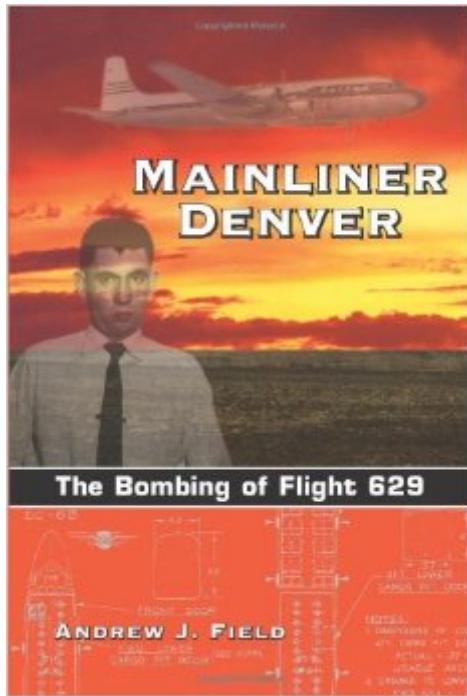


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# Mainliner Denver: The Bombing Of Flight 629



## **Synopsis**

The riveting true story of the FBI's investigation into the first act of sabotage against a U.S. commercial aircraft and the unprecedented televised trial that exposed the dark motives of John Gilbert Graham, who placed a bomb in his mother's suitcase shortly before she boarded the plane known as the Mainliner Denver.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is one of the best true crime and punishment dramas I've read in a very long time indeed. Andrew Field uses his experience in the legal field to present a meticulously well researched account of one of the most horrific American domestic air travel industry crimes ever committed and the dramatic trial and execution of a murderer. You will never forget the callousness of a son who could end the lives of 40+ people with America's first in flight bombing of a civilian airliner for no other reason than to murder his mother for the insurance money. What I particularly appreciated, as a photographer, is Mr. Field's fascinating side look at the impact and issues tied to television and film photography in the courtroom during the trial, as it raised issues and controversies the effects of which are still being felt today in the field of trial law. Altogether, a thoroughly well researched, entraining and truly informative book!

This book is an outstanding read, a very-well-researched and detailed account of domestic terrorism '50s-style. Andrew Field captures the domineering mother, the sweet and forever-loyal wife, the loser son and his insane logic, the horror of a mid-air fireball in the chilly night, J. Edgar Hoover's

just-the-facts G-men, the lawyers' hopeless strategy, and the criminal's mind right to his execution. It's also a fascinating trip through innocent times when, in just 45 minutes, a frighteningly cold man could drop off his family at an airport terminal, park the car, set the timer, check Mom's extra-heavy bag, buy flight insurance, walk Mom to the gate, and kiss her goodbye forever -- then sit down to dinner with the family to wait for the distant bang.

My father-in-law told me the story of the bombing of flight 629. He was a kid, working on the family farm late one evening when the whole sky light up. He saw the fireball...he arrived on scene before the authorities. It was an amazing story. Years later I came across this book. It's the same story of the same event. I've read this book cover to cover twice. Tragic, but well written. I gave a gift wrapped copy to my father-in-law, my father, and my neighbor...it's just that good of a book. This is a wonderfully detailed account of the events that lead up to the bombing of flight 629, and a great narrative of events that followed. It's a story that you will enjoy.

This story ran in newspapers all over the country, apparently, because here in the east I saw bits of the story when a kid. Now I have the 'rest of the story', as they say. He was guilty as all get-out, yet his jailers were considerate of his needs. You might think that some of the 'rights' for civil treatment of someone so obviously criminal were only arrived at after decades of social uprisings of the 60s and thereafter. But no. The biographer was thorough about every moment of Graham's incarceration, his surroundings in jail(s), his legal team and never intimated that things were rough on this murderer. That gave me a good feeling about this whole drama. The jailers, et al, had to have 'known' he was guilty --- but the system toed the line on giving him basic comforts. I fully expected to find that someone's disgust might have shown itself and that he would be handled with less than ordinary care. Of course with their suspicion that he would lose at trial they also guessed he was a dead man walking. Sure enough he did lose and did go to the gas chamber -- and that was told not leaving out one or two gruesome minutes. A good read. And a lot of answers for one who was so young and so mystified once.

I remember being fascinated with this story back in 1955 when I was in the 7th grade. I didn't realize there was a book on this incident until I recently saw a television program. The author provides the reader with the recollections of individuals who saw the airplane fall from the sky. The investigation follows until the focus turns to sabotage and with the perpetrator being John Gilbert Graham. Greed was the motive as the son took out an insurance policy on his mother with himself as the

beneficiary. Graham had conflicting feelings towards his mother since he was a child. He felt he didn't get the love and affection from his mother as a child when he wasn't retrieved home by his mother when she was financially able to support him. This mass murder took the lives of 44 individuals. Following his arrest the book focuses on the selection of a jury and the trial itself. This takes up a good portion of the book and if you are interested in law this should be of special interest to you. Following his conviction the book covers Graham's time in prison until his execution in January of 1957 in Colorado's gas chamber in Canon City. This bombing incident of this airplane took place on November 1, 1955, less than a month after the October 6, 1955, airplane crash that killed 63 passengers and 3 crew members when the plane slammed into Medicine Bow Peak in Wyoming. I feel author Andrew Field did a wonderful job in relating this crime of mass murder through sabotaging an airplane with a planted bomb by the son in his mother's suitcase which he claimed was a present for her to open when she arrived at her destination. If you enjoy true crime stories this book will provide you with a unique twist on the subject.

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