

IN ANSWERING REFER TO

No. 4000/170

Office Chief Patrol Inspector  
El Paso, Texas.  
June 3, 1929.

District Director  
U. S. Immigration Service,  
El Paso, Texas.

JUN 12 1929

RECEIVED  
OFFICE OF DISTRICT DIRECTOR  
JUN 4 - 1929  
IMMIGRATION SERVICE

With reference to your file No. 5005/2120, there is transmitted herewith in sextuplicate statement made by Patrol Inspector Donald C. Kemp concerning a gun fight had with an unknown person in an alley between Hammett Blvd and Latta streets lying near the International line this city on the 30th ultimo in which Patrol Inspector Benjamin T. Hill was instantly killed. These officers had been assigned to patrol the boundary between Copia street and Hammett Blvd along what is known as Cordova Island. At about 9:15 PM when between Hammett Blvd and Copia streets an unknown man was seen approaching their position from the direction of the International line. Upon drawing near he was called upon to halt by Patrol Inspector Donald C. Kemp in the Spanish language and instead of doing so he darted into an unnamed alley about one hundred feet in length referred to as alley "A" in the attached statement. The officers gave chase, Inspector Kemp leading but after running a short distance in the alley and due to a heavy shower a few minutes before he slipped to his knees which permitted Inspector Hill to gain the lead, after travelling a few feet in the alley the murderer wheeled about suddenly and fired at Hill, the shot penetrated his heart and killed him instantly. Inspector Kemp who was a few feet behind him fired two shots in the direction of the murderer before he disappeared. Inspector Kemp notified this office by telephone and within a few minutes the writer accompanied by several other inspectors arrived upon the scene. Coroner A. J. Wilson was called and after an examination ordered the body removed to Peak Hagedorn Undertaking establishment.

An extensive investigation was immediately started and is still being conducted. Developments indicate that Hill was killed by a Mexican named David Torres, known as a liquor runner and an all around bad man, who has been deported on numerous occasions, your file No. 6003/2914, Bureau file No. 55615/313 covers.

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June 8, 1929.

Reliable information indicates that Torres was struck in one leg by one of the two shots fired by Inspector Kemp and that he is now in Juarez, Mexico. The locality in which this happened is inhabited by bootleggers, smugglers, dope fiends and prostitutes and is conceded to be one of the worst localities along the boundary within the limits of the city of El Paso.

Torres has a wife and several American born children living in the vicinity of the alley where the fight occurred and it is believed that this and the smuggling activities will bring him back to this side of the line as soon as his injury will permit, as he believes himself to be beyond suspicion. Measures have been taken to arrest him when he crosses into the United States.

It is not believed that there is any connection between the two boys previously met by the officers and David Torres.

Funeral services for Patrol Inspector Benjamin T. Hill were held on the first instant this city after which the remains were forwarded to his father at Shamrock, Texas, he having been notified by this office on the evening of his son's death. All expenses incurred in the connection with the death of Inspector Hill have been met by his father Mr. B. T. Hill, Shamrock, Texas.

H. C. Horsley  
Chief Patrol Inspector

HCH:R  
Incl. 1003



P R E S E N T

H. C. Horsley  
Donald C. Kemp  
Buford A. Riley

Examining Officer  
Witness  
Stenographer

BY THE EXAMINING OFFICER:

You are advised that I desire to take a statement and from you concerning a shooting affair had between yourself and former Patrol Inspector Benjamin T. Hill and an unknown person between Hammett Blvd and Latta Streets in the vicinity of the International Boundary on the 30th ultimo.

WITNESS, FIRST BEING DULY SWORN, testified as follows:

- Q. Please state your name and occupation? A. Donald C. Kemp, Patrol Inspector U. S. I. S. Border Patrol, El Paso, Texas.
- Q. What was your duty assignment on the 30th ultimo? A. I was assigned to work with Patrol Inspector Benjamin T. Hill and we were to patrol the International Boundary between Copia street and Hammett Blvd this city.
- Q. State fully the circumstances surround the fight had with the unknown person and the death of Patrol Inspector Benjamin T. Hill? A. While watching the boundary from an old adobe house near the foot of Stevens street at about 3:30 PM, I noticed two men with sacks on their backs coming up the Mexican side of the International Boundary and I said to Inspector Hill who had been assigned to work with me, "we are going to make a catch", we then stepped outside of the house where we could see more and were watching in the direction the two men had gone when two boys entered the adobe house. We re-entered the house and questioned the two boys who proved to be American born Mexicans and after thoroughly satisfying ourselves that they were legally in the United States permitted them to go. We then decided that the two men whom we had seen just across the International Boundary were not going to cross into the United States inasmuch as we believed the two boys we had questioned to be "spotters". We then decided to retire from our position and make it appear as though we were leaving the vicinity and then double back through the alleys. We proceeded up Stevens street to San Antonio street and then down San Antonio to the first alley East of Hammett Blvd and down this alley to Finley street and from there West on Finley street toward Latta street until we came to a row of trees just east of an unnamed alley (which will be referred to later in this statement as alley "A"), leading off of Finley street. At this time we noticed a man coming from the direction of Monument #10 on Cordova Island and because there are no houses on the American side of the line at this point we believed that he was coming from Mexico, we watched him closely and allowed him to enter the alley before us (alley "A") thereby hoping to pre-



vent his escaping back to Mexico. I called "Alto Federalies", and he started to run down the alley and we started to run after him, as we turned the corner I slipped and fell to my knees and Inspector Hill went around me thus throwing him in the lead, when I had regained my balance Inspector Hill was about ten feet in the lead and the man was twenty or twenty-five feet ahead of Hill as best I could judge in the dark, it being extremely dark and cloudy just after a heavy shower and I distinctly heard the cock of a pistol and a shot was fired by this unknown person who turned and ran down the alley (alley "A") and as he turned the corner I fired two shots at him but failed to stop him. I then turned to Inspector Hill who was on the ground by that time, raised his head and spoke to him but could see that he was dead. I ran to the nearest light which was directly opposite where Inspector Hill had fell and asked if they had a telephone which they did not have. In this particular house were two Mexican boys and a woman, one boy lying on aavenport fully clothed and apparently asleep. I told the boy who was up to sit his lamp in the doorway and watch Hill's body until I could get to a telephone. I went around the corner on Finley street where there was a dance in progress and asked if they had a telephone which they did not. At this time I recognized a man as an employee of the City Disposal Plant and asked him to drive his car to the entrance of the alley and turn on his lights, which he did. I then asked him to see that no one touched Hill's body until I returned. I then ran to the City Disposal Plant and called Border Patrol Headquarters and within a few minutes Chief Patrol Inspector H. C. Horsley, Senior Patrol Inspector Edwin M. Reeves and Patrol Inspectors Bertram E. Williams and Ivan E. Scotton arrived upon the scene. This all happened about 9:15 PM. Coroner A. J. Wilson was summoned and after an examination of Inspector Hill's body, ordered it removed to Peak Hagedorn Undertaking establishment.

- Q. How many shots did this unknown person fire? A. One.
- Q. Was Inspector Benjamin T. Hill instantly killed? A. Yes sir.
- Q. How was Inspector Hill armed? A. With side arms and a shotgun.
- Q. How were you armed? A. With side arms only.
- Q. What is the approximate length of the alley referred to as alley "A"? A. About one hundred feet.
- Q. About what position in this alley was Hill killed? A. Approximately in the center from left to right and about fifty feet from the North end of the alley.
- Q. Give the approximate distance apart of yourself, Inspector Hill and the unknown person at the time he fired the fatal shot? A. I was about forty feet into the alley (alley "A"), Inspector Hill about fifty feet and the unknown person about seventy feet.
- Q. Do you know whether this unknown person was hit by your firing? A. I do not know if he was hit or not but I failed to stop him.
- Q. Were there any lights in this vicinity? A. There was only a lamp light shining through a window pane directly opposite where Inspector Hill fell.

I certify that the above is a full, true and correct transcript of my notes as taken by me in the above mentioned case.

(Signed) Buford A. Riley  
Stenographer



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
Immigration Service

4000/170

OFFICE CHIEF PATROL INSPECTOR

El Paso, Texas,  
June 3, 1929.

Mr. & Mrs. B. W. Hill,  
Wheeler, Texas.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Hill:

At a recent meeting of officers of this service, of which your son was an honored member, the writer was asked to address a letter of condolence and heartfelt sympathy to you in your terrible bereavement. This is at best a difficult task, for I assure you, dear folks, that were I able to express on paper that which is in my heart, and in the hearts of each and every officer of this service who knew your son, I would indeed rank with those few prophets and teachers whom we all revere but whom we cannot emulate.

In my poor and insufficient way I can only say, for myself and for my brother officers, that your son, known to us but a short time, had already found a place in our hearts and obtained a respect accorded but few of our associates and that his straightforwardness, his cleanliness of mind, his manly conduct and general ability and demeanor were already the cause of much favorable comment on the part of his fellow officers.

We want you to know that in the feeling and expression of our sympathies we are not being idle and that we are leaving no stone unturned in our search for the murderer whose hand caused the death of your son, our beloved comrade. We want you to know that your son's name will go down in Border Patrol history as a martyr to the cause of justice and as an example of fearlessness in the enforcement of the Laws of our Country.

We beg of you to command us in any way in which we can be of service to you and we all sincerely hope that if at any future time you find yourselves in our neighborhood that you will honor our service by making a personal call at our headquarters in order that we may have privilege and honor of meeting the mother and father of Patrol Inspector Ben Hill, "A gentleman of courage".

(Signed) H. C. Horsley.

HCH/GWL