodical payments to enrolled members of the tribe, or their heirs. Each per capita payment, so distributed wholly or in part to June 30, 1931, has been in the following amounts:- (By fiscal years)

1890	10.50	1910	250.00
1	16.00	1	387.91
2	22.50	2	445.87
3	51.00	3	357.89
4	87.00	4	799.88
5	107.75	5	221.51
6	62.50	6	316.69
7	157.83	7	2719.88
8	343.25	8	3672.33
9	163.33	9	3930.00
1890	165.50	1920	8090.00
1	233.00	1	8600.00
2	167.50	2	7700.00
3	412.00	3	12400.00
4	236.50	4	11600.00
5	342.00	5	9300.00
6	217.00	6	13400.00
7	214.00	7	7700.00
8	162.00	8	5700.00
9	251.00	9	4050.00
1900	200.00	1930	2480.00
1	165.00	1	1365.00
2	174.00		
3	470.00	Total	\$111,751.11
4	168.00		
5	348.00		
6	291.00		
7	394.00		
8	232.00		
9	380.00		

(94L-25)

3013

908 Federal Reserve Bank Bldg.,

Kansas City, Missouri.

AIR MAIL.

October 21, 1932.

SPECIAL DELIVERY.

Director,  
United States Bureau of Investigation,  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to Bureau telegram of October 18, 1932, directing that this office obtain from Agent J. H. Burger, and forward, any interesting details and sidelights for radio broadcast on Osage Indian Murders, W. K. Hale, et al. Attached hereto is the memorandum, dictated today by Agent Burger, requested in Bureau telegram of reference.

In connection with the unreasonable delay in submitting this information, it is stated that upon receipt of the telegram of October 18th, the writer endeavored to communicate with Agent Burger, who was then on sick leave and thought to be confined to his home. It was discovered upon investigation that Agent Burger had left Kansas City and his exact location was not known until sometime later, he being located by this office the night of October 20th. Agent Burger provided this office with no address during his absence from home, and the writer believes that appropriate explanation should be made by Agent Burger, and will, therefore, request that he prepare such statement as he may have and furnish the same to the Bureau upon his return to duty on Monday, October 24th.

It is the writer's impression at this time that Agent Burger did not intentionally fail to furnish an appropriate address and that probably his failure to do so was to some extent attributable to his illness. This, however, will probably be gone into more in detail by Agent Burger when his explanation is submitted to the Bureau.

Very truly yours,

Chapman Fletcher

Acting Special Agent in Charge.

CF-ebc  
Encl.

3014

Kansas City, Missouri.  
October 21, 1932.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR:

RE: OSAGE INDIAN MURDER CASES,  
WILLIAM K. HALE, ET AL.

HENRY ROAN, a full-blood Osage Indian, about forty years of age, who, at the time he was murdered on or about January 26, 1923, was living with his wife, also a full-blood Osage Indian, at Fairfax, Oklahoma, was found murdered, three or four days after death, apparently having been shot through the head, in a canyon located about five miles northwest of Fairfax, Oklahoma.

About one year prior to Roan's death, W. K. (BILL) HALE, a wealthy ranchman in Osage County, Oklahoma, obtained a \$25,000.00 insurance policy on the life of Roan and conspired with JOHN RAMSEY, known as the "COW BOY FAIRFAX," living in Osage, Oklahoma, to lure Roan into an isolated canyon, no road leading to this canyon, access being by cow paths, over which Roan was induced by Cow Boy Ramsey, Hale's co-spirator, to proceed in his car into this canyon to a point where the automobile was completely obscured from human view. At this desolate spot, Roan was induced by Cow Boy Ramsey to take a drink of whisky, and while in the act of taking a drink of whisky, apparently seated in the front seat of the car, Roan was shot in the back of the head by Ramsey, on the promise of Hale that he would give Ramsey a new Ford automobile and \$500.00 in cash. Roan's body was found some five or six days after death by passing hunters.

Following the murder of Roan, W. E. (BILL) SMITH, MRS. RITA SMITH, wife of Bill Smith, and NERTIE BROOKSHIRE, servant girl, Fairfax, Oklahoma, were killed by a dynamite explosion, which demolished Smith's home at Fairfax, Oklahoma, on March 10, 1925. W. E. (BILL) and Rita Smith were full-blood Osage Indians, both having head-rights, obtained through mineral and oil rights, as paid all full-blood Osage Indians for royalty by the United States Government.

3015

ANNA BROWN, full-blood Osage Indian, Fairfax, Oklahoma, was found murdered, in an isolated canyon about four miles northeast of Fairfax, Oklahoma, at a point where there was no passing, or roads leading near the scene of murder. The body of Anna Brown was also discovered by hunters.

CHARLES WHITTHORN, full-blood, Osage Indian, Pawhuska, Oklahoma, was found murdered, shot through the head, on Dial Hill, about two miles north of Pawhuska, Oklahoma, May 15, 1931, apparently having been lured to this isolated spot for the purpose of murdering him to obtain the rights and privileges of his oil royalties. His body was found by an oil driller, who reported the matter to the authorities.

Prior to the Government's entrance into this case, private detective agencies had made extensive investigations, with no results, other than to confuse informants and make it almost impossible for Government Agents to approach informants, including citizens and Indians, in an endeavor to obtain evidence with reference to the murders of the above named.

Vice-President Curtis, then Senior Senator from the District of Kansas, called to the attention of Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, Director, United States Bureau of Investigation, the murdering of the above named Osage Indians at which time, Mr. Hoover directed Special Agent J. R. Burgess of the Kansas City office to make extensive investigations with reference to the motive for such murders, which investigation was made and an initial report by Agent Burgess was furnished to Mr. Hoover.

Other Government Agents of the United States Bureau of Investigation were then dispatched by Director Hoover to the scenes of the crimes, these Agents being assigned under-cover, using different pretexts, such as insurance agents, Indian doctors, cattle buyers, and such other pretexts as would properly secure an approach to informants, in an effort to obtain true information with reference to the actual murder or murders of the above named, with result that the evidence obtained was that:

W. F. (Bill) Hale had conspired with ELMER BARKHART, his arrange with John Ramsey, after getting him under the liquor, for him, Barkhart and Ramsey to lure Henry P. Roan to a canyon to indulge in drinking a gallon jug of whisky. Accordingly arrangements were made for Henry Roan, Barkhart, and Ramsey, near this isolated spot. On reaching the murder, John Ramsey invited Roan out of his car, to get out of his automobile, to take a drink of whisky, and while apparently endeavoring to leave the front seat of his car Ramsey shot Roan in the back of the head with a .45 Colt.

3016

him by Ernest Burkhart, the said pistol having been obtained from W. K. (Bill) Hale, with the understanding that Ramsey would shoot Roan with this pistol. Hale, in carrying out his promise to Ramsey, did arrange and buy Ramsey, who was a poor man, a Ford automobile at Ponca City, Oklahoma, and gave Ramsey \$500.00 in cash, which was later admitted in signed statements by both Ramsey and Burkhart. This canyon, property allotted to a full-blood Osage Indian, never having been transferred, gave the Government jurisdiction in the murder of Henry Roan. Hale and Ramsey were tried jointly for the murder of John Roan, and each was convicted in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. An appeal was taken by each defendant and the case reversed; the case was again tried at Pawhuska, Oklahoma, severance being granted to each defendant, each defendant was tried separately by a jury, and Hale and Ramsey each was convicted and sentenced to serve life imprisonment in the United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas, where they are now confined.

Ernest Burkhart, turned state's evidence, and was used as a Government witness in the prosecution of both Hale and Ramsey. Burkhart later entered a plea of guilty in State Court at Pawhuska, Oklahoma, and was sentenced to life imprisonment in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary at McAlester, Oklahoma, where he is now confined.

A confession was obtained from KELSEY MORRISON by Agents of the United States Bureau of Investigation in which he, Morrison, admitted enticing Anna Brown to an isolated canyon, where a pistol, ostensibly accidental, was discharged shooting Anna Brown in the back of the head, instantaneously killing her. Later, refuting his statement, Morrison was tried in State Court at Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and was convicted by a jury in Oklahoma State Court and sentenced to serve life in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary.

The investigation in the murder of Anna Brown developed that W. K. (Bill) Hale and Kelsey Morrison had both been intimate with Anna Brown, and at the time of Anna Brown's death, she was pregnant and had openly stated that W. K. Hale was the father of her expected child, which caused Hale to conspire with Kelsey Morrison and his nephew, Bryan Burkhart, to get Anna Brown under the influence of liquor and lure her to this canyon and shoot her, in order to avoid Hale disgrace and embarrassment.

Further, in the murdering of Anna Brown, who was a sister of Ernest Burkhardt's wife, the head-right of her is , which at that time was \$5,000. a year, would go to the estate of Ernest Burkhardt's wife upon Anna Brown's death.

3,500.  
Anna Brown's  
Mar 30 17  
meeting

It may be well to mention at this time that upon the death of Rita Smith and Anna Brown, sisters, their oil royalties or headrights would have gone to the estate of their sister, Mollie Burkhardt, Ernest Burkhardt's wife, and Hale would have eventually gained control of these headrights.

The Government's investigation developed with reference to the Charles Whitehorn murder that his wife was of questionable character and had on several occasions kept company with the parties who were last seen in company with Whitehorn. The Government, not having jurisdiction in this case, did not follow this case to conclusion, other than the questioning of Hattie Whitehorn, wife of Charles Whitehorn, who told two or three different stories with reference to the last time she had seen her husband Charles Whitehorn, and the parties last seen with him.

One very noticeable thing in the Government's investigation of the above murder cases is that there had not been one single murder of Osage Indians since Director Hoover first assigned Agent C. R. Burger on these cases, neither has there been a murder of an Osage Indian under suspicious circumstances, and Mr. Lohring, then First Assistant United States Attorney General in the Criminal Division, assisted in the prosecution of W. K. Hale and John Ramsey. Mr. Lohring commented that this was one of the biggest criminal cases the Government had ever tried, being the most complicated and requiring more precaution and patience in investigation to obtain necessary results for a successful prosecution than any case coming under his observation in thirty years.

In view of the fact that W. K. (Bill) Hale was the owner of a big ranch consisting of thirty thousand acres, well stocked, reputed to be worth \$1,000,000.00 at the time of this investigation was started, and the fact that there had been several murders, caused people to openly denounce Bill Hale as being the instigator of the murders of these Indians to benefit financially therefrom. For instance, Bill Smith openly denounced Bill Hale as having Henry Roan and Anna Brown murdered, and two days later his house was blown up, the explosion killing Smith and his entire family, including himself, wife and servant girl.

3018

During the course of this investigation, it developed that Ernest Burkhardt, nephew of Bill Hale, was rather talkative, and apparently easily influenced by his uncle, W. K. (BILL) Hale, therefore, it was decided by the Agents assigned to this case by Director Hoover to interview Ernest Burkhardt and lay before him all the facts as obtained from other sources, which resulted in Ernest Burkhardt making to the Government a complete confession and statement in writing, in which he stated that the murder of Henry Roan was prompted by W. K. Hale and Roan was actually killed by John Ramsey; that the home of Bill Smith had been blown up at the request of W. K. (Bill) Hale by one ACIE KIRBY (then deceased); that Hale had made arrangements with him, Burkhardt, to have Acie Kirby blow up the home of Bill Smith, as above related; that Anna Brown was murdered, shot by Kelsie Morrison in the canyon, arrangements having been made by Bill Hale for him, Burkhardt, to first get Anna Brown under the influence of liquor and take her to this isolated canyon where he, Morrison, shot her in the back of the head with a pistol and left her in this canyon.

.....  
Agent, being ill, and not having access to the file, which is in Oklahoma City, the above is perhaps rather disjointed, however, the story Agent has desired to portray, and this is stated in view of the fact that reference telegram indicated this matter may be used in connection with a story for radio broadcast, is:

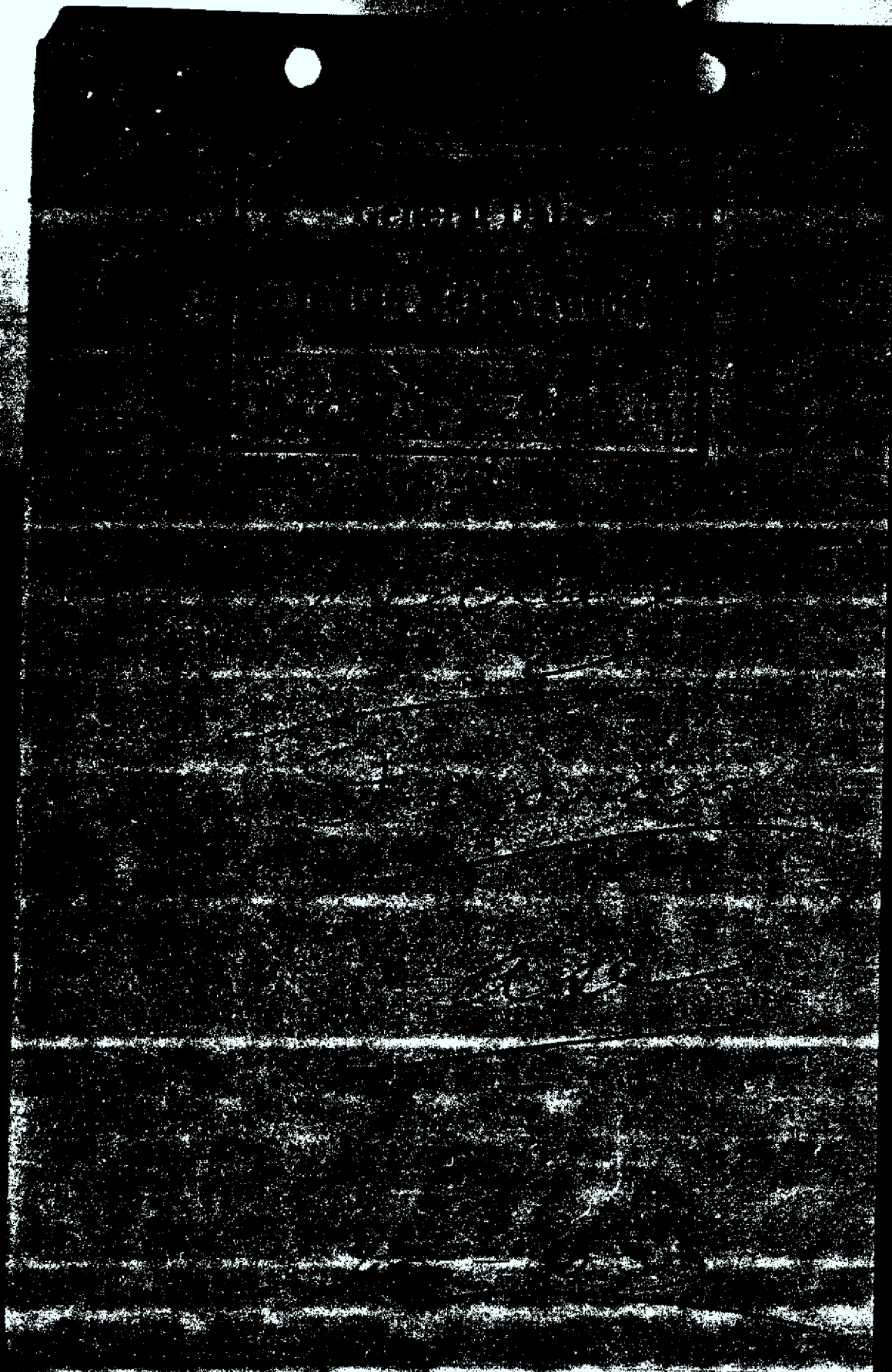
Scenes of the several murders, including the canyon murder scenes, first getting the victims intoxicated, the explosion of the home, killing three people, after the head of the house had denounced the millionaire Hale, the death of Anna Brown, openly accusing again the millionaire Hale, and the local authorities having failed to ascertain any information as to the criminals. Presentation to the United States Bureau of Investigation by Vice-President Curtis; assignment of Agents of this Bureau, under cover, gathering of information by Agents of this Bureau and taking such information to the nephew of the master mind of the murder plot, breaking him and obtaining his confession, together with the results of sending the several participants in the plot to prison for life.

Respectfully,

J. R. Burger  
Special Agent.

JRB-c

3019



United States Department of the Interior  
Office of Indian Affairs

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General Data  
concerning  
Indian Reservations

[ Revised to June 30, 1929 ]

Prepared under direction of  
The Commissioner of Indian Affairs

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October 15, 1929



United States  
Government Printing Office  
Washington : 1930

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