

Myth No. 2—"The Missing Week"

"On the evening of January 9, 1947, Elizabeth Short, the Black Dahlia, walked out of the Olive Street entrance of the Biltmore Hotel, turned right, and was last seen walking south on the sidewalk. She was never seen again, until her nude, bisected body was found six days later, on January 15, posed on the vacant lot."

ONE OF MY BIGGEST INVESTIGATORY REVELATIONS came to me late in the year 2000, when I was just completing my first full year on the case. I had spent four full months chronicling the known facts and had amassed 150 different witness interviews covering the time period from 1943-1999.

After sorting them by date, time, and location, in looking at the limited time frame of January 9-14, 1947, it became obvious that there never was a missing week. All of the original witness interviews from that time period, which law enforcement had collected independent of each other, supported the same truth—there was *no missing week*.

Apparently, no one before me, including modern LAPD detectives, had taken the time to take a look at this. That's partly understandable for LAPD because it was extremely time-intensive research that required many months to compile. But there it was!

Only now in recent years, have I come to understand why modern-day authors, theorists, and even LAPD have no desire to underscore the obvious. Why?

In LAPD's case, it proves that their official public position—in place for decades—is simply not true. If confirmed, it exposes the department to criticism of being inept, ignorant, or misinformed about the true facts.

No conspiracy here. The truth is simple. No modern-day LAPD detective is familiar with the facts of the case, nor have they been since the 1950s.

In the 1970s, when LAPD Robbery Homicide detectives John St. John ["Jigsaw John"] and his partner Kirk Mellecker were assigned as the official custodians of the case, they were at least honest enough to admit, they "didn't have the time to fully review the facts of the long cold case due to active case demands."

By the 1990s, when Detective Brian Carr inherited the forty-year-old case, all pretense about familiarity with the facts had been dropped. Carr quickly named himself a “gatekeeper” and said publicly “the case will never be solved” and he would “pass it on when he retired.”

By 2007, Detective Carr, confronted with constant questions from the press about my investigative findings, was forced to give an on-camera interview where he simply stated, “I don’t have time to prove or disprove Hodel’s investigation.” Carr, true to his word, “passed the case on” when he retired from LAPD in May 2009.



LAPD Wanted Information Bulletin contributed to “Missing Week” Myth

At first glance, without reading the information, the official LAPD Wanted Information Bulletin would appear to confirm a missing week between January 9-15, 1947.

However, closer examination proves that it does just the opposite. The bulletin is actually a request for information.

It was prepared and circulated just four days after Elizabeth Short’s body was identified, and it is exactly what its title suggests: a wanted information bulletin.

The bulletin was originally distributed to uniform patrol officers and detectives at all roll-calls, and instructed officers to attempt to locate witnesses who might have seen her:

“Make inquiries at local hotels, motels, apartment houses, cocktail bars and lounges, night clubs to ascertain whereabouts of victim between dates mentioned.”

On January 21, just five days into the investigation, LAPD officers began distributing the bulletin and asking questions if anyone had seen the victim between the dates of January 9 to 15?

Their actions resulted in twelve (12) verified reliable sightings of the victim. Elizabeth Short was seen on every day of the week from January 9 through January 14. Half of these witnesses personally knew her and could not have been mistaken.

Here are the facts:

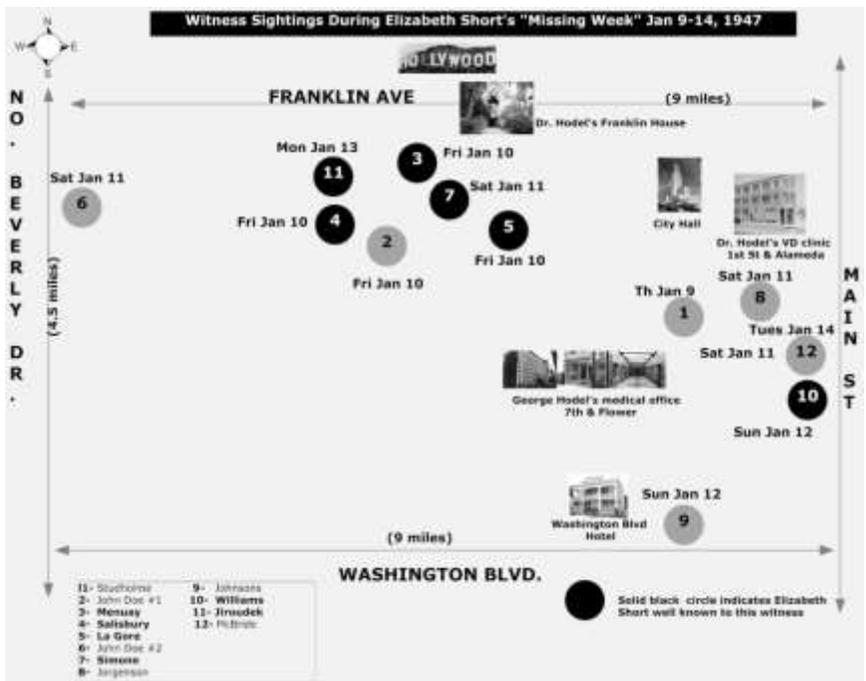
All of the witnesses listed below made official reports directly to the LAPD. They are fresh accounts from January, 1947.

They were published in the various Los Angeles newspapers in the days and weeks immediately after the discovery of the body. [See BDA Chapter 18, pages 232-238 and page 527 for a detailed narrative of each of these 1947 witnesses' statements, and where and when they were documented.]

4|MYTH NO. 2—"THE MISSING WEEK"

Witnesses Chronological Sightings During Elizabeth Short's "Missing Week" (Name in bold/italic indicates witness personally acquainted with Elizabeth Short)		
WITNESS	DATE	LOCATION
Mr. Studholme Biltmore Hotel employee	Jan. 9 (Thur) 7-10 p.m.	Biltmore Hotel 5th & Olive St. (Olive Street entrance) Downtown L. A.
"John Doe #1" (LAPD withheld name)	Jan. 10 (Fri) evening	7200 Sunset Blvd. Hollywood (street) Hollywood
Miss Iris Menuay <i>(Former roommate/friend)</i>	Jan. 10 (Fri) 8:30 p.m.	1842 N. Cherokee Ave Chancellor Hotel (lobby) Hollywood
Christina Salisbury <i>(Restaurant owner/friend. Employed victim in Florida)</i>	Jan. 10 (Fri) 10:00 p.m.	7290 Sunset Blvd. Tabu Club, Hollywood (street) Hollywood
Buddy La Gore <i>(Bartender, knew victim as a "regular")</i>	Jan. 10 (Fri) 11:30 p.m.	6818 Hollywood Blvd. Four Star Bar & Grill (bar) Hollywood
"John Doe #2" (Hotel service, station attendant LAPD withheld name)	Jan. 11 (Sat) 2:30 a.m.	9641 Sunset Bl. Beverly Hills Hotel (gas station) Beverly Hills
Mr. Paul Simone <i>(Maintenance man Chancellor Hotel)</i>	Jan. 11 (Sat) daytime unstated hour	1842 N. Cherokee Ave Chancellor Hotel (rear and front) Hollywood
Mr. I. A. Jorgenson (Cab driver)	Jan. 11 (Sat) afternoon unstated hour	112 W. 5th St. Rosslyn Hotel (Entered cab at front of hotel) Downtown L. A.
Mr/Mrs William Johnson (Hotel owners/on-site managers)	Jan. 12 (Sun) 11:30 a.m.	Hotel 300 E. Washington Bl. (Hotel lobby/registration desk) Downtown L. A.
Mr. C. G. Williams <i>(Bartender, knew victim as a "regular")</i>	Jan. 12 (Sun) 3:00 p.m.	634 S. Main St. Dugout Cafe (bar) Downtown L. A.
Mr. John Jiroudek <i>(Jockey/friend, knew victim from Camp Cooke military base)</i>	Jan. 13 (Mon) unstated hour	Hollywood & Highland (Street) Hollywood
Officer Meryl McBride (LAPD uniformed police officer, two contacts half hour apart)	Jan. 14 (Tues) 3:30 -4 p.m.	6th & Main St. Bus Depot(street/bar) Downtown L. A.

DIAGRAM OF LOCATIONS



Above diagram shows the 4-mile-by-9-mile perimeter between Hollywood and downtown Los Angeles, within which boundaries Elizabeth Short was seen on twelve separate occasions during the five days (January 10—January 14) prior to the discovery of her body on January 15, 1947. Incredibly, six of these twelve witnesses were personally acquainted with the victim, so their positive identifications are not in question. (Solid black circles signify those witnesses.)

Also included in the diagram are: Dr. George Hodel's 1947 private residence, the Franklin house at 5121 Franklin Avenue, his privately owned downtown VD clinic at First and Alameda Street, and his private medical practice, at Seventh and Flower Street, just three blocks from the Biltmore Hotel [1].

Sightings of Elizabeth Short by location and day of the week during the five-day period:

Downtown Los Angeles—five independent sightings

1. Thursday, January 9
2. Saturday, January 11
3. Sunday, January 12
4. Sunday, January 12
5. Tuesday, January 14

Although each witness' report was separate from the other reports, all these downtown sightings of Elizabeth Short were within a one-mile radius of each other on four separate days of the week.

Hollywood—six independent sightings

1. Friday, January 10
2. Friday, January 10
3. Friday, January 10
4. Friday, January 10
5. Saturday, January 11
6. Monday, January 13

Although each witness' report was *separate* from the other reports, all Hollywood sightings of Elizabeth Short were within a four-block radius of each other on three separate days of the week.

Beverly Hills—one sighting

1. Saturday, January 11

This sighting was close in time to the four January 10 Hollywood sightings as it occurred just a few hours after midnight. This location is about four [4] miles west of the earlier Hollywood sightings, and was immediately west of the Sunset Strip, just inside the Beverly Hills city limits.



LAPD Capt. Jack Donahoe was convinced that the January 11, 1947, witness sighting at the Beverly Hills Hotel gas-station was accurate and kept the "John Doe No. 2" witness' name confidential. Here is the report from the February 7, 1947, *Herald Express* article on that sighting:

The "lost week" of the "Black Dahlia" prior to her murder was narrowed by two days today with a report that placed her in the city on Jan 11, four days before her body was found. A service station attendant who handles the gasoline pumps at the Beverly Hills Hotel "positively" identified the slain beauty, Elizabeth Short, as one of the occupants of a car that drove up for gas between 2:30 and 3 a.m. on that date.

The attendant said the "Dahlia" was accompanied by another woman and a man, and that she seemed "very upset and frightened." The man driving the car, a 1942 Chrysler coupe, was described as about 30 years old, 6 feet 1 inch tall and weighed about 190 pounds. The other woman was dressed in dark clothing, the attendant said. Capt. Jack Donahoe ordered an immediate check on the car and its occupants.

...

During her so called, "Missing Week" [it was actually only a five-day period], Elizabeth Short was seen in Hollywood on six separate occasions by six different witnesses. *Five of the witnesses KNEW her personally and could not have been mistaken.* [The sixth might have also known her, but his name was withheld by police and released publicly only as "John Doe."] All of these Hollywood contacts were within a four square block area occurring on three separate days of the week. [January 10, 11, and 13.]

