

318 News Building
San Francisco, California.



REV:IS
Refer file
97-27.

December 29, 1936.

JAN-4-1937

Mr. George Fico,
United States Marshal,
Post Office Building,
San Francisco, California.

THOMAS H. THURMAN
JOHN W. HARRIS
PROCKE LO HART - Victim,
Kidnaping.

I am attaching herewith a letter received from
Marion King of San Jose, California, returning the
books returned for John W. Harris and Thomas H.
Thurman.

S.S. Division,
Jan 2, 1937.



XXXXXX
XXXXXX
XXXXXX

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

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

Deletions were made pursuant to the exemptions indicated below with no segregable material available for release to you.

Section 552

Section 552a

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- Information pertained only to a third party. Your name is listed in the title only.
- Documents originated with another Government agency(ies). These documents were referred to that agency(ies) for review and direct response to you.

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_____ Page(s) withheld for the following reason(s): _____

For your information: _____

The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
7-375 - Not Recorded enclosure.

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X DELETED PAGE(S) X
X NO DUPLICATION FEE X
X FOR THIS PAGE X
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THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

FILE NO. 7-11

REPORT MADE AT NEW ORLEANS, LA.	DATE WHEN MADE 1-10-34	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 1-8-34	REPORT MADE BY M. A. TAYLOR
TITLE THOMAS H. THURMOND JOHN M. HOLMES BROCKE L. HART - VICTIM			CHARACTER OF CASE KIDNAPPING

b7C

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS

Such a story that he told about story that abducted one Simmons and three other men attempted to hire him to drive the car in instant kidnapping.

New Orleans, La. is said by Police officials to be of unsound mind and to have frequently contacted interested persons and officials in connection with prominent cases, offering valuable information. Descriptive data (kidnapping) form and photo of submitted to Division, herewith.

JAN 15 1934 AM

REFERENCE:

Letter of the San Francisco Division Office, dated January 4, 1934.

DETAILS:

AT NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

At the Parish Prison, New Orleans, La., Agent interviewed [redacted] who is being held under a local statute pertaining to confidence games, etc., on charges arising out of the phone call made by M. Holmes at San Jose, California, on January 8, 1934. He alleged to have requested or demanded transportation from Mr. Holmes in order to make his trip to California, under the pretense that he had important information pertaining to instant case.

When first approached, [redacted] appeared or pretended to be reluctant to divulge the information concerning instant case, but after some conversation stated that he would tell all he knew. He advised that he had refused to work in the local police because he did not trust them. It may be stated here that nothing of the facts in instant case. He did not even know of Thurmond's connection with the case. His story which is briefly stated hereafter, was told in a rambling and disconnected manner, and from the beginning [redacted]

APPROVED AND FORWARDED: *[Signature]*

COPIES OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO:

- 3-Division
- San Francisco
- New Orleans
- San Francisco (1)

7-375-62

JAN 15 1934 AM

b7c

impressed agent as being mentally unbalanced.

stated that in June 1930 he had re-enlisted in the Army and had been stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia; that in the early part of 1931, about February 3rd, he had received a six months sentence in the Army Jail for stealing a pair of Army shoes, and on June 8, 1931 had completed serving his time and had received a dishonorable discharge. advised that while thus incarcerated, he had had as a fellow prisoner, one Simmons, who was serving a sentence of three or four months for desertion. stated that Simmons was released and dishonorably discharged shortly after himself, related that during the entire time he and Simmons were in jail, once every week a large Cadillac car containing four men would appear and an envelope or letter would be delivered to Simmons; that each of these would contain \$60.00 or \$50.00. recalled that on one occasion Simmons dropped a letter and he picked it up and noted that it was signed, "Pretty Boy Floyd".

stated also that towards the end of their term, he had struggled a Thompson machine gun into the cell to Simmons, which gun he had received from the four men, but that the authorities had gotten "wiser" and he had managed to get out as they. He stated that he received \$200.00 for using this piece of work.

Further related that from June 1931 until some three weeks before instant kidnaping, he heard nothing from Simmons, and he declared he had powerful connections in the underworld, although he understood that Simmons had been in and out of New Orleans, Las Vegas and other places. That three days before the Aera, Frank Barlow, arrested, Simmons and three of the four men mentioned appeared at the Casino Hall, 1017 Iberville Street, New Orleans, La., where he arranged out, and he agreed to help to make some big money. Simmons informed him that they wanted a telephone for them, and that they had spotted Frank Barlow, that his car had a lot of money, and the job was a cinch. described Frank Barlow as 24 or 25 years of age, 6'11" high, very hairy, and weighing about 300 pounds, according to the description furnished him by Simmons. stated that he informed the gangsters that he would not accept a kidnaping, and that one of the four men wanted to kill him on the spot, drawing a forty-caliber revolver, but that Simmons intervened with this man, and the four drove off in a large new Cadillac. declared that he has been in fear of his life because of the information he possessed, but that he had decided to turn the information over to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Willingly admitted that he had telephoned Mr. Holmes on January 29, 1934 from a pay station in a drug store which he stated is located at 424 and 426 Poydras Street, New Orleans, La., and he insisted that he has no thought of black-mail or extortion, and had requested \$5,000.00 for transportation of other men.

also advised that he had written the letters to Mr. Holmes, and immediately after he had written the second letter, and sent it to the first of the letters written to Mr. Holmes, since he had been in jail.

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Agent examined the two letters written by Mr. Holmes, dated January 3, 1933 and January 5, 1933 respectively. Both are signed "M. Holmes, 930 N. 11th Street, San Jose, Calif." The first acknowledges receipt of letter, and states that Mr. Holmes has received many crank letters; that he is sorry that [redacted] got into trouble over the telephone bill, and he will attend to that request that [redacted] clear his [redacted] son's name, for which he will be ever grateful; and advised that lawyers will visit [redacted] noon and request [redacted] to tell all he knows in a sworn statement.

The second letter states that a wire has been sent to the District Attorney (does not state where) to get [redacted] statement; and asks the following questions: "Can you give me names of anyone implicated there you in San Jose during the lynching? Can you give names of anyone that took part that night? What were you arrested for? Were you arrested as a suspect? In connection with this case or what? If only for telephone bill I will take care of this."

single report in that case, which contains a good description, and something of reputation is being transmitted to the San Francisco Office for its information. This report was written by Special Agent, P. M. Brock, New Orleans, La. dated February 6, 1933.

The following criminal record of [redacted] was obtained from an examination of Division letter to the New Orleans Police Department in response to a request for criminal record, and from the police records.

Agent interviewed Captain Harry Ferguson and William Bell, Detective Joseph Koch and Identification Officer A. M. O'Boyle, all of the New Orleans Police Department. These officers are well acquainted with [redacted] and referred to him as "Curry". He is [redacted] and was [redacted] in the New Orleans Naval Hospital, and [redacted] an inmate of the [redacted] and stated that in many instances [redacted] had caused them [redacted] by writing to interested parties and authorities that he could read

light on their particular case. They mentioned the Washel Kidnapping case and several local murder cases in which [redacted] had written that he could furnish valuable information. The officers stated that [redacted]

[redacted] at Orleans, La., has advised that during the past few months any of [redacted] criminal acts had been hatched.

In view of the fact that [redacted] appears continually involved in petty black-mail and extortion he may even participate in a major offense. Accordingly the Division is being furnished a descriptive data report from [redacted] in connection with kidnapers and extortionists, together with a photograph of [redacted]

b7c

REFERRED UPON COMPLETION TO OFFICE OF ORIGIN

REV: 13
Refer File
37427.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. DIVISION OFFICE
(Name and address of Contributor)

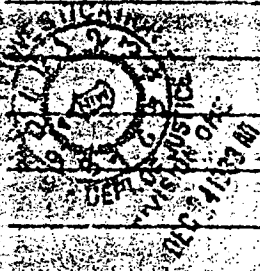
Mr. J. E. Hoover, Director,
United States Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D. C.

Date: 11/27/33.

Dear Sir:

Following are the dispositions of cases in which fingerprints have been mailed to the United States Bureau of Investigation:

Bureau File Number	Print Number	Name and Alias	Disposition
7-27	San Francisco, Calif. Police Department No. 50390 50391	JOHN G. BOLLES	11/22/33 indicted by Federal Grand Jury, San Francisco, Calif. in seven counts, violation extortion angle of Kidnaping Act. 11/26/33, lynched by mob at San Jose, California, while in custody of the State.
7-27	San Francisco, Calif. Police Department No. 50390 50390	THOMAS H. TRER- BOND	11/22/33 indicted by Federal Grand Jury, San Francisco, Calif. in seven counts, violation extortion angle of Kidnaping Act. 11/26/33, lynched by mob at San Jose, California, while in custody of the State.



Very truly yours,

B. E. Vetter

Special Agent in Charge
(Official Title)

7-375

DEC 2 1933

Special Agent in Charge

For instructions see reverse side

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR

Division of Investigation

U. S. Department of Justice

Washington, D. C.

February 28, 1934

CS:mr

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. TOLSON

There is attached hereto an interesting
write-up on the case of BROOKE L. HART - KIDNAPING.

Respectfully,

Clinton Stein

Clinton Stein.

Enclosure #691654.

7-375-63
28 1934

DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

CS:DT:mr

L. C. 87-375

February 27, 1934

THOMAS E. GUNN;
JOHN H. HILL;
THE KIDNAPING OF BROCK L. HART

At six P. M. November 9, 1933 Brock L. Hart, age 22 years, son of Alexander J. Hart, a prominent merchant at San Jose, California, left his father's store to secure his personal automobile which was in a parking lot approximately fifty yards from the Hart Department Store in San Jose, California. The father returned to his home about six P. M. and about 9:35 P. M. that same night received a telephone call from an unknown individual advising him that his son had been kidnaped and that he would have to pay \$40,000.00 for the safe return of his son. Hart immediately communicated the substance of this call to Chief of Police Black, San Jose, California who promptly got in touch with the Division office at San Francisco advising the Special Agent in Charge of the telephone call which Mr. Hart had received, stating that the call had been made through a telephone at the Pittman Hotel in San Francisco. Chief Black further stated that he desired the active cooperation of the Division of Investigation in this case.

At the time a Special Agent happened to be in San Jose, California on other business. The Special Agent in Charge of the San Francisco office of the Division of Investigation telephonically instructed the Special Agent who then happened to be in San Jose to contact the elder Mr. Hart at once and to advise him that the Division of Investigation would cooperate with him in this kidnaping to the fullest extent, bearing in mind that the first objective would be the safe return of his son Brock Hart.

On November 10, 1933 the car of the missing Brock Hart was found abandoned on a highway a short distance from San Jose. A careful examination of the same failed to disclose any evidence that might point to the identity of the kidnapers.

DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Brooks H. Hart

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February 27, 1934

On November 11, 1933 Mr. Hart received a letter from the kidnapers which is quoted as follows:-

"Your son is O. K. and treated well. One more jump to police will be his finish. You have made 1 agreement. Another will be too bad. We will have \$10,000. You get 50% - 20's, 20's - 10's, 20's - 5's (remarked). Put it in a satchel (black). Be ready to take a week's trip on a hour notice. Co. the State. Edstr. have radio installed. When told to go you will take orders from K.F.O. You better do as told."

On the same date the victim's wallet was found on a pier at the San Francisco waterfront. No money was in the wallet but numerous identifying cards of victim were still intact.

On November 19, 1933 another letter was received by Mr. Hart from the kidnapers which is quoted as follows:-

"We presume you have gotten our letter from Sacramento. If you have money as demanded indicate same with a numeral at the Market and Beale Clave St. window of your store - viz. -1-. You will be advised when to start your trip as noted in former note. As long as contents of these notes are known to you alone Brooks is safe. By now you know Federal or anyone else are powerless to bring Brooks to you except through us. When A. J. Hart who will carry the money starts his trip he will carry the money in black satchel (small) beside him in seat of Stude. Edstr. If anyone follows this car or knows its errand Brooks will not be returned alive. Our next contact will tell you time to go and be prepared to start on the minute. Your every move is being observed. - Wait further contact."

In compliance with this letter the numeral 1 was placed in Mr. Hart's department store window with another card which bore in large black letters "I cannot drive." On the same night about 7:30 P. M. Mr. Hart received another telephone call from one of the kidnapers telephoning from a pay station in Eureka at San Jose, California in which further instructions were given him as to how to contact the kidnapers.

DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

George L. Hart

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February 27, 1934

The Sheriff at San Jose, accompanied by Special Agents of the Division, took into custody Thomas E. Thurmond whom they had suspected of being one of the kidnapers. Thurmond made a complete confession of the kidnaping and implicated John M. Holmes as a partner in this kidnaping. That same night Holmes was taken into custody by the Sheriff and Agents of the Division of Investigation and made a complete confession regarding the kidnaping of young Hart. The substance of their confessions is as follows:-

On November 9, 1933 Brooke Hart went to the parking lot to secure his Studebaker Roadster. As he left the lot to drive onto the main street he stopped momentarily whereupon Holmes opened the door of Hart's car and with a gun in his hand forced Hart to drive on and out through the main part of town to a small town of Milpitas, California, at which point according to a prearranged scheme Thurmond was waiting along the roadside in a Chevrolet car belonging to Holmes. Then Holmes passed in a Studebaker Roadster with Hart, Thurmond followed them to a point on the highway approximately one and one-half miles from Milpitas on a road which follows the foothills. At that point the Studebaker car was abandoned and young Hart was placed in the back seat of Holmes' Chevrolet car. Holmes and Thurmond then drove toward the point known as the San Mateo Bridge in San Mateo, California, a distance of approximately 25 miles.

While Holmes was driving, Thurmond covered young Hart with a revolver and upon reaching San Mateo Bridge young Hart was told to get out of the car and the gun was transferred from Thurmond to Holmes who hit the victim over the head with the butt end of the gun, knocking the victim in the pavement of the bridge. Holmes then jumped on the victim and held him while Thurmond bound his feet with wire. The wire was run through a heavy cement block weighing approximately 25 pounds. The upper part of the victim's arms was then bound close to his body after a similar concrete block had been attached so that it was pressed tightly against the victim's back.

The victim cried for help whereupon he was hit over the head with the butt of a revolver rendering him practically unconscious. Holmes took hold of the arms and shoulders of the victim, while Thurmond grasped his feet, and together they heaved the victim up over the railing of the San Mateo Bridge and dropped him into the bay. After the victim struck

DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Brooks L. Hart

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February 27, 1934

the actor he made several feeble outcries, whereupon Holmes crashed down over the trestlework of the bridge and fired three shots at the spot in the water where the victim had sunk. Holmes and Thurnand prior to tossing the victim into the bay removed his wallet in which there was about \$7.00, and after dividing the money drove along the waterfront and attempted to throw the wallet into the water. Holmes and Thurnand then returned to San Jose and commenced negotiations as previously set out with the victim's father for the purpose of securing \$40,000.00 as ransom. It might be noted at this point that it was a premeditated plan of Holmes and Thurnand to kill young Hart and then attempt to secure the ransom money from the father under the pretense that young Hart was still alive. The premeditation evidenced in this plan was later supported by an investigation by Agents of the Division of Investigation. It was learned that Holmes had gone to the backyard and had weighed various blocks of cement until he found two that weighed approximately 25 pounds each. Thurnand was also found to have gone to a hardware store where he purchased 75 feet of clothes line wire which was used to truss the victim before he was thrown into the bay. Intensive efforts were made at once by the sheriff and his deputies from San Jose to locate the body of young Hart in San Mateo Bay, unsuccessfully.

On November 27, 1933 the facts in this case were laid before the Federal Grand Jury of San Francisco, California with respect to the letters mailed by Holmes and Thurnand to Mr. Alexander Hart, threatening bodily harm to his son and demanding ransom. On the same date the Federal Grand Jury returned a true bill as to both Holmes and Thurnand which included seven counts, one count charging conspiracy of both individuals to violate the extortion section of the recent kidnaping act, three counts charging the sending of threatening letters through the United States mail, three counts charging bodily harm and three counts charging the sending of letters through the United States mail to extort money. In the meanwhile an intensive search was being made for the body of young Hart. On November 27, 1933 his body was found floating about a mile and a half from the San Mateo bridge by some duck hunters. Due to the disintegration of young Hart's clothes and the decomposition of his body, the wires and the cement blocks had become detached, thus permitting the body to float.

With the finding of the body the United States Attorney of San Francisco decided that the proper place for the prosecution of Holmes and Thurnand would be in the State Court inasmuch as they could be charged with

DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Brooks L. Hart

- 3 -

February 27, 1934

either the kidnaping or the murder of young Hart, either of which offense carries the death penalty in the State of California.

With the finding of Hart's body the people in the community of San Jose became highly aroused and numerous threatening statements to the effect that Holmes and Thurmond should be lynched were made by various people. However, the crowd did not appear threatening until about ten o'clock that night. At that time about three thousand people led by several young men descended on the jail and demanded that Holmes and Thurmond be turned over to them for lynching. The sheriff and his deputies laid down a gas barrage for several hours and were able to keep the crowd at a distance. After running out of gas bombs, however, the crowd battered down the jail door, seized Holmes and Thurmond and lynched them in a park across from the Court House. It is to be noted that at the time this lynching occurred, both Holmes and Thurmond were completely in the custody of the State Officials inasmuch as all Federal protective action had been held in abeyance pending the outcome of the trial in the State Court.

Rec'd 2/27/34
654

CLASS

September 6, 1934.

Mr. E. H. Sick,
Division of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
575 Lexington Avenue, Room 1403,
New York, New York.

Dear Sir:

There are transmitted herewith copies of a letter
addressed to the Division by

San Jose, California, by RECV
San Jose, California, and a copy of the Division's reply thereto,
concerning the case of Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr., Kidnaping,
and John E. Salvo, Kidnaping.

Please give the information most attention as it
deemed appropriate.

A copy of this letter is being forwarded to the San
Francisco office in order that that office may be informed
as to receipt and should any request be made for it
for investigation.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]
Special Agent in Charge

CC: SAC SAN FRANCISCO
Enc. 2-1-34

RECORDED

INDEXED

[Handwritten notes and stamps]

b7c

San Jose, Calif.
May 1, 1935.

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

b7c

Dear Mr. Hoover:

I presume this letter will reach you without my using your proper title and address; I do not care to make inquiries in this sweet little political city of ours.

What I want to know is: Have you dropped the Hart kidnaping case as solved and completed? I don't mean any personal offense to you, but I suppose you realize the general public has little confidence in the ability or honesty of any cop, big or little. From listening to the radio, I gather there is quite an attempt to dethrone the gangster from the hearts of the people and make a hero of the copper who goes after said gangster. Smart. But I wonder if even the so-called G-men care anything about a case except for the glory and for stopping the howls of the dear people.

The fact is, a lot of people here doubt if there ever was a kidnaping, and they doubt if Thurmond had any more connection with the case than being a cop who tried to collect a few grand; a great many people doubt if Holmes had any connection with it.

RECORDED & INDEXED

17-375-66

I admit I haven't any proofs and I am not asking any shaves. I tried to get the Liberty Magazine to make an investigation; I tried to get Upton Sinclair interested, but all I got was a couple of fellows from the Civil Liberties; they tried to get money out of me, and seems to be more interested in raffle lines than anything else, and I am plenty sick of that bunch, having been

10:935

TAMM ONE

I talked to newspapermen close to the case, in particular then with [redacted] he said he didn't think the case had been solved; that something would break later. [redacted] admitted that he had never gotten to talk to either Thurmond or Holmes before they were lynched. He said the so-called confessions were handed out by Louis [redacted] the local political boss, and that he wouldn't believe that bird if [redacted] swore on a stack of Bibles big enough to convert all the heathen. [redacted] said he thought Chief Black had the hottest idea. Black said when Hart first disappeared, that he didn't think he was kidnaped, that he was mixed up in some gambling debts and was trying to find a way out. It seems generally understood here that young Hart was hitting the primrose path long and fast, and that he owed a lot of money on gambling debts; notorious dive owner, is said to have threaten[redacted] Hart if he didn't pay up. Holmes' father told me he never got to see his son again for a short time the day his son was lynched, and that he could prove that his son could not have done what he says ex-sheriff [redacted] his son [redacted]

I might say that it is believed that murder can literally be gotten away with in this community if you stand right politically. There is certainly much evidence to back up that idea. Many of us think that is what happened in the past case. If you and your men are completely [redacted] further will be [redacted]

I hope that is not the case.
Yours truly,

(Signature)

7-375-66

RECORDED

MAILED

June 3, 1935

~~can stop, please~~

Dear Sir:

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your
communications of May 22, 1935, and have carefully
noted the contents.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director

RECORDED
JUN 3 1935
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

MEMORANDUM

Re: KIDNAPING AND MURDER OF BROOKE L. HART

Brooke L. Hart was kidnaped at San Jose, California, on November 9, 1933. Thomas H. Thurmond and John H. Holmes confessed to the kidnaping and subsequent murder of Brooke Hart and were lynched by a mob at San Jose, California, on November 26, 1933.

These individuals have no prior criminal record.

7-375

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