

## FAQ 11

### 11.1

**Q: Lillian Lenorak identified Elizabeth Short as being a girlfriend of your father's and also as being at parties at the Franklin House. Could you explain George Hodel's connection with the policewoman who wrote the letter to LAPD about your father.**

Yes. The policewoman, Mary Unkefer, was from Santa Barbara Police Department. Her letter (scanned below) was mailed to District Attorney investigators, Lts. Jemison and Sullivan-- not LAPD. It was dated, January 30, 1950.

SANTA BARBARA POLICE OFFICER MARY UNKEFER & THE UNKEFER-ELIZABETH SHORT-LILLIAN LENORAK- DR. GEORGE HODEL CONNECTIONS

From *Black Dahlia Avenger: A Genius for Murder* pg-479

On January 16, 1947, the day "Jane Doe Number 1" was identified by the FBI as Elizabeth Short, Santa Barbara policewoman Mary Unkefer was one of the first important witnesses contacted by LAPD in the Black Dahlia investigation. Why? Because Officer Unkefer had direct and extended contact with Elizabeth Short after Elizabeth's September 1943 arrest for "minor possession." The *L.A. Daily News* of January 17, 1947, under the headline: "**Identify Victim as Hollywood Resident,**" detailed Officer Unkefer's connections:

She (Elizabeth Short) had been a clerk at the Camp Cooke post exchange near Santa Barbara and was picked up for drinking with soldiers in a cafe there.

Policewoman Mary Unkefer of the Santa Barbara police department took the girl to her own home to live with her for nine days...

"We put her on the train for her home, and several times later she wrote to me from there" Miss Unkefer recalled. One of her letters said: "I'll never forget you thank God you picked me up when you did!"

Incredibly, from information contained in these DA documents, we only now discover that Officer Mary Unkefer—who in 1943 had been directly responsible for rescuing Elizabeth Short from a dangerous environment—in January 1950 drove from Santa Barbara to Dr. Hodel's Franklin Avenue residence and there removed another young female victim from harm's way. Officer Unkefer, after safely returning the victim, whose name was Lillian Lenorak,\* to Santa Barbara, typed a letter to Los Angeles DA investigators, describing and informing them of Dr. Hodel's involvement in multiple crimes, including subornation of perjury and felony assault. Here for the first time is that remarkable letter, published in its entirety, exactly as it was typed:

- Through other DA documents, we know that Lillian Lenorak was a 1949 defense witness who testified at the Hodel incest trial, was an acquaintance of George Hodel's, and when shown photographs of Elizabeth Short by DA investigators identified her as Hodel's girlfriend. Miss Lenorak was preparing to recant her previous sworn testimony and admit she perjured herself at the incest trial. Lenorak's perjury at the Hodel trial had to do with the fact that she was present at Dr. Ballard's office with Charles Smith, when Tamar, George Hodel's 14-year-old daughter was "examined" but no abortion occurred. She was now going to admit the truth of it, that in fact, an abortion was performed on Tamar.

**OFFICER MARY UNKEFER'S ORIGINAL LETTER AS FOUND IN DA FILE**

Below is Santa Barbara Police Department officer Mary Unkefer's actual letter to the DA, as she typed it. In it she documents Dr. Hodel's assault and drugging of the victim, and his "staging of her attempted suicide." She additionally provides information re. Dr. Hodel's "payoffs to police and DA through his attorney, Jerry Giesler."

Jan.30-50

Dist. Attorney's Office  
Los Angeles, Calif.

209 W.Valerio St.  
Santa Barbara, Calif.

Dear Sir;

I am sorry I missed the Gentleman from your Office on Wednesday. I work at odd hours & I arrived at home about ten minutes after your Men left for Los Angeles.

I had expected to come to Los Angeles early this week as I had business to attend to there but find it is not necessary for me to make the trip except to give you what information I can regarding the Woman whom I brought to Santa Barbara from the home of Dr.Hodel on Franklin Ave.

Mrs Hamilton (Mother of the young Woman) asked me to go to Los Angeles to get her & her Baby. I called Dr.Hodel before I left Santa Barbara to make sure the Patient was at his home & there would be no chance of me running into a snag when I got there as it was night & I was not prepared to have to look for her. Dr.Hodel told me that it was very necessary for her to be removed from his home that same evening as he intended to put her in an Institution in Los Angeles if she was not immediately taken back to Santa Barbara. He informed me that two of her Friends were there & that they would return to Santa Barbara with Lillian to keep her from becoming too much of a problem on the way.

When I arrived at the Franklin address (I took a young Woman with me) I sensed something wrong as soon as I entered the building. The Dr.seemed very anxious to tell me that the Girl was in a bad mental condition & that she had attempted suicide. I asked where the parties were who were going to ride to Santa Barban with me & he said he could not get in touch with them at that time,but when I assured him that I would not take the Girl with me unless her Friends would go along, he then called the Woman (Karoun Tootikian) who came to his home & said she would go with me. Two young men volunteered to drive another car & follow me to see that I got the Girl safely home. Joseph Barrett,who lives at the same address on Franklin & another young man Friend who was not interested in the case,except that he offered to drive Barrett up here & then take the Woman & the other man(Joe Barrett) back to Los Angeles.

When I asked to see Lillian Dr. Hodel explained that I had no need to worry about her giving me trouble on the way to Santa Barbara. He stated that he had given her a large enough dose to keep her asleep for three hours. With the aid of the Mexican maid (who looks like a half-wit or a hop-head, we packed Lillian's clothes & it was about ten P.M. before we got away from his home. Dr. Hodel & (Joe Barrett) took Lillian to my car, holding her up on both arms. That wakened her & she began to tell us about the Dr. She talked a great deal about her relations with him & she stated that she was very much afraid of him. She said she had witnessed an abortion performed on his own little Girl & then she stated that he had threatened to have her Child taken from her if she did not testify in his favor in Court. She said he knew of some of her foolishness in connection with a Man called Charles, & that he (the Dr.) was holding that over her. She said that she had never attempted suicide & that she had never cut her wrists or her hands. She stated that the Dr. constantly gave her drugs & that when she wakened the cutting had been done. While I was in the Dr's sitting room waiting for the Woman who was to drive with us, I asked the Dr. what had caused the Girl to go haywire so suddenly. He said it was a great deal to do with some case she had in Court. It was not until Lillian wakened & told us how she had perjured herself in Court for the Dr. that I realized what case it was that had caused her so much worry. There were scratches & bruises on her forehead & arms. Her (three-year old) baby said the Dr. knocked his Mommie down & made Mommie cry hard. On the way north, the car with the young men in, drove behind us & it was after I left Lillian at the Psycho Ward at the Gen. Hospital that I had a chance to talk to Joe Barrett. He stated emphatically that there was nothing wrong with Lillian except what had been brought on by the cruel treatment received from Dr. Hodel. He stated that he knew Lillian had perjured herself at the trial because the Dr. had her under his influence. He stated that the relations between the Dr. & his Child were terrible & were worse than I had any idea. He stated that the Dr. boasted that the \$ 15,000.00 he paid Jerry Geisler was used to influence the Dist. Attorney & that was how the Dr. was cleared of the charge against him. He stated that Lillian had fallen in love with Charles &

that Charles was an assistant to another Dr. <sup>4</sup> Friend of Hodel. When I asked Barrett where this Charles was now living, he stated that he had 'taken off' after the Dr's trial & was in San Francisco. Lillian stated that she had a very guilty mind after the trial & told Hodel that she was going to tell the Dist. Attorney that she had lied on the witness stand, & that Dr. Hodel told her if she squealed that he would name Charles & the other Dr. as being the ones who performed the operation. Joe Barrett spoke of Dr. Hodel as being a real 'NO GOOD GUY'.

I visited Lillian at the Hospital on Sunday (yesterday). She seemed glad to see me & stated that she would like to tell me all about the true facts concerning the Dr's activities & the trial but she stated she knew he would have her done away with as well as her Baby. He said she would like to have told the men from your office all about it but he said she was not sure if you were her Friends & she was just PLUM SCARED to tell for fear he would carry out his threat to have her Boy taken from her & to have her committed to an insane Institution.

This morning I went to the hearing at the Psycho Ward & it was determined that she is mentally upset. The Dr. said a deal of the condition was brought about from the strain of the trial. Both Drs. stated that they felt she should have medical care. So she is to be taken to Camarillo State Hospital for treatment.

My personal opinion is that if the feeling between her & her Mother was not so strained, she might have been given a chance to go home & be taken care of by her Mother. There seems to have never been love between those two. Her Mother takes the attitude that she is going to MAKE Lillian do things the way she (Mother) wants them & the Girl seems just as determined that she is not going to be always treated as a Child. Hence there is fireworks between them.

Joe Barrett & Karoun Tootikian were here from Los Angeles to attend the hearing. Joe has had a good chance to talk to Dr. Hodel & he knows the Dist. Attorney's office is interested in the case. He seems to be afraid he might be questioned about the trial because his whole attitude was changed. He now speaks of the Dr. as 'not a bad fellow, with plenty of worries of his own'. He spoke & acted as though he is sorry he opened his mouth the night I brought Lillian home from Los Angeles. Karoun Tootikian's address is 2211 S. Highland, Dancing Teacher.

I do not know that this information will be of any help to you. It is about all I could tell you if I came down personally. But if there is anything I can do to help in anything that is good & sincere, I am at your service.

Very Sincerely Yours

Mary A. Zuckefer.

Franklin House witness/roomer, Joe Barrett, in a 2003, on-camera television interview for ABC's DATELINE recounted witnessing an incident in early 1950, involving Lillian Lenorak at the Franklin House. He tells of returning home to find an excited Ellen (our maid) warning him that Lenorak was in George Hodel's bedroom and was threatening to shoot Hodel when he came home.

Barrett entered the bedroom, and found a hysterical Lenorak, armed with a rifle belonging to George Hodel. Lenorak was screaming, "He is going to pay for what he has done. He has to pay for it. I'm going to kill him." Barrett claims he calmed her down, and removed the rifle from her person. When asked in this interview by reporter Josh Mankiewicz, "What Lenorak was referring to?", Barrett replied, "It was about the fact that Lillian knew that George had killed Elizabeth Short. Lillian knew Elizabeth and had met her at the house, and said that George had to pay for killing her."

Barrett also stated that "When George came home, I told him about what happened, and that Lillian was going to shoot him, and George's response was, "Why didn't you let her?"

[ NB: It is my belief that this "rifle incident" occurred in late-January, 1950, and is the event that immediately precipitated my father's "staging her attempted suicide." Lillian Lenorak was going to reveal to the DA what she knew, and he had to either kill her, or try to discredit her. With Barrett as a witness, he couldn't kill her, so he took the next best step. Try to set her up as a "mental case." He then drugged her, and staged her "attempt suicide" as described in policewoman Unkefer's letter to the DA. (We even have the dramatic corroboration from Lillian's three-year-old son, John, who witnessed George Hodel's assault on his mother. In route to Santa Barbara with his mother and officer Unkefer, the child tells the policewoman, "He [Dr. Hodel] hit mommy hard and knocked her down." I expect the critics who claim Lillian was just a "mental case" would also have to include her child as well, since he dramatically and immediately corroborates his mother's assault.

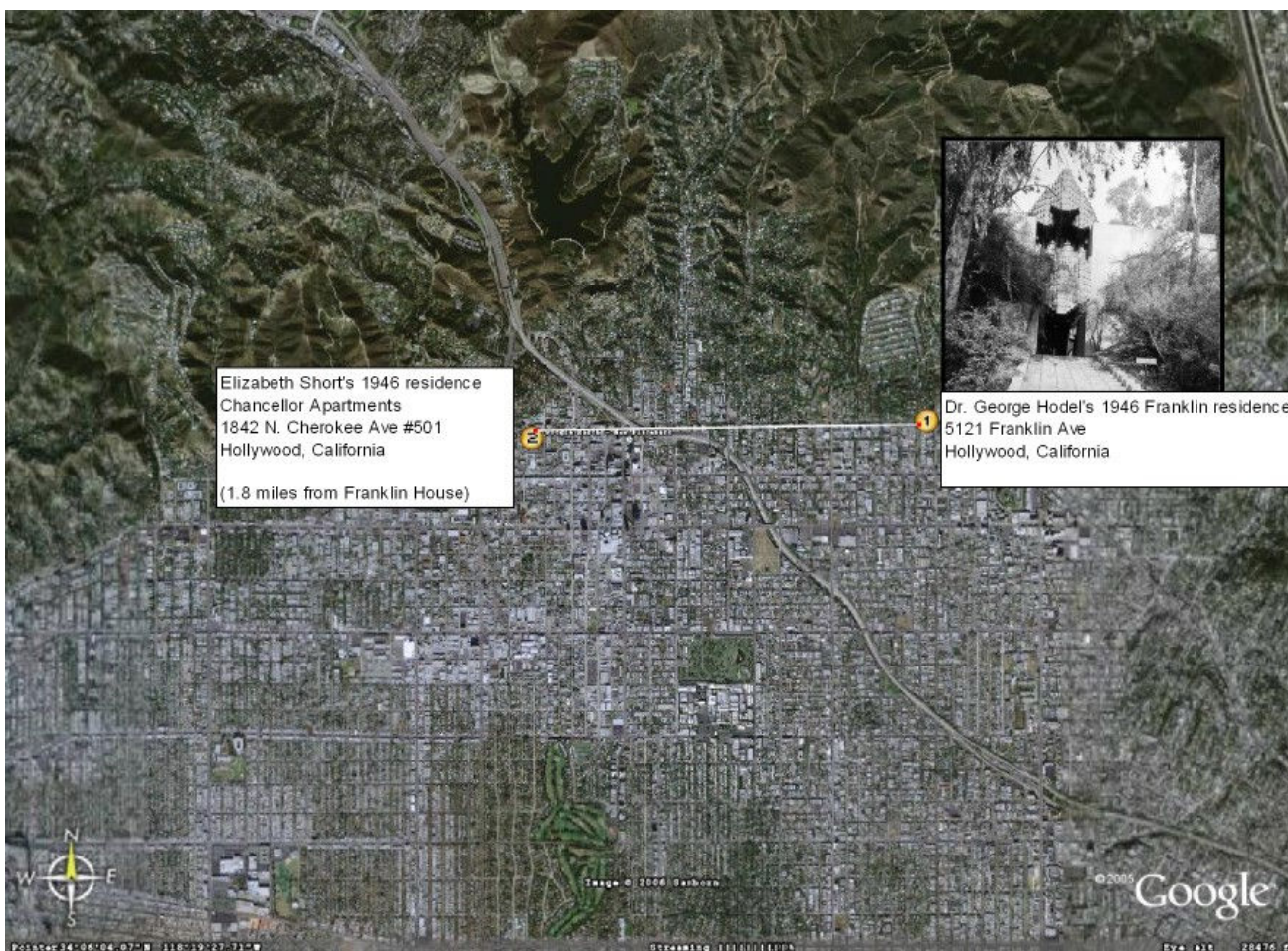
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## 11.2

**Q: Was your father's home on Franklin Avenue, close to where Elizabeth Short was living in Hollywood?**

Yes. As shown below, her 1946 address at the Chancellor Apts was directly parallel and **less than two miles** from my father's home. Elizabeth also stayed for a short time with Ann Toth, at the home of Mark Hansen, 6024 Carlos Ave, which was located directly behind his FLORENTINE GARDENS nightclub. This address was even closer, and was approximately, **one mile** southwest of the Franklin House.



**Dr. George Hodel's residence to Elizabeth Short's apartment = 1.8 miles (2.9 kilometers)**