

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI
AUGUST 3, 1939

Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D. C.

Re: ACTIVITIES ON THE O'BANION FARM
NEAR COLDWATER, KANSAS

Dear Sir:

By letter dated January 10, 1939, Mr. WILLIAM H. DAVENPORT, Supervising Agent of the Kansas City, Missouri, Division of the United States Secret Service, advised the Kansas City Field Division that an Agent of the Secret Service had been told by City Detective ED CUNNINGHAM, Hutchinson, Kansas, that he had received information that a Mr. O'BANION, the father of a former Chicago gangster, now lives on a farm near Coldwater, Kansas, at which place suspicious activities have been noted and the farm is considered a possible rendezvous for criminals.

Special Agent H. O. HAWKINS was advised by City Detective ED CUNNINGHAM that former Sheriff J. OVEROCKER of Coldwater, Kansas, had advised him that suspicious activities had taken place on the abandoned farm indicating on several occasions that planes have landed there, and that numerous expensive automobiles were also observed on the farm. Further that conversation with a grandchild of O'BANION indicated that some of the men who visited O'BANION's farm had a gun with a silencer.

On July 22, 1939, Sheriff GEORGE WILLIAMS, Coldwater, Kansas, advised Special Agent J. W. CORE of this office that CHARLES O'BANION owns a farm twenty-two miles southeast of Coldwater, and that former Sheriff OVEROCKER also owns a farm in the same vicinity. Sheriff WILLIAMS stated that CHARLES O'BANION, the father of DION O'BANION former Chicago gangster, has lived in Coldwater, Kansas, for the last twelve or thirteen years, during which time he has spent practically all of his time in Coldwater. For the first two or three years O'BANION had an Italian body guard, who was with him all of the time, however, it has been approximately ten years since this body guard disappeared and has never since been back. Sheriff WILLIAMS

COPIES DESTROYED

11 OCT 26 1964

Director

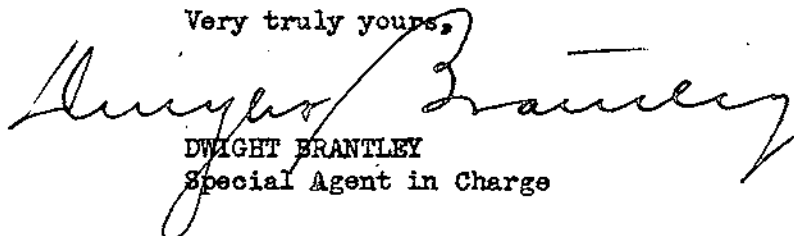
-2-

August 3, 1939

stated that he sees O'BANION almost every day in Coldwater and to his knowledge he never receives visits from strangers, however, that he occasionally does go to Texas with other men of Coldwater and occasionally goes to Chicago where it is Sheriff WILLIAMS understanding that he still owns some property. Sheriff WILLIAMS expressed the opinion that while O'BANION's son was in the rackets in Chicago that undoubtedly the father participated and reaped some benefits from these rackets but that during recent years Mr. O'BANION has apparently tended strictly to his own business in Coldwater and on his farm; that he has one daughter, RUTH, who is married to GEORGE STEWART, who also owns a farm in the vicinity of Coldwater, and whose reputation is above reproach.

Because of other expedite matters, Sheriff OVEROCKER was not interviewed, however, he will be contacted at a later date for information in his possession, and the Bureau will be advised of the results thereof.

Very truly yours,



DWIGHT BRANTLEY
Special Agent in Charge

JWC:MT
62-1379

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice

Kansas City, Missouri
September 14, 1939

Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

RE: ACTIVITIES ON THE O'BANION FARM
NEAR COLDWATER, KANSAS

Reference is made to my letter dated August 3, 1939. Please be advised that Special Agent F. D. FLANAGAN of this office interviewed J. D. OVEROCKER, the former Sheriff at Coldwater, Kansas, who now resides about twenty miles southwest of that town. Mr. OVEROCKER lives on a ranch about five miles from the ranch owned by CHARLES O'BANION, the father of the former Chicago gangster DION O'BANION. OVEROCKER stated that CHARLES O'BANION no longer lives on this ranch but is presently residing at Coldwater, Kansas, with his daughter, Mrs. GEORGE STEWART.

OVEROCKER was interviewed relative to the information which he gave to Detective ED CUNNINGHAM of the Hutchinson, Kansas, Police Department. He stated that about six or eight years ago he observed a number of airplanes landing on the O'BANION ranch, although he could not state for what purpose these planes were coming to the ranch, he believing they were probably friends of the O'BANIONS from Texas, as he had often heard O'BANION speak of wealthy friends in the State of Texas.

OVEROCKER said that he had never heard of O'BANION being in any trouble of any kind in or about Coldwater but some eight or ten years ago O'BANION did have an Italian bodyguard with him and at various times large groups of tough looking men would gather at the O'BANION ranch. In recent years he has seen no airplanes or suspicious looking characters on or about the O'BANION ranch.

Sheriff GEORGE WILLIAMS of Coldwater, Kansas, stated he knew CHARLES O'BANION and knew that a number of years ago he had an Italian bodyguard constantly with him and that a number of men who appeared to be gangsters used to come and visit at the O'BANION ranch some ten years ago. However, Sheriff WILLIAMS stated that he has not seen any strange persons on the O'BANION ranch or associating with O'BANION in the last five or more years. He said that O'BANION appears to be a law abiding citizen and is presently residing with his daughter at Coldwater, Kansas.

COPIES DESTROYED

11 OCT 26 1964

RECORDED & INDEXED 62-54858-3

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

18 1939

DEPT. OF JUSTICE

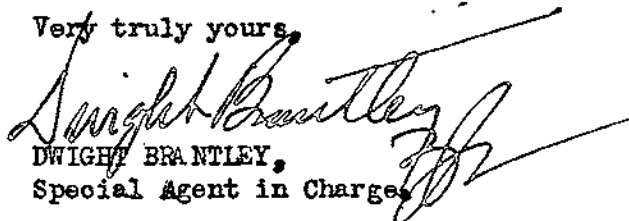
Handwritten initials and signatures

RE: ACTIVITIES ON THE O'BANION FARM
NEAR COLDWATER, KANSAS

September 14, 1939

Inasmuch as the investigation of this matter reveals no pertinent information which would be of value to this office, no further investigation will be conducted into the affairs of CHARLES O'BANION.

Very truly yours,


DWIGHT BRANTLEY,
Special Agent in Charge.

FDF:B

62-1379