

**I & J Obituaries pre-1923, not previously shared  
(from Monica Schirmer Eshelman)**

**Date of death: 11 Apr 1909**

**Subject: Sr. Mary Georgia Ineichen**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 12 Apr 1909, p. 4**

Maryville, Mo., April 12.—Sister Mary Georgia, aged forty-seven, died at the Convent of Perpetual Adoration at Conception, Mo., yesterday. She was a sister of the Rev. Father Anselm Rneichen [sic], pastor of St. Mary's Church of this city. Sister Mary Georgia was born in the canton of Luzerne, Switzerland and came to Conception in 1890. The funeral services were held there this morning.

**Date of death: 31 Mar 1902**

**Subject: Charles Irvin\***

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 1 Apr 1902, p. 4**

Charles Irvin, a negro died in an omnibus at 1:45 o'clock Monday afternoon, while being transferred from the Union passenger station to the Ensworth Hospital. Irvin was brought to St. Joseph from White Cloud, Kan., and was to have been operated upon for appendicitis at the Ensworth Hospital. He was accompanied by Dr. J. H. Hobson of White Cloud, who was with him at the time of death. The body was removed to Heaton's morgue, and will be sent to White Cloud for burial this morning.

**Date of death: 20 May 1908**

**Subject: James Irvine (or Irvin)**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 20 May 1908, p. 1**

An unidentified man, believed to have borne the name of James Irvine, was ground to pieces under the wheels of a Burlington passenger train one mile north of the Francis street station a few minutes before 2 o'clock this afternoon.

He stepped off of one track to avoid a northbound train, and was struck by passenger train No. 20, southbound. The Burlington has a double track at that point.

Death was instantaneous. The body was horribly mutilated and scattered along the track. The shapeless pieces of flesh were picked up and conveyed to a boxcar where they were placed in the baggage room.

A Burlington employe says the dead man is James Irvine, a laborer. He says Irvine was directed at noon to go to a riprapping camp north of St. Joseph for employment. He says Irvine had been employed as a laborer in and about St. Joseph recently, but he did not know anything of the man's antecedents or family ties.

The train which struck Irvine was in charge of conductor Jerry Potter and Engineer John Donald.

**Date of death: Apr 1903**

**Subject: Charles Jackson\***

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 20 Apr 1903, p. 5**

The body of Charles Jackson, colored, arrived from Chicago yesterday morning and was taken in charge by his brother, William Jackson. The man was struck and killed by a locomotive in Chicago last week. The funeral services were held at Francis Street Baptist church and conducted by the pastor, Rev. Mr. Coren, yesterday afternoon. The interment was at Mt. Mora cemetery.

**Date of death: 18 Jan 1905**

**Subject: Hattie Jackson\***

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 19 Jan 1905, p. 6**

Hattie Jackson, colored, aged 20 years, died at 6:20 o'clock yesterday morning at her residence, 814 Sacramento street.

**Date of death: [23 Aug] 1910**

**Subject: J. Jackson**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 23 Aug 1910, p. 4**

An unknown man was instantly killed by inbound ... 14, about ... o'clock this morning, a... water works pumping station ... walking north ... track and was in full view of ... and ... seemingly made no effort ...

The body was picked up and brought to the union passenger station, where Coroner Byrd viewed it and ordered it moved to Heaton's morgue where the inquest will be held.

The train was in charge of R. Ri..., conductor, W. Duntz, engineer, and R. H. Gourley, fireman. According to Engineer Duntz, when he first saw the man he blew the locomotive whistle several times, expecting him to step off the track, but the stranger paid no attention. By the time it was seen that he was not going to get off the track, it was too late to do anything to save him.

The walker was hurled against the side of a box car on a siding. The train was stopped and the mangled corpse was placed in the baggage car and brought to the city.

In one of the dead man's pockets was found a piece of note paper upon which there was some scribbling containing the name "Jauck." Nothing else could be deciphered.

It was learned that he had been at one time employed on a Rock Island section gang, and had applied for work with a Burlington construction force working near the scene of his death. He was about thirty-five years old.

**Date of death: 18 Mar 1909**

**Subject: John Lewis Jackson**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 18 Mar 1909, p. 4**

John L. Jackson, seventy-four years old, died at 4:30 o'clock this morning, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. R. P. Davidson, 422 1/2 North Sixth street. He is also survived by another daughter, Mrs. A. Crouch of Los Angeles, and three sons, Lee Jackson of Covina, Cal., and Frank and M. W. Jackson of St. Joseph. The body will be taken to Savannah, Mo. for burial.

**Date of death: 3 Apr 1918**

**Subject: Lester Chauncy Jackson**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 4 Apr 1918, p. 6**

Lester Jackson, forty-nine years old, a teamster, died late yesterday afternoon at his home, 2429 South Ninth street. He is survived by the widow, three daughters, Mrs. Martha Layman, Mason City, Iowa; Miss May Jackson, Omaha, and Mrs. Laura Elsworth, and a son, William Jackson, both of St. Joseph.

**Date of death: 17 Mar 1917**

**Subject: Matt James\***

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 17 Mar 1917, p. 2**

Matt James, a negro adjudged insane by the county court two weeks ago, was found dead in the padded cell at the county jail at 9:30 o'clock. The corpse was discovered only a few minutes after Dr. E. H. Bullock, superintendent of State Hospital No. 2, had notified the county court that room for James had been made at the institution and that he could be admitted.

James doubtless died of exhaustion, as the only nourishment he had taken since his incarceration was by forced feeding. Dr. C. R. Woodson gave him his dinner through a tube last night, but had not arrived to give his breakfast when the body was found.

Sheriff Isaacson had been in constant fear that James would injure himself, as he was continually attempting to climb to an electric lamp on the ceiling of the cell, which he declared was "the light of heaven."

Before he was taken into custody, James lived at 326 West Missouri avenue. Until today the state hospital authorities would not admit him to the institution because the two male negro wards there were crowded.

Elmer Woodson, the negro letter carrier who was adjudged insane by the county court a week ago and who also was refused admission to the state hospital, yesterday was removed to the home of his sister, at 1863 Felix street, where arrangements have been made to care for him. It is said that Woodson is rational much of the time.

**Date of death: 27 Mar 1906**

**Subject: Forester Mercer Jenkins**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 28 Mar 1906, p. 7**

Savannah, Mo., March 28.—O. A. Jenkins, better known as 'Foster' Jenkins, dropped dead at his home about five miles northwest of Rosendale yesterday morning about aa o'clock, of heart

failure. Mr. Jenkins had been in the best of health and the death was a great shock to his family. He was an old resident in this ... having been born and raised west ... He was sixty years old and is ... his widow, four sons and ... daughters.

Funeral arrangements have not yet been made.

**Date of death: 4 Jan 1903**

**Subject: Samuel Jenkins\***

**Source: *St. Joseph Daily News*, 6 Jan 1903, p. 6**

Samuel Jenkins, colored, died at his residence in the rear of No. 541 North Second street, January 4, at 1 o'clock p.m., aged thirty years. Funeral this afternoon at 2 o'clock; burial at city cemetery.

**Date of death: 30 May 1922**

**Subject: Charles Jobe**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 1 Jun 1922, p. 9**

Charles Jobe, sixty-one years old, a painter, died at 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon in a local hospital.

**Date of death: 18 May 1903**

**Subject: [Mrs.] Anna Johnson\***

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 19 May 1903, p. 8**

Anna Johnson, the young negro woman who was so badly burned about 2 o'clock yesterday morning, died about 8 o'clock at St. Joseph's hospital as a result of her injuries. It was learned that she had poured coal oil over her clothing and had burned while she laughed like a demon. She was addicted to the use of morphine and string [sic] drink. The woman was about 23 years old and lived with her monther [sic] at Seventh and Powell streets.

**Same**

**Source: *St. Joseph Daily News*, 18 May 1903, p. 6**

A terrible death was that chosen by Anna Johnson, a young colored woman, who committed suicide this morning.

The young woman, who lived with her husband and his mother at Tenth and Powell streets, arose from her bed about 2 o'clock this morning and saturated her underclothing with coal oil, which, it is presumed, she ignited with a match, with intent to burn herself up.

As soon the flames burst out all about her the young woman regretted what she had done and called to her mother-in-law in an adjoining room. Together they tried to ... the flames. Her husband was also aroused, but the burning woman ran into the yard and nearly every stitch of clothing was burned from her body.

Dr. H. L. Walker was summoned and he ordered the woman removed to St. Joseph's hospital where she suffered the most agonizing pain until her death, at ... o'clock.

The Johnson woman had been a slave to morphine and strong drink for several years and was not considered responsible. She had repeatedly threatened to kill herself and had been closely watched for some time.

The house in which the negroes lived was almost completely burned up, together with all its contents.

Coroner Doyle summoned a jury to view the body and will hold an inquest tomorrow.

**Date of death: 16 Jun 1920**

**Subject: Bernetta (Johnson) Coleman\***

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 17 Jun 1920, p. 1**

The nude, headless body of a woman believed to be between 20 and 25 years old was found in the water at the edge of a bridge at the northwest end of Lake Contrary shortly after noon yesterday. The head had been entirely severed from the body and so far identification has been impossible. The body bore evidence of having been in the water three or four days.

The arms were bound securely to the sides of the body with a wire clothes line, and two iron bed rails, presumably meant for sinkers were securely attached to the back, also with pieces of clothes line. The body had been caught in a wire fencing on the west side of the bridge and was barely below the surface of the water. That the young woman had been murdered was accepted as beyond a doubt according to the police and county authorities.

Two splotches of blood, evidently not more than two or three days old, were found on the floor of the bridge near the edge, and on the top rail a smaller spot was found, all on the side beneath which the body was found.

The body was first noticed yesterday morning by H. M. Rice, 2426 Penn street, a postman, who was fishing near the bridge yesterday. Rice said he noticed the object barely perceptible beneath the surface, but that it did not occur to him that it was a woman's body. It was later recognized as a human body by Phyllis Gordon, 9-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. ?. Gordon, 1622 South Eleventh street, who, with her family, was fishing at the lake. She called her father, who later went to the home of W. T. Wheeler, deputy United [sic] States marshal, a mile east of the bridge, and notified the police. Dr. J. J. Wieser, acting coroner, took charge of the body and sent it to H. O. Sidenfaden's undertaking rooms.

Farmers living in the vicinity of the bridge were deputized by Coroner Wieser to make a search for the head of the woman and late yesterday afternoon they seined the lake near the bridge, but the head was not found. The bridge is a small one, about three feet above the water, and is situated in what is known as the upper dam of the lake.

The police learned last night that a blood-stained automobile containing bloody clothing, was found early this week at Armour Junction, twenty-... miles south of St. Joseph. Chief of Detectives Thomas A. Johnson made an effort last night to get in touch with the persons who found the car and if it is still there he will go to Armour today for an investigation. ... authorities believe that if such a car was found, it was the car which carried the body of the murdered woman to the lake. It is also believed that the woman was murdered some distance away from the place where the body was discovered and that her murderers were under the impression they were throwing her body in the river when they put it in the lake. The river is not more than 200 yards to the north of Lake Contrary at this ...

The clothesline which had been used to bind the woman was evidently ... in a hurry, as one end still carried a large spike nail in it. The ... was secure and the loose ends were neatly cut off, with the exception of the one bearing the nail.

The condition of the corpse was such that it could not be exactly determined whether the woman was a negro or white. The dinger nails, one possible means of identification, indicated that the woman was white. She was comparatively short of stature and well ..., according to Sidenfaden.

The head was severed barely above the shoulders and the body bears evidence of some instrument with a ... nicked edge having been used. No other mark appears on the body, Sidenfaden said. Her age was, of course, a matter of conjecture, Sidenfaden said, but from her form it could be judged she had attained maturity.

### **Same**

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 18 Jun 1920, p. 1**

The police were no nearer last night to the solution of the identity of the young woman, whose nude, beaten body was found in Upper Lake Contrary Wednesday afternoon. Efforts to recover the head by dragging the lake had been abandoned. The mystery was intensified during the day by the receipt of five telephone calls at the office of H. O. Sidenfaden, the undertaker at whose establishment the body is being held. All the inquirers re... to divulge ... identity. All asked for a description of the woman.

A telegram was received last night at the police station from L. B. Leeds of Indianapolis, Ind., giving a description of his daughter who disappeared from there, but the description did not tally with that of the corpse here.

A possible solution was hope for in a long distance telephone message yesterday afternoon to Chief of Police Watson, from Edwardsville, Ill., on suspicion that the murdered woman was from that place. However, the woman who disappeared there had a scar on one thigh and the woman here has no scar.

Efforts to locate the supposed "murder car," which had been reported at various small towns near here, proved fruitless. Investigation of several clues failed to develop anything. No trace of a Buick car reported abandoned near Armour was found. No traces were found at either Winthrop or Rushville.

One of the five persons who telephoned to Sidenfaden yesterday, a woman, said her daughter had disappeared. Another left a telephone number, but calling the number failed to elicit any information. A third was invited to view the body. None called. Two negroes visited the morgue, explaining that relatives of theirs had disappeared.

The coroner's inquest is announced for 7:30 o'clock this afternoon. If no further clues are discovered, the body will be buried in the city cemetery.

The police believe the murder may have been committed some distance from the lake, and the body hauled to the lake and thrown in.

Physicians who viewed the body yesterday agreed it was that of a white woman. Dr. J. J. Wisser, acting coroner, could not decide whether it was the body of a white woman or a negress, but said the death certificate would be filled out temporarily for a negress.

### **Same**

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 19 Jun 1920, pp. 1 & 2**

Was the head of the unidentified and decapitated body of a young woman found in the upper part of Lake Contrary Wednesday afternoon, recovered Thursday night and removed to some new place of concealment by two unknown men? Two strangers spent the greater part of the day wading out into the waters of the bayou, a mile southeast of where the body was found, apparently in search of some object in its shallow depth.

That was the latest question before the police and county authorities last night in the mysterious and revolting murder case now confronting them. The search with grappling hooks and by hand continued until late last night in the new location brought to light by the story of Harry McKinnon, a farmer who lives southwest of Lake Contrary and near the north shore of the bayou. The head had not been found last night.

McKinnon's story strengthens the theory that the head was deposited some distance from the body and that the murderers are still remaining in the vicinity of St. Joseph, keeping close track of the investigation.

Last Friday or Saturday McKinnon is not positive of the date, he said he saw a rather small dark colored roadster coming eastward on the road along the shore of the bayou and stop at the improvised landing place for his private boat about 150 yards south of his house. He was not sure about the hour, but said it was about dusk. The car came to a stop and one of the men got out. He was rather short, stickily built and appeared to be young, McKinnon said.

He carried an object in his right hand which appeared to be a woven parcel carrier often used as a shopping bag by women. The man was between McKinnon and the water and the object was well defined against the light background, McKinnon said, while he (McKinnon) was apparently concealed from the view of the man.

The man with the bag walked around the car and standing about four feet from the bank he took two swings and threw the object, McKinnon said, into the bayou. As he threw the bag the noise of a car approaching from the west reached the ears of the man and he whirled about and tried to peer around the bend of the road. He then ran to the car, McKinnon said, clambered in, started the engine with a self-starter, and sped away in a southerly direction as the second car came around the bend. McKinnon said he could not discern whether the man had a companion or not as the side toward McKinnon's house was curtained. The second car, according to McKinnon, was one which he has noticed many times within the past several weeks and he believes it is the property of a farmer who lives several miles away from the lake and uses this route in going to and from town. The road on which the two cars approached leads from the bridge on the upper dam at the northwestern end of the lake, where the body was found.

Yesterday afternoon McKinnon told Phil Slattery, assistant prosecuting attorney, and reporters, the second episode of the mysterious visits to the place where the object was thrown in, leading to the believe that the mysterious object contained the head of the young woman and was later recovered by the perpetrators of the crime.

McKinnon has been planting corn in a field not far from his house the past several days. "I went home for dinner yesterday (Thursday) and at that time first noticed two young men near my boat landing place," he said, speaking of the second visit of strangers to the place on the bayou.

"One man was in the water up to his hops, apparently fishing. The other was on the bank. I never thought anything about it as it is a place where people often come to fish. I watched them for a time, however, as persons have stolen my boat which I keep tied there, on several occasions. I was not closer to the men than 200 yards at dinner.

"I went back to the field in the afternoon and when I came back for supper the men were still there. It struck me as being pretty queer for a man to be wading in the water on a day when it was so cool. He was still in the water and the other was sort of hidden from me by some willows along the bank. No automobile was in sight. Neither man appeared to have fishing poles.

"So I yelled to him, 'Kinda chilly for wading isn't it?' and he didn't answer me. I didn't go very near the men and went on to my house. I watched them for a while but it was getting dark so I couldn't see them very well. Finally about 8 oclock [sic] I went to bed and as far as I know the men were still there when I went to bed."

"Had you heard about the body of a young woman being found on Wednesday?" McKinnon was asked. He replied that he had, but only from a brother-in-law, and had not learned any details.

A careful search was made at the ... indicated by McKinnon in his statement to the authorities yesterday afternoon.

A water jug filled with water to the approximate weight of a human head was thrown into the bayou by several persons standing in the spot indicated by McKinnon. In each trial the jug fell within a radius of twenty-five feet from the bank. The water is not deep here and by lying flat in a ... Tull McKinnon, a brother of Har... McKinnon, moved slowly about the ... feeling



carefully the bottom ... bottom he said is mud but of a depth of not more than a foot. McKinnon covered the area within which ... object is believed to have , fallen ... the mysterious ... He ...  
[several paragraphs mostly illegible]

### Drop "Murder" Car Clue

[Several paragraphs partly illegible] ... lake below ... continues in a ... the shores ... fas as a mile west ... a road crossing ... upper lake where ... road is a ... fairly good condition ... the bridge the car ... the throwing of ... the bayou, gone west ... amusement park or ... road that goes ... the park. ... the abandoned car ... of Armour ... south of St. Joseph ..., was the murder.... Groundless yesterday ... Detectives ... message from Armour. ... abandoned because it ... The windshield ,, and one of the men re... on his hand which bled... He used an extra shirt in ... of blood and when ... was said the shirt ... The name of Chief ... informant was not disclosed ... message came from a reliable ... said.

... the blood splotches were ... the planks of the bridge ... the body is supposed to have been thrown, and will be sent by ... Slattery to a Kansas City chemist for analysis. It is believed that an analysis may disclose whether the blood was that of a negro or white woman. The question is still largely a matter of conjecture, as no exact ... is possible.

"... inquest over the body was ...:30 oclock yesterday afternoon, but when news came of ..., Acting Coroner J. ?. Wisser decided to postpone the inquest until 3:30 oclock this afternoon, hoping to find some clue in the investigation of the farmer's story. The body lies at the H. O. Sidenfaden undertaking rooms. It is blackened and beyond all possible hope of identification.

The police have been receiving numerous messages from other cities inquiring details of the crime and a description of the young woman. In several cases names of missing young women in other cities have been forwarded, giving the circumstances of their disappearance. The Atchison police ... the case of Mrs. Frank Olson, who disappeared here last Tuesday night. She has not been heard of since she came here Tuesday, presumably to meet a man.

*[Other information about missing women]*

Telephone inquiries ... to Sidenfaden's ... sking descriptions of the ... names were divulged.

### Same

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 20 Jun 1920, pp. 1 & 2**

The iron bed rails used to weight down the nude, headless body of a young woman, found in Lake Contrary Wednesday, may point the way to the discovery of her identity and that of her murderer. Whereas the police were working blindly and without much hope Friday, and were almost ready to admit the mystery would go unsolved, Chief of Detectives Tom ...inson said last night he thought his men had a fair chance to solve the riddle.

The inquest, held yesterday afternoon at the H. O. Sidenfaden undertaking rooms, shed some light on the case, chiefly through the testimony of Mrs. Mabel Christo, 222 1/2 West Missouri

avenue, who related her experience with head and foot pieces of an iron bed, which she saw Wednesday in the alley behind her home, and which were gone when she looked for them after reading the first newspaper accounts of the gruesome find at the lake.

A post mortem examination of the body, made just before its burial in the city cemetery late yesterday, also revealed facts having a definite bearing on the case, it was said by the authorities, who declined, however, to say just what discoveries were made.

Mrs. Christo was called to the witness stand at the inquest at 7:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon and told Acting Coroner J. J. Wisser and Phil Slattery, assistant prosecuting attorney, of her discovery. Mrs. Christo testified she first noticed the pieces of dismantled bed Wednesday morning, the day the body was discovered. She could not account for their appearance, she said, and following the first news of the finding of the body Wednesday afternoon, the pieces were taken away again that night.

"Two pieces of the bed," Mrs. Christo testified, "were leaning up against the shed where I keep my chickens, but were on the outside or . . . , in the alley. I don't remember what time it was when I first noticed them. They appeared as if they had been recently painted a light green and bluish shade. The thought then occurred to me that some one had painted the bed and left it out in the alley to dry.

"There were no rails or side pieces in sight, just the front and foot pieces. A track which appeared to be that of a heavy wagon was not far from the pieces. I just let them stay there, thinking that they would be removed by whoever put them there. Wednesday afternoon I heard from one of my neighbors that the body of the young woman had been found with bed rails attached to it. It wasn't until that night that it occurred to me that the bed rails might have been from the bed in my alley, and on Thursday morning when I looked for the bed, it was gone."

The color of the bed rails which were attached to the body of the young woman is a light blue, the same, according to authorities, that such a bedstead as described by Mrs. Christo would have turned after having been in water several days.

Another report to the effect that the bed rails came from an abandoned cottage on the north shore of the lake formerly occupied by the late . . . Theisen, reached the prosecuting attorney's office late yesterday afternoon. The report came in a round-about way but an investigation will be made by police detectives.

Phil Slattery and Police Detectives Kelley and Reynolds went to the home of Mrs. Christo late yesterday afternoon and made a careful investigation of her premises and the place where she said she found the bed. Mrs. Christo lives upstairs at the Missouri avenue address, over a business house. The alley running back of her house leads from Lake avenue and although not paved, it is in fairly good condition for vehicular traffic. The shed where the bed was found is about fifty yards from the mouth of the alley.

In the course of the investigation at the Christo house, John H. Stevens, a shoe repairer and taxi driver, who lives at 218 West Missouri avenue, told the officers of an iron bedstead, the head and

foot pieces of which he saw in a garage in the rear of his house. The garage is owned by Dr. ? N. Goodson, a negro physician, who lives upstairs at 216 1/2 West Missouri avenue. Doctor Goodson told the police he did not remember the pieces of an iron bedstead in the garage. Whether the bed is the same as the one referred to by Mrs. Christo is another phase of the mystery which is being investigated by the police and Slattery.

An anonymous message printed in ink on a small piece of paper came to the police yesterday morning. It contained the following six words:

"Body ... is Omaha woman."

The message ... sized envelope ... the address ... was postmarked ... been mailed at ... Friday night. The lettering ... message and the envelope ... and evidence ... The paper was ... paper about two by three inches in size.

Opinion as to whether the message was intended ... to ... the police on a false ... them a top which ... up the mystery... police have received ... from Omaha ... Omaha... [*rest of paragraph illegible.*]

The search for the head of the young woman ... bayou was abandoned yesterday... of two days which revealed nothing. Failure to find the shopping bag which according to Mr. McKinnon, was thrown into the bayou last Friday or Saturday, is believed to be ... either ... that was washed away ... falling water... that it was ... by the two men whom McKinnon saw Thursday.

The coroner's inquest yesterday afternoon failed to determine whether the young woman was white or a negro. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon, who were at the lake when the body was discovered and removed, as well as a number of farmers, who were at the bridge when the body was taken out, testified at the inquest that the feet and lower parts of the legs were white. The white portion blackened after it was taken out of the water, it is said. The verdict returned at the inquest was that the woman came to her death by the hands of unknown persons. Acting Coroner J. J. Wisser filled out the death certificate for a negress.

[*More information on other missing women.*]

### **Same**

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 21 Jun 1920, pp. 1 & 5**

Handicapped by the fact that no missing woman is known to the police that answers to the description of the nude, headless body found in Lake Contrary last Wednesday, the police and county authorities are investigation [sic] an otherwise good clue that promises to throw light upon the murder mystery within a few days. Circumstantial evidence Saturday afternoon and Sunday during an investigation of the mysterious appearance and subsequent disappearance of the head and foot pieces of an iron bed in South St. Joseph, points the way to a possible solution of the mystery, but according to Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Phil Slattery, the authorities "are working on a back trail."

Such a trail, nevertheless, may prove a good starting point and the police are not overlooking its importance. The investigation so far strengthened by what was reported found by an autopsy performed on the body immediately before burial, indicates generally that the perpetrators of the crime are in the negro and Mexican colony of South St. Joseph.

A wire clothesline found in the rear of a residence in South St. Joseph Saturday is said to resemble the pieces used in binding the body of the young woman to the iron bed rails used as sinkers. Pieces of the clothesline found there were brought to the Central police station by detectives and a comparison has been made, showing the same number of strands in the wire, and evidences of each having been freshly cut, the cuts very similar according to the police. Knots in the wire found in the yard and knots in that on the body were also similar, it is said. The bed rails were placed in the middle of the woman's back and ran horizontally with the length of her body.

Additional evidence said to have considerable bearing on the mystery was the discovery of a mattress and bed springs in the rafters of a garage at the same address. Neither the springs nor mattress were old and the other pieces of the bed were not found. Sufficient explanation as accounting for the presence of these parts of a bed was not given, according to Slattery.

One person told the police that the front and rear pieces of a bed were in the same garage for several days over a week ago, and that since the body was found they disappeared. Whether this part of the bed is the same as the one referred to by Mrs. Mabel Christo in her testimony before the coroner's inquest Saturday, has not yet been determined. Mrs. Christo said she saw those parts of a bed in the alley back of her house Wednesday morning and following the discovery of the body that afternoon they had been taken away by Thursday morning. The garage in which the other bed was found is not far away from the home of Mrs. Christo, according to the authorities.

The discovery of rags and a piece of paper with red splotches on them was also made in the garage, but opinion is divided as to whether the splotches are blood or red paint.

The bed rails found on the body and the pieces of bed said to have been seen by two South Side residents correspond in color. Both were painted light blue with an almost greenish shade. The police suspect the bed rails on the body were taken from the bed which has completely disappeared. Investigation along this line would be greatly facilitated, it is said, if either the head or foot piece seen by Mrs. Christo could be found.

The head was severed from the body evidently with deliberation, and by someone with some knowledge of the most practical method of doing it.

Despite the evidence herein mentioned and additional information, withheld by the police, Tom Johnson, chief of detectives, has little faith in the course of investigation, believing that nothing will be gained along this line. His detectives are still at work on this phase of the case, but their chief believes that a solution must come beginning from an opposite source, with a knowledge of the identity of a missing woman to work from. What has been found so far is not without its value, according to the chief, as a means of attaining the other end of the thread of mystery.

That the laconic message received Saturday morning by the police to the effect that the body was that of an Omaha woman, was sent to throw the police off the track is their present belief. The message was in an envelope postmarked St. Joseph. A telegram of inquiry to the chief of police at Omaha Saturday was answered yesterday and told of the disappearance of but one Omaha girl. She was believed to be in St. Joseph, and her probably whereabouts were told. An inquiry in St. Joseph revealed the fact that the missing girl is here and in steady employment.

*[Information about others missing, and about a possible reward fund.]*

**Same**

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 22 Jun 1920, p. 1**

Little progress was made by the police and representatives of the prosecuting attorney's office yesterday in the solution of the mystery surrounding the discovery of a nude, headless body of a young woman last Wednesday in Lake Contrary. A clue that Saturday afternoon seemed valuable is still being investigated, but little actual headway has been made. There has been considerable theorizing, in which, it is said, some very favorable comparisons have been made.

The clue referred to was the discovery of some wire clothesline which was virtually identical with that around the woman's body, according to the police, and information that the head and foot pieces of an iron bed were seen but later disappeared from the garage of F. N. Goodson, a negro physician, 216 1/2 Missouri avenue, in South St. Joseph.

Joseph Smith, a 13-year-old negro boy, employed by Doctor Goodson, was questioned by Chief of Detectives Johnson and other detectives yesterday morning concerning several discoveries at Goodson's place, which is a rooming house. Smith told the police the bed referred to by John H. Stevens, a shoe repairer who lives at 218 West Missouri avenue, in his story to the police Saturday, had been removed from the garage which Stevens shares with Goodson, and had been set up in Goodson's house. The boy further declared that the paper and a rag found in the garage containing red splotches were discolored by red paint which had been used at the Goodson place recently, and not by blood. The paper, which is an old calendar, has been saved for analysis.

Smith was shown the bedrails with which the corpse was weighted, and said he had never seen any like them before. All the beds in Goodson's house, he said, were black. The rails on the body were of a bluish-green color. Smith also said he had never seen the parts of a bed mentioned by Mrs. Mabel Christo, 222 1/2 Missouri avenue, who saw the pieces in an alley back of her house, according to her testimony at the coroner's inquest. The police are searching for a junk dealer who might have taken the pieces.

No arrests have been made yet in connection with the affair. The fact that the woman had been subjected to a criminal operation not long before her death, according to a discovery made at the autopsy before burial, is another phase which adds to its mystery. It was evident that the operation had been performed by a fairly skilful [sic] surgeon, but whether it caused the death of the woman is, of course, unable to be determined.

**Same**

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 24 Jun 1920, pp. 1 & 2**

A state warrant charging Fenton N. Goodson, a negro physician who lives in South St. Joseph, with the murder of the young woman whose headless body was found in Lake Contrary a week ago yesterday, will be issued from the office of Justice C. A. Loomis, in the South Side at 9 o'clock this morning, according to Phil Slattery, assistant prosecuting attorney. Goodson was arrested in a raid by police detectives led by Slattery early yesterday morning on the rooming house at 216 1/2 West Missouri avenue, which Goodson conducts, and on another rooming house at 320 1/2 West Missouri avenue.

All that remains to complete the case against Goodson, according to Chief of Detectives Tom Johnson, is the identity of the young woman, who is believed to be a negress. A close cross-examination of ten negro men and seven negro women arrested in the two simultaneous raids, failed to disclose her identity. All, with the exception of Goodson and Minnie Lewis, who conducts the rooming house at 320 1/2 West Missouri avenue, were released yesterday afternoon. Mrs. Lewis is held pending investigation by federal authorities of the discovery of a complete moonshine still and a quantity of illegally manufacturer whisky.

The missing head and foot pieces of the iron bed from which bed rails were taken to weight the body, were found Tuesday afternoon by Mrs. John Bielak, 123 Antelope street and following a test of the effect of water upon the color at the central police station yesterday were said to have tallied with the pieces found upon the body of the woman. The pieces were found in a patch of weeds in a swamp between Florence addition and the Larabee mills. Mrs. Bielak found the pieces when she made a trip to the place where her cow was tethered.

Following the grilling of the negroes and Doctor Goodson yesterday afternoon at the police station, Chief Johnson said it was the general opinion of the authorities that the woman came to St. Joseph from some other city to have a criminal operation performed by Doctor Goodson. The autopsy conducted by Acting Coroner J. J. Wisser and Deputy Coroner Tom Matney before the burial revealed that a criminal operation had been performed on the woman between three and ten days before her death. Doctor Wisser said yesterday the woman might have died during the operation.

The fact that the body has not been identified is not irreconcilable with such a theory. The woman might have told relatives she was coming to St. Joseph for the operation, to be gone several weeks, the police say, and since the discovery of the body was made a week ago, not more than three or four days after it had been thrown into the waters of the lake, it follows that her relatives might not yet have suspected fatal results, consequently making no inquiry in this direction.

The police hope to hear in the near future from the relatives of the woman who will supply the missing link in the case against the negro. As the case now stands, without the identity, Chief Johnson said yesterday afternoon, "we have enough evidence that will convince the public that Goodson caused the woman's death."

The police and Slattery have so far refused to make public any details of the evidence in the case as gathered from the grilling of the negroes yesterday. "The fact that we are going to issue a warrant for murder in the first degree should indicate that we have sufficient evidence against the negro," Slattery said last night, when asked for a statement.

The police were working on a new lead last night, Slattery said, which may lead to the discovery of the woman's identity.

Goodson was questioned for fifteen minutes yesterday afternoon behind closed doors at the central police station, but Chief Johnson refused to divulge the result of the grilling. Goodson has presented an unshaken and almost stoical front to the authorities, according to Slattery, denying any knowledge of the evidence found on his property, or any knowledge of the crime.

Goodson will be arraigned today, Slattery said, and will be held until the date of his preliminary hearing. A person held on a first degree murder charge cannot give bond until after the preliminary hearing.

The raids yesterday morning were made shortly after 6 o'clock. Led by Slattery and Chief Johnson, the raiding party of Police Detectives Boyle, White, Walsh, Kelly, Reynolds, Reichen, Thedinga, and Sergt. J. E. Kelley, left the station at 6 o'clock and went to South St. Joseph. The negroes were surprised, many of them still in bed. They were marched to the South End station and taken from there in the police patrol wagon.

*[Repeated information about Mrs. Christo's sighting of the bed, and evidence found in the doctor's garage.]*

Goodson has a Ford coupe which he keeps in the garage, and the police point to the testimony at the inquest by Harry G. McKinnon, a farmer who lives southwest of Lake Contrary, who declared that he saw a stickily built man drive up in a roadster and throw a heavily weighted shopping bag into the waters of the bayou... *[More repeat of details]*

Goodson is 32 years old. He was born in Carrollton, Mo., where he received his grade and high school education. Later he attended a medical college at Nashville, Tenn., and upon his graduation went to Lincoln, Neb., where he practiced his profession for nearly two years. Goodson moved to South St. Joseph more than seven years ago and is said to have a large practice among members of his own race in South St. Joseph. During the world war Goodson enlisted in the medical service and served over a year, but did not go overseas. He is large, broad shouldered, smooth shaven, and above the average member of his race in general appearance.

Goodson's wife left him six months ago and is now living with relatives in Auston, Texas, the police say.

*[More details about the still and whisky discovery.]*

**Same**

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 25 Jun 1920, p. 1**

*[Information about Dr. Goodson awaiting trial for the murder of "Mary Doe." Nothing new about the identity of the dead woman.]*

*[Note: later editions of the newspaper are not available.]*

**Date of death: 14 Apr 1906**

**Subject: Clarence Johnson**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 14 Apr 1906, p. 2**

Savannah, Mo., April 14.—A telegram was received here today stating that Clarence Johnson, who left Savannah a few weeks ago for Montana, was stricken with heart failure and died within a few hours. It is not yet known whether the body will be brought here for burial.

**Date of death: 21 Jul 1907**

**Subject: Emma A. (Johnson) Sanborn**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 7 Aug 1907, p. 10**

Friends in St. Joseph of A. G. Sanborn, county clerk at Seneca, Kan., have been advised of the death of his wife at Seneca, which was followed closely by the death of his daughter, Lena, in Denver, Colo., where she had gone seeking relief from asthma. Mr. Sanborn had taken the child [sic] to Denver in the hope that her health would improve there, but she died within six hours after reaching the city. Mr. Sanborn has a wide acquaintance here and in Andrew County and northern Kansas. He was formerly engaged in the newspaper business and for several years was a mail agent on the Grand Island road.

**Date of death: 28 Apr 1908**

**Subject: Flossie Johnson**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 29 Apr 1908, p. 4**

Flossie, the two-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Johnson, 1308 South Eighth street, died of pneumonia at the family residence Tuesday noon.

**Date of death: 26 May 1902**

**Subject: John Johnson\***

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 27 May 1902, p. 6**

John Johnson, the negro who was rescued from the river at the foot of Charles street Sunday evening, died at his home 709 North Second street, at 11 o'clock Monday morning. Death was due to congestion of the brain, caused by alcohol. The shock produced by Johnson falling into the river is believed to have hurried the congestion.

Coroner Doyle viewed the remains and decided that an inquest was unnecessary.

**Date of death: 17 Jun 1907**

**Subject: Jonas Johnson\***



**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 19 Jun 1907, p. 5**

Coroner C. F. Byrd was called to 111 West Augusta street at 11 o'clock yesterday morning to view the body of the infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Ellis Johnson, negroes, who died late Monday night without medical attendance. An autopsy showed death to have been caused by acute pneumonia.

**Date of death: 6 Jun 1909**

**Subject: R. N. Johnson**

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 9 Jun 1909, p. 7**

R. N. Johnson, 92 years old, died at a local hospital Sunday night. He was a native of England and a tailor by trade, but for 38 years has been an inmate of the county farm. The infirmities of age were given as the cause of death.

**Date of death: 22 Oct 1903**

**Subject: Thomas Johnson\***

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 23 Oct 1903, p. 8**

Thomas Johnson, colored, died at 516 North Second street at 3:25 o'clock yesterday afternoon. Johnson has no relatives in this city. The funeral will be held at 2 o'clock Saturday afternoon. The body will be buried in the city cemetery.

**Date of death: 6 Feb 1903**

**Subject: Benjamin Franklin Jones\***

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 8 Feb 1903, p. 8**

Benjamin F. Jones, aged 33, colored, died at his home, No. 215 Michel street, Feb. 6, at 7:30 p.m. Funeral services will be held at the A.M.E. church at 2 o'clock Monday evening, Feb. 9. The body will be interred at Oakland cemetery.

**Date of death: 22 Jan 1918**

**Subject: Darrell Jones**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 22 Jan 1918, p. 6**

Darrell, the infant son of Mr. and Mrs. R. Jones, died this morning at 1 o'clock at the family home, 1619 Savannah avenue.

**Date of death: 21 Oct 1909**

**Subject: Mathew Jones**

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 23 Oct 1909, p. 8 & *St. Joseph News-Press*, 22 Oct 1909, p. 4**

Mathew Jones, aged 63 years, died at 10 o'clock Thursday night in a local hospital.

**Date of death: 8 Sep 1916**

**Subject: Thomas Jefferson Jones**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 8 Sep 1916, p. 6**

Thomas Jefferson Jones, seventy years old, for ... an inmate of the county farm, died at ... o'clock this morning at a local hospital.

**Date of death: 5 Nov 1918**

**Subject: Trammel Jones**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 5 Nov 1918, p. 6**

Trammel Jones, fourteen-month-old son of Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Jones, died at 4:30 o'clock this morning at the home of the parents, 715 Angelique street, of influenza.

**Date of death: 6 Mar 1909**

**Subject: William A. Jones**

**Source: *St. Joseph News-Press*, 6 Mar 1909, p. 4**

Maryville, Mo., March 6.—The body of W. A. Jones, aged fifty-five years, was found in the bottom of a well this morning on his farm near Pickering. A son, O. E. Jones, discovered the body.

Worry over a land deal is said to have made Mr. Jones despondent.

In addition to O. E. Jones, who lived on the farm with his father. A son, L. M. Jones, is a student at Baldwin University, Baldwin, Kan.

**Date of death: 1 Dec 1902**

**Subject: Mrs. Lucinda (\_\_\_) Jordan Smith Adams**

**Source: *St. Joseph Gazette*, 3 Dec 1902, p. 3**

Lucinda Adams, wife of W. R. Adams, who resides at Twenty-first and Bell streets, died at midnight Monday night at the family residence. Death was due to pneumonia, and Mrs. Adams had been sick but six days. She is survived by her husband, two daughters and a son. The children are Miss Bessie Smith, D. M. Jordan and Mrs. Rosa Foster.

The funeral will be held from the residence at 9 o'clock this morning and interment will be made in Amazonia cemetery.