

Bonnie and Clyde: The Joplin Files

**As provided to
A. Winston Woodward
by former Joplin P.D.
Operations Commander
Jim Hounsshell**

**Edited by
A. Winston Woodward**

© 2009 by A. W. Woodward

**Production assistance by
Tommy Methvin and
Jimmy Ray Gillman**

A Tres Amigos Production

To order Internet download
or CD of this work, contact
bchistory@optonline.net

CD also available from



Southwestern Historical Publications

swhistorical@yahoo.com

214-747-2362

Forward

Although without the fanfare that accompanied discovery of the FBI's long lost Dallas Field Office files on Bonnie & Clyde— the Joplin, MO. P. D. files concerning the notorious West Dallas desperadoes— were in their own way, also waiting to be discovered by the public. Beginning in 2006, and encompassing more than a 2 year period— I had searched feverishly for any and all information relating to authentication of The Bonnie & Clyde Signatures. In doing so, I had conducted interviews of those in Joplin, who still had ties to the saga of Bonnie & Clyde— in an attempt to locate vintage copies of Bonnie Parker's poetry. I had hoped to find handwritten versions of Bonnie's poems left behind in the Joplin raid, which occurred in April of 1933. The goal of this search was to discover if possible, a signed poem— for use as a known example of Bonnie's signature, in a pending forensic signature analysis.

When interviewed, Joplin Chief of Police Kevin Lindsey, was most helpful— and in viewing others he felt maybe useful to our quest— referred me to former Joplin P. D. Operations Commander, and Bonnie & Clyde Historian Jim Hounsshell.

Although admittedly— with some of it's key contents, having been “pilfered” from within over the years— Jim was most gracious, in offering to provide our investigation with the entire remaining Joplin P. D. file on Bonnie & Clyde. Mr. Hounschell had apparently used this Joplin file in researching his book—and as the file had just been declassified, he was kind enough to provide a digital version for our use.

The Joplin P. D. Bonnie & Clyde file consists of a wealth of correspondence to and from former Joplin Chief of Detectives Ed Portley— as well as vintage news accounts of Bonnie & Clyde history. Although one might think the scope of this file, would be limited almost entirely to Joplin related events— there are also other unique revelations, found within the Joplin file.

In addition, as documents within the file make clear— there's a great sense of dedication in Chief Detective Portley's efforts, to bring Bonnie & Clyde to justice— for the Barrow Gang killings of Constable John W. (Wes) Harryman and Det. Harry McGinnis. Also of note, are correspondence from Cumie Barrow and Blanche Barrow regarding the Joplin incident.

Unlike my previous effort in editing *Bonnie & Clyde: The Long Lost FBI Files*, I thought it best this time— not to index *The Joplin Files*. In being nearly 1000 pages, the Dallas FBI Files seemed to demand the advantage of a descriptive index. With this file being shorter, and including so many wonderful newspaper articles to wade through— I felt the act of exploring here, rewarding enough— without the need of further aid.

I have removed a bevy of duplicate documents of lesser quality, than ones which remain. As with FBI Dallas Field Office file 26-4114, I have arranged *The Joplin Files* chronologically, to provide historical continuity— & provide order to what was a haphazard collection, of documents and images.

Not many intact or relatively intact *Bonnie & Clyde* files still exist. My thanks to Jim Hounschell for his generosity in sharing *The Joplin Files* with our inquiry, and now through this work, to all— with a keen interest in *Bonnie & Clyde*. I hope you will enjoy *The Joplin Files*. Please direct any comments or questions to me at— bchistory@optonline.net
Thanks for participating in this history.

— **A. Winston Woodward**