

JER:ECB

November 16, 1933.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

On the evening of November 9, 1933, Mr. Brooks Hart, age 22, a graduate of the University of Santa Clara and a son and partner of Alexander J. Hart, one of San Jose's wealthiest merchants, was kidnaped at about 6:00 p.m., while on his way home from the department store operated by his father and himself. His failure to arrive at home on schedule time caused his family to become uneasy, and about 10:00 p.m., two telephone calls were received from San Francisco at his home, advising that the son, Brooks Hart, was being held and would be released upon payment of \$40,000 ransom.

The San Francisco Office of the Division of Investigation of the U. S. Department of Justice, together with the local police of San Francisco, San Jose, and the sheriff of San Jose immediately initiated an investigation. The authorities had the fullest cooperation and assistance of the victim's father. I immediately ordered a special squad of Agents to proceed to San Francisco in order to augment the group of Agents we have regularly stationed there, selecting men especially trained in the handling of kidnaping cases. Between November 9 and November 15, several letters and telephone calls were received from the kidnapers, and last evening a phone call was received at the residence of Mr. Alexander J. Hart, and through investigative activities of the Agents of this Division, together with the sheriff of San Jose, California, Harold T. Thurmond, 28 years of age, was taken into custody at 7:30 p.m. A thorough interrogation of Thurmond by the Agents of this Division brought about a full confession, involving one John H. Holmes, 29 years of age, who was taken into custody at a hotel in San Jose, California. The confession of Thurmond disclosed that Holmes and Thurmond kidnaped Mr. Brooks Hart on the evening of November 9 about 6:00 p.m. and drove to the San Mateo bridge. There they killed Hart and bound his arms with wire, and attaching some bricks to the body, threw the body into San Mateo Bay. Holmes and Thurmond then proceeded to write the letters and to put through the telephone calls, amounting \$40,000 ransom.

Holmes and Thurmond have been removed from San Jose to San Francisco in order to insure safe keeping by reason of the possible arousing of public opinion against them for their act of murder.

While this case is a Federal case in that the kidnapping was done, in view of the very serious charge of murder which will be lodged against these two men, it is contemplated that the case will be turned over to State authorities for prosecution.

The Chief of Police of San Jose, Mr. J. E. Black; the sheriff of San Jose, Mr. Zaig; and the Chief of Police of San Francisco, Mr. William J. Quinn, have rendered excellent cooperation and assistance to the Federal authorities in this matter. The Agent in Charge of our San Francisco Office, Mr. R. E. Vetterli, and the Agent in Charge of our Kansas City Office who proceeded to San Francisco by plane, Mr. E. E. Gandy, directed the details of this investigation at San Jose. These Agents in Charge were in telephonic communication with this office at Washington throughout the entire investigation.

7-375-52
RECORDED
NOV 18 1933

Handwritten signature or initials

Mr. Shepard who is at the head of the bank and a man I know well, said they could not find those numbers.

I asked again at the Postal Savings and Mr Hoinz there told me they had no numbers of those bills.

I wrote Haskins bureau at Washington to see if he knew whether there were really any numbers of the ransom money and he said the treasury dept at Washington would have them.

While every thing is quiet and these people are not suspecting they might be watched could you in some way check up on these numbers where ever Thurmond, Holmes and one other name I believe is very important but have not made the connections yet. It is Park of the Vogue Apts on 4th and Julian Streets here in San Jose. b7c

They began to make repairs on this large apt house just after the baby was taken or at least after the ransom money was gotten.

I have thought they might be paying small amounts to some building and loan.

There are two brothers or men at Milpitas who are cattle men and I wish a check could be made on them. They are

I have thought right along that the Lyndbergh baby is not dead. It could be so. b7c

Well at these parks on 4th and Julian or near there at night when the train switches down about 8 o'clock I see a short man of the type I have seen all along in my observations with a pale baby of the type and size of Lindy.

This man is either a Dain or a Sweed because I engaged him in conversation, that I might get a good look at the baby.

I sat through the movies of the baby when they were being shown here and there was a mannerism that baby had that this man had. A peculiar twirk of the eyes.

The eyes are a sort of greenish blue as far as I could see in the lamp light.

I have seen this pale child there with this man twice just as I was passing.

These people are either in the Vogue Apts or near there.

When I went past later the man was hurrying east on Julian but I thought this was a blind.

I know you will have the right methods to look into this and I feel so
rested and confident that you will carry it through.

It would be wonderful to find that baby alive wouldn't it.

I am so sorry I made the mistake about the Press. Please excuse me.

I was so upset about the Hart case it made me suspicious of many whom I
should not have been.

I feel so happy to be able to write you about this last hypothesis in
my findings because I know you will give it a fair trial and throw it out
if it proves not to work out as I wish it would.

Very Sincerely Yours

b7c

San Jose, Calif.
Nov. 21, 1933

b7c

- Mr. Nathan
- Mr. Tolson
- Mr. Clegg
- Mr. Glavin
- Mr. Ladd
- Mr. Nichols
- Mr. Rosen
- Mr. Tracy
- Mr. Carson
- Mr. Egan
- Mr. Gurnea
- Mr. Hendon
- Mr. Lester
- Mr. Quinn
- Mr. Nease
- Miss Gandy

3

The National Bureau Penology
Mr. Hoover.
Washington, D.C.

I believe that the ransom notes written by the kidnapers of Brook Hart in San Jose have been written by the same hands that wrote the Lindbergh ransom cards.

My conclusion is reached by the comparison of the letter O.

I used the card printed in the True Detective for Nov. 1932 page 8.

This periodical is published by New Metropolitan Fiction Corporation Inc. Danolen N.J.

The ransom notes in the Hart kidnaping are printed in the Mercury Herald and the Oakland Tribune.

The o is invariably written small in connection with capital letters in the printed parts.

The O in police and close in the Lindbergh printing.

The o in follows, contact, another, Hart.

The oo is very characteristic. The oo in look and good in the Lindbergh printing.

The oo in Brook.

Another characteristic way of telling about the next contact is noticed. All the notes seem to plan definitely for future meetings.

But I also believe that proof can be made to see if these men now in captivity wrote these notes. The writing of each can be noted.

There might be some one else, a master mind, who I should like to see in captivity so please act secretly to see if these things will work out.

7-375-54

RECORDED

NOV 23 1933

December 7, 1933.

RECORDED 7-375-54
DEC-11 1933
b7c

Dear Madam:

The Division has received your letter of November 21, 1933, addressed to the National Bureau Penology.

Your interest and courtesy in forwarding the information concerning the apparent similarity of the ransom notes in the Hart case with the handwriting in the Lindbergh notes is appreciated.

The Division has a local office in San Francisco, California, the address of which is as follows:

Special Agent in Charge,
Division of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
515 New York Building,
San Francisco, California.

Very truly yours,

Director

FILE SECTION
MAILED
DEC 7 1933
P. M.
DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Handwritten signatures and initials at the bottom of the page.

W
KPC:AMP.

December 8, 1933.

Special Agent in Charge,
Division of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
315 Hayes Building,
San Francisco, California.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to the laboratory report dated November 22, 1933, in connection with the extortion messages in the case captioned Thomas H. Thurmond, et al, Brooks Farm, victim, kidnaping.

An examination was made by technical experts of the identification unit of the extortion notes in this case, including the postal card and no latent prints could be developed on the notes. It would appear that particular effort was used to avoid leaving fingerprints on these notes. Fragmentary formations developed on the surface of the letter by use of chemical reagents appear to be imprints caused by the pressure of a soiled fabric as might have been caused by holding the paper firmly while writing with a handkerchief or shirt sleeve.

Several fragmentary latent fingerprints were developed on the outside of the envelopes. These have been compared with the finger impressions of Thomas H. Thurmond, our 5712846 and John H. Holmes, our 5763527 and in no instance are the latent prints found to be identical with these fingerprints.

Very truly yours,
For the Director,

Acting Director.

RECORDED

MAIL SECTION
MAILED
★ DEC 9 1933 ★
DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

7-375-55
DEC 9 1933

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Utahn Takes Part

In Kidnap Capture

OGDEN—A former Utah agent of the division of investigation, Utah state department of justice, Monday told in detail of some of the details involved in the capture and confession of the kidnapers and slayers of Francis Hart, 25, whose body was found in the San Francisco bay. The agent is Edward E. Conroy, who stopped in Ogden to visit briefly with his mother and to "catch up on some of my sleep."

He was called from his headquarters in Kansas City to travel to San Francisco by airplane and assist in the investigation of the crime. He had done his part in the apprehension of Thomas H. Thurmond and J. M. Holmes, the kidnapers and slayers, and came to Ogden Sunday by airplane to visit with his mother, Mrs. E. M. Conroy, 2515 Adams avenue.

Mr. Conroy said that a simple ruse was employed to trap the felons. A telephone line leading to the Hart home at San Jose was tapped by federal investigators, and when Thurmond called to demand ransom the agents were able to trace the call and were at his side before he had hung up the receiver.

Voices Identified

Mr. Conroy said that when Thurmond was arrested he claimed he was trying to get another number, but that the line was busy. "We took him in and called the Hart home and had him talk over the phone," Mr. Conroy explained. "Mr. Hart positively identified the voice as belonging to the man who had called a few minutes before."

"Of course we had him there, but we never got nothing from him but denials about the actual kidnaping. At first we thought he was just a chiseler who had heard of the kidnaping and was trying to extort a little easy money for himself."

But when someone happened to mention the possibility of young Hart's having been murdered Thurmond broke out in a cold sweat, and his anxiety when this line of questioning was pursued gave every indication that he might have a guilty knowledge of the young man's murder.

"We arrested him at 8 p. m. The questioning continued throughout the night, and at 3 a. m. he broke down and confessed the kidnaping and killing, naming Holmes as his accomplice and saying that he thought Holmes was staying at a hotel."

Also Confessed

"Well, we all went over to the home and made Thurmond knock on Holmes' door and call 'Jack,' which was his first name. When Holmes spotted up we had him covered with several revolvers and he surrendered without a struggle."

"Holmes was very unconcerned and denied any connection with the affair, but after he was confronted with the confession of Thurmond, which had been typewritten and signed, he admitted his part in the crime, wrote his last confession and was taken to detail with that of his partner in crime."

"Thurmond showed great remorse and in his crime, but Holmes was not visibly affected. When he was driven across the bridge, past the scene of the crime, he laughed, joked and whistled in a cheerful manner."

"Holmes formerly was a gambling salarman and Thurmond ran a filling station. That's how the two became acquainted."

"This case was unique in that it is the first kidnaping case in which the kidnapers have been captured before the ransom had been paid or before the victim had been returned."

Mr. Conroy said he had been in Ogden since he was called to Kansas City.

Literary Agent Prepares To Fight Larceny Charge

SEATTLE, Nov. 22.—James Ashe, literary agent, was in jail here today, after his arrival from Dallas, Texas, yesterday, ready to fight the "last ditch" against a \$3000 grand larceny charge sworn to by Mrs. Sarah Shannon of Seattle, accusing him of kidnaping her in a plan to win prizes for a novel she wrote.

Ashe said her charges were "ridiculous and absurd," adding that while her novel had "possibilities," she protested against any charges in it.

A BIRD OF A BOARDER

DARBY, Pa., Nov. 22.—Wah Swanson, locally famous as "the poet of Chicken Hill," found a startling's nest under the eaves of his home—built in 1760. A scrap of hand-made newspaper, of a sort not made for many years, formed part of the nest, and woven in with it was a dollar bill—one of the large size withdrawn from circulation several years ago!

DIVORCES GRANTED

One divorce was asked and two were granted Monday in district court. On the ground of cruelty, decrees were given to Myrtle A. Mitchell from Benjamin A. Mitchell and to Anne H. Parker from Joseph A. Parker. Non-support was charged by Hazel A. Hazen, seeking a divorce from Harry LeRoy Hazen.

Salt Lake City Tribune
11/24/33

Detective From S. L. Gives Notes

(Continued From Page One)

Brooks Brooke is being treated as well as possible but the case is getting too much publicity for us to hold him any longer. We are sorry to do this because Brooks is a manly lad but he has seen us and is too

"Killing him is the easy way with little risk for me. Kidnaping him is what we demanded the ransom for. Sorry I can't get some better proof for you but I said the writer is a contact man and we do not hold anyone here, Mr. Hart, unless our principals hear favorably from us by 7:30, 11-15-33, you will not be contacted again. It will be useless if you comply to our demands put a numeral two where the 1 now is as soon as it is received. Starting 7:20 p.m., 11-15-33, drive south on Montgomery road to Los Angeles, take Malibu highway into L. A. stop at Mayfair hotel. You will get telegram there about release of Brooks."

U. S. Bureau of Investigation

Department of Justice

903 West Thirteenth St.
Salt Lake City, Utah.

Mr. Nathan	.....
Mr. Tolson	.....
Mr. Clegg	.....
Mr. Glavin	.....
Mr. Ladd	.....
Mr. Nichols	.....
Mr. Rosen	.....
Mr. Tracy	.....
Mr. Carson	.....
Mr. Egan	.....
Mr. Gurnea	.....
Mr. Harbo	.....
Mr. Hendon	.....
Mr. Jones	.....
Mr. Quinn	.....
Mr. Nease	.....
Miss Gandy	.....

MVO

November 21, 1933.

General.

Director,
Division of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
Washington, D. C.

Dear sir:

Attached you will find news articles appearing in the Deseret News of Salt Lake City and the Salt Lake City Tribune issue of November 18 and 21 respectively.

The Division might give consideration to the wisdom of making public the means adopted by agents of the Division in detecting and apprehending violators of the law. To make known the method pursued does, at times, educate the criminally inclined so that future cases become the more difficult to handle. It is a known fact that inmates of jails and prisons are, to a great degree, readers of detective magazines and press reports treating of important criminal cases and it is reasonable that certain of the inmates learn to better evade justice through a knowledge of the modus operandi of the law enforcement officer.

Very truly yours,

John A. Dowd

John A. Dowd,
Special Agent in Charge

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DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION
NOV 27 11 3 PM

RECORDED

7-375-56

DEC 13 1933

DEC 12 1933

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR

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

VAH:CS

Mr. Nathan	✓
Mr. Tolson	
Mr. Clegg	
Mr. Egan	
Mr. Fox	
Mr. Glavin	
Mr. Ladd	
Mr. Nichols	
Mr. Rosen	
Mr. Tracy	
Mr. Carson	
Mr. Coffey	
Mr. Hendon	
Mr. Pennington	
Mr. Quinn	
Mr. Nease	
Miss Gandy	

December 1, 1933.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR.

With reference to the attached letter received from Agent in Charge Lowi, concerning newspaper reports of the investigation of the kidnaping of Brooke Hart, deceased, at San Jose, California, I believe that Mr. Lowi's comments are to the point.

I think that we should be very careful not to disclose the methods pursued by the special agents of the Division in conducting investigations of kidnaping cases. Possibly it would be well to write Agent in Charge Conroy, who appears to have been quoted in this case.

Respectfully,

V. W. Hughes
V. W. Hughes.

*Letter to
One Conroy
12/1/33
H*

RECORDED
INDEXED

7-375-56

DEC 12 1933

RECEIVED

RECORDED

INDEXED

DEC 13 1933

December 7, 1933.

7-375-56

Mr. E. E. Conroy,
Division of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
Federal Building, Suite 1,
Kansas City, Missouri.

Dear Sir:

The Division's attention has been called to articles appearing in the Deseret News of Salt Lake City and the Salt Lake City Tribune issues of December 12 and 21 respectively.

The Division notes apparent omissions of detailed statements from you purporting to give investigative details in connection with the Hart kidnaping case.

The Division is of the very positive opinion that no titles and for no reason should the details of investigative activity be given to the press. The Division regrets that you are incorrectly noted.

Very truly yours,

Director

sep

Return for: Encl

b7c
return only

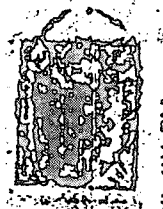
Receipt Required
by the Recipient
Delivered to Addressee Only

REGISTERED

NO. 3071

Identification Dept.
Department of Justice

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover
Washington
D.C.



VIA AIR MAIL

VIA AIR MAIL

Will you please
return this
letter about 1/2
Please note about it is the
only one I have -

(The Encls. next) b7c

Nov. 27, 1933

Mr. Nathan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Tolson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Clegg	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Mr. Ladd	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Nichols	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Rosen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Tracy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Carson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Egan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Gurnea	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Hendon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Mumford	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Quinn	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Nease	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miss Gandy	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Hoover:

Since writing you last and sending you the thought that the hand printing in the Hart case was much like that of the card in the Lindbergh case printed in the Nov. 32 'True Detective.

If this sample is a specimen I am sure they are very much alike.

I take my lead from the small O which is used so often in connection with every other capital letter.

This seems to be a characteristic.

Something very interesting has come under my observation and I believe it has a very definite bearing on the case.

Did I tell you about the New Jersey car that changed from a N.J. license to a Cal license 9A1242 on October 29th 33 in Los Angeles.

This car I saw circling around the business district about dark the evening the Hart boy was taken or the evening before. I am now checking my dates to make sure.

The number of the New Jersey car was P29329.

The name is [redacted] b7c
Will you have [redacted] checked to see if I might have made a slight mistake in the numbers and this Bert Baran could have had a Sedan of the next number before or after.

This evening it was on a sedan but the license calls for a roadster.

Another very significant finding is an observation made in a drug store where I went after the children's music lessons to get some thing for my son who was ill.

I saw a fleshy light haired man in the telephone booth that night Nov. 14th at about 8 o'clock. Just out side the booth was a younger rather heavy set man not quite as light haired who was holding the door that nobody could get near.

I later learned that a ransom demand was made from this pay phone [redacted] but I do not know whom it was.

Out side was a rather tall [redacted] complexioned young man, who was not so heavy, he looked me over carefully.

The girls were sitting in the car outside and I asked them if they took their numbers and they said they did not take them too much.

Handwritten notes on the left margin, including a large 'X' and some illegible scribbles.

7-375-57

DEC 14 1933

INDEXED

DEC 13 1933

Then a few days later I saw this same heavy set man who phoned getting into a car on My street near the place where I take my two boys to a private school.

The car was 7z9963 Calif. A Ford 8 coach with the handle of the door on the drivers side broken off.

Then Friday night as I went for Ruth who attends a school quite a distance from home I saw a large car either British Columbia or D.C. The color was Dark green or black for the plates.

There were four boys in it and two got out and were acting funny so I took the number. Seems now I had a hunch they might have dealings on Ruth.

The number was 5562 and I thought at the time it was a Packard.

We drove around the block instead of turning on the street we were on and as we came over on 14th street there was the car sitting in front of *b7c*

There were the two boys on the steps.

So I have tried in some way to see if these two addresses are connected.

This morning early I did some asking questions of Telephone information and found that the names were common to the two addresses but there are two families apparently in each house so I do not know if we can count on that.

The name in common was *b7c*

But there is one other connection with one of the other party *b7c*

is the name.

It is in *b7c* who drives for origin parties who keep their cars in the *b7c*

It is a man much like this fellow who was driving that New Jersey car that night.

yesterday I took the numbers of all the cars around there as there were many just after the news of the finding of the body of Hart.

Here they are.

71161 Cal. Dodge Sed.

7E9974 Red Chev. Cpe.

4H6198 Light Blue Pontiac Rdstr.

6E8836 Blue Peerless 6E8996 Blue Chev. Cab.

3A1381 Red Chev. Cpe.

6E8996 seemed to be most significant, it heavy set swarthy man

attached to car

It would be wonderful to catch the heads of this gang.

I believe that if you will take time to consider the contents of this letter you will be fully repaid for the search.

It does not seem right that one woman should bear the burden of it when the government has so many to help.

Very Sincerely Yours

(The Sisters)

b7c