

# *The Columbus Dispatch*

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# Gunman may have been saved by bulletproof vest

■ *A videotape of the shooting appears to show that Cheyne Kehoe is shot in the chest, a sheriff said.*

**By Jim Woods**  
*Dispatch Staff Reporter*

WILMINGTON, Ohio — Cheyne Kehoe might have been wearing a bulletproof vest during the Feb. 15 shootout with a deputy and state trooper, Clinton County Sheriff Ralph Fizer said yesterday.

On a videotape of the shooting, it appears that Kehoe is shot in the chest, Fizer said.

Kehoe, 20, and his brother Chevie Kehoe, 24, both of Colville, Wash., are being sought nationwide. They were indicted last week by a Clinton County grand jury on 16 charges stemming from two shootouts with Wilmington-area law enforcement officers.

Chevie Kehoe was indicted yesterday by a federal grand jury in Spokane, Wash. on three counts of firearms violations.

Two of the counts specify that Chevie Kehoe possessed a firearm stolen in October 1995 and one stolen in January 1996 from the Arkansas home of gun dealer William Mueller. The decomposed bodies of Mueller, 52, his wife, Nancy, 28, and her daughter, Sarah Elizabeth Powell, 8, were found in June in the Illinois Bayou near Russellville, Ark.

The third count charges that Chevie Kehoe possessed an unregistered machine gun in October 1994.

Fizer said a video recording of the first Wilmington shootout, made by a camera mounted in a State Highway Patrol cruiser, appears to show Cheyne Kehoe's body flinch at one point.

"When I first saw the videotape I didn't see how my guy could have missed him," Fizer said.

The sheriff said he believes that Kehoe might have put on a bulletproof vest while a State Highway Patrol trooper was talking to his brother outside their 1977 Chevrolet Suburban.

Fizer said he has seen an FBI enhanced version of the videotape and it appears the passenger is "putting a strap" over his shoulder.

On the videotape, Cheyne Kehoe, who is sitting in the passenger seat, repeatedly looks in the rear-view mirror, fidgets and ducks down in the seat.

"The squirming around tells you that something isn't right," Fizer said.

Sgt. John Born, spokesman for the Highway Patrol, agrees that Cheyne Kehoe might have put on a bulletproof vest.

"It appears in the video that the passenger is reacting to being struck in the chest area, someplace where a vest would cover," Born said.

Fizer said that Deputy Robert Gates followed proper procedure in that he kept his gun level and fired seven shots from about 9 feet away after Cheyne Kehoe fired first, Fizer said.

One of the bullets fired by Gates was found embedded in the passenger side headrest. Fizer said the trooper fired at least two shots.

Minutes later, Chevie Kehoe was engaged in a shootout with Wilmington Police Officers Robert Martin and Rick Wood.

Wilmington Police Chief Mike Hatten said about 26 rifle shell casings were found in the parking lot of Clinton Electric Co. on Main Street in Wilmington.

"It sure tore the hell out of our car," Hatten said.

Hatten said his officers fired four or five shots. A passer-by suffered a minor shoulder wound.

After the second shootout, the Kehoes are believed to have stolen a car that was later found abandoned 40 miles away in Frankfort, Ohio.