

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
AND
PRIVACY ACTS**

Subject: Kate Barker "MA"

File Number: 7-576-8695



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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FBI ST PAUL 12-29-35 1-40 AM SWO

DIRECTOR

PHONE. BREKID. REFERENCE PHONE CALL OF SUPERVISOR ROSEN TO SPECIAL AGENT K B MCINTIRE AT ST PAUL ON DECEMBER 28 REQUESTING CERTAIN INFORMATION RE KATE BARKER.

INFORMATION AS FOLLOWS. KATE BARKER WAS RAISED IN THE VICINITY OF TULSA OKLAHOMA HER MAIDEN NAME BEING EFFIE GORDON. HER MOTHER HAS REARRIED ONE REUBEN B. REYNOLDS, ALSO KNOWN AS JAMES J. REYNOLDS, MOTHER AND STEP FATHER NOW LIVING AT 419 SOUTH WHEELING AVE TULSA. KATE HAS FOUR FULL SISTERS AND ONE HALF SISTER AS WELL AS ONE HALF BROTHER ALL REPORTED TO BE LIVING IN OKLAHOMA WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MRS VOSBURG OF LONG BEACH CALIF NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF RELATIVES NOT KNOWN KATES MOTHERS NAME IS ERMA REYNOLDS REYNOLDS NOW ABOUT SEVENTY YEARS OLD, LAST EMPLOYED AS A WATCHMAN AND DIRECTOR OF TRAFFIC AT THE OIL EXPOSITION AT TULSA. REYNOLDS LAST HEARD DIRECTLY FROM KATE BARKER ABOUT EIGHT YEARS AGO WHEN HE REFUSED TO LOAN HER SOME MONEY. THEY HAVE BEEN ON THE OUTS EVER SINCE. REYNOLDS CHARACTERIZED FRED AND ARTHUR BARKER AS BEING MEAN AND NO GOOD, THAT NEITHER OF THEM HAD DONE ANY WORK SINCE THEY GOT OUT OF THE PENITENTIARY THE FIRST TIME, THAT HE WAS SURPRISED THAT GOVERNOR MURRAY WOULD PAROLE SUCH A MAN AS DOG

BARKER. FOR ABOVE INFORMATION SEE LETTER OF LOS ANGELES TO ST PAUL DATED MAY

5, 1934.

RECORDED & INDEXED

7576-8695

KATE BARKER MARRIED GEORGE BARKER ABOUT THIRTY FIVE YEARS AGO THEY HAD FOUR SONS HERMAN BARKER, KILLED AT WICHITA KANSAS AUGUST 29, 1927 WHILE RESISTING

JAN 4 1936

DEC 31 1935

ONE

TELETYPE

ARREST HE WAS AN OKLAHOMA OUTLAW. FRED BARKER, KILLED IN RESISTING ARREST
ON JANUARY 16, 1935 NEAR OKLAHAWA FLORIDA. LLOYD BARKER RECEIVED LEAVENWORTH
PENITENTIARY JANUARY 16, 1922 CHARGE ROBBING U S MAILS SENTENCE 25 YEARS PRISON
NUMBER 17245 AND ARTHUR BARKER RECENTLY CONVICTED IN THE BREWER CASE AND SENT-
ENCED TO LIFE IN ALCATRAZ.

KATE KILLED NEAR OKLAHAWA ON JAN 16, 1935 ALSO

THIS IS GENERAL INFORMATION NO REFERENCE BEING MADE TO ANY PARTICULAR
CORRESPONDENCE.

KATE BARKER WAS VERY FOND OF HER SONS, PARTICULARLY ARTHUR AND THE FONDNESS
WAS RECIPROCATED. KATE WAS OF A CRIMINAL DISPOSITION AND CONDONED THE ACTS

OF HER SONS. WHEN FRED BARKER WAS ADMITTED TO THE KANSAS STATE PENITENTIARY
ON MARCH 12, 1927 HE STATED HE WAS BORN IN MISSOURI, AMERICAN, NO RELIGION,

OCCUPATION LAUNDRYMAN, SIXTH GRADE EDUCATION THAT HE HAD BEEN MARRIED TO BILLIE

ORE, NO CHILDREN OF THE UNION, THAT HIS PARENTS WERE LIVING AT 401 CINCINNATI

AVE, TULSA. FOR THIS INFORMATION SEE REPORT OF FORMER AGENT W F TRAINOR, KC

MO DATED FEB 20, 1934 PAGES 7 AND 8.

AGENT MCINTIRE RECALLS THAT PAULA HARMON ADVISED AGENTS THAT KATE BARKER

WHILE CONDONING THE CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES OF HER SONS DID NOT APPROVE THEIR

ASSOCIATION WITH WOMEN. UPON INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE BARKER BOWS PAULA HARMON

DELIVERED MONEY TO GEORGE BARKER AT NEOSHO MO DURING SUMMER OF 1934 ACCORDING

TO JESS DOYLE, ARTHUR BARKER HAD SOME REGARD FOR HIS FATHER BECAUSE AFTER DOC

BARKER'S RELEASE FROM OKLAHOMA STATE PEN ON SEPT 10, 1932 HE VISITED HIS FATHER

AT NEOSHO MISSOURI BEFORE PROCEEDING TO ST PAUL MINN TO JOIN HIS MOTHER AND

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GANG.

REFER REPORT OF FORMER AGENT H E HOLLES OKLAHOMA CITY DATED 3-7-34 IN WHICH IT

IS SHOWN THAT MRS. ELSA BARKER OF LINDSEY OKLAHOMA IS LISTED AS THE WIFE OF

ARTHUR BARKER PAGE FIVE OF SAID REPORT SHOWS THAT FRED BARKER HAD ANOTHER WIFE

TELETYPE

KNOWN AS JOHAN ARMOUR. SEE LETTER OF JACKSONVILLE TO BUREAU DATED FEB 7, 1935
WHERE FRANK DIXON ADMINISTRATOR ESTATE OF FRED BARKER ADVISED THAT GEORGE
BARKER WAS DIVORCED FROM KATE BARKER SEVERAL YEARS AGO EXACT DATE NOT KNOWN
THAT SINCE THE DIVORCE HE HAS LIVED IN FEAR OF HIS LIFE THAT HE HAS BEEN AFRAID
OF HIS WIFE AND SONS THAT KATE BARKER WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CRIMINAL LIVES
AND ACTIVITIES OF HER SONS THAT GEORGE BARKER NEVER TALKS OF HIS FAMILY THAT
HE NEVER MENTIONS THE BOYS UNLESS IT WOULD RELATE TO THE TIME WHEN THEY WERE
ALL CHILDREN THAT ON OCCASIONS GEORGE BARKER WOULD BAR HIS DOORS AND WINDOWS
WITH HEAVY TIMBERS FEARING THAT DURING THE NIGHT THE BOYS MIGHT COME IN AND ^{KILL} HIM.
SEE REPORT J L MADALA CHICAGO 3-30-35 PAGE THREE AND FOLLOWING TO EFFECT THAT
A W DUNLOP ALIAS GEORGE ANDERSON THE SUPPOSED HUSBAND OF KATE BARKER RENTED
A COTTAGE LOCATED ONE AND ONE HALF MILES FROM THAYER MISSOURI ON OR ABOUT
OCTOBER 12, 1931 THAT SHORTLY THEREAFTER FRED BARKER AND ALVIN KARPIS MOVED IN
WITH THEM THAT ON DECEMBER 18, 1931 KARPIS AND FRED BARKER ROBBED A STORE IN
WEST PLAINS MISSOURI THAT ON DECEMBER 19, 1931 KARPIS AND FRED BARKER WERE
ABOUT TO BE QUESTIONED BY SHERIFF C R KELLY OF WEST PLAINS AT WHICH TIME KARPIS
FIRED ON THE SHERIFF KILLING HIM THAT DUNLOPS HOUSE IN THAYER WAS RAIDED, WAS
FOUND TO HAVE BEEN ABANDONED SHORTLY BEFORE THE RAID THAT THERE WAS FOUND IN
SAID HOUSE CERTAIN LETTERS INDICATING THAT MRS G BARKER ALIAS MRS ARRIE
BARKER HAD FOUR YEARS PRIOR THERETO RESIDED AT 401 CINCINNATI STREET TULSA
APPARENTLY OWNING THIS PROPERTY THAT A W DUNLOP AND KATE BARKER THEN FLED
NORTHWARD TAKING RESIDENCE AT 1031 SOUTH ROBERTS STREET WEST ST PAUL MINNESOTA
WHERE THEY LIVED WITH FRED BARKER AND KARPIS THAT THESE PERSONS WERE SUSPICIONED
AND AT ONE AM ON APRIL 25, 1932 THEIR PRESENCE WAS REPORTED TO CHIEF OF POLICE
DAHILL AND CHIEF INSPECTOR JAMES CRUMLEY OF THE ST PAUL POLICE DEPARTMENT THAT
AT ABOUT SEVEN AM THE SAID PARTIES FLED BEFORE THE POLICE RAID WAS MADE, THAT
ON THE MORNING OF APRIL 26, 1932 THE BODY OF A W DUNLOP WAS FOUND ON THE SHORES

TELETYPE

OF LAKE FRENSTED NEAR WEBSTER WISCONSIN THAT THE BODY WAS STRIPPED OF CLOTHING AND SHOWED THAT IT HAD BEEN SHOT THREE TIMES AT SHORT RANGE THAT NOT FAR FROM THE BODY WAS FOUND A BLOOD STAINED WOMANS GLOVE THAT IT IS GENERALLY BELIEVED THAT DUNLOP WAS KILLED BY FRED BARKER AND KARPIS IN THE BELIEF THAT DUNLOP HAD TIPPED OFF THE POLICE.

SEE REPORT OF J L MADALA CHICAGO 3-30-35 -- PAGES SIX EIGHT AND NINE FOR THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION. THE FORT SCOTT KANSAS BANK ROBBERY WAS EFFECTED ON JUNE SEVENTEEN 1932 BY KARPIS, FRED BARKER, HARVEY BAILEY AND OTHERS, THAT DURING THE SUMMER OF 1932 KARPIS AND FRED BARKER WERE ASSOCIATING AT ST PAUL MINNESOTA WITH J EARL SMITH A TULSA CRIMINAL ATTORNEY WHO WAS LATER HIRED TO DEFEND HARVEY BAILEY ON THE FORT SCOTT BANK CHARGE. THAT SMITH IS REPORTED TO HAVE TURNED IN TWO BONDS IN THE DENOMINATION OF ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS TO FENCER AND BEANE BROKERS TULSA OKLAHOMA. THAT THESE BONDS WERE A PART OF THE LOOT OF THE SAID BANK ROBBERY. THAT SMITH DEFENDED BAILEY THE LATTER BEING CONVICTED. THAT SMITH LATER ADMITTED TO AUTEORITIES THAT THE BONDS HAD COME TO HIM FROM A THIRD PARTY WHO HAD COTTEN THEM FROM FRED BARKER. THAT ON THE MORNING OF AUGUST 12, 1932 SMITH RECEIVED A PHONE CALL PRESUMABLY FROM KARPIS INFORMING THAT FRED BARKER WISHED TO SEE SMITH IN TULSA THAT ON THE FOLLOWING MORNING SMITHS BODY WAS FOUND BULLET RIDDLED AT THE INDIAN HILLS COUNTRY CLUB FOURTEEN MILES NORTH OF TULSA OKLAHOMA. NO FURTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE RE YOUR REQUEST.

ANDERSEN

END

OK FBI WASHINGTON DC GHB

DISCONNECT

August 19, 1955

MEMORANDUM

RE: ~~KATE BARKER~~ ^{Summary}, with aliases
Kidnaping; Bank Robbery

BACKGROUND:

Kate Barker, known as "Ma" or "Mother," was born in the vicinity of Ash Grove, Missouri, known as the Ozark country, of Scotch-Irish parents. She was of an ordinary family and during her early life it appears that she was reared near the place of her birth. On September 14, 1892, as Arrie Clark, Kate was married to George E. Barker, at Ash Grove, Missouri, and their early married life was spent at Aurora, Missouri, where their four sons were born. About 1903 or 1904, the family moved from Aurora to Webb City, Missouri, where Herman and Lloyd, the elder sons, attended grade schools, and by the time Herman Barker had completed his grade school education, the family moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma. The two younger sons were Fred and Arthur.

Kate Barker's sons encountered difficulty with the law as early as 1915, and before long they were roving the countryside perpetrating burglaries, bank robberies and the entire gamut of vicious crimes. Kate, who liked to live well, bought expensive clothing, furniture and other items with the proceeds of her sons' depredations. She started stepping out and, in 1928, separated from her husband.

CRIMINAL CAREER:

On December 19, 1931, Fred Barker and Alvin Karpis, the latter a notorious gangster whom Fred had met in prison, fatally shot a sheriff at West Plains, Missouri. As a result of this murder, Kate Barker, accompanied by Fred, Alvin Karpis and another companion, fled to St. Paul, Minnesota. Meanwhile, police in several jurisdictions were seeking the criminals. In April, the bullet-riddled body of the trio's accomplice was found. The subsequent investigation caused the gang to flee again, this time to Kansas City, Missouri. There, they took up residence under the guise of respectable citizens, posing as being in the insurance business. The residence, however, actually served as a base from which they carried out their nefarious criminal activities, with the aid of half a dozen other equally notorious hoodlums with whom they had cast their lot. In July, 1932, when FBI Agents apprehended three members of the gang at a

- Tolson _____
- Boardman _____
- Nichols _____
- Belmont _____
- Harbo _____
- Mohr _____
- Parsons _____
- Rosen _____
- Tamm _____
- Tracy _____
- Winterrowd _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holloman _____
- Gandy _____

MLLong:rcw
(5) *rcw*

NOTE: IC # 7-576.

62-99379-9

ENCLOSURE

WLF

Kansas City golf course, Kate, Fred, Karpis and several of their companions again deemed it wise to move on. Back to St. Paul they went, and from there to a summer resort at nearby White Bear Lake. Continuing their criminal activities, consisting in the main of bank robbery at this stage, the band of lawbreakers was joined several months later by Arthur "Doc" Barker, just released from prison.

On June 15, 1933, William A. Hamm, Jr., member of a family prominent in the brewing industry in the St. Paul-Minneapolis area, was kidnaped by members of the mob. This crime netted the gangsters \$100,000 before Mr. Hamm was released. The resulting police investigation again forced the mobsters to move, but before fleeing to Chicago they paused long enough to commit a payroll robbery during which one police officer was murdered and another seriously wounded.

In less than a month, the gang once more turned to murder, their victim again being a policeman. They continued to ravage the midwest, perpetrating one bank robbery after another with intermittent kidnapings and other equally vicious crimes, conceived and planned in the mind of Kate Barker.

On January 17, 1934, Edward George Bremer, president of a St. Paul bank, became the second prominent member of that community to fall victim to the kidnaping exploits of the mob in less than a year. Three weeks later the bandits, richer by \$200,000 in ransom money, released their victim, but the job of the FBI had just begun. There followed one of the most widespread and relentless investigations ever undertaken by the FBI.

DISPOSITION:

Twenty-five persons were convicted as a result of the abduction of Edward George Bremer. Six life sentences were handed down, and others in the case received sentences totaling one hundred years and one day. The investigation at last brought Special Agents to the cottage at Lake Weir near Ocala, Florida, where Kate had taken refuge with her son Fred. On January 16, 1935, Agents surrounded the cottage and issued the command for the surrender of the occupants. Kate and Fred Barker replied with a blast of machine gun fire. The FBI men responded with their own machine guns, tear gas bombs and rifle fire. When they entered the house more than an hour later, they found Fred Barker dead with a .45 caliber automatic by his side. Kate Barker was dead, too, a machine gun lying near her left hand.