



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

OSAGE INDIAN MURDERS

PART 19 OF 19

BUFILE NUMBER: 62-5033 AND 62-5033 SUB A

FILE DESCRIPTION

BUREAU FILE

SUBJECT Page Indian Murders

FILE NO. 62-5033

SECTION NO. 21

SERIALS 798 - 830

pages 3138-3265

1 Cover Page 7129 pages

U. S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Investigation

P. O. Box 1535
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
November 17, 1932

RHC:MMB.
63-436

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

NOV 29 1932

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

Dear Sir:

Re: Osage Indian Murder Broadcast

All of us at this office looked forward with much interest to the broadcast of the Osage Indian murder story which occurred on the 15th instant, and I had taken pains to give the matter a little local publicity by having an item appear in two of the local newspapers.

I regret to say that we were all very much disappointed in the manner in which the story was dramatized and it is felt that the manner in which the episode was dramatized did not do justice whatever to the facts of the investigation. Sheriff Harve Freas, Pawhuska, whose part was portrayed in the broadcast, is a big, upstanding western Sheriff, very active and aggressive, whereas his part as pictured in the broadcast would create in the minds of the listeners an impression that he was perhaps a little "dried-up runt", ignorant, fearsome and requiring to be led. I suspect that if Sheriff Freas listened to this broadcast, he will not hereafter have a very kindly feeling toward this Bureau.

I realize that the subject matter of investigation was difficult to dramatize, but inasmuch as it is one of the most spectacular and important cases ever handled by this Bureau, I think much more favorable publicity could have been had by having the story told by Agent Conroy along the same plans used by him in other stories which he has put out over the radio, and to which I have listened with a great deal of interest and enthusiasm. I realize that the broadcasts by Agent Conroy do not reach one-tenth as many people as the N.B.C. broadcasts, but I wish to say that in my opinion the activities of the Bureau can be much more effectively brought out along the lines he uses than by the dramatization system as employed in the N.B.C. broadcast.

Please be assured that I have only the best interests of the Bureau at heart in writing this letter of criticism.

Very truly yours,

R. H. Colvin
R. H. Colvin,
Special Agent in Charge.

3138

62-5035-798

RECORDED

WEL:CG4

November 22, 1932.

Special Agent in Charge,
United States Bureau of Investigation,
Post Office Box 1535,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to your letter of November 17, 1932, relative to the recent broadcast of the Osage Indian Murder case.

The Bureau regrets your disappointment and that of your local friends at this broadcast, especially in view of the fact that you had taken pains to give the matter publicity in the local newspapers.

As indicated in the Bureau's letter of November 21, 1932, to Special Agent F. S. Smith, a copy of which was sent to you, other sections of the country in which the listeners were not familiar with the actual details of the case, as in the Osage country itself, received the presentation of this case more favorably and considered it the most effective of the broadcasts presented to date.

Serious consideration is being given to the suggestion contained in paragraph three of your letter to the effect that the presentation of cases could be more adequately presented if given in narrative form, but at the present time the larger broadcasting companies desire to present them only in dramatized form.

The Bureau would be very pleased if you could make arrangements to have some radio station in the vicinity of Oklahoma City broadcast this particular case in narrative form, to be supplemented with an introduction by you explaining the general activities of the Bureau.

As stated in the Bureau's letter of November 21 relative to this matter, the history of this case as prepared by the Bureau and by Special Agent F. S. Smith was submitted to the broadcasting company for use in its dramatized version of the case.

NOV 23 1932
U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

W. L. ...
3139

7 SAC, Oklahoma City

-2-

11/22/32.

12 The Bureau realizes that you have its best interests
13 at heart, appreciate the criticism contained in your letter,
14 and, as indicated above, will be very pleased if you can make
15 arrangements to have this case broadcast in narrative form by
16 some local station there.

17 Very truly yours,
18

22 Director. *W. H. D. S.*
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40

3140

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR

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

WHIL:EB

70 711
62-5038

April 26, 1933.

WILLIAM KING HALE; JOHN RAMSEY

MURDER ON INDIAN RESERVATION

Mysterious Murders of Several Osage Indians Solved.
Hale and Three Confederates Given Life Sentences.

From 1921 to 1923, several Osage Indians died under mysterious circumstances on the Osage Indian Reservation in Oklahoma. Four Indians and a white girl were thought to have been murdered at the instigation of William King (Big Bill) Hale, sometimes referred to as "King of the Osage", in order to collect insurance and to make two of Hale's nephews sole heirs to valuable oil properties of the murdered Indians. Investigation by Special Agents of the United States Bureau of Investigation was extremely difficult, due to Hale's power in the community and the fear in which he was held. Special Agents worked under the guise of medicine men, cattlemen, and insurance salesmen. They established that Hale had had the white girl and two Indians blown up by dynamite and two other Indians shot. Hale and John Ramsey, his henchman, were convicted of murder after a spectacular trial in Federal Court and each sentenced to life imprisonment in the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth. Ernest Burkhart, a nephew of Hale, and Kelsey Morrison, a hireling of Hale, each received life sentences in the State Courts for murders in which they participated at Hale's instigation, but which did not occur on the Indian Reservation.

RECORDED

MAY 10 1933

62-5038-711

MAY 10 1933 A.M.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

CLERK

FILE

3141

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR

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

November 6, 1932.

70-File
I. C. #62-5033

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 was Pawhuska, having a population of eight thousand. Other towns and villages in the county are Fairfax, Grayhorse, Hominy, Wynona, Forshing, Skiatook and Nelagoney.

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 of 1907, head rights for 2,229 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

3142

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, 1931, were paid a total net revenue of \$241,546,299.82, 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, 1920, was 5,859, and had increased to 8,579 as of June 30, 1922. Practically all of the land contained in the reservation is leased for oil or natural gas production purposes.

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.

3143

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 each per month.

Stamp 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 stamp 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 older men and women of the tribes, who, perhaps, are remembering the feasts of earlier years and are trying to bring back their happy 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 contain 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.

"Curley" 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.

3144

Another notorious character who shared honors with W. K. Hale of the criminal element of Osage County was Henry Grammer, a notorious bad man who had complete control of the Osage Liquor traffic, and who was reported 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 \$15,000.00 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 gaping wound under his left amput.

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 overnight 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 and more or less uncouth cow puncher and cattle thief, but possessed of a domineering personality. He finally succeeded in controlling 45,000 acres of select Osage grazing land by means of leases, and acquired 5,000 acres outright, in addition to controlling a bank at Fairfax, Oklahoma, and owning a part in a store there, growing immensely wealthy from his dealings with the Osage Indians. 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 raffish element which had drifted in, but of many good and substantial citizens.

The various characters concerned in this story were as follows:

WILL ("BILL") KING HALE, master mind behind the five murders investigated, 55 year old typical westerner of medium stature, black hair turning gray, prepossessing figure, neat dresser, ruddy complexion, who affected a military air, with shoulders back and chest out, self-confident, the owner of many fine horses, having a home in Fairfax, Oklahoma, and a ranch house near Rayhorse, Oklahoma, in the middle of his immense holdings.

2145

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, Nettie Brookshire, and Henry Rean.

ERNEST BURKHART, "Squaw Man", in his early thirties, nephew of W. K. Hale, who completely dominated him, a weakwilled individual who did his uncle's bidding; married to Mollie Burkhardt, full-blood Osage Indian, daughter of Lizzie Q, wealthy in her own right; a very friendly individual who seemingly thought he had done no wrong in participating in the crimes he admitted; implicated in the murder of Henry Rean and of the W. E. Smith family. He was the weak link in William K. Hale's organization, the first to confess the true state of affairs, giving Special Agents of this Bureau their first real lead in the case, actually 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 Burkhardt at instigation of W.K.Hale.

BRYAN BURKHART, a "Squaw Man", younger brother of Ernest Burkhardt, who turned State's evidence in the State Courts.

DEE LY SELPH, a "Squaw Man", former husband of Cecilia Bigheart, full-blood Osage woman, who was hired by W. K. Hale to murder an 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 land rights, and receiving royalties from oil and gas wells.

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

Just prior to the investigation of the Osage Indian Murder Cases 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. The tribal council passed a resolution requesting the aid of the Government in solving these murders. The fact that law-abiding

3146

citizens actually feared to converse with the agents of this Bureau relative to the recent killings made the task of the Bureau's agents extremely difficult.

Information obtained by an agent of this Bureau indicated that in connection with the mysterious deaths of a large number of Indians the perpetrators of the crime would get an Indian drunk, have a doctor examine him and pronounce him intoxicated, following which a morphine hypodermic would be injected into the Indian, and after the doctor's departure the members of the gang would inject an enormous amount of morphine under the armpit of the drunken Indian, which would result in his death. The doctor's certificate would subsequently read, "death from alcoholic poisoning".

To further complicate the task of the Bureau in investigating these murders, Burt Lawson, a convict confined in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary at McAlester, Oklahoma, made several confessions to the murders, in which he claimed to have been employed by Hale to murder W.E. Smith and his family. Painstaking investigation by Bureau agents developed that Hale had concocted this story himself, by which Lawson pretended to implicate Hale, knowing full well that Hale could prove a perfect alibi for Lawson and thereby absolve himself at the same time. It was necessary to disprove the details of Lawson's confession before investigation looking toward the development of the true facts could be commenced.

In addition to this effort on Hale's part to mislead the investigators, he had hit upon the further plan of throwing suspicion upon one Roy Bunch, who had been intimately associated with Roan's wife for a year or two prior to Roan's murder and who had subsequently married her. Circumstances did point the finger of suspicion at Bunch and it was necessary for Bureau agents to prove Bunch innocent before they proved Ramsey and Hale guilty of the murder. This was accomplished through the confessions of Ernest Burkhardt and John Ramsey, which vindicated Bunch. False rumors and statements on the part of William K. Hale's myriads of friends and henchmen caused Bureau agents to make needless trips to California, New Mexico, Old Mexico, Kansas, Colorado, Texas, and Arizona.

Anna Brown, daughter of Lizzie Q, was murdered on the night of May 22, 1921, about three miles from the town of Fairfax, Oklahoma, on the pasture lands of William K. Hale, and her body thrown into the bottom of a small ravine. Investigation by Bureau agents revealed that on the night of her murder she had been plied with liquor by Kelsey Morrison and Bryan Burkhardt, who, accompanied by Catherine Cole Morrison, full-blood Osage wife of Morrison, drove by the ranch house home of William K. Hale, who furnished Morrison with a .32 automatic pistol. From Hale's ranch house they drove to within a few hundred feet of where the murdered body of Anna Brown was later found, and while Bryan Burkhardt held the drunken Anna Morrison shot her through the back of the head, with the automatic pistol furnished him by Hale for the purpose.

3147

Upon the discovery of Anna Brown's body several days later, Hale ordered an autopsy performed in the back of his store, at which he saw that Anna Brown's body was chopped up into small pieces, in an effort to prevent the discovery of the fact that she had been murdered. All of these facts were developed from the questioning of Kelsy Morrison, himself, who testified to them at the trial of William K. Hale for murder, being substantially corroborated as to the details of the murder by his wife, Catherine Cole Morrison, and by Matt Williams, a bootlegger, who stated from the witness stand that he saw Anna Brown murdered while delivering whisky ordered by Morrison and Burkhart.

Henry Roan was a picturesque full-blood Osage Indian, six feet tall and a fine-looking specimen. He wore his hair in plaits down his back. Roan was an inveterate drunkard, who stayed away from his home for weeks at a time. About a year prior to the murder of Henry Roan, William K. Hale had taken out a \$25,000.00 life insurance policy on Roan. John Ramsey made friends with Roan by means of Roan's fondness for whisky and took Roan out on several occasions, ostensibly to furnish him liquor, but in reality to murder him. Upon each occasion, however, Ramsey lost his nerve, but finally persuaded Roan to drive to the bottom of a canyon cut off of sight of the nearby road, where he shot Roan through the back of the head with a 45-caliber pistol which he had obtained from the arsenal of Henry Grammer.

This murder occurred on January 26, 1923, and investigation by Bureau agents developed that William K. Hale hired Ramsey to commit this murder, buying Ramsey a \$500.00 Ford car prior to the murder as a part payment for the deed and paying him \$1,000 in cash after the murder had been committed. It was developed that Henry Grammer had furnished John Ramsey to Hale as the killer. Roan's body was discovered several days later sitting in an upright position in his car frozen stiff. The facts surrounding the murder of Roan were proven by John Ramsey's own confession, as well as by the confession of Ernest Burkhart, nephew of William K. 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 on the streets of Fairfax, Oklahoma, by William K. Hale as the Indian whom Hale wanted killed. Hale was a self-appointed pall-bearer at Roan's funeral, and Ramsey, the actual murderer, upon viewing the body of Roan, pretended to be deeply affected.

Henry Roan was the only one of the five individuals proved to have been murdered at the instigation of William 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, a full-blood Osage, whose Indian name was Tom-Pah Pe.

After the death of Anna Brown and Henry Roan, William E. ("Bill") Smith stated openly that he believed William K. Hale had killed Henry Roan

and Anna Brown, and that Hale would not hesitate to kill the rest of Liza's children. A short time prior to his murder Smith had had a violent altercation with Hale relative to a \$8,000.00 indebtedness which Smith claimed was due him by Hale. Shortly after this altercation, on the night of March 10, 1923, the house of William E. Smith was blown up by having a five-gallon keg of nitro-glycerin exploded under it, blowing the house to atoms and killing Rita Smith, wife of W. E. Smith, and Nettie Brookshire, a white servant girl instantaneously, and horribly mangling the body of William E. Smith, who lived a few hours, however, and stated his belief that Hale had had him killed.

It was developed through investigation by Bureau agents that William K. Hale had hired John Ramsey and Asa "Ace" Kirby to murder William E. Smith and his wife and had subsequently paid Ramsey approximately \$1600.00 for performing the murder. These facts were proven by means of a confession obtained from John Ramsey himself, as well as the confession of Ernest Burkhart, who pointed out Smith's house to Ramsey and Kirby, acting under instructions from Hale, and who sought out Ramsey on the day of this murder to inform him that William K. Hale and Henry Grammer, in order to allay suspicion, were going to Fort Worth, Texas, to a cattlemen's conference, and that William E. Smith and his wife should be murdered that night. It developed further that William K. Hale had attempted to hire the notorious outlaw, Al Spencer, to commit this murder, but Spencer refused, stating that while he had no compunction at robbing a train or blowing a safe and killing individuals in such an attempt, he had not sunk so low as to murder helpless individuals for money. After Spencer's refusal Hale attempted to hire "Blackie" Thompson, Dick Gregg, and his father, John Gregg, to murder William Smith and his family, all of whom refused.

William K. Hale became afraid that "Ace" Kirby, who participated in the murder of the Smith family as set out above and who actually placed the five-gallon can of nitro-glycerin under the Smith house and set it off, would make known Hale's connection with these murders, and accordingly persuaded Kirby to attempt the robbery of a grocery store near the Kansas-Oklahoma State line, assuring Kirby that the owner of the grocery store possessed certain valuable guns. The owner of the store was in turn informed of the exact hour of the contemplated robbery and as Kirby forced entrance into the grocery store through the window, greeted him with several loads of buckshot from a shotgun, thereby removing a witness who could have implicated Hale and his associates.

[REDACTED]

B7D

3146

B7D

[redacted] Ernest Burkhardt, upon being confronted with "Blackie" Thompson and the additional incriminating facts relative to the murders which agents had already obtained, finally confessed that he knew all about the murders; that Roy Bunch, who was thought to have committed the murder of Henry Roan, was innocent, and that John Ramsey, who was at that time living on William K. Hale's ranch, had figured actively in all the murders. John Ramsey was immediately located by agents of the Bureau, and upon being confronted by Burkhardt and learning that Burkhardt had confessed, made a complete confession as to his part in all the murders.

In addition to the solution of the murders themselves, Bureau agents discovered that Mollie Burkhardt, full-blood Osage Indian wife of Ernest Burkhardt, who alone remained between William Hale's nephew, Ernest Burkhardt, and the fortune of the Lizzie Q. family, at the time the Government commenced its investigation of the case was dying from what was believed to be slow poisoning. It is an established fact that as soon as she was gotten out of the control of Burkhardt and Hale she immediately regained her health and is living today.

In conducting investigations of these murders one Special Agent of the United States Bureau of Investigation posed as an Indian medicine man in an undercover investigation, claiming to be in search of relatives who had moved to Oklahoma several years before. He made a lot of medicine around Fairfax, consisting mostly of sweetened water, and was taken in by the Indians, visited in their homes, attended their ceremonials, thereby gaining much useful information. Not only did the agent acting as a medicine man in actually dispensing the sweetened water to the Indians gain their confidence and cooperation, but he also served as an Indian medicine man in the inner circle and tribal councils, helping them to make plans for the administration of their tribal problems and government.

Another Special Agent of the United States Bureau of Investigation, working undercover on the case, posed as an insurance salesman and actually sold life insurance of a legitimate character, thereby gaining entrance to the homes of influential citizens and gathering useful information, which the citizens refused to give to government agents openly because of their fear of William K. Hale. In connection with this sale of life insurance, of course, information about the personal habits and other types of information available to insurance companies would be obtained, and frequently this information would have a direct bearing on the different angles of the case under investigation. This agent contacted William K. Hale himself under his guise of an insurance salesman, and almost succeeded in selling him a policy.

Still another Special Agent of the United States Bureau of Investigation played the part of a plain Texas cowman, and established close association with many of Hale's intimates and employees, all of whom unknowingly contributed useful information. The agents of the United States Bureau of Investigation who were working undercover on this case often met

3130

in remote and dangerous places in the Osage country, such as the woods previously used as a meeting place by Al Spencer and his outlaw gang, on Devil Man's Hill, where many murders and robberies had been plotted. Two agents of the United States Bureau of Investigation, together with a lieutenant of the State Bureau of Criminal Identification of Oklahoma, upon one occasion sat up for two nights and days with a convict witness before obtaining a statement from him. The interesting incidents occurring in the investigation and the trial of the guilty parties involved in these murders are too numerous to mention.

Burt Lawson, whose "bogus" confession caused Bureau agents many hours of weary work, upon his release into custody of the agents, proved to be a glutton, who ate tongue steak and French-fried potatoes three times a day. Upon his first visit to a cafeteria with agents, upon reaching the cashier he was found to have four pieces of pie and three pieces of cake upon his tray and complained of the fact that he had no room for a meat dish.

Dewey Selph, a material Government witness, testified to the fact that he was hired by William K. Hale to murder Kelsey Morrison's wife. He was released from the Syracuse, Kansas, Jail to testify, and while being held at Guthrie, Oklahoma, with other material witnesses who had been transferred from the Kansas State Penitentiary, he was left in a jail cell of which all the bars were found to have been partly sawed. He showed his appreciation by breaking out of the sawed bars and was subsequently located by Bureau agents clad only in his underclothing, attempting to hide in a barrel at a pressing shop at Pawhuska, Oklahoma, where he was having his suit pressed. He gave as his reason for the jail break that he intended calling on a lady friend, who, incidentally, was his ex-wife, Cecelia Bigheart, full-blood Osage woman.

On another occasion Selph walked out on a drunken jailor, taking with him the jailor's pistol, and afterwards stole an automobile, in which he made his escape. He was recaptured by Bureau agents at a subsequent date and returned to testify at the trial of Hale. Dewey Selph's next attempt to escape, after having been returned to the Arkansas State Penitentiary to complete a sentence there, resulted fatally for him.

While the trial was actually in progress a Bureau agent obtained information to the effect that Hale was receiving letters from a witness who had perjured himself at Hale's former trial. This agent searched Hale's cell and located in the bedclothing two letters from the witness stating that he had perjured himself in Hale's behalf at the last trial and intended doing so again. This witness was subsequently sent to the State Penitentiary for life on a charge of murder, and the statements were introduced against Hale at his final trial.

An attorney for Hale located two tramps and carefully schooled them in helping prepare a defense for the trial of Hale. The alert agents

of the Bureau discovered this situation, secured confessions from them, thereby prevented their appearance at the trial. Some witnesses actually testified voluntarily at the trial of Hale and Ramsey and received subsequent sentences because of their perjured testimony. Most noteworthy among them was P. C. Hester, who was given a sentence of two years in the Federal Penitentiary and fined \$100.00. Other friends and relatives of Hale were sentenced for being in contempt of court and for interfering with the legal progress of the court.

John Ramsey, upon his trial for murder, offered an alibi to the effect that he was not in Fairfax, Oklahoma, on the date of the murder for which he was being tried. Investigation by agents of the Bureau resulted in the production of the hotel register of an old Indian woman who had formerly operated a hotel at Fairfax, Oklahoma, reflecting that Ramsey was actually registered in this hotel on the day of the murder. This Indian woman, it developed, had been furnished whiskey by a lawyer presumably working in the interest of Hale, in an attempt to have her change her testimony. This lawyer was subsequently sentenced to eighteen months in a Federal Penitentiary for this action on his part.

Upon the successful conclusion of the cases against Hale and Ramsey and the other individuals involved in the murders, the Osage Indians, through their tribal council, passed resolutions, enrolled upon the records of the tribes, expressing their appreciation of the great service rendered by agents of the United States Bureau of Investigation in breaking up the vicious murder ring which had been preying upon that tribe for years.

William K. Hale and John Ramsey were tried four times - twice in the Federal District Court at Guthrie, Oklahoma, once in the Federal District Court at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and once in the Federal District Court at Pothuska, Oklahoma, resulting in their being convicted for the murder of Henry Ream and sentenced to life imprisonment in the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. These two convictions were in the Federal Court, due to the fact that the United States had jurisdiction over the actual place where Henry Ream was murdered. Other sentences imposed in the state courts for murders over which the United States had no jurisdiction were Ernest Burkhardt, life imprisonment for his part in the murder of William E. Smith and family; Kelsey Morrissey, life imprisonment for the murder of Anna Brown, while Bryan Burkhardt, brother of Ernest Burkhardt, turned state's evidence in state court and was never convicted.

It is interesting to note that upon the first trial of Hale and Ramsey the Federal District Court ruled that it had no jurisdiction over the case, only to be reversed by the Supreme Court of the United States within the comparatively short period of twenty-five days. From the second trial of Hale and Ramsey in the Federal Court at Guthrie a hung jury resulted. The case was retried at Oklahoma City in the Federal District Court at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and both Hale and Ramsey were

3152

connected and given life sentences. Hale appealed and had his conviction reversed upon the ground that the case had been tried in the wrong district, which decision automatically reversed Ramsey's conviction also. Upon their last trial Hale and Ramsey asked for a severance and were tried separately in the Federal District Court at Pawhuska, Oklahoma, resulting in conviction and sentences as set forth above.

One other interesting sidelight to these cases is the fact that "Billie" Hale, the beautiful daughter of W.K. Hale, within a comparatively short time after her father had been sent to the penitentiary, married a wealthy full-blood Osage Indian, erected a home, and at present lives within a few hundred yards from the spot where Anna Brown's murdered body was found.

3153

Department of Justice

Bureau of Investigation

Washington, D. C.

December 2, 1929.

Interesting Cases - Bureau - No. 3.

MURDER OF OSAGE INDIANS. William K. Hale, John Ramsey, et al.

Following the discovery of oil in the Osage country of Oklahoma, the "black gold rush" brought many of the worst criminals in the nation to that section to prey upon the newly rich Indians and, if profitable, to marry them. During a period of recent years many wealthy Osage Indians came to their death in a mysterious manner, and these outrages came to a climax with the deaths of Anna Brown, Henry Roan, and W. E. "Bill" Smith and family. The Osage Tribal Council and many business men began to offer rewards for the solution of the mysterious murders, and amateur detectives and many so-called "sleuths" made fruitless investigations which resulted in nothing more than a destruction of many valuable "leads" and the loss of the confidence and cooperation of the citizens in any kind of investigation. Such was the situation that confronted Special Agents of the Bureau of Investigation, U. S. Department of Justice, when they began the investigation of the alleged murders.

It was developed that a hunting party found the body of Anna Brown in a ravine near Fairfax, Oklahoma, a crude autopsy indicating that she had been shot through the cranium from the rear; that Henry Roan, an Osage Indian, whose body was found on the front seat of his car in a small canyon, had come to his death as a result of a gunshot wound; and that the home of W. E. "Bill" Smith had been completely demolished during the night by a charge of high explosive, which resulted in the death of Smith, his wife, who was an Indian, and a servant girl.

The attention of the Agents, who were searching for motives for the crimes, was directed toward W. K. "Bill" Hale, an unscrupulous prospector, who was known to have had in his employ many reckless characters. It was learned that Anna Brown was the daughter of the Squaw, Lizzie Q, who had two other daughters, Mollie and Rita. The latter was the wife of Bill Smith and Mollie was married to Earnest Burkhardt, a nephew of Bill Hale. Lizzie Q. had acquired a large fortune, as had her children, and when she became seriously ill a joint will was made by her and her daughter, Anna Brown, providing that the survivor of the two would inherit the bulk of the other's estate. It was

3154

Shortly before the death of Lizzie Q. that Anna Brown was found murdered. Apparently Rita Smith alone stood between the entire fortune of the family and Burkhart's wife, Mollie. Bill Smith saw the situation and began to discuss openly the possibilities connected with the death of Anna. No doubt it would be beneficial to some one to dispose of Smith and his wife. Such was the status of affairs when Smith's home was blown up, resulting in the tragedy already described. The apparent plans were miscarried, however, when Smith survived his wife by a few hours, and his wife's estate went to a daughter of Smith by a former marriage. It was also learned that Bill Hale had a claim of \$6,000.00 against Henry Roan, one of the victims. After Roan's death it was discovered that Hale had insured Roan's life for \$25,000.00, and that Hale was the beneficiary. The insurance was not paid on account of fraud.

The Bureau of Investigation Agents continued their investigation, winning the confidence and cooperation of the Indians, as well as the whites, mingling with the people as medicine men, insurance agents, and gathering valuable information, until they obtained evidence sufficient to show that Hale was the master-mind behind these murders, in order to obtain for himself and nephews the fortune of Lizzie Q. and her daughters, as well as the insurance on the life of Henry Roan. The murders had been brutal and in cold blood, and evidence was obtained showing that they were committed under the direction of Hale.

Every trick and device of resourceful attorneys had to be met at the trial. Witnesses committed perjury in their testimony, and many of the prosecution's witnesses were intimidated and threatened. However, on October 29, 1926, at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, William K. Hale and John Ramsey, who participated in the murder of Henry Roan, were found guilty and were sentenced to life imprisonment in Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary.

The case as to W. K. Hale was reversed and remanded for retrial by the United States Circuit Court of Appeals. Following this, Agents of the Bureau of Investigation made a recheck of the original investigation and Hale was brought to trial again at Pawhuska, Oklahoma. On January 26, 1929, he was again convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment at Leavenworth.

See Bureau file 66-2660.
62-5053.

3155

FEB:CSB

May 5, 1933

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

There are attached hereto, as listed below, four cases, written up in appropriate synopsis form, for use in connection with the Bureau's exhibit at the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago.

JOHN S. CURRAN, IMPERSONATION - Bureau file 44-2210

HOMER NOEL, et al, IMPERSONATION; CONSPIRACY TO VIOLATE THE NATIONAL PROHIBITION ACT; MURDER - Bureau file 747-594

WILLIAM KING HALE, et al, MURDER ON INDIAN RESERVATION - Bureau file 770-62-5643

SAM GREENHILL, et al, MURDER ON GOVERNMENT RESERVATION - Bureau file 770-62-7332

Photographs in connection with each of these cases are attached hereto, together with copies of the interesting case write-ups, giving detailed information concerning the cases.

This makes a total of forty-eight cases which have been prepared and submitted by Division Two.

Respectfully,

T. F. Baughman.

RECORDED

MAY 11 1933

62-5033-700
BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

MAY 10 1933
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

3156

1
2 JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
3 DIRECTOR
4
5
6
7
8
9

GNL: CJ

Division of Investigation

U. S. Department of Justice

Washington, D. C.

May 17, 1934.

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. CLEGG. *H. Clegg*

10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18 On the afternoon of May 16, 1934, Miss Amanda
19 Patrick of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, called in the office
20 and advised that she had been a witness in some of the various
21 prosecutions growing out of the Osage Indian murders involving
22 W. K. Hale; that she had been severely beaten and left for
23 dead by one Jim Sharp, who, she stated, was a defendant in
24 one of these cases, and who had supplied an agent of the Division
25 with a statement of his attack on her; and that she now desired
26 to secure a copy of this statement or to be allowed to see it.
27

28 I informed Miss Patrick that such statements, as well
29 as all other information gathered by agents of this Division, are
30 kept entirely confidential, and that we are restricted by
31 legislative enactment from supplying such information to private
32 individuals.
33

34 Respectfully,

35 *G. W. London*
36 G. W. London.
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

MAY 21 1934

62-50233-811	
DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION	
MAY 18 1934	
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	
FILE	

3157

1
2
3 JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
4 DIRECTOR
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61

Division of Investigation

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

GHL:EC

June 6, 1934

Got for Mr
MEMORANDUM FOR MR. NATHAN

Mr. Whitehurst, who stated that he is the clerk of the House Judiciary Committee, called by telephone to inquire of Miss Amanda Patrick who was then in his office and who stated that she had previously interviewed me and had been denied the privilege of examining certain cases in our files which she stated pertained to an assault committed on her by one Jim Sharp some years ago in Texas.

I told Mr. Whitehurst that Miss Patrick had made such a request of me and that I had explained to her that all the information contained in the files of this Division were of a confidential nature and that we were restricted by legislative enactment from supplying information contained therein to other than duly authorized law enforcement officials.

I informed Mr. Whitehurst that the Division would be pleased to handle any request which he might make that would come properly within our jurisdiction. Mr. Whitehurst said that he had no such request to make.

Respectfully,

G. N. Lowden
G. N. Lowden.

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

JUN 8 - 1934

62-5033-804	
JUN 7 1934	
U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE	
NATHAN	

3158

Division of Investigation

U. S. Department of Justice

Washington, D. C.

CHL:ec

August 11, 1934

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. TAMM

On the afternoon of August 10, 1934, a Mr. Ward, Secretary to Congressman Marland of Oklahoma, telephoned to advise that one Amanda M. Patrick, who was then in his office, claimed to have money due her for confidential information furnished Special Agent Frank Smith in connection with the Jim Sharpe case in Texas and Oklahoma.

Upon receipt of this information, I called Mr. Ward and in answer to his inquiries as to the authenticity of this woman's claim, I informed him that on May 17, 1934, I had interviewed her, at which time she was seeking compensation for injuries which she alleged had been sustained as a result of her having supplied information concerning one Jim Sharpe who is a defendant in one of the cases going out of the Osage Indian murders involving W. K. Hale. I informed Mr. Ward that at that time Miss Patrick desired to have access to our files concerning this case and that following her departure I had searched unsuccessfully for any reference to her which might be contained in our files.

Mr. Ward was further informed that Mr. Whitehurst, Clerk of the House Judiciary Committee, had made similar inquiries concerning Miss Patrick on June 6, 1934, and that I had informed Mr. Whitehurst at that time that our files contained nothing that would serve to identify Miss Patrick or which would substantiate any claim she might have against the Government.

Mr. Ward informed me that he believed this woman would return to his office the next day for the purpose of "bumming" \$10.00 or so from him and that for this reason he had made the inquiry.

Respectfully,

G. W. Lowdon.

RECORDED

INDEXED

AUG 17 1934

AUG 15 1934

TAMM

3159

Mr. Ward, Secty to Cong. [redacted] of Okla. Branch 426

called and stated a one Amanda M. Patrick claims to
have money due her for confidential information
furnished Special Agent Frank Smith in connection with
the Jim Sharpe case in Texas and Okla.

He desires to be called back this afternoon
3-10-34 on any information we may be able to give
him in re. above.

62-5033-703

3160

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

September 5, 1934.

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. TOLSON.

In compliance with a request from Mr. Quinn, I furnished him with copies of the following photographs relative to I. C. 70-File, #62-5055, to be delivered to Mr. Rex Collier:

Ravine where Anna Brown's body was found.
Hale's ranch house.
William K. Hale (Front view).
William K. Hale (Profile).
Smith house before explosion.
Smith house after explosion.
Anna Brown.
Rita Smith, Mattie Brookshire.
John R. Smith.

It is my understanding that Mr. Collier has had several photographs recently furnished by this office to Mr. Quinn to be delivered to Mr. Collier.

Respectfully,

W. H. D. Lester.

3161

1
2
3 JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
4 DIRECTOR

5 Division of Investigation
6 U. S. Department of Justice
7 Washington, D. C.

8 WHDL:vg

9
10
11
12 September 5, 1934.

13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. TOLSON.

In compliance with a request from Mr. Quinn, I furnished him with copies of the following photographs relative to I. C. 70-File, #62-5033, to be delivered to Mr. Rex Collier:

Ravine where Anna Brown's body was found.
Hale's ranch house.
William K. Hale (Front view).
William K. Hale (Profile).
Smith house before explosion.
Smith house after explosion.
Anna Brown.
Rita Smith, Nettie Brookshire.
John Ramsey.

It is my understanding that Mr. Collier lost the several photographs recently furnished by this office to Mr. Quinn to be delivered to Mr. Collier.

Respectfully,

W. H. D. Lester
W. H. D. Lester.

RECORDED

62-5033-804

SEP 8 1934

TOLSON

3162

August 31, 1934.

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. TOLSON

Mr. George Hadler of the Files Section, who assisted the writer in obtaining pictures of interest from the files in the William King Hale case, for delivery to Mr. Rex Collier, requested a copy of Division 1. C. #70.F.62-5039, entitled, "William King Hale; John Ramsey - Murder on Indian Reservation", to read, which was furnished to him for this purpose.

Respectfully,

W. H. D. Lester.

WHD
3163

1
2
3 JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
4 DIRECTOR
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62

ADL:EHG

Division of Investigation

U. S. Department of Justice

Washington, D. C.

August 31, 1934.

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. TOLSON

Mr. George Medler of the Files Section, who assisted the writer in obtaining pictures of interest from the files in the William King Hale case, for delivery to Mr. Rex Collier, requested a copy of Division I. C. #70.F.62-5033, entitled, "William King Hale; John Ramsey - Murder on Indian Reservation", to read, which was furnished to him for this purpose.

Respectfully,

W. H. D. Lester
W. H. D. Lester.

RECORDED

INDEXED

SEP 14 1934

62-5033-8	
SEP 12 1934	
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	
TOLSON	FILE

3164

FDG:A

September 10, 1934

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. TOLSON

Please be informed that on August 31st Mr. Rex Collier appeared at the office and stated that he had been furnished with several photographs by the Director to be used in connection with preparing certain cases for the Saint Louis Post Dispatch; that he needed immediately a photograph of William King Hale, as well as any other photographs available in that file.

A photograph of Hale, together with a photograph of the house before and after it was blown up, were furnished to Mr. Collier, and on the following day he informed me that the same had been lost. He made a careful search at the places where he had visited, inserted an ad in the paper, but was unable to locate these photographs. However, I found that prior to delivering these photographs to Mr. Collier, Mr. Lester made twelve copies of each and since that time I have given Mr. Collier a duplicate set in order that he could use the same in connection with his articles.

Respectfully,

T. D. Quinn.

3/65

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR

Division of Investigation

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

September 10, 1934.

FDQ:A

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. TOLSON

Please be informed that on August 31st Mr. Rex Collier appeared at the office and stated that he had been furnished with several photographs by the Director to be used in connection with preparing certain cases for the Saint Louis Post Dispatch; that he needed immediately a photograph of William King Hale, as well as any other photographs available in that file.

A photograph of Hale, together with a photograph of the house before and after it was blown up, were furnished to Mr. Collier, and on the following day he informed me that the same had been lost. He made a careful search at the places where he had visited, inserted an ad in the paper, but was unable to locate these photographs. However, I found that prior to delivering these photographs to Mr. Collier, Mr. Lester made twelve copies of each and since that time I have given Mr. Collier a duplicate set in order that he could use the same in connection with his articles.

Respectfully,

T. D. Quinn.

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

SEP 14 1934

62-5033-
SEP 11 1934
U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE
TOLSON

3166

2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62

Division of Investigation

U. S. Department of Justice

P. O. Box 1276
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
February 11, 1935

DE:ME
Director,
Division of Investigation,
U.S. Department of Justice,
Pennsylvania Avenue at 9th Street, N.W.,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Please be advised that on February 11, 1935 there appeared at this office a man who gave his name as Bill Griffies and stated that he is a reporter for the Southwest American, a daily newspaper at Fort Smith, Arkansas. He desired to be furnished with information relative to the W. K. Hale case, Hale being convicted in connection with the killing of some Osage Indians a few years ago. I asked him why he desired the data and he stated that he is writing a story which he expects will be published in one of the McFadden Company's detective story magazines.

I, of course, informed this man that he should make inquiry of the Division with respect to such matters.

I was not favorably impressed with the appearance of this individual and my recommendation in the matter, which I of course realize is gratuitous, is that he be not furnished any information with respect to this or any other case.

Very truly yours,

Dwight Brantley
DWIGHT BRANTLEY,
Special Agent in Charge.

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

FEB 13 1935

5-50-807
FEB 14 1935
TOLSON BACKUS ONE

316

RECEIVED AT

11 New York Avenue
Washington Building
Washington, D. C.

STANDARD TIME
INDICATED ON THIS MESSAGE

Postal Telegraph
THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

Commercial
Cables



Mackay

All America
Cables

Radio

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

DL	DAY LETTER
NL	NIGHT LETTER
NM	NIGHT MESSAGE
CC	DEFERRED CABLE
RLT	NIGHT CABLE LETTER
WLT	WEEK END CABLE LETTER
RAD	RADIOGRAM

BMA247 15/47 NL 2 EXTRA

1935 FEB 11 PM 11

OKLAHOMA CITY OKLA 11

DIRECTOR DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION

ANSWER REQUESTED

DEPT OF INVESTIGATION WASHN DC

WILL YOU GRANT PERMISSION INTERVIEW LOCAL BUREAU RELATIVE MAGAZINE
ARTICLE I AM PREPARING ON RAMSEY HALE INDIAN MURDERS CASE CLOSED
CRIMINALS IMPRISONED AM NEWS REPORTER FORTSMITH WIRING BECAUSE GREAT
INCONVENIENCE AND EXPENSE RETURN HOME WAIT LETTER IF COURTESY
GRANTED PLEASE REPLY SOONEST POSTAL COLLECT
BILL GRIFFIES HOTEL BRISTOL.

RECORDED & INDEXED

62-5033-808

FEB 15 1935

FEB 18 1935

FEB 15 1935

TOLSON

DECKUS

Mr. Nathan
Mr. Tolson
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Ladd
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tracy
Mr. Carson
Mr. Egan
Mr. Harbo
Mr. Quinn
Mr. Schilder
Mr. Tamm
Miss Gandy

*case notes
approved
1/2*

3168

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Room 5101

2-12

1935.

To: Director
Mr. Nathan
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Tamm
Mr. Edwards
Mr. Egan
Mr. Quinn
Mr. Baughman
Mr. Backus
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Swenson
Mr. Tracy
Miss Gandy
Mr. Renneberger
Miss Sheaffer
Mr. Kennedy
XXXX Mr. Seyfarth

See Me

Send File

Any record of this man?

ACS

No record on file
2/12/35

Clyde Tolson

3169

62-5033-808

CT:MC February 12, 1935

BILL GRIFFIES
HOTEL BRISTOL
OKLAHOMA CITY OKLAHOMA

REPLYING YOUR TELEGRAM I HAVE INSTRUCTED MR DWIGHT BRANTLEY
AGENT IN CHARGE OKLAHOMA CITY OFFICE OF THIS BUREAU TO DISCUSS
OSAGE INDIAN MURDER CASE WITH YOU FURNISHING SUCH FACTS AS MAY
BE AVAILABLE FOR USE IN MAGAZINE ARTICLE

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

POSTAL - COLLECT

3 copies

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

3170

RECORDED

5033-908

CT:MC February 12, 1935

DWIGHT BRANTLEY
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U S DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
224 FEDERAL BUILDING
OKLAHOMA CITY OKLAHOMA

IN RESPONSE TO TELEGRAPHIC REQUEST BUREAU HAS ADVISED BILL GRIFFIES
HOTEL BRISTOL OKLAHOMA CITY TO CONFER WITH YOU CONCERNING OSAGE
INDIAN MURDER CASE FOR FACTS FOR USE IN MAGAZINE ARTICLE YOU ARE
AUTHORIZED TO DISCUSS FACTS THIS CASE ELIMINATING ANY REFERENCE
TO NAMES OF BUREAU AGENTS

HOOVER

3 copies

DISPATCHED BY
FEB 15 1935

- Mr. Nathan.....
- Mr. Tolson.....
- Mr. Clegg.....
- Mr. Egan.....
- Chief Clerk.....
- Mr. Coffey.....
- Mr. Edwards.....
- Mr. Egan.....
- Mr. Harbo.....
- Mr. Keith.....
- Mr. Lester.....
- Mr. Quinn.....
- Mr. Schilder.....
- Mr. Tamm.....
- Mr. Tracy.....
- Miss Gandy.....

3171

2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62

Division of Investigation

H. S. Department of Justice

P. O. Box 1276
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
February 16, 1935

DB:AGB
70-1

Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
U.S. Department of Justice,
Pennsylvania Avenue at 9th Street, N.W.,
Washington, D. C.

Re: W. K. Hale - Murder of
Osage Indians.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to your telegram of February 12, 1935 in which you stated the Bureau has advised Bill Griffies, Hotel Bristol of Oklahoma City, to confer with me with respect to this case and that I am authorized to discuss the case with him without referring to individual names of any Agents.

Please be advised that I previously wrote the Bureau concerning this individual. Since receipt of your telegram I have contacted the Hotel Bristol and made inquiry concerning Griffies, but was informed that he is no longer registered there.

Very truly yours,

Dwight Brantley
DWIGHT BRANTLEY,
Special Agent in Charge.

RECORDED & INDEXED

FEB 19 1935

FEB 20 1935

20-5083-707
FEB 19 1935
20-5083-707
FEB 19 1935
20-5083-707
FEB 19 1935

3172

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
Division of Investigation

U. S. Department of Justice

P. O. Box 1276
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
March 9, 1935

DB:KMB
70-1

Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
U.S. Department of Justice,
Pennsylvania Avenue at 9th Street, N.W.,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Re: W. K. Hale, et al.
Murder of Osage Indians.

Special Agent Frank S. Smith of this office recently while in Okemah had occasion to interview Mr. Kit Walker of the First National Bank of that city, at which time Mr. Walker divulged to him that he is a very close friend of W. K. Hale, now confined in Leavenworth Penitentiary, serving a life sentence for implication in the Osage murder cases, and that he, Mr. Walker, is going to aid Hale in securing a pardon from the Penitentiary; that he and Congressman Cassaway are going to Washington in the near future and present the matter to the President of the United States, the Attorney General, and confer with the Bureau in the interest of securing his freedom. He stated that Senators Gore and Thomas are in accord with this move.

Very truly yours,

Dwight Brantley
DWIGHT BRANTLEY,
Special Agent in Charge.

RECEIVED

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
MAR 12 1935

RECORDED & INDEXED

MAR 27 1935

62-52-816

MAR 12 1935

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

ONE 9/11

3173

JHE:RD

62-3033

810

RECORDED

March 21, 1935

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL,
MR. WILLIAM STANLEY.

Re: W. K. HALE, et al -
Murder of Osage Indians.

I am in receipt of a letter from the Oklahoma City Office of this Bureau, which sets out the information that recently when a Special Agent was in Okemah, Oklahoma, he had occasion to interview Mr. Kit Walker of the First National Bank of that city, at which time Mr. Walker divulged to him that he is a very close friend of W. K. Hale, now confined in Leavenworth Penitentiary, serving a life sentence for implication in the Osage murder cases. Mr. Walker stated that he is going to aid Hale in securing a pardon and that he and Congressman Cassaway are coming to Washington in the near future and present the matter to the President of the United States and the Attorney General. Mr. Walker also stated that Senators Gore and Thomas are in accord with this move.

For your information, in 1923 this Bureau investigated the case in which Hale was the principal offender, and the facts briefly, are as follows: From 1921 to 1923 several Osage Indians died under mysterious circumstances on the Osage Indian Reservation in Oklahoma. Four Indians and a white girl were thought to have been murdered at the instigation of William King (Big Bill) Hale, sometimes referred to as "King of the Osage", in order to collect insurance and to make two of Hale's nephews sole heirs to valuable oil properties of the murdered Indians. Investigation in this case was extremely difficult due to Hale's power in the community and the fear in which he was held, which is evidenced by the fact that several witnesses committed perjury in their testimony and many of the Government's witnesses were intimidated and threatened. Hale's influence was so strong that before he was finally sentenced to life imprisonment, he was tried four times; twice in the Federal

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1 yellow

3174

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146
147
148
149
150
151
152
153
154
155
156
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298
299
300
301
302
303
304
305
306
307
308
309
310
311
312
313
314
315
316
317
318
319
320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341
342
343
344
345
346
347
348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393
394
395
396
397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404
405
406
407
408
409
410
411
412
413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443
444
445
446
447
448
449
450
451
452
453
454
455
456
457
458
459
460
461
462
463
464
465
466
467
468
469
470
471
472
473
474
475
476
477
478
479
480
481
482
483
484
485
486
487
488
489
490
491
492
493
494
495
496
497
498
499
500
501
502
503
504
505
506
507
508
509
510
511
512
513
514
515
516
517
518
519
520
521
522
523
524
525
526
527
528
529
530
531
532
533
534
535
536
537
538
539
540
541
542
543
544
545
546
547
548
549
550
551
552
553
554
555
556
557
558
559
560
561
562
563
564
565
566
567
568
569
570
571
572
573
574
575
576
577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588
589
590
591
592
593
594
595
596
597
598
599
600
601
602
603
604
605
606
607
608
609
610
611
612
613
614
615
616
617
618
619
620
621
622
623
624
625
626
627
628
629
630
631
632
633
634
635
636
637
638
639
640
641
642
643
644
645
646
647
648
649
650
651
652
653
654
655
656
657
658
659
660
661
662
663
664
665
666
667
668
669
670
671
672
673
674
675
676
677
678
679
680
681
682
683
684
685
686
687
688
689
690
691
692
693
694
695
696
697
698
699
700
701
702
703
704
705
706
707
708
709
710
711
712
713
714
715
716
717
718
719
720
721
722
723
724
725
726
727
728
729
730
731
732
733
734
735
736
737
738
739
740
741
742
743
744
745
746
747
748
749
750
751
752
753
754
755
756
757
758
759
760
761
762
763
764
765
766
767
768
769
770
771
772
773
774
775
776
777
778
779
780
781
782
783
784
785
786
787
788
789
790
791
792
793
794
795
796
797
798
799
800
801
802
803
804
805
806
807
808
809
810
811
812
813
814
815
816
817
818
819
820
821
822
823
824
825
826
827
828
829
830
831
832
833
834
835
836
837
838
839
840
841
842
843
844
845
846
847
848
849
850
851
852
853
854
855
856
857
858
859
860
861
862
863
864
865
866
867
868
869
870
871
872
873
874
875
876
877
878
879
880
881
882
883
884
885
886
887
888
889
890
891
892
893
894
895
896
897
898
899
900
901
902
903
904
905
906
907
908
909
910
911
912
913
914
915
916
917
918
919
920
921
922
923
924
925
926
927
928
929
930
931
932
933
934
935
936
937
938
939
940
941
942
943
944
945
946
947
948
949
950
951
952
953
954
955
956
957
958
959
960
961
962
963
964
965
966
967
968
969
970
971
972
973
974
975
976
977
978
979
980
981
982
983
984
985
986
987
988
989
990
991
992
993
994
995
996
997
998
999
1000

Case for Mr. Stanley

3-21-35

District Court at Guthrie, Oklahoma, once in the Federal District Court at Oklahoma City, and once in the Federal District Court at Muskogee, Oklahoma.

A review of the file in this case reflects that the several murders committed at the instigation of Hale, were done in a most cold-blooded fashion.

I am submitting the above for your information.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

3175