

# Oklahoma Bombing Leaves Trail Of Unsolved Mysteries

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A week after the FBI found Timothy McVeigh, a drifting Army veteran, sitting in a county jail in Perry, Okla., the list of questions about him and the Oklahoma City bombing continues to grow.

Who is the second suspect, a mysterious tattooed man known only as John Doe No. 2, a sketch of whom has spawned thousands of telephone calls to the FBI without so far yielding a solid clue?

Who else may have helped to carry out the attack? What were the plans behind it? Where did McVeigh spend the last year? When was the bomb built? What was the specific target of the blast?

No one knows for sure, and the investigation Friday began taking on the feel of a long, hard march over unknown terrain. The authorities' search for answers has become nearly as frustrating as the rescuers' search for the dead.

The government is preparing to lease a building in Oklahoma City to house the bulging investigative files of "OKBomb," as the case is known. Evidence from the scene, including tons of debris from the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, will be microscopically examined at forensic labs run by the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

The far-flung investigation now stretches from Pendleton, N.Y., a Buffalo-area town where McVeigh grew up, to the Arizona desert community of Kingman, where he lived in a trailer park before drifting away in the last year. More than 1,000 local, state and federal law-enforcement officials are on the case.

In Junction City, Kan., where the Ryder truck that held the bomb had been rented, federal agents have shown residents of the Dreamland Motel, where McVeigh stayed briefly, sketches of him, John Doe No. 2 and Terry Nichols, one of two brothers being held as material witnesses.

But one resident there said they also had been shown pictures of two other people as well, one of a man with long, scraggly hair, the other of a heavyset "military guy" in a photograph taken during basic training for his military service.

Across the country, agents have been collecting pictures of soldiers who served in the Persian Gulf war with McVeigh. What happened to McVeigh during that war?

Fellow soldiers say he drove a Bradley Fighting Vehicle in the 100-hour ground attack against Iraq. Bradley vehicles of the 1st Infantry Division, with which he served, executed one of the war's most hard-nosed operations, burying hundreds of wounded and living Iraqi soldiers in their sandy trenches.

Several people interviewed by the FBI have said that he came back from the war a changed man. One friend said McVeigh had returned believing that the Army had implanted a computer chip in his buttocks in order to keep him under surveillance.

The questions continue: Why Oklahoma City? Was the bombers' target the entire federal government, and everything it represents? Was it the firearms bureau, whose agents carried out the initial botched raid on the Branch Davidian cult's compound near Waco, Texas, two years ago?

Did the bombers know there was a day-care center in the building they destroyed? If so, did they pick their target to avenge the death of children in a second federal raid on the Branch Davidian compound, the operation that brought the fire that ended a two-month government siege there?

Surely, the authorities have said in a federal affidavit, McVeigh could not have built the two-ton bomb and carried out the attack alone. Was he part of a conspiracy? If so, was he was a leader or a follower?

The FBI has no idea how many people may have known of the bombing in advance. Its sole firsthand sources of information on McVeigh's movements before the blast are a truck rental clerk in Junction City, Kan., waitresses and motel clerks who have identified him, and the two brothers who befriended him.

The brothers, Terry Nichols of Herington, Kan., and James Nichols of Decker, Mich., are both being held on charges unrelated to the explosion in Oklahoma City; they have been accused of conspiring with McVeigh to build small bombs and detonate them on James Nichols' farm.

Terry Nichols, who voluntarily surrendered to the authorities, is said to be cooperating somewhat; James is not.

McVeigh, under close guard at a federal prison in El Reno, Okla., is not talking. He claims to consider himself a prisoner of war, although it is unclear what army he believes he belongs to.

McVeigh had no visible means of support in the last year, during which he drifted from a trailer park in Kingman, Ariz., on the edge of the Mojave Desert, to James Nichols' bean farm on the thumb of Michigan.

A man who resembles a composite sketch of the second suspect in last week's Oklahoma City bombing was arrested Friday afternoon by Santa Monica police and was being questioned Friday evening by the FBI, police said.

A police officer, who identified herself only as L. Davis, said the department was waiting for confirmation from the FBI as to whether the man they were holding was "John Doe No. 2," the suspect pictured in a composite sketch that has been broadcast across the nation.