

Doe No. 2 Remains a Mystery - Bomb Suspect Gets a Hat and More Detail in FBI Sketch

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OKLAHOMA CITY - Bits and pieces of the investigation of last week's horrific bombing are falling into place, but the most frustrating mystery - the identity of the most wanted man in America - is still unsolved.

John Doe No. 2, as the suspect is known to the nation, was given a baseball cap Tuesday by FBI artists.

The revised sketch of the square-jawed man immediately triggered recognition from the manager of the Great Western Inn in Junction City, Kan.

"He spoke broken English," the manager said.

As new information came out of Kansas, reports from Oklahoma City indicated more evidence against the suspect in custody, 27-year-old Army veteran Timothy McVeigh.

A man believed to be McVeigh was reportedly seen in Omaha, Neb., about a week before the bombing, asking questions about the federal building there. The questions were about the location of law enforcement offices in the building, which does not have curbside parking.

Broadcast reports Tuesday night said traces of ammonium nitrate on McVeigh's clothes linked him to the materials used in the truck bomb that smashed the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

Another report said McVeigh was seen around the building without the truck, possibly waiting for a second person who was driving it.

An earlier story put McVeigh and a passenger in the truck shortly before the bombing. McVeigh reportedly was asking for directions.

A report indicated that investigators found in a patrol car a piece of paper that mentioned explosives. McVeigh was transported by a highway patrol trooper to Perry, Okla., on April 19.

It was apparently the second such piece of written evidence found. An envelope was found in McVeigh's 1977 yellow Mercury Marquis after the trooper stopped him on Interstate 35. One report by The Dallas Morning News said the envelope contained a letter referring to the Branch Davidians at Waco, Texas.

The lawyers

There is no shortage of lawyers willing to risk the death threats associated with representing McVeigh.

Federal authorities said famous criminal defense lawyers from around the country were calling the blast-damaged courthouse here throughout the day Tuesday, offering to represent the now-infamous defendant.

McVeigh's current attorneys want off the case. John W. Coyle III says he and his family have received death threats. He and federal public defender Susan Otto also said they would have trouble being objective, because they knew people injured and killed in the blast.

McVeigh, who is said to be calling himself a "prisoner of war," faces the death penalty if convicted. He is charged with the federal crime of maliciously damaging U.S. property by use of an explosive. He could also face state and federal murder charges.

Legal proceedings for McVeigh and two men being held as material witnesses will continue this week.

A preliminary hearing for McVeigh, which may include a request for a change of venue and new attorneys, is scheduled for 2 p.m. Thursday. No site has been determined, as the U.S. Marshal's service assesses the security risk of various sites.

"This is kind of a floating crap game," one official said.

And although preliminary hearings are public by law, authorities said they have not decided how to handle the hundreds of reporters who would want to attend.

A hearing for Terry Nichols, a close friend of McVeigh who shared his anti-government sympathies, is scheduled for 2 p.m. today in Wichita.

Tuesday, he and his brother, James Nichols, were charged in federal court in Michigan with engaging in a bomb-building conspiracy with McVeigh. McVeigh's mother distanced herself from her son Tuesday, saying she has had little contact with him in the last decade.

"I just want to say I feel deep sympathy for the victims and families involved in the Oklahoma City bombing," Mildred Frazer, McVeigh's mother, said in a note handed through her door Monday to a St. Lucie County, Fla., sheriff's deputy.

"I have had only brief contact with my son the past 10 years and only know details from what I have been watching on TV the last few days," it said. "P.S. Please leave our family alone!"

The sketch

The manager of the Great Western Inn was watching television with two reporters Tuesday when the new FBI sketch of the missing suspect in the Oklahoma City bombing appeared.

He recalled the man immediately: "He said he was from Colorado.

He drove a Ryder truck."

The man stayed in Room 107 on April 17, two nights before the bombing, he said. He left early the next day, leaving the key and an empty liquor bottle in the \$26.90-a-night room.

"He was scared. He didn't want to talk to me too much," said the manager, who requested anonymity because he feared for his safety.

A motel clerk, interviewed last week by The Kansas City Star , said she wasn't sure whether the man looked like John Doe No. 2.

She recalled making small talk with the man. When asked, he said he was from Colorado, but didn't want to talk otherwise.

"My boss said, 'I don't like something about him,' " the clerk remembered. "He wasn't very friendly."

The motel manager said the man he saw had a mustache, dark eyebrows, long hair, a light brown complexion and a thick nose. He was 5 foot 10 to 5 foot 11, and 190 to 200 pounds, he said.

The manager said the man gave a foreign name when he checked in, but the manager couldn't remember it. He said the FBI has his guest register and had searched the room where the man stayed.

The new sketch showed the man wearing a cap with two stripes across it that come together in the middle. Aside from the cap, it resembled the original sketch of the man, with dark, heavy eyebrows, thick lips, a short neck, slightly flared nostrils and a squared jaw.

Others in Junction City also remember the man wearing the hat. A clerk at Quik Kash Inc. said a man wearing such a hat cursed her on Saturday, April 15, when he asked about cashing a check.

The sketch was based on new interviews with witnesses who saw two men in Junction City rent the truck on April 17, said sources in Washington who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Great Western manager said he hadn't seen McVeigh or Terry Nichols. He said a man named James Nichols stayed at the motel the night of April 7. It was not known whether that man was Terry Nichols' brother or another traveler with the same name.

Interviews with another motel operator seem to indicate that McVeigh and John Doe No. 2 stayed in separate motels a mile away, but both were seen parking a Ryder truck at those motels.

McVeigh stayed in room 25 of the Dreamland Motel, one exit down Interstate 70, according to owner Lea McGown, who recalls suggesting that he move the parked truck to allow better traffic flow in the lot.

McVeigh was registered there from April 14 to April 18.

The guns

Another minor development was the tracing of the gun found on McVeigh when he was stopped by the trooper near Perry, Okla. It came from Pat's Pawn and Gun Shop in Ogden, Kan., northeast of Junction City.

Police in Perry contacted the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms in Washington to check on the registration of the weapon and see if it was stolen.

Pat Livingston, owner of the shop on the eastern border of Fort Riley, said that after the bombing - he can't remember which day - the ATF made an urgent request for the name of the buyer.