

Division of Investigation

U. S. Department of Justice

1531 First Nat'l. Bank Bldg.,
El Paso, Texas,
February 23, 1934.

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

Dear Sir:

Re: GEORGE KELLY BARNES, with aliases,
et al.
CHARLES F. URSCHEL, Victim.
KIDNAPING.

In accordance with instructions received some months ago,
but which I had never been able to carry out up until now, I am
today mailing my report as to the modus operandi and solution of
the Urschel kidnaping case.

I am forwarding one copy to the San Antonio office in
order to have enough photostatic reproductions prepared for each
Division office, and will suggest that the San Antonio office mail
them direct to each individual office.

This report may not be as complete in detail as would be
desired and there may possibly be some inaccuracies as to dates,
etc., for the reason that it is written almost entirely from memory,
not having the basic file of the Oklahoma City office before me.
I regret that I was unable through pressure of business to prepare
this report while at Oklahoma City.

Very truly yours,

Note possible date etc. errors

R. H. Colvin,
Special Agent in Charge.

Handwritten: Remanded 2/26/34
P. H. Wack

PHC: ● b7C
cc San Antonio.

RECORDED

COPIES DESTROYED
20 MAR 16 1955

MAR 1 1934

7-115-1110	
DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION	
FEB 26 1934 A.M.	
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	
FILE	

UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **Oklahoma City, Okla.**

FILE NO. **7-7**

REPORT MADE AT: El Paso, Texas.	DATE WHEN MADE: 2-23-34	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE: 2/18/34	REPORT MADE BY: R. H. Colvin b7c
TITLE: GEO. KELLY BARNES, with aliases, et al CHARLES F. URSCHEL VICTIM			CHARACTER OF CASE: KIDNAPPING

21702

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

Modus Operandi and solution as detailed hereunder in narrative.

P.

DETAILS:

CHARLES F. URSCHEL and his wife BERNICE SLICK URSCHEL, residing at 327 N.W. 18th St., Oklahoma City, Okla., are the principal heirs and trustees of the Estate of the late T.B. SLICK, oil producer, which Estate is variously estimated to be valued at from ten to twenty million dollars.

On the night of July 22, 1933, MR. AND MRS. URSCHEL, with their friends and neighbors, MR. and MRS. WALTER R. JARRETT, were having a social game of bridge in a sun room at the rear of the URSCHEL mansion on the ground floor. At about 11:00 p.m., [REDACTED] of MRS. URSCHEL, drove her car into the driveway to the garage at the rear, came to the screen door of the sun room, which was fastened on the inside. MR. JARRETT let her in and apparently did not refasten the door. [REDACTED] proceeded to her room and to bed. About 15 minutes later, or at 11:15 p.m., two men suddenly came in through the screen door, one with a machine gun, the other with a pistol and menaced the four bridge players. One of the intruders said: "Which is URSCHEL? We want URSCHEL." No one of the players said anything, whereupon the individual said: "Well, we will take them both."

The intruders then threatened the women and told them to stay away from the phone. They marched URSCHEL and JARRETT out onto the driveway of the URSCHEL garage, where they had their own car parked,

DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES

APPROVED AND FORWARDED: <i>R. H. Colvin</i>	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	7-115-1111	RECORDED AND INDEXED: FEB 26 1934
COPIES OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO: Division 2 All Division Offices each El Paso 2		FEB 26 1934 A M	CHECKED OFF: FEB 28 1934
<div style="text-align: center;"> <p>206 MAR 16 1934</p> <p>91</p> </div>		BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION	JACKETED:
		ROUTED TO: FILE	

572 MAR 1 1934

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1932

All b7c

7-3034

apparently a '33 model Chevrolet sedan. They put both URSCHEL and JARRETT in the rear seat while the two kidnapers both got in the front seat and drove rapidly away out of town by a dirt road paralleling the main highway. URSCHEL and JARRETT were both in their shirt sleeves and were not searched for arms.

Immediately the kidnapers left the house, MRS. URSCHEL phoned the police; and then, within ten minutes of the event, phoned long distance to Mr. Hoover, Director of the Division, giving him the particulars. 21703

The writer was immediately called on the phone by John Watt, Chief of Police, at Oklahoma City, and dressing hurriedly called two other Division Agents and sent them to the URSCHEL residence, the writer proceeding to Police Headquarters where, almost immediately after my arrival, telephonic instructions were received from the Director to concentrate the entire energies of the Oklahoma City Office on the case. Wires were immediately sent calling all Agents then in the field to headquarters.

About 12:40 a.m., a message was received from the Agents stationed at the URSCHEL residence that JARRETT had returned. He was immediately brought to the police station and questioned by the writer and by Police Chief Watt.

He related that while driving out of the City the kidnapers had taken the pocket books of both him and URSCHEL, and after examining identification cards, etc., had taken about \$50.00 out of his pocket book and given it back to him. While driving along, one of the kidnapers said to the other: "Floyd give me a cigarette," evidently with the purpose of creating the impression that Charles "Pretty Boy" Floyd, notorious Oklahoma outlaw was one of the kidnapers. However, neither of the men resembled Floyd and their subterfuge was so obvious that it was properly discounted in subsequent investigation.

JARRETT, while quite agitated, was able to describe quite accurately the route taken to a point about 10 miles northeast of Oklahoma City, where the car was stopped on a lonely road. He was put out, told to keep his mouth shut and get home. After starting back on foot along the dirt road, he was overtaken by some boys in an old Ford whom he hired to take him back to town.

JARRETT gave a fair description of the two men; but as to the car, was confused as to whether it was a coach or a sedan, and did not secure any license number.

This was the first commercial kidnaping to have occurred in Oklahoma. Hence, authorities were at a loss as to whom to suspect. Photos of numerous Oklahoma outlaws and police characters were pulled from police files and taken to the URSCHEL residence with JARRETT, where all were exhibited to MRS. URSCHEL, MRS. JARRETT and to JARRETT. But no definite identification was made.

Composite descriptions, as given by the JARRETTs and MRS. URSCHEL, were compared with literally hundreds of police photos.

It was learned that no previous threat to kidnap, which appeared serious, had been received by the URSCHEL family, and no suspicious letters at all had been received for several months.

At this time, about 4:00 a.m., JARRETT was put in a car with Division Agents and Police and instructed to follow, as near as he could, the route taken by the kidnapers.

He unerringly took the officers to the spot where he was released, although it was still dark and the route followed was quite intricate. The tracks where the car had stopped and JARRETT had been put out were quite plain, as well as JARRETT'S foot prints going back down the road. It might be interesting to note that the ease with which JARRETT took officers to the above spot caused considerable suspicion to be directed towards him as a possible "finger man." Other circumstances, as to his financial condition and certain circumstances in connection with the bridge party, strengthened this suspicion; but suffice it to say that nothing was ever developed along this line.

At the spot where JARRETT was released, efforts were made to photograph the tracks of the automobile. But, owing to improper colored background, the efforts were not successful. However, it was definitely determined by a tire expert that the tracks were those of United States Rubber Company tires, of a size used on a certain model Chevrolet.

The tracks of this car turned south at the point where JARRETT was released, and were followed in that direction for about 3 or 4 miles and then 1 mile northeast by Division Agents and Police. There the trail was lost, by reason of later traffic. Owing to the several turns made by the kidnapers' car, it was difficult to decide definitely what direction it would eventually take. Since the travel so far had been in the darkness of night and over infrequented roads, no one could be located who had seen the car.

In the meantime, at the URSCHEL residence, a heavy Police guard had been placed, with Division Agents inside the house who answered all telephone calls and received all mail.

The full cooperation of the members of the URSCHEL FAMILY was solicited and secured MRS. URSCHEL stating that she was in the hands of her Government and would do any and all things we might request. She was given complete assurance that the Government's first concern would be the safe return of her husband; that while we would not interfere with any plans to insure the safe return of MR. URSCHEL, we would need to be informed of every development as it came up.

Early in the game, there were those who insisted that the kidnaping was a frame-up; that the URSCHEL Estate had borrowed to the limit; that URSCHEL had had himself kidnaped in order that funds might be raised for payment of an ostensible ransom, etc. This caused an examination of the will of the late T.B. SLICK, wherein it was discovered that a certain Board of Trustees had been named, with provisions as to their successors, in the event of demise of any of them. This led to a certain attorney, who would have been first in line as successor to URSCHEL, in the event of his death. (It will be noted that up to now it was not known whether URSCHEL had been taken for ransom or for a more sinister purpose). Naturally, in the circumstances, and coupled with certain information as to this attorney's character, and although he had been fully trusted by the URSCHEL family, he became a person of considerable interest and inquiry, including adequate telephone surveillance. Similar surveillance was maintained over the main switchboard in

the SLICK ESTATE offices, and also over the offices of other suspected persons. One hundred per cent cooperation from the offices of public communications systems was had in this case.

21705

By now, the Director had sent SAC Jones, from the San Antonio Office, SAC Blake, from the Dallas Office, and Agents [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from their respective Districts to assist in the investigation.

Practically all routine business of the Oklahoma City Division Office was stopped. Clocks and beds became relics of a bygone age, and Division Agents took complete charge of the investigation, although it had not been determined whether a Federal offense had been committed.

In this program, we were fortunate in having the full and complete cooperation of the Police Department and Sheriff's Office, who placed their whole resources at our command and practically under our direction; and while not evading any of their own responsibilities, at the same time looked to us for direction and leadership.

This sensational abduction of one of Oklahoma's most prominent citizens aroused such national and international interest as to cause three or four newspapers to set up a telephone station and temporary office across the street from the URSCHHEL home, with crews of reporters, photographers, etc., on 24 hour duty. This newspaper surveillance was so thorough that it severely handicapped investigative and contact efforts in that no member of the URSCHHEL household or no Division Agent could leave the premises without being tailed by reporters.

On Tuesday after the abduction, [REDACTED] of the URSCHHEL'S and co-trustee of the Estate, arrived and, together with E. E. Kirkpatrick, partner in the Estate, took charge of the family affairs. [REDACTED] happened to be an old friend of Agent in Charge Gus Jones and Kirkpatrick also. Through these, it was then possible to solidify and guarantee the further absolute cooperation on the part of those most affected. This perfect coordination continued to the very end.

Now began floods of fake telephone calls and letters, purporting to be from the abductors, and it was no small task to sift the wheat from the chaff.

A series of phone calls which it appeared might be actually from the abductors, were received. Division Agents handling the matter were at once consulted and, on their advice, a test was made to ascertain whether or not the parties attempting to make contact were actually holding URSCHHEL. To do this, it was necessary for MRS. URSCHHEL to agree to pay \$5,000 for evidence of the possession by the alleged abductors of any identifiable property of MR. URSCHHEL, such as his watch, and she agreed to meet the contact man at the designated spot with this amount of money.

On the advice of Agents, the money was put up in five separate packages so that if the parties were contacted and produced proper evidence, the whole amount could be handed over in good faith. If not, and it proved to be a hijacking, perhaps only one package would be lost. The latter turned out to be the net result and the net loss was one thousand dollars. The net gain was the determination of the fact that still no genuine contact had been made. To carry out the above

b7C

test, it was necessary for MRS. URSCHER and [REDACTED] to be smuggled out of the URSCHER house and for Division Agents to refrain from any activity whatsoever.

21706

At this time, it was felt that the constant heavy police guard and the army of newspaper sleuths was seriously handicapping any possible contact with the kidnapers. The police were withdrawn and ostensibly so were all Division Agents and public announcement in the press was made to that effect. However, Division Agents were kept in the house, unknown to anyone except the immediate family. Then the press was prevailed upon to withdraw their forces from the immediate vicinity, at least temporarily. The latter concession was secured only after the utmost difficult persuasion. *

Agreement was had by Division Agents with the URSCHERS and their representatives that should a genuine contact be made with the abductors and negotiations entered into, that Division Agents would not engage in any activity which might jeopardize the negotiations; that, in fact, we preferred them not to advise us of any negotiations or contacts until release had been effected. In return, the family had agreed that once MR. URSCHER was safe every bit of information available would be furnished us.

At this time, arrangements were made that if any contact was effected and payment of ransom made, that a record be kept of the serial numbers and description of the ransom money for future use.

During a period of more or less apparent inactivity on the part of Division Agents, and because the Press could learn nothing of what was being done, one of the large publishing companies wired a long protest to Washington, requesting that competent investigators be put on the job. This was done in a spirit of pique because of their consistent failure to obtain from Division Agents the full story of our activities. It happened that exactly the same crew of Agents who were then on the job were the ones who finally brought the case to a successful conclusion, which necessitated the papers to make a sort of left-handed apology for their previous action.

On Wednesday morning, July 26, at Tulsa, Okla., a Western Union Messenger boy delivered to JOHN G. CATLETT, a personal friend of the URSCHER'S, a package containing certain personal documents of CHARLES URSCHER, with a letter to CATLETT, from URSCHER, in the latter's handwriting, in which CATLETT was asked to get into immediate contact with E. E. KIRKPATRICK, business associate of URSCHER, and deliver to him another typewritten letter, written by the abductors and instructing that if the family desired to open negotiations, they should run a certain worded advertisement in the Daily Oklahoman on July 27th, to run for one week. (Proper efforts to identify the persons who delivered the package to Western Union at Tulsa were later made, but without success).

CATLETT did as instructed, proceeded to Oklahoma City at once and delivered the letter to KIRKPATRICK, and the ad was placed as directed.

On July 28, a Special Delivery, Air Mail, letter, postmarked: "Joplin, Mo., 3 p.m., July 27," addressed to: "Box 67, The Daily Oklahoman," was delivered to KIRKPATRICK. It was from the abductors and instructed him to pack \$200,000 in used \$20.00 Federal Reserve notes in a light colored tan hand bag; to board an

M. K. & T. train at Oklahoma City, at ten p.m. on the night of July 29, with ticket and Pullman to Kansas City, Mo., upon arrival there, to register at the Muehlback Hotel, as E.E. Kincaid, Little Rock, Ark., when he would receive further instructions. P 21707

b7C
KIRKPATRICK, with [REDACTED] procured the money, in the form of ten thousand used \$20.00 notes of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, at the First National Bank and Trust Co., in Oklahoma City, packed them as directed, after having the serial numbers (which were not in sequence) recorded. He proceeded as directed and checked in at the Muehlback Hotel on the morning of July 30th. Shortly after ten a.m., he received a Postal Telegram from one C. H. Moore, sent from Tulsa, Oklahoma, saying that due to an unforeseen incident contact would be delayed; but that he would receive a telephone call about 6:00 p.m.

At about 5:30 p.m., he did receive a telephone call from a person who identified himself as the sender of the telegram, and who instructed him to take a cab to the La Salle Hotel, to alight there and walk West.

KIRKPATRICK did so, and, after walking half a block or so, was met by a man who said: "All right, Kirkpatrick, I'll take that bag," whereupon he did so and told KIRKPATRICK to return to the Hotel, where he would phone him later, and that the "deeds to the farm" ought to be received within 12 hours,--meaning, of course, that URSCHER would be home in that time.

On July 31st, at about 11:00 p.m., the Oklahoma City Division Office received a telephone message from the URSCHER home saying that "Mr. URSCHER has just returned home."

The writer and Agent in Charge Jones proceeded there immediately and found that MR. URSCHER had been released by two men in a car near Norman, Okla., about 20 miles south of Oklahoma City, at approximately 10:00 p.m., and was instructed to proceed to his home. He had procured a taxi and had done so. He was very nervous and exhausted and was only questioned briefly at this time.

All the activity herein related from the time JOHN CATLETT received the first communication, up to the time URSCHER arrived home, had been without the specific knowledge of Division Agents. We were aware that something was going on. But, in accordance with our previous agreement, we had refrained from inquiry, so as to give full opportunity for the completion of any transactions which might effect the safe return of MR. URSCHER.

MR. URSCHER was at this time quite pessimistic about ever apprehending the kidnapers, and seemed to have no idea as to where he had been held captive, stating that in so far as he knew it might have been in any one of three or four different states.

b7C
Immediately after Urschel returned, it was ascertained from Kirkpatrick and [redacted] that the \$200,000 ransom money consisted of \$20.00 notes on the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, Mo., serial numbers of these notes having been placed on small slips of paper by the Bank employees and thrown indiscriminately into a box, without regard to numerical sequence. However, as a preliminary step towards locating any of the ransom money which might be put in circulation, every Division Office was requested, by wire, to notify every bank in their respective districts to look out for any large deposits or exchange of large amounts of used \$20.00 notes on said Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. This necessitated notification of thousands of banks and was, of course, a rather indefinite clue.

21708

In the meantime, the entire force of the Oklahoma City Office was put to work sorting and arranging in numerical sequence the 10,000 tickets representing the serial numbers of the individual bank notes. This was a huge task in that the serial numbers ran anywhere from 3 figures to 8 figures and necessitated the sorting and arranging of the 10,000 tickets approximately 20 times. However, this task was completed in 16 hours, the list properly typed, and on its way to the Division in Washington by air mail for printing and distribution to 17,000 banks.

On August 4, 1933, a wire was received from the St. Paul Office to the effect that the Hennepin State Bank, of Minneapolis, Minn., had reported the receipt of \$1000 in one batch of used \$20.00 notes on the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, in connection with their sale of a Cashier's Check in the sum of \$1800. Again on August 5th, the St. Anthony Falls Branch of the Northwestern National Bank, of Minneapolis, Minn., received a \$500 deposit, all of the same bills. The serial numbers were furnished the Oklahoma City Office and quickly compared with the list of the original ransom money, and it was definitely determined that both lots of money were a part of the original ransom fund.

Quick work by the St. Paul Office resulted in the arrest of some 7 suspects who had had something or other to do with the passing of this money. It was determined that they had handled altogether \$5500, their claim being that the money was paid to them by a Southern bootlegger in an alcohol transaction. The persons arrested in connection with this angle at that time were: Earney Berman, Clifford Skelly, Isadore Blumenfield, Sam Kronick, Sam Kozberg, Charles Wolk, and Peter Valder. Protracted grilling of these 7 suspects produced no tangible results whatever as to the identity of the kidnapers; nor did extended subsequent investigation connect them directly with the kidnapers.

The next day after his return, Mr. Urschel, having had a good night's sleep and being refreshed, was questioned for 6 hours. He is a man of brilliant mind and cool headed and was able to recall many details of events transpiring from the time of his abduction until the time of his release, a period of 9 days.

It was ascertained that after Jarrett had been released from the automobile 10 miles northeast of Oklahoma City, Urschel had been made to lie down in the back of the car, his captors remarking that they would probably meet some officers and, if they did, there would be shooting and that they did not desire to hurt him. After proceeding about 20 miles, he was handcuffed and his eyes blindfolded with adhesive tape. They drove, in a roundabout manner,

over apparently infrequented dirt roads until about 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, when they arrived at a house and the car was driven into some sort of enclosure or barn, the nature of which Urschel was, of course, unable to describe exactly. Here they remained for approximately 30 minutes and he was transferred into a larger car, and license plates were changed. Also, Urschel was able to determine from the sounds that gasoline was being taken from one car and being put into the other. Shortly before daylight, they left this place in the larger car and drove, continuously, in a roundabout manner until approximately 3:00 p.m. Sunday, July 23rd. He recalled that enroute they stopped once at a filling station run by a woman. 21709

Upon stopping at 3:00 o'clock that afternoon, the car in which he was captive was driven into a garage and one man remained with him on guard, until after dark when the other came back and they escorted him, still blindfolded, out of the garage to a distance of 50 or 60 feet into a house and into a bedroom. Urschel carefully remembered that when coming out of this garage he stepped up on to a boardwalk and then up a couple of steps into the house which apparently contained 3 or 4 rooms, judging from the noises and the doors through which he passed. He was confined in this room until dark on Monday, the 24th, being fed with meals prepared by some woman in the house whose voice he could hear. After dark, on the latter date, the two men placed him in a small roadster, one riding on each side of him, and each carrying machine guns. They drove for approximately 15 or 20 minutes over very rough roads and arrived at a house where he was taken out and taken inside, where apparently arrangements had been made to receive and care for him. Here he was placed under guard by the two men and a third, who apparently lived there, and forced to sleep on an old mattress on the floor and kept handcuffed. Urschel had remembered that at the first place where he was held captive there were a number of guinea hens whose presence he detected by their incessant noise.

On Tuesday, the 25th, one of his abductors asked Urschel to name a friend who would act as intermediary for him in negotiations looking to his release and finally John G. Catlett, of Tulsa, was agreed upon. The abductors then compelled him to write a letter to Catlett, which has been previously described herein as the first communication. They stood over him and one removed his blindfold sufficiently for him to look down and write. They would not let him look up. Urschel very cleverly remembered that the man who stood over him while writing this letter had very hairy hands and wore a gold ring with a red setting. One of his abductors apparently went away with this letter at this time and asked Urschel for his hat and shirt size.

The next day, or the next, the other abductor disappeared and an old man came to assist the third younger man in guarding and caring for Urschel. The first abductor reappeared, bringing Urschel a new shirt and new straw hat which had been purchased in Joplin, Mo. He also brought a steel chain about 20' in length and with which Urschel was chained to the bed or to a table at night.

The two guards, apparently natives of the vicinity, remained with him constantly and were not reluctant to engage in conversation. Urschel carefully noted significant remarks in an effort to gain some clue as to their identity or as to his own whereabouts. He observed that the older of the men, from his conversation, seemed to be sort of a boss in the community, perhaps a neighborhood political leader of the farmer type. This man frequently made remarks

on different subjects and used the phrase: "Down in Oklahoma." This was obviously for Urschel's benefit and in order to make him think he was perhaps north of Oklahoma. In various conversations with his guards, and judging from sounds which he heard about the place, the victim was able to deduce that they had about 5 or 6 hogs. He also heard the bellowing of a bull nearby and artfully abstracted from the younger of the two men the fact that it was a white-faced bull.

[21710

Urschel observed that water for the house was procured from a well situated to the north of the house according to his best ability to orient himself; and that this well was equipped with a rope and pulley which squeaked when water was being drawn. He observed that the country thereabouts was inhabited by many quail whose cries he could hear early each morning.

He engaged his guards in conversation about fishing, in an endeavor to ascertain whether they were located near streams and was able to deduce from their replies that such was not the case. He talked with them about crops and ascertained that it had been quite dry in that community; and that one of the crops raised around there was broom corn. He observed that the water which he drank was strongly impregnated with iron and that it had stained the kitchen utensils a rusty color. This latter information was secured because he was able to see out occasionally, in a downward manner, under his blindfold.

In casual conversation with one of his guards, he heard about a young girl in the community who was a public prostitute, with bookkeeping proclivities as to her business with the male sex.

He observed that twice a day could be heard the sound of an aeroplane passing over, always going in the same two directions. He realized that the place must be on or near a regularly travelled aeroplane route and therefore attached the proper importance to this event and by adroit questioning at proper times, finally was able to determine that this plane went north at 9:45 a.m. and south at 5:45 p.m. each day. Of course, his watch had been taken from him and it was therefore more difficult to elicit this information without raising the suspicion of his captors than would have been ordinarily.

He was careful to observe the weather and remembered distinctly the days on which it rained and those on which it did not. He was able to remember that on a certain day on which it rained heavily, the aeroplanes did not pass over.

During the period of his captivity, he was moved occasionally from one room to another in the house and allowed to walk about a little, blindfolded, however. In this manner, he determined the approximate shape and size of the house and the nature of its construction. He was able to state that in one room there was an old-fashion, round top, tin trunk; that in another there was a wooden bench; that there were no door knobs on one of the outside doors; and that there was a round hole through the door which was fastened with a wooden button on the inside. In a surreptitious manner, he was able to get a glimpse through one of the front windows and observed that there was a small porch on the front of the house which had holes in the roof.

He observed that each day fresh baker's bread and ice were brought to the

house and was able to learn that trips to town were necessary to secure the ice. On one day, several days after his abduction, he remarked that he would like to have a good meal, having been fed up to this time principally on canned goods and sandwiches. The next day a woman brought them a fried chicken dinner with all the accessories. The food was still warm and the woman had apparently walked from the place where it was prepared to the place where he was held captive.

21711

From remarks made by his guards, the victim was able to deduce that the place where he was being held was apparently the home of the younger guard who accidentally let slip the fact that he was married and that his wife had been sent away while Urschel was being held there.

About Saturday, July 29, the elder of his captors became worried about the failure of the two absent kidnapers to return and had informed Mr. Urschel that if the men did not get back in a day or two with the ransom money, he, himself, would take Mr. Urschel home.

On Sunday morning, July 30, a woman came to the house afoot, walking through the rain, and informed the elder man, who was guarding Mr. Urschel, that there had been a delay on account of the weather; and that the boys would not be back until the next day. She stated that she had received a telephone call to that effect.

On Monday, July 31, about 3:00 p.m., one of the abductors of Mr. Urschel came to the shack in which he was confined, shaved him or allowed him to shave himself, gave him the new shirt and new hat, placed him in, apparently, the same car in which he had been brought to the place and they left.

After travelling some few miles, they were apparently contacted by another car and the second abductor got in with Urschel. They drove continuously until 10:00 o'clock that night, over roads other than paved highways most of the time. About 10:00 p.m. they apparently drove through the outskirts of Norman, Oklahoma, to the northerly edge of that town, where they took the blindfolds off of Urschel's eyes, put him out of the car, near a barbecue stand, and directed him to proceed home, without telephoning to anyone, as described earlier in this report. Urschel was unable to see from which direction they had come to Norman. Upon continued and detailed questioning, however, he recalled that they crossed the Canadian River Bridge a half hour or so before arriving at Norman. Although blindfolded and in the dark, Urschel was able to recognize this bridge by its peculiar construction in that in coming to it from the south one goes down a steep hill and then goes up a steep approach to the bridge which is of steel construction but with wooden flooring, which is loose and rattles with the passing of an automobile. The length and contour of this bridge are well known to Mr. Urschel who has travelled over it many times and from the familiar sensations, he was able definitely to establish the fact that his captors had evidently brought him at least from a point south of this bridge which is known as the Lexington Purcell Bridge, some 40 miles south of Oklahoma City.

Mr. Urschel was still, of course, unable to say how far he had been hauled, as his captors had evidently purposely, and with cunning, driven many hours longer than was necessary to cover the direct distance from the place of

his abduction to the place of his captivity. In fact, judging from his calculation as to the speed travelled and the hours consumed, it would have been possible for him to have been 500 or 600 miles from Oklahoma City and either in the State of Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, Colorado, Texas, or Oklahoma. 21712

A careful summation and study of all the bits of information furnished by Urschel was made with a view, of course, to determining, first, the place of his captivity. First importance was attached to the information relative to the daily passing of the aeroplane at designated hours. An intensive study of various aeroplane commercial lines was begun, finally resulting in the information that the Bowen Air Lines' commercial route from Tulsa to Dallas had a schedule in which the northbound plane would be over the same spot at 9:45 a.m. as would the southbound plane at 5:45 p.m. This spot was indicated to be, roughly, 100 miles northeast of Oklahoma City, and in the approximate vicinity of Weleetka and Wetumka, Oklahoma. Due consideration was given to the few miles of possible variation on account of head or tail winds, or side drift on account of cross winds; but this was determined to be the general vicinity which would meet the required conditions. Agents flew over this route, after having made arrangements with the pilots of the regular planes to fly as low as regulations permitted in order to allow observation of places on the ground which might fit the description given by Urschel as to his prison. It will be noted that Urschel had furnished what turned out to be a very good description of the shack in which he was confined.

A large oil concern placed at the disposal of Division Agents one of their private planes and pilots, in which additional flights were made over the terrain above described, but no success was had in locating a place of the type described.

Agents were also sent into that section in automobiles, together with officers familiar with the territory, and 3000 miles were driven in the immediate vicinity in an effort to locate characters described by Mr. Urschel as his guards and places such as described herein, without success.

In the meantime, an intensive study had been made of weather reports for that section of Oklahoma, with regard to rains, and in checking up on this, it was found that the planes flying over this particular route had not missed a trip on the rainy Sunday described by Mr. Urschel. We, therefore, had to start all over again and make checks of the aeroplane schedules of commercial air lines operating within a radius of 600 miles of Oklahoma City. This brought to light another aeroplane schedule between Dallas and Wichita Falls, Texas, on which line was discovered another locality which met the requirements in so far as the passing of the planes at the hours of 9:45 a.m. and 5:45 p.m. had to do. This point was determined to be in the vicinity of Paradise, Texas. Weather maps of this vicinity disclosed that it had rained heavily in that vicinity on the particular Sunday. Inspection of the Air Company's records disclosed that on that particular day the planes had been diverted by reason of the storm. Agricultural crop reports from that vicinity disclosed a condition as described by Mr. Urschel, and the further fact that broom corn was grown in the neighborhood.

217-
-113 1

With this information, an Agent was dispatched into the vicinity of Paradise, with a full description of the two places where Mr. Urschel had been held. This Agent contacted an old time officer, thoroughly familiar with every detail of the farms and ranches in that vicinity, through whose assistance the Agent finally was taken to the farm of R. G. Shannon, about 4 miles west of Paradise, Texas. Under appropriate pretext, the Agent managed to enter the actual shack where Urschel had been confined, and by a quick and keen observation noted the many objects of furniture and so forth in the house which Urschel had previously described. The well, northwest of the house, with its rope and pulley, was there. The 5 hogs were in the barnyard. The white-faced bull was grazing nearby. The guinea hens, previously mentioned by Urschel, were located at the main farm house of R. G. Shannon about a mile away from the shack. It was ascertained by cautious inquiry that a 16 year old girl prostitute lived nearby.

Prior to this time, some suspicion was directed to this same locality by detectives of the Ft. Worth, Texas, Police Department who had information that the Shannon farm was somewhat of a rendezvous for criminals; that the Shannons were the mother and step-father, respectively, of one Catherine Thorne Kelly, whose husband, known as George Kelly, was a bandit and bank robber.

Upon receiving telephonic report from Agent [redacted] who had made the undercover investigation at Paradise, Texas, and vicinity, it became certain that the place of Urschel's captivity had been definitely located and steps were taken to visit the place immediately.

All
b7c

Agents Jones, [redacted] and [redacted] accompanied by Mr. Urschel and by Chief Deputy Sheriff [redacted] of Oklahoma City, left Oklahoma City immediately upon Friday afternoon, August 11, after having made arrangements for Agents from the Dallas Office, together with members of the Dallas Police Force, and with detectives from the Fort Worth Police Department, to meet the Oklahoma City party at Denton, Texas, where it was planned to raid the Shannon farm that afternoon. However, some delays were encountered and it was seen that arrival at the farm would be too late in the evening to accomplish a thorough raid and search before darkness. Therefore, matters were continued until next morning when it was planned to reach the farm about daylight.

The raid was executed as then planned and the farmhouse of R. G. Shannon was first visited. At this point, R. G. Shannon and wife were located and apprehended and Harvey Bailey, notorious bandit and escaped convict from Lansing Penitentiary, was found asleep on a cot in the backyard and captured, together with his automatic pistol, automatic rifle, and machine gun.

Urschel at this time was able to identify R. G. Shannon as one of his captors and, in fact, practically identified this place as the one where he was held on the first day of his captivity.

The raiders then hurriedly made their way to the shack home of Armond Shannon, son of R. G., and located about a mile away from the main farmhouse, where Armond Shannon and his wife were apprehended. Urschel, of course,

immediately identified the place and Armond Shannon and at this time Armond Shannon recognized and called Urschel by his name. 21714

When Bailey was searched, \$700 of the original ransom money was found in his pockets. Subsequently, confessions were obtained from R. G. and Armond Shannon as to their part in the affair and implicating George Kelly, Catherine Kelly, and one George Bates, alias G. L. Davis, Kelly and Bates being indicated as the actual kidnapers.

All
b7c

The four Shannons and Bailey were taken to jail at Dallas, Texas, on August 12, and a nationwide search begun for Bates, alias Davis, and Kelly and his wife. On this same date there was received at the Fort Worth Police Department a telegram from Denver, Colo., addressed to Detectives [redacted] and [redacted] signed by George L. Davis, and stating that Davis was in jail at Denver and urging [redacted] and [redacted] to proceed there immediately by aeroplane, as Davis was wanted at two points in Texas for bank robbery, and that other officers had placed hold orders and were attempting to procure custody. It was apparent from the wording of the telegram that the person sending it was desirous of getting into the custody of Detectives [redacted] and [redacted] as soon as possible, in order to prevent being taken somewhere else where he was badly wanted. Upon receipt of this wire, [redacted] and [redacted] immediately recognized that it was from George Bates, with whom they had no doubt had previous contact, it having been developed by now that these two officers had been more or less familiar with George and Catherine Kelly and their associates

Upon learning of the arrest of the alleged Davis in Denver, telephonic communication with Agents in Denver disclosed the information that Davis, when arrested, had in his pockets about \$700 in \$20.00 notes of the Federal Reserve Bank, of Kansas City, and a check disclosed that the serial numbers of these bills corresponded with like numbers of the ransom money. Complaint was therefore immediately filed against him. In the meantime, the Railway Express Agent were endeavoring to hook Bates up with the robbery of several thousand dollars worth of Express Travellers' Checks. He was also wanted in several states on bank robbing charges. However, the Denver Police Authorities consistently held him for the Government.

The Railway Express Agency tied up by Court attachment all funds in the possession of Bates, alias Davis, on the pretense that even the \$700 ransom money found in Bates' possession was the proceeds of stolen traveller checks belonging to that corporation. These funds were impounded in the State District Courts of Denver and it was only after threats by the U.S. District Judge at Oklahoma City to cite the Clerk of said Court for contempt if he failed to produce these particular moneys in response to a sub poena which was procured for the production of this money in Court to be used as evidence.

After the true identity of the kidnapers was disclosed, it was also discovered that George Kelly Barnes and wife Catherine Kelly Barnes, heretofore known as George Kelly and Catherine Thorne Kelly, had frequently used and travelled in the names of R. G. Shannon and Ora L. Shannon which are the true names of Catherine Kelly's step-father and her mother. It was likewise discovered that George Bates, alias George L. Davis, etc., had frequently used the name of Feldman; and that numerous telegrams had been exchanged between these parties in the names above mentioned. Therefore, most intensive investigation of the records of telegraph companies at Dallas, Texas; Paradise, Texas; Den

21715 1

Colorado; and Oklahoma City, was made with the resultant disclosure of many telegrams over a period of several months, indicating constant communication between Bates and Kelly under their various names, including that of L. E. Lang, and which telegrams were finally located and produced under sub poenas duces tecum, it being noted that telegrams were also sent and received at Stratford, Oklahoma; at which place Kelly and his wife were using the name of T. H. Coleman, which is the name of the grandfather and grandmother of Catherine Thorne Kelly Barnes. These telegrams played an important part in the conviction of subjects when introduced in evidence.

Disclosures by the Shannons and resultant investigation made at Stratford and vicinity, Oklahoma, brought forth evidence to the effect that for two or three days prior to the kidnaping, George Kelly and wife had been stopping at the farm of Catherine Kelly's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. T. M. Coleman, at Stratford, and where they were joined by Bates; that on the afternoon preceding the kidnaping, Kelly and Bates had left for Oklahoma City, Catherine remaining at the farm; that shortly before daylight on Sunday morning, July 23rd, Kelly and Bates returned with Urschel a captive, changed cars, and left almost immediately after old lady Coleman had informed them that they could not stay there. Catherine Kelly also immediately departed, alone, in her Ford Roadster.

It has been indicated that had the Colemans permitted the abductors to remain at their farm with Urschel, he would not have been taken out of the state of Oklahoma and hence the Federal jurisdiction of the case would have been lost.

The Colemans, when first detained, were hostile and uncommunicative but later broke down and testified freely for the Government.

Handwritten note:
From March 1933
St. Paul, Minn.

After the apprehension of the Shannons, Harvey Bailey, and Bates, the Grand Jury, at Oklahoma City, returned indictments charging those, together with George and Catherine Kelly, and the 7 Minneapolis and St. Paul defendants, hereinbefore mentioned, with kidnaping and conspiracy.

The only charge which could be made against the St. Paul defendants was that they had knowingly received and assisted in exchanging a portion of the ransom money, knowing its true character at the time of their acceptance and exchange of same.

In September, 1933, Harvey Bailey, George Bates, R. G. Shannon, Ora L. Shannon, Armond Shannon, and the seven St. Paul defendants, were placed on trial at Oklahoma City; the defendants George Kelly Barnes and Catherine Kelly Barnes still being fugitives. It will be noted that while Harvey Bailey was being held in jail at Dallas, pending removal, he had, with the connivance of certain jailers, made his escape but was recaptured on the same day near Ardmore, Oklahoma. All defendants pleaded "Not Guilty." The trial resulted in the conviction of Bailey, Bates, R. G., Ora L., and Armond Shannon, and Edward Barney German, and Clifford Kelly.

While the trial of the aforementioned was in progress, concentrated efforts were being made to locate the fugitive Kellys. It had been ascertained that at Cleveland, Ohio, in June, prior to the kidnaping, they had purchased

a 16 cylinder Cadillac Sedan, making a down payment of \$1000, title being issued in the name of Ora L. Shannon. Upon ascertaining these facts, and that they still owed on the car, arrangements were made to cover their possible appearance in Cleveland. Unfortunately, these arrangements were perfected one day too late and it was ascertained that they did appear there on August 8th, paid their balance due on their 16 Cylinder Cadillac, amounting to some \$1800, and deposited \$500 on the purchase price of a new Cadillac 12. By this time, they had become aware that their connection with the kidnapping had been disclosed and they went on the dodge, disposing of their big Cadillac by storing it in Chicago and purchasing a small Chevrolet Coupe.

During the course of the trial of the first group of defendants at Oklahoma City, through a confidential source it was ascertained that an attorney named Roberts, from Enid, Oklahoma, was stopping at the Skirvin Hotel, Oklahoma City, claiming that he was representing George and Catherine Kelly; and that he was contacting a man who claimed to be contact man for Kelly and who was stopping in the same Hotel with two women.

Immediate close cover was placed on these persons and it was observed that not only Roberts but some of the leading attorneys for the Shannons made contact with this room occupied by the so-called contact man and the two women. Investigation of Agents disclosed that Attorney Roberts and the alleged contact man, Luther Arnold, had arrived at the Hotel on the same day; and that all bills were being charged to Arnold's room.

A vactuphone set was installed in an adjoining room and Agents placed on 24 hours shift for observation purposes. However, before results could be had, one of the women, in moving the bed, accidentally dislodged the microphone and disrupted the plans.

However, it was learned that Arnold had departed for Texas, ostensibly to contact Kelly and his wife. Enough evidence had been discovered to warrant investigation of Arnold and the two women for violation of the White Slave Traffic Act. Therefore, when he returned he and the two women were immediately arrested for investigation on such charge.

Through vigorous, but appropriate, methods, Arnold was convinced that he should give all information in his possession to the Government and, in order to cover him up, a charge of violation of the White Slave Traffic Act was filed against him with the two women named as material witnesses. He was allowed to make bond after arrangements had been made for his proper surveillance.

From Arnold it was learned that some two weeks before while he, his wife, and 12 year old daughter were hitch-hiking through Texas, they had been picked up by Catherine Kelly, who was travelling alone and who had approached them to act as contacts to arrange for counsel for the Kellys, in Oklahoma, and otherwise keep them posted as to the progress of the case. Catherine Kelly had furnished Arnold with the Chevrolet car which they had purchased in Chicago, and with several hundred dollars in money, and furthermore had taken old, his wife, and their daughter to San Antonio, Texas, where a house was used to serve as meeting place and rendezvous for Kelly and his wife. Kelly visited there once and both he and Catherine Kelly departed, taking the

12 year old Arnold girl with them, ostensibly for only a one day trip, but never having been seen again by Arnold or his wife. Arnold had expected that the Kellys would return momentarily to the house in San Antonio which was, therefore, kept under proper surveillance for a reasonable time and, nothing having shown up, Mrs. Arnold was arrested and confirmed the information previously given by her husband.

21717

In the meantime, J. T. Brooks, father of Catherine Kelly, had moved from Fort Worth to Oklahoma City, stopping in a cheap rooming house. Proper surveillance over this place, including the telephone, had been established and about this time a Citizen's Committee, of Oklahoma City, offered rewards totalling \$15,000 for the apprehension of George and Catherine Kelly. This aroused the cupidity of the landlady where Brooks was stopping and she too became confidential informant, co-operating in so far as she was able. It was known that Arnold and Brooks, the father of Catherine were in communication. And while Arnold had promised faithfully to shoot square, every precaution was taken to see that there was no doublecross. Therefore, Arnold's telephone in his room, as well as the telephone at the Brooks room, was properly covered 24 hours per day.

All of these precautions necessitated the employment of 8 or 10 extra telephone operators, besides the confidential co-operation of telephone switchboard operators in Hotels.

On September 25, while Agent was assisting in covering the movements of Arnold, at Welles-Roberts Hotel, at Oklahoma City, a Western Union telegram arrived for him which was intercepted before delivery, same being sent from Fort Worth, Texas, that afternoon, signed "Gerry," and stating that she would arrive at Oklahoma City at 10:35 that night and for him to meet her. "Gerry" was the 12 year old daughter of Arnold. Nothing was said to Arnold about the telegram and delivery was made to ascertain if he would keep faith. He did, immediately calling the Division Office, advising of its receipt.

He was instructed to meet the train and to bring his daughter to the apartment of the writer. The arrival of the train was covered by other Agents as was Arnold's trip to the apartment of Agent, where Arnold and his wife brought their daughter immediately. In the meantime, the Dallas office had been requested, by phone, to check the sending of the said telegram from Fort Worth.

Immediately this girl arrived at Agent's apartment, where Assistant Director Nathan was waiting, we ascertained from her the story of her travels with George and Catherine Kelly from San Antonio, Texas, through northern Texas, up into Chicago and thence to Memphis, Tenn.

It was ascertained that George and Catherine Kelly were then stopping in Memphis, at the house of a paralytic called "Tich," who operated a garage and used car place; and that Geraldine Arnold, the 12 year old girl, accompanied by one Ramsey, a lawyer of Memphis, and who was the brother of Kelly's first wife, had been sent by Kelly to Coleman, Texas, to the farm of J.C. Coleman, for the purpose of recovering a large sum of the ransom money which had been buried on the Coleman farm; that they had been unsuccessful in inducing Coleman to dig up the money. They had then proceeded to Fort Worth intending to come to Oklahoma City where they were to contact the Arnold girl's parents and see what could be

done. The girl, however, had persuaded Ramsey to put her on a train at Fort Worth while he followed by car.

21718

At this moment, about 11:00 p.m., a telephone call was received from the Dallas Office, advising that at the same time that the telegram to Arnold had been filed, another had been filed by the same man, addressed to J. R. Tichnor, Central Garage, Memphis, Tenn., advising him that the deal had been a failure and to communicate with the sender at Gainesville, Texas, immediately.

Upon mentioning the name "Tichnor" to the Arnold girl, she recalled that this was the full name of the man at whose house Catherine and George Kelly were stopping in Memphis. She described accurately the location and the house.

The Birmingham Office was immediately called by telephone and advised as to the exact whereabouts of George and Catherine Kelly. The Agent in Charge was instructed by Assistant Director Nathan to proceed immediately to Memphis, by aeroplane, with a suitable number of Agents and to contact the Police there immediately for a proper raid on the Tichnor premises. The Director was contacted in Washington, by telephone, and instructed that Agents from the St. Louis Office be also dispatched by aeroplane.

All this was accomplished, the Birmingham Office having great difficulty in procuring a plane at that time of night. However, the plans were successfully carried out and George and Catherine Kelly were apprehended at Memphis at daylight on the morning of the 26th of September.

Kelly had his hair dyed a dirty yellow and Catherine was wearing a red wig over her closely cropped, dark brown hair. They did not, however, deny their identity.

Previous underground information had been received from a more or less reliable source to the effect that a portion of the ransom money was buried on the farm of J. C. Coleman, in Texas, which information was strongly confirmed by the story of the Arnold girl. Therefore, immediately upon the apprehension of the Kellys, telephonic request was made of the Dallas Office to cause the immediate apprehension and detention of J.C., or "Cass", Coleman, the uncle of Catherine Kelly.

b7C
At 10:40 a.m., September 26, the writer, accompanied by SAC Jones, of the San Antonio Office, left Oklahoma City by automobile, proceeding to Dallas where we picked up SAC Blake, of the Dallas Office, proceeding thence to Coleman and to the farm of Cass Coleman where we found the latter under guard of the Sheriff of that County, Tom Mills and Agent [REDACTED]. At this time, Coleman said that he was ready to talk and that he had realized that he had gotten in bad and wanted to get out of it the best way he could. He had been shown the newspapers of that day, reflecting the capture of the Kellys in Memphis, and decided to tell what he knew.

He stated that a large amount of money was buried in his cotton field and that he would assist in digging it up; that the location of this money was known only to himself and to George Kelly.

We proceeded into the middle of a 240 acre cotton field and, at a spot indicated by Coleman, we dug up a two gallon thermos jug and a one gallon syrup can containing \$72,940 of the original ransom money.

Coleman was incarcerated and charged with harboring the Kellys.

The writer and Agent Jones returned directly to Oklahoma City with the recovered money, arriving there at 12:40 P.M., the 27th, and having driven 900 miles without rest.

On October 7th, 1933, George Kelly and Catherine Kelly, whose true names have been in the meantime disclosed as George Kelly Barnes and Catherine Kelly Barnes, having been removed from Memphis, Tenn., to Oklahoma City, were arraigned and pleaded: "Not Guilty." They went to trial on October 9, 1933, a jury returning a verdict of "Guilty" on 10/12/33.

The other defendants who had been convicted were, on October 7, 1933, sentenced as follows: Harvey J. Bailey; Albert L. Bates, alias George L. Davis; R. G. Shannon; and Ora L. Shannon, were sentenced to life imprisonment in a United States Penitentiary. Armond C. Shannon was, on the same date, sentenced to 10 years probation and paroled in the custody of his attorney. Subjects Berman and Skelly were sentenced to 5 years each in a United States Penitentiary, filing notice of appeal and allowed freedom on continuing bond.

On October 12, when the jury returned the verdict of "Guilty" as to George Kelly Barnes and his wife, they were both immediately sentenced to life imprisonment in a United States Penitentiary.

Thereafter J.C., "Cass", Coleman and one Will Casey were indicted, convicted, and sentenced in the Dallas District for harboring Kelly and his wife. Thomas L. Manion, and the other Deputy Sheriff at Dallas, Texas, who procured the escape of Harvey J. Bailey from jail at that place, were convicted and sentenced to the Penitentiary for assisting a Federal Prisoner to escape.

At Memphis, Tenn., Langford Ramsey and J. R. Tichnor were convicted and sentenced to the Penitentiary for harboring and concealing the Kellys. In Chicago two other persons, whose more specific identities are not recollected by the writer, at this time have been indicted for harboring and concealing the Kellys.

In this case it will be seen that practically every person having had any active part in the conspiracy from beginning to end, has been apprehended, convicted, and sentenced, even to a couple of Minneapolis gangsters whose only participation was an attempted exchange of some of the "hot" money for "clean" money. All of the principals, with the possible exception of a reputed finger man, or locator, have been convicted. Nearly one-half of the ransom money has been recovered.

The effective results accomplished in this case, were due to the whole.

hearted and vigorous, untiring efforts of the following Divisions, each of which had an active part in the investigation:

St. Paul,
Chicago,
Kansas City,
St. Louis,
Cincinnati,
Detroit,
Birmingham,
San Antonio,
Dallas,
Salt Lake City,
Portland,
Oklahoma City.

21780

The perfect and instantaneous co-ordination of effort on the part of the various offices, together with a very unusual response from the public, local and State officials, and public service corporations everywhere, all tended to the success of the undertaking.

The publicity given the case and the facilities afforded by the Court for such publicity, as a matter of public policy and interest, was unprecedented in Federal Courts, in that during the entire trial there were batteries of moving picture cameras, and sound recording instruments located in the Court Room itself.

The precautions taken by the Division in the transfer, safe-keeping, and guarding of the prisoners throughout the trial and prior thereto and until final delivery of the prisoners to their places of confinement was also extraordinary. Fortunately, due to such precautions no untoward event or escape occurred, with the exception of the jail break of Bailey who was recaptured after approximately 4 hours liberty.