1935

Jesse James- FBI Files part four

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December 6, 1925

30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York

Room 5600

Dear Mr. Whitley,

Here are the letters I mentioned to you over the telephone this morning. I will telephone you next week.

Very sincerely,

[Signature]

Mr. E. Whitley
370 Lexington Ave.
New York City, N. Y.
Anonymous
Post marked Jacksonville, Fla.

2 boys convinced Mr. R. is Jesse James. Ask Mr. R. to contact them thru the personal column of the newspaper saying "Come home at once Dexter". If not they will take the matter up with the government.

b9c.

HP
Mr. Rockwell

We have written you once about your life, but did not receive any answer. We are sure that you are interested in the land.

Put a message in the Personal section of the paper either one for a week. This is our last letter. If we do not receive a message in the next ten days, we are going to take it up with the U.S. Government. Or to the U.S. D.G.Y. Cut. in the paper. You are right.

Dick

This is our last letter.

Ball and Child
Dear Mr. Rockyfellow,

Mr. Rockyfellow, we are just two boys and find it is very much like that of Jesse James, the Western outlaw. Will you contact us through newspapers under the following: "Please come home at once. Letter to government." I think this is all that need to be said. We would like to see you personal.

P.S.

We are sure that you are Jesse James.
Special Agent in Charge, New York, New York,

May, 1935.

[Signature]

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Visiting Director.

Dear Sir:

With reference to your letter of December 9, 1935, in which you enclosed carbon copies of a letter dated December 5, 1935, addressed to you by [Redacted] of the [Redacted] Office, you are advised that the Bureau has made a probable identification of the writers of the two anonymous letters received by Mr. Rockefeller.

The Jacksonville Office has been requested to intercept these two writers, who appear to be young children and they will be instructed to discontinue writing any such letters in the future.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

John Edgar Hoover, Director.
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
U. S. Department of Justice  
Post Office Box 4907,  
Jacksonville, Florida.  

December 11, 1935.

Director,  
Federal Bureau of Investigation,  
U. S. Department of Justice,  
Pennsylvania Avenue at 9th St., N.W.,  
Washington, D. C.

RE: UNKNOWN SUBJECTS;  
JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER - Victim.  
Extortion.

Dear Sir:—

Reference is made to letter to the Bureau from the New York  
Office dated December 9, 1935, copy of which was furnished to the  
Jacksonville Office, and to which was attached photostatic copies of  
two letters and envelopes, the originals of which accompanied  
letter to the New York Office dated December 9, 1935.

Relative to this matter I desire to advise the Bureau and  
the New York Office as follows:

Sunday, December 8, 1935, about 1:00 P. M., I received a  
television call at the Jacksonville Office from a person who refused  
to give his name or address. He stated that he wished to confer with  
the writer concerning a matter that might possibly be of interest to  
the Government. He was advised that the writer would be in his office  
during the entire day of Sunday and would be glad to confer with him.  
He replied, stating that it would be impossible for him to call at the  
Jacksonville Office on Sunday, but that he would call some day during  
the week.

About thirty minutes prior to the receipt of the copy of the  
New York Bureau Office letter to the Bureau, dated December 9, 1935, a  
boy, about 15 years of age, entered our offices and was approached by  
the Chief Clerk. He stated that he had previously telephoned for an  
appointment and that he wanted to confer with the man in charge of the  
office, concerning information that he had that might be of interest to  
the Government. He stated that his name was [redacted].
TO DIRECTOR,
12-11-35

After entering my office he stated: "Now I want to
ask you for some confidential information. I know that you are going
to laugh, for everyone to whom I have reported this matter has laughed,
but I am going on just the same". He then inquired, "Do you know
positively that Jesse James is dead?" I told him that I was quite
sure that Jesse James was dead and buried; that I knew his brother,
Frank James, who told me a number of years ago where Jesse James
was buried. The boy replied: "You might have been told that Jesse
James is dead and buried, but another boy and I have been reading
considerably about the life of Jesse James and have come to the con-
clusion that old man John D. Rockefeller is none other than Jesse
James".

I then inquired of him on what grounds he based his
conclusions. He then stated that his boy friend and he had been
reading a great deal about Mr. Rockefeller; that they had been told
that Mr. Rockefeller had only had his photograph taken once or twice
during his life time; and that they had read in the papers that before
he left his home in the North to come to Florida for this winter he
positively refused to permit photographers to take his picture and
for that reason he and his boy friend believed that Mr. Rockefeller
was Jesse James or some other notorious outlaw.

The young man seemed sincere in his convictions. He
refused to give his address in Jacksonville, saying that after he had
thought the matter over it all seemed so silly that he did not want
to be interrogated further. He said nothing about having written to
Mr. Rockefeller as reflected in the enclosures received from the New
York Office.

It is apparent indeed that the letters in question to
Mr. Rockefeller were written by this boy of Jacksonville,
Florida.

Very truly yours,

R. A. ALL,
Special Agent in Charge.

cc New York
December 23, 1935

Mr. Rhodes White,
Special Agent in Charge,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
370 Lexington Avenue, Room 1405,
New York, New York.

Dear Sir:

With reference to the letter addressed by the Bureau to the Jacksonville Office under date of December 12, 1935, pertaining to the anonymous communications addressed to John E. Rockefeller, in which the name of Jesse James appears, you should advise the Secretary to Mr. Rockefeller that the Bureau has ascertained that these letters were written by two boys of approximately 13 years of age, whose identity is known to the Bureau. Mr. Rockefeller's secretary should be informed that these boys evidently had a bona fide belief that John E. Rockefeller is in fact Jesse James. You may also inform Mr. Rockefeller's Secretary that the Bureau is taking appropriate steps to have these boys discontinue the writing of these letters.

For your information, I am attaching hereeto a copy of a letter addressed to the Bureau under date of December 11, 1935, by the Special Agent in Charge of the Jacksonville Bureau Office.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

Enclosure #31300

Communications Section
Mailed
Personal and Confidential
Dec 23, 1935.

P.M.
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice.
December 27, 1935.

Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
Pennsylvania Avenue at 9th St., N.W.,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:-  RE: UNKNOWN SUBJECTS;
                      John D. Rockefeller - Victim.
                      Extortion.

Reference is made to Bureau letters dated December 12th and
23rd, 1935, (62-38875), directing me to get in touch with the author
of letters to Mr. John D. Rockefeller, regarding accusations that he
was believed to be identical with Jesse James.

Attention is first invited to my letter to the Bureau dated
December 11, 1935, which fairly well established who the author of these
letters was. However, since the submission of the photostatic copies of
letters received by Mr. Rockefeller, and the Director, I have caused two
boys named to be located in Jacksonville
and brought to this office for personal interview.

These two boys live in the outskirts of Jacksonville and come
of very poor families. They are high school students and from my inter-
view with them I am convinced that the writing of the letters in question
by the boys was not prompted by any ulterior motive. They readily admitted
that they had written the letters in question; that they had no idea what-
soever of seeking any money or reward, but were prompted to take this ac-
tion by reason of having seen photographs of John D. Rockefeller and Jesse
James in some publications which came to their attention and upon studying
same it appeared to them that there was a considerable likeness, and they
thought it would be a good idea to check up on their "hunch".

admitted that he wrote the letter to the Director,
stated that he wrote the letter to Mr. Rockefeller. The
typing on the envelope transmitting the letter to the Director, and the
typed names of these two boys appearing on the letter to Mr. Hoover, was
placed thereon by using a typewriter in a local drug store where these
boys are employed on alternate shifts during Saturdays and other school
holidays.
TO DIRECTOR,
12-27-35.

I personally instructed these boys that they must desist from writing such letters, even though they had good intentions by reason of the fact that Mr. Rockefeller, Mr. Hoover and various other public officers were being continually annoyed by letters of this character, in the first place, and in the second place they could not possibly serve any good purpose.

Both of these boys are sufficiently intelligent to appreciate my talk to them, appear to be very penitent as regards the instant matter and assured me that we would not hear from them again, and I believe there will be no further trouble from these boys.

The descriptions of the boys are as follows:

Name
Age
Weight
Height
Eyes
Hair
Complexion
Build
Occupation
Residence
Parents

The Jacksonville Office will regard this as a closed case.

Very truly yours,

R. A. AIT, Special Agent in Charge.

cc - New York

Jax No. 9-29-
FEB 24 1950

62-58875-6, 7, 7X

CHANGED TO

62-26471-5X, 6X, 8X