

## **FAQ 77**

**(12/23/2008)**

**77.1**

### **THE LOUISE SPRINGER MURDER**

**JUNE 13, 1949**

Now let us move forward in time to a crime that occurred just **THREE BLOCKS** from the Dahlia vacant lot, and briefly examine another 1940s Los Angeles lone woman murder. One which I summarized in BDA but has been mostly ignored by the reading public **and totally ignored by today's LAPD.** (This despite the fact that their own, on-scene investigator, (and lead Dahlia detective), **Harry Hansen, was actively assigned to the case from its onset, and publicly stated his belief that the crime was very likely, "Dahlia connected."**)

**“The Black Dahlia and the Louise Springer murders might be linked. Both crimes could have been committed by the same man.”**

**Detective Harry Hansen**

**LAPD Homicide Division**

**Los Angeles Times, June, 1949**



**DETECTIVE HARRY HANSEN WAS ASSIGNED TO INVESTIGATE THE 1947 ELIZABETH SHORT & THE 1949 LOUISE SPRINGER MURDERS. FIVE DAYS INTO THE SPRINGER INVESTIGATION HE PUBLICLY INFORMED THE PRESS THAT THE TWO CRIMES WERE POSSIBLY CONNECTED.**

**WHY?**

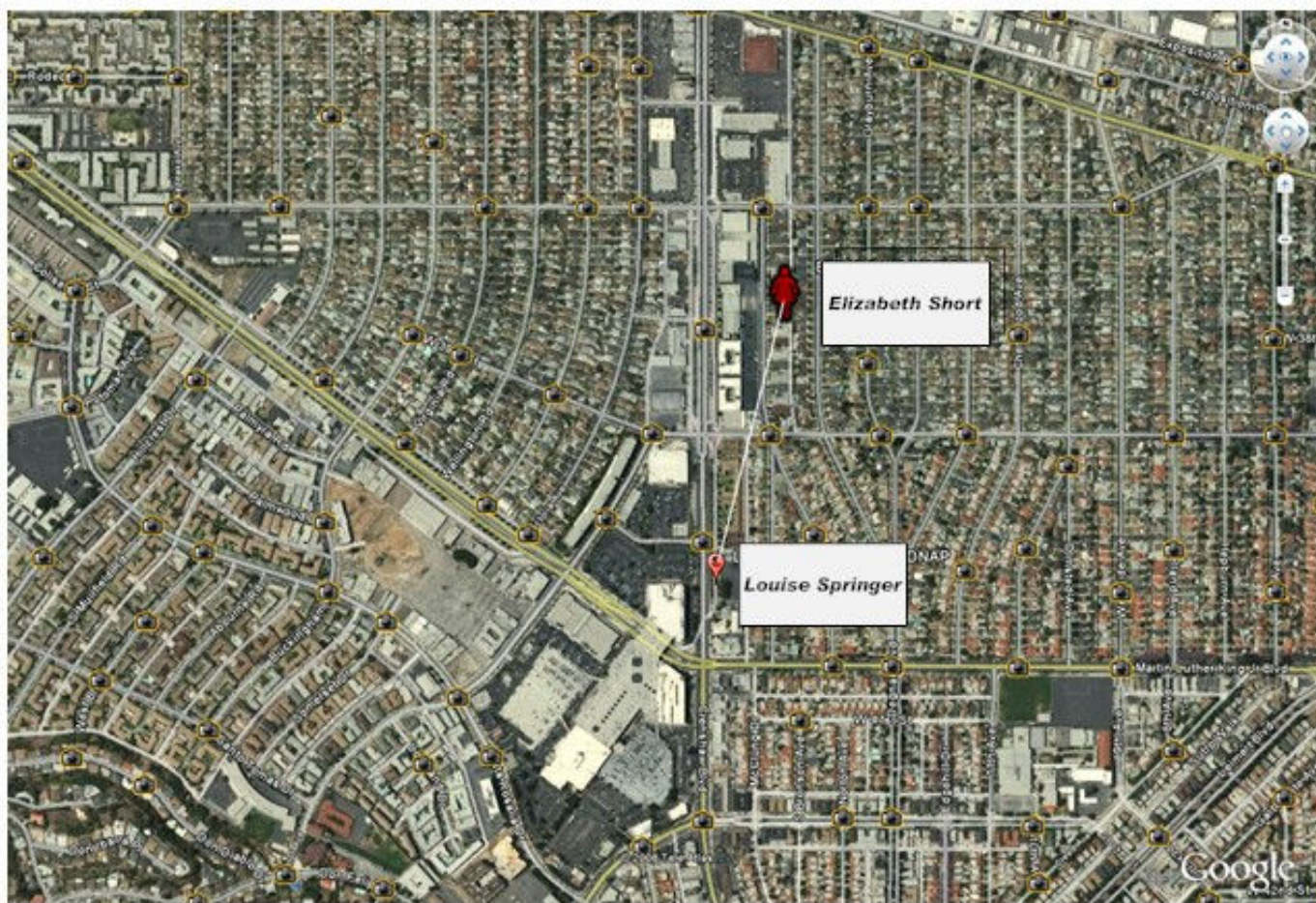
**LOUISE SPRINGER CRIME SUMMARY:**

At approximately 9:15 p.m. on the evening of June 13, 1949, Laurence Springer, drove his new Studebaker convertible to pick-up his wife. Louise Springer met him in the parking-lot on Crenshaw Blvd, near Santa Barbara where she worked as a beautician. As she entered the car, Louise noticed she had left her eye-glasses inside the beauty parlor. Her husband offered to get them for her and also purchased a newspaper and cigarettes at an adjacent drugstore. He was gone less than ten minutes. Upon his return, both his car and Louise were gone. The husband immediately contacted LAPD who referred him to University Division Police Station, where the desk officer advised Mr. Springer, "They could not take a formal Missing Person Report, for 24-hours." The husband attempted to convince the officers that his wife would not simply drive away, and that she had to have been the victim of a kidnapping, or foul play. Sadly, his pleas fell upon deaf ears. Frustrated and angry, the husband returned to his Hollywood home to be with their three-year-old son, and could only hope his wife would call. Three days later, Laurence Springer's suspicions were confirmed. Louise Springer's body was found in the back seat of the car, which the suspect by circumstance, had been forced to park on a quiet residential street just an hour after the abduction and murder. Here are the investigative highlights and findings:

June 13, 1949- 9:15 P.M.

VICTIM KIDNAPPED (HIGHJACKED IN OWN CAR) WHILE WAITING FOR HUSBAND TO RETURN TO CAR. VICTIM SEXUALLY ASSAULTED BY SUSPECT WHO USED A 14" LONG TREE LIMB TO SODOMIZE VICTIM IN VEHICLE. SUSPECT THEN STRANGELED VICTIM USING ROPE LIGATURE AND LEFT HER BODY IN REAR SEAT OF VEHICLE COVERING HER WITH A BEAUTICIAN'S TARP BELONGING TO VICTIM.

LOUISE SPRINGER KIDNAP LOCATION ON CRENSHAW BLVD, JUST NORTH OF SANTA BARBARA BLVD. (NOW MARTIN LUTHER KING BLVD.) THIS LOCATION IS JUST 500 YARDS SOUTH OF WHERE ELIZABETH SHORT BODY PARTS WERE FOUND AT THE VACANT LOT, 3815 S. NORTON.

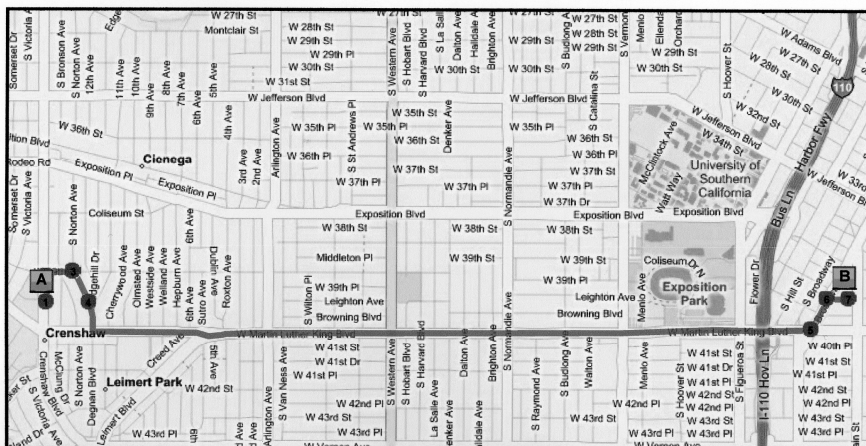


June 13, 1949 - 10:30 p.m. –

Neighborhood witnesses observed Springer's vehicle being driven eastbound on 38<sup>th</sup> St., and saw the driver quickly swerve the car to the south curb and park. (126 W. 38<sup>th</sup> St., Los Angeles) The driver turned off the headlights and slumped down behind the driver's wheel. Seconds later, an LAPD uniformed patrol car with its emergency lights blinking pulled over a teenage driver for a traffic violation. As the witnesses watched from their residence the man in the Studebaker sat motionless while the officers exited their patrol car and wrote a ticket to the teenager, standing just a few yards away. The officers after citing the teen then reentered their police car and drove off. The witnesses continued looking out their window and saw the man reach toward the back seat, then after a few minutes he was seen to exit the Studebaker and walk away. Due to the darkness, the only description they could provide was "A Male with black curly hair." These actions occurred just one-hour after the abduction, but because the witnesses were unaware that any crime had occurred, nothing was reported for three days. On June 16<sup>th</sup>, a separate neighbor became suspicious of the abandoned vehicle and called the police. Officers determined it was the missing Springer vehicle and responded to find the victim strangled to death under a tarp in the backseat. A neighborhood check by homicide detectives for witnesses resulted in three coming forward to describe what they saw on the night of June 13<sup>th</sup>.



Driving directions: 3960 Crenshaw Blvd, Los Angeles to 126 W 38th St, Los Angeles



A Start: 3960 Crenshaw Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90008-2543

A-B: 3.9 mi, 10 min

126 W. 38<sup>TH</sup> St. - 4 miles (10 minutes) from abduction location

### LOUISE SPRINGER MURDER HEADLINES JUNE 17, 1949

**Examiner**  
THE GREAT NEWSPAPER OF THE GREAT SOUTHWEST  
Examiner Telephone Richmond 1212

FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 1949

Two Sections—Part I—SEVEN CENTS

## Mother Kidnaped, Slain; Seek Curly-Haired Man in New 'Black Dahlia' Case

**Alone in Auto  
When Seized**

Tucked into the back seat of a sleek new convertible which had stood for 60 hours on West 38th street, the strangled, violated body of a pretty, young woman was found yesterday by police.

And on her twisted, 97-pound body, they quickly discovered a hallmark of the same sex-craved horror that had motivated the still-at-large killer of the "Black Dahlia," some two years ago.

She lay face down, sprawled on the back seat. Her dress was in significant disorder. A hard, white window sash cord was twice round her neck, the ends in two hard square knots.

**BODY VIOLATED—**

And with a 14-inch length of finger-thick tree branch, ripped from some small tree, the killer had violated her body in such manner as to stamp this crime category as the killing of Elizabeth Short, "the Black Dahlia."

The woman was 26-year-old Mrs. Louise Coulter Springer, expert hairdresser in a department store.

She was the wife of Laurence G. Springer, himself a hair stylist of wide reputation, who works in another branch of the same store.

And she was the mother of their 22-month-old son, Larry.

**KIDNAPED—**

According to her husband's story—and after right questioning and checking, police say the

**BODY**—Cramped in rear seat, covered by sheet, this is the body of Mrs. Louise Coulter Springer was found yesterday. Car had been parked on 38th street since Monday night. —Associated Press photo

**FIEND'S PREY—**  
Mrs. Louise Coulter Springer.  
(Other photos are to be found on Page 2 and the Picture Page.)

**Committee Gets**

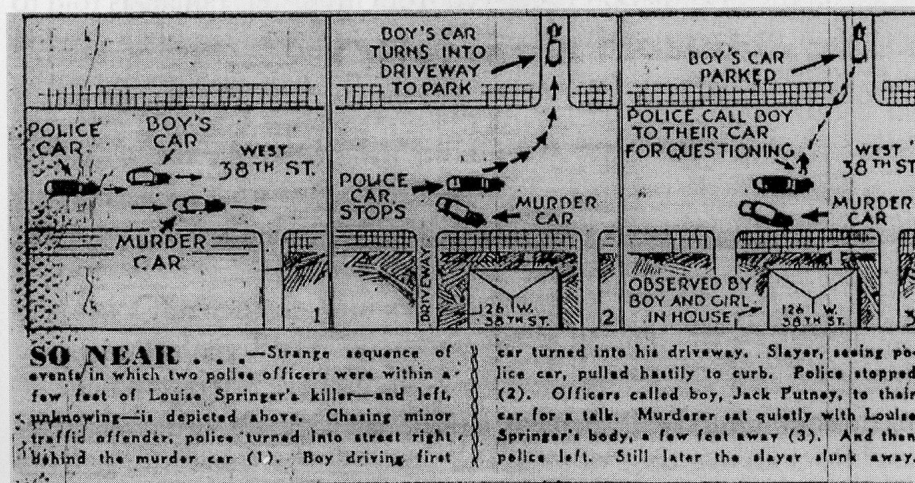
## Los Angeles Examiner --June 18, 1949

**"POLICE MISSED MAD KILLER IN AUTO WITH SLAIN VICTIM, PARKED NEAR SQUAD CAR"**

"Police Missed Mad Killer, in Auto with Slain Victim, Parked Near Squad Car."

The *Examiner* printed a diagram showing the relative positions of the police, the traffic offender, and the murder suspect on 38th Street.

*Exhibit 64*



*Los Angeles Examiner, June 18, 1949*



1949 PHOTO OF GEORGE HODEL SHOWING HIS "BLACK CURLY HAIR"

1949 STUDEBAKER CONVERTIBLE SIMILAR TO SPRINGER VEHICLE



***Los Angeles Examiner* of June 17, read:**

...

**Body Violated**

And with a 14-inch length of finger-thick tree branch, ripped from some small tree, the killer had violated her body in such manner as to stamp this crime at once and indelibly in the same category as the killing of Elizabeth Short, “the *Black Dahlia*.”

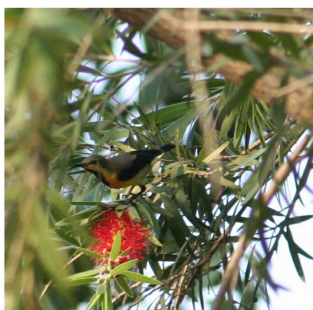


**A section of the actual tree branch used in sexual assault (sodomy) of victim Louise Springer**

**(Edited from original autopsy photo by author)**

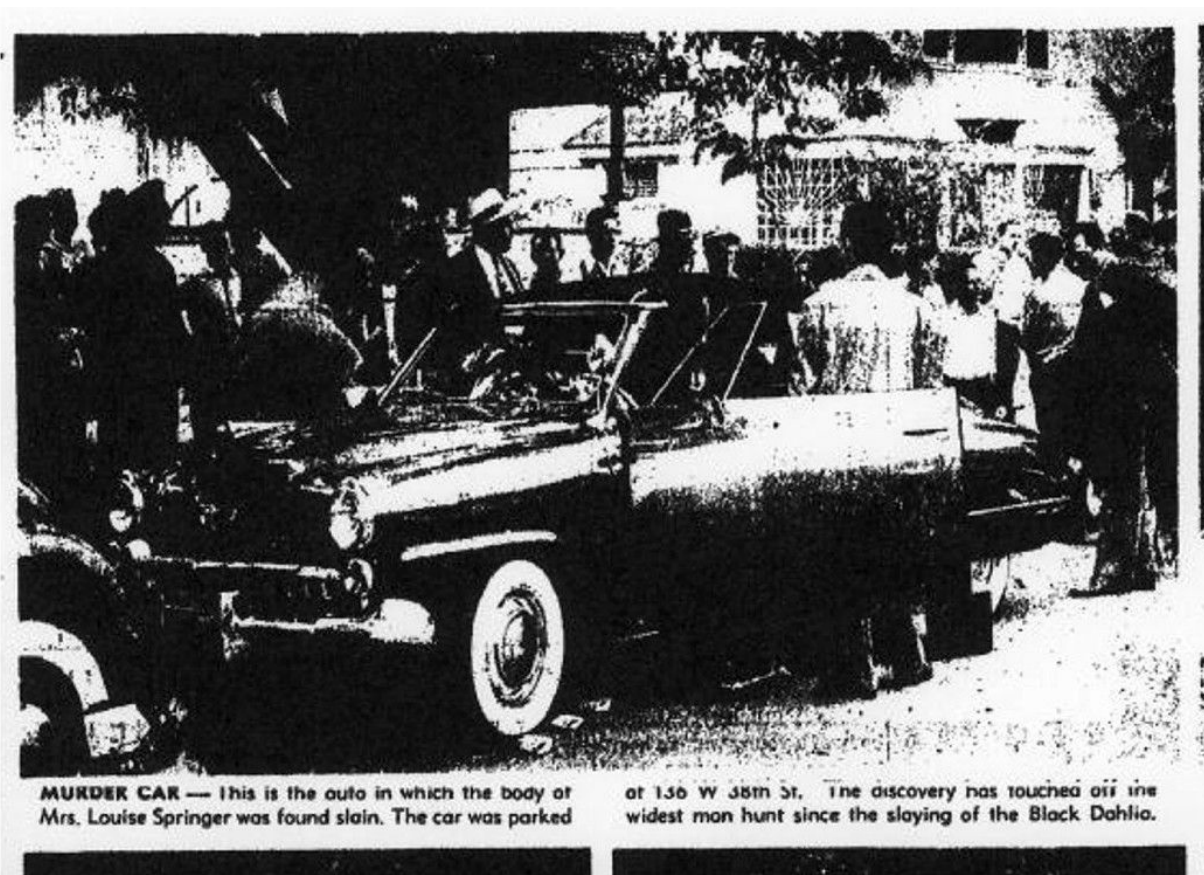
**LAPD CRIMINALIST RAY PINKER CALLED IN A BOTANIST EXPERT ON LOUISE SPRINGER CASE WHO IDENTIFIED THE BRANCH AS COMING FROM A “BOTTLEBRUSH TREE”**

**(SEE BELOW PHOTO)**





Springer Studebaker parked at 126 W. 38<sup>th</sup> St. Los Angeles



Police procedures and crime-scene investigation in 1949 were light years behind today's standards.

In what today's forensic and CSI world would consider an absolute "no-no," LAPD Homicide Det. Capt. Francis Kearney, accompanied by Coroner's deputy, Victor Mallage, actually drove the vehicle (with the victim's dead body in the back seat) from 38<sup>th</sup> Street to the L.A. County Morgue, at the Hall of Justice. Dr. Frederick Newbarr performed the autopsy. (Newbarr also performed the autopsy on victim Elizabeth Short.)

Chief LAPD criminalist Ray Pinker took charge of the forensic investigation at scene.

**Some additional investigative findings:**

- **Police suspected killer may have known victim prior. Possible jealous ex-boyfriend? Det. Hanson and partner traveled to San Francisco for a full week investigation into victim's background. Newspapers of the day hinted at a "possible romantic affair." No hard evidence believed found?**
- **Prior to the murder a male called Laurence Springer's work telephone (six times) over six days, and kept hanging up. Also, called Springer's home residence.**
- **Though LAPD continued to suspect the Springer and Elizabeth Short and other lone woman crimes could have been connected, Louise Springer's sadistic killer, like the others- was never identified.**
- **1949 Grand Jury demanded a reinvestigation of the Elizabeth Short and other unsolved murders as is evidenced by the below 1949 headline, which adds Louise Springer's photo to the long list of unsolved murders.**

# 1949 Grand Jury assigns DA to reinvestigate LAPDs unsolved lone-woman-murders

**Rep. May indicted in Arms Fraud Case**

**HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SEARCH FOR DAHLIA MURDER CLUE**

WILL 'Dahlia' Slaying Join Album of Unsolved Murders?

**Asks Drop Portal Suit**

**Flight of Love and A Kiss at the Train**

**Ex-Rep. May of Ky. Indicted**

**Hirohito Emperor Sees the Dawn, Pens a Poem**

**Werewolves Leave Trail of Women Murders in L. A.**

**Comb Death Area**

**1947**

**HERALD-EXPRESS**  
The Evening Herald and Express  
1343 Truman St. Room 13  
Los Angeles 4141  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 1947  
G. K. NO. 184

**JEANETTE SHORT**  
The slaying of Elizabeth Short, "The Black Dahlia," a week and today may join the grim album of unsolved crimes against women in Los Angeles which was begun in the city's history.

**MRS. OSA MURRAY**  
The slaying of Elizabeth Short, "The Black Dahlia," a week and today may join the grim album of unsolved crimes against women in Los Angeles which was begun in the city's history.

**JEANETTE SHORT**  
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**Unsolved L. A. Crimes Ripped By Grand Jury**

**They Strayed Into Port of Missing Women**

**JEANETTE SHORT**  
Victim of One of L. A.'s Most Brutal Crimes

**MRS. GLADYS KERN**  
Real Estate Woman Killed in Vacant Mansion

**LOUISE SPRINGER**  
Fiend Strangled Her to Death With Sash Cord

**MRS. LAURA TRELSTAD**  
Victim of Mad 'Werewolf' Sex Killer

**DOROTHY MONTGOMERY**  
'Butterfly Murder' Victim, Slain in 1947

**EVELYN WINTERS**  
Her Nude and Beaten Body Found in 1947

**Pointing a grave finger of condemnation at law enforcement officials for their failure to solve many mysterious murders and disappearances of women, the 1949 Los Angeles County Grand Jury in its final report today painted a black picture of:**

1. Crime, corruption and gangsterism which included charges that evidence indicated that law enforcement officers many times accepted bribery payments to cover up law violations.
2. That Los Angeles women and children are continually in danger because of the failure of the authorities to apprehend

**1950**

**Checks**

**Snow and**

**Boy**

**Planes, Warships Hunt**

**Day**