



accomplishment through periods of great National challenge.” After Hoover’s death on May 2, 1972, Tolson was briefly the acting head of the FBI.

L. Patrick Gray became acting director on May 3. That same day, Tolson wrote his letter of resignation. Citing ill health, Tolson retired from the bureau on May 4, the day of Hoover’s funeral.

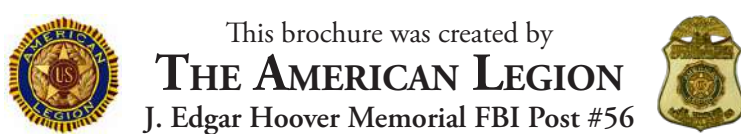
After Tolson left the FBI, his health began to decline. On April 10, 1975, Tolson was admitted to Doctors Community Hospital in Washington, DC, for renal failure. He died there four days later of heart failure at the age of 74. Tolson is buried in the Congressional Cemetery, near Hoover’s grave.

Hoover and Tolson were nearly inseparable, for decades. During their lives, they spent much time together, both at and away from the office. In fact, Tolson is best known for being Hoover’s protégé and frequent companion. Hoover himself called Tolson his ‘alter ego’, because their thoughts, behavior, and beliefs were so similar.

Two medical experts commenting to a Hoover biographer (journalist Anthony Summers) claimed similar beliefs about Hoover’s sexual orientation: one said he had a “strongly predominant homosexual orientation” while the other claimed he was bisexual. Many who knew the men claim their fondness for each other was merely a ‘brotherly love’.

When Hoover died, Tolson inherited his estate of US \$551,000, moved into his house; and accepted the U.S. flag draped on Hoover’s coffin.

“Above all, I would teach him to tell the truth. Truth-telling, I have found is the key to responsible citizenship. The thousands of criminals I have seen in 40 years of law enforcement have had one thing in common: every single one was a liar.”
-J. EDGAR HOOVER



Join Us!

The Association for the Preservation of Historic Congressional Cemetery is a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the restoration, interpretation, and management of Congressional Cemetery. It is predominantly a volunteer-based organization relying on over 400 neighbors, history buffs, conservators, dog walkers, and armed forces personnel each year to restore and maintain this national treasure. Established in 1976, the Association is listed on the National Register of historic Places. We welcome you to become a member of the Association to help us continue our third century of service to the Nation’s Capital.



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ESTABLISHED 1807

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF
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Walking Tour MEN OF THE FBI

History comes to life in Congressional Cemetery. The creak and clang of the wrought iron gate signals your arrival into the early decades of our national heritage. In 1790, the establishment of the District of Columbia as the new center of the nation brought prominent citizens from across the country to the banks of the Potomac River, along with the presidents, Congressmen and justices came builders, military leaders and merchants—and their families—to build the new government and its new capital. A suitable burying space within reasonable proximity to the community was soon in order, bringing about Washington Parish Burial Ground, established by private citizens in 1807. By 1820 it was known as the “national burying ground” due to the many grand funeral processions for prominent national figures. These important individuals from many walks of life create an exciting tapestry of American heritage: architects and builders, musicians and explorers, patriots and scoundrels, pioneers and diplomats, and veterans of every war.

Amongst the most recognizable names are two that set the founding cornerstones to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. They are John Edgar Hoover and Clyde Anderson Tolson.

As you walk the trail of this self-guided tour, note the artistry and craftsmanship of the memorial stone carvings and try to decipher the cultural language of the iconography.

A WORD OF CAUTION: The centuries have made many grave markers and sites unstable. Please be careful near grave markers and watch where you step: depressions and sink holes lie hidden in grass, and footstones and corner markers can trip the unwary.



John Edgar Hoover
January 1, 1895 - May 2, 1972

John Edgar Hoover was born January 1, 1895, to Dickerson Naylor Hoover and Annie Marie Scheitlin Hoover, two civil servants who worked for the U.S. Government. Along with his siblings, Hoover grew up in a neighborhood three blocks from Capitol Hill, in Washington, D.C. After the death of his father, since his siblings had left the area, Hoover moved back home to help care for this mother, who served as the family's disciplinarian and moral guide. He stayed with her until her passing in 1938.

Highly competitive, Hoover worked to overcome a stuttering problem by learning to talk fast. He joined the debate team in high school, where he achieved some notoriety. Wanting to enter into politics, he worked for Library of Congress after high school and attended night classes at George Washington University Law School, earning his Bachelor of Laws in 1916 and a Master of Laws in 1917.

J. Edgar Hoover, as he was known, joined the Department of Justice (DOJ) in 1917 where he became involved in law enforcement as a special assistant to the attorney general's Alien Registration Section of the DOJ overseeing the roundups and deportations of suspected communists during the post-World War I era. It was there that he monitored alien radicals in what became a lifetime antiradical crusade. Appointed head of the General Intelligence Division in 1919, Hoover continued to monitor radical activities, culminating in the series of deportation raids during 1919-1920. In 1924, at 29 years old, Hoover was appointed director of the Bureau of Investigation by President Calvin Coolidge, from Attorney General Harlan Fisk Stone recommendation. Hoover held that post until his death in 1972.

When the Bureau reorganized as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 1935, Hoover instituted strenuous agent-recruiting and advanced intelligence-gathering techniques. During his tenure he confronted gangsters, Nazis, and communists.

Hoover emphasized modern investigational techniques and earned renown for challenging criminal syndicates. He also became known for discreetly monitoring the activities of organizations that were considered subversive, including the Black Panthers, Socialist Workers Party, the Ku Klux Klan and others.

A lifetime bachelor and a 33rd degree Mason, Hoover devoted his considerable talents to furthering the power of the FBI. Having inherited an agency beset by scandal, Hoover moved quickly to restore public confidence by improving the quality of bureau employees and by ostensibly working within the limits of a powerful states' rights tradition. A more professional organization evolved and, responding to the seeming crime wave of the 1930s, the public came to accept the need for a federal law enforcement role.

Hoover's keen sense of public relations and careful cultivation of reporters, members of Congress, civic leaders, and conservative organizations won him a powerful constituency. An administrative genius, he devised sophisticated records procedures. Finally, Hoover served under presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt to Richard Nixon and obtained their issuance of executive directives expanding FBI authority. As a result, the bureau increased in size (from 890 agents in 1940 to 7,002 in 1952, and 10,000 in 1970).

In 1968, Congress enacted legislation requiring Senate confirmation of future FBI directors and limiting their tenure to ten years. Hoover's death on May 2, 1972 coincided with the furor created by the Watergate affair. At that point, the FBI was assigned the responsibility to investigate the break-in which along with Hoover's death marked the end of an era.



“No amount of law enforcement can solve a problem that goes back to the family.”

-J. EDGAR HOOVER

SEE INSIDE THE FBI:

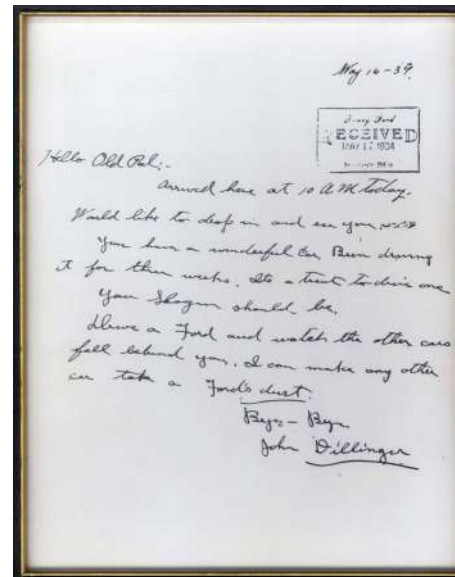
During the 1930's the FBI was deeply involved with investigating and arresting the notorious gangsters of the era, such as John Dillinger and Bonnie & Clyde. **Did you know Henry Ford, of Ford Motor Company, received fan-letters from both John Dillinger & Clyde Barrow?**

WANTED DESCRIPTIONS:

John Dillinger (left); Bonnie & Clyde Barrow (right)



FBI copy of John Dillinger's letter to Ford.



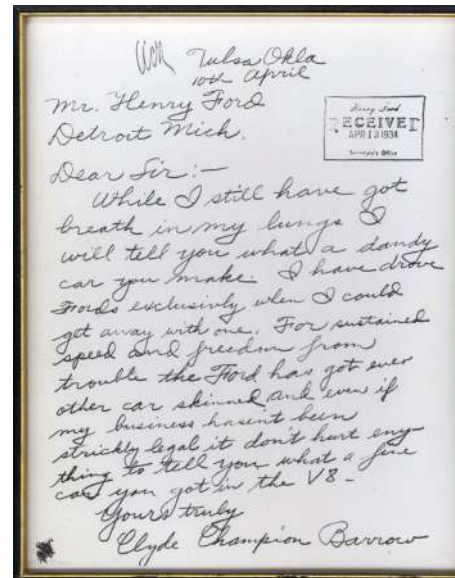
May 16, 1934
(Received on May 17 1934)

Hello Old Pal,

Arrived here at 10:00 am today. Would like to drop in and see you. You have a wonderful car. Been driving it for three weeks. It's a treat to drive one. Your slogan should be, drive a Ford and watch all other cars fall behind you. I can make any other car take a Ford's dust.

Bye-Bye,
John Dillinger

FBI copy of Clyde Barrow's letter to Ford.



Tulsa, Okla 10th April
(Received on April 13 1934)

Mr. Henry Ford
Detroit, Mich.

Dear Sir: -
While I still have got breath in my lungs I will tell you what a dandy car you make. I have drove Fords exclusively when I could get away with one. For sustained speed and freedom from trouble the Ford has got every other car skinned, and even if my business hasn't been strickly legal it don't hurt anything to tell you what a fine car you got in the V8.

Yours truly
Clyde Champion Barrow



Clyde Anderson Tolson
May 22, 1900 - April 14, 1975

Tolson was born in Laredo, Missouri, where he graduated from Laredo High School in 1915 and attended Cedar Rapids Business College from which he graduated in 1918.

From 1919 to 1928, he was confidential secretary for three Secretaries of War: Newton D. Baker, John W. Weeks, and Dwight F. Davis. Tolson completed a Bachelor of Arts degree at George Washington University in 1925 and a Bachelor of Laws from the same institution in 1927. While attending George Washington University, Tolson became a member of the Delta Pi Chapter of Sigma Nu.

In 1928, Tolson applied to the FBI and was hired as a Special Agent later that year. Tolson reportedly indicated on his application that he wanted to use the job as a stepping stone to gain experience and earn enough money to open a law practice in Cedar Rapids. After working in the FBI's Boston and Washington, D.C., field offices, he became the Chief FBI Clerk and was promoted to Assistant Director in 1930, primarily responsible for personnel and discipline.

In 1936, Tolson joined Hoover to arrest bank robber Alvin Karpis. Later that year, he survived a gunfight with gangster Harry Brunette. In 1942, Tolson participated in capturing Nazi saboteurs on Long Island and Florida.

In 1947, he was promoted to FBI Associate Director with his duties expanding into budget and administration.

In 1964, Tolson suffered a stroke and remained somewhat frail for the remainder of his life. Hoover kept Tolson employed in the FBI even after he became too old for police duty and passed the retirement age. In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson awarded him the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service, saying that Tolson "has been a vital force in raising the proficiency of law enforcement at all levels and in guiding the Federal Bureau of Investigation to new heights of