

- 0. THE SUSPECTS - Story Preface
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At the inquest, Detective Lieutenant Jesse Haskins described the condition of the body when he first arrived on the scene:

The body was lying with the head towards the north, the feet towards the south, the left leg was five inches west of the sidewalk. . .The body was lying face up and the severed part was jogged over about 10 inches, the upper half of the body from the lower half. . .there was a tire track right up against the curbing and there was what appeared to be a possible bloody heel mark in this tire mark; and on the curbing which is very low there was one spot of blood; and there was an empty paper cement sack lying in the driveway and it also had a spot of blood on it. . .It had been brought there from some other location. . .The body was clean and appeared to have been washed.

The coroner, Dr. Frederick D. Newbarr, told the inquest jury that Elizabeth died on the 14th or 15th of January. He explained the cause of death:

Q: Your finding is that the real cause of death was hemorrhage and shock due to blows to the head?

A: Blows on the head and face.

The police were convinced that someone with medical training was involved, either before or after the murder. According to [an FBI letter](#), dated February 25, 1947:

The manner in which ELIZABETH SHORT's body was dissected has indicated the possibility that the murderer was a person somewhat experienced in medical work. The Los Angeles Police Department has undertaken to develop suspects among the medical and dental schools in the area, as well as among other students who have anything to do with human anatomy.

Complying with the police request, USC sent names of students, as evidenced by the [FBI's letter of March 6th](#):

Reference is made to your letter of February 25, 1947, submitting a list bearing the names of students enrolled in the Medical School of the University of Southern California and requesting that these names be searched through the criminal indices of the Identification Division ...

The first suspect, [arrested](#) for the murder of Elizabeth Short, wasn't a medical student. He was Robert "Red" Manley. But his alibi, for the 14th and 15th of January, and his lie detector tests - there were two - caused the police to let him go.

Waiting to [testify at the inquest](#), Manley - together [with his wife](#) and father - were in the [same room](#) as Elizabeth's mother (Phoebe), [sister](#) (Ginnie) and Ginnie's husband, Adrian West (a Berkeley professor).

Mark Hansen, who owned the Florentine Gardens and in whose home Elizabeth had stayed, became a suspect when someone - presumably the murderer - sent a package of Short's personal effects to the *Examiner*. Among other items, including Short's birth certificate, was an address book. It had Mark Hansen's name on the cover.

Even Elizabeth's father, Cleo Short, was evaluated as a potential suspect. In 1943, he had sent money to his daughter so she could be with him in Vallejo, California.

Their reunion was short-lived and, soon thereafter, Elizabeth found a job at the [Camp Cooke PX](#). (A significant portion of that base was transferred from the Army to the Air Force, in late 1956, to be used as a missile launch and training facility and is now called Vandenberg Air Force Base.) While at Camp Cooke, Elizabeth's good looks earned her the nickname "Camp Cutie."

By June, the police had processed - and eliminated - a list of 75 suspects. People sent "[tips](#)" to the police - [most](#) were completely [off the mark](#). Folks also [sent messages](#) to the [news media](#) and [to](#) the district attorney. The case remained unsolved.

By December, of the following year, investigators had considered a total of 192 suspects. In 1949, with the case still open, the Grand Jury (which included Gladys Littell - seated second right - founder of the Hollywood Conservatory of Music and Arts), was convened to investigate both the murder and the possibility of police corruption and/or coverup.

Although jurors did not indict anyone for Elizabeth's murder, their 1949 Grand Jury Report found:

deplorable conditions indicating corrupt practices and misconduct by some members of the law enforcement agencies in the county... alarming increase in the number of unsolved murders... jurisdictional disputes and jealousies among law enforcement agencies.

To this day, the murder of Elizabeth Short remains officially unsolved.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-SUSPECTS-Black-Dahlia>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-SUSPECTS-Black-Dahlia>

Media Stream



Black Dahlia - Robert ("Red") Manley Arrested

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library website.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Black-Dahlia-Robert-Red-Manley-Arrested>



Black Dahlia Case - Robert Manley Testifies

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library website.

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Black Dahlia Case - Robert Manley's Family

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Black Dahlia Case - Short and Manley Families

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library website.

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Elizabeth Short - Her Family at the Courthouse

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library website.

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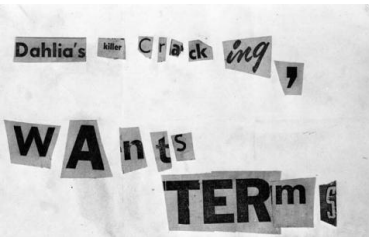


Camp Cooke PX

Image online, courtesy Bob West website.

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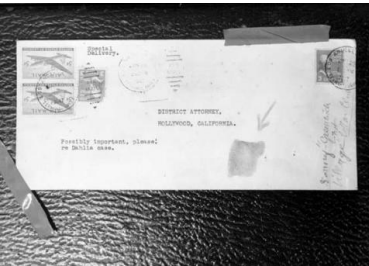
Alleged Help from the Public - A "Tip"

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Special Delivery - The Black Dahlia Case

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library website.

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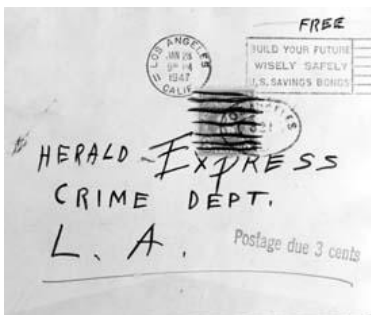
Gladys Littell - A Black Dahlia Grand Juror

Image online, courtesy the Hollywood Professional School website.

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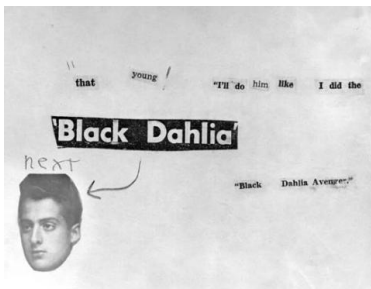
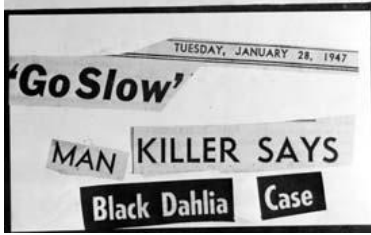
Black Dahlia Letter on Jan. 28, 1947

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library website.

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The Black Dahlia Avenger - Crank "Tips"

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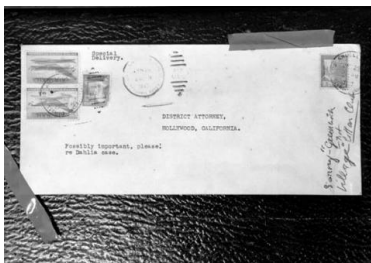
The Herald Express - Crank Tip

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Black Dahlia Case - Letters to the D.A.

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Black Dahlia Case - Members of the Grand Jury

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