

# MT. EAGLE GIRL FOUND BRUTALLY MURDERED

## Twenty-four-year-old Faye Gates is Victim of Crime Similar to State College Co-ed Slaying; Head Crushed by Blunt Instrument

### BODY, PARTIALLY DISROBED, DISCOVERED NEAR HER HOME

A fiendish slayer — possibly the same one who battered Rachael Taylor to death one month ago — struck again in Centre County early this morning.

The victim was Miss Faye Gates, aged 24, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Gates, of Mt. Eagle.

Her lifeless body was discovered about 2:20 o'clock this morning, along a lonely detour between Curtin and Mt. Eagle, the scene of the crime being less than a mile west of the victim's home.

According to reports obtainable, the girl probably has been criminally attacked, and apparently died from head wounds believed to have been inflicted by some blunt instrument. She was not otherwise mutilated, police reported after a superficial examination at the scene of the crime.

The Gates family car, which the girl had driven to Bellefonte last night, was parked along the dirt road just in front of the body. Police said tracks in the road indicated it had been turned hurriedly around on the road, and one wheel is believed to have passed over the victim's foot.

During a thorough search of the car, officers discovered in the back seat a three-foot iron wrecking bar. The bar was processed for fingerprints, but no statement could be obtained as to whether it had been used by the slayer in beating his victim to death. The bar has a sharp edge at one end and is curved at the opposite end.

Discovery of the slaying was made about 2:20 o'clock this morning by Richard Wallace, aged about 19, who was on his way to his home in Milesburg after spending the evening with one of Miss Gates' sisters.

Wallace said that as he drove along the rough and muddy detour he thought he saw a body lying at the rear of a car parked along the road. Putting on speed, he went to Milesburg where he notified Sheriff Edward R. Miller. Within a short time the Sheriff, his deputy, James Hugg, and officers James Griffith, H. D. Ream and Pvt. Royko, all of Rockview Barracks State Police, accompanied Wallace to the detour and confirmed his fears.

The girl's body was found face up on a grassy plot just off the road. Her clothing was disarranged and torn. Caught in the closed door of the car was a portion of her clothing which apparently had snagged on the door as she was dragged from the car.

In the back seat of the car were the victim's glasses and some underclothing, and there were evidences that a struggle had taken place in the car. There were no bloodstains in the machine, early reports indicated.

Within five hours after Wallace first passed the scene, Col. Adams, head of the State Police, Lt. Norman Annich, and other State Police officials from Harrisburg, accompanied by a squad of fingerprint experts, photographers, police surgeons and pathologists arrived at the site and combed the car and its surroundings for every possible clue. All spectators and others not in an official position were barred from the area. Traffic along the detour was prohibited until officers have completed their investigation.

The body, covered with a blanket during the probe, was removed from the scene about 10 o'clock this morning, being taken to the Neff funeral home at Howard.

Centre County Coroner, Charles Sheckler, of Milesburg, was one of the first persons to reach the scene after Wallace spread the alarm. He was instrumental in preventing officers and others from destroying valuable evidence until barriers were placed around the area.

Coroner Sheckler said this morning that the time for the inquest will not be established until the post mortem examination is completed.

Miss Gates, graduate of the Bellefonte High School, and an employe of the Federal Match Company here, was widely known in this area.

She had driven the family car, a 1940 model Chevrolet Sedan to Bellefonte early last night and spent the evening in town with friends. She and Miss Anna Eckel, of Reynolds Avenue, Bellefonte, are reported to have left the Pe-Ro dairy store on West High street,

shortly after midnight, the two girls being in Miss Gates' car. A few moments later the car, with its two occupants, was seen to turn around at the railroad tracks at the foot of High street, continuing up the hill toward the Dairy Store where Miss Eckel had parked her car.

A short time later Miss Gates and two friends, Miss Ruth Robinson, aged 18, and Miss Maude Rager, aged 17, both students at the Howard High School, left Bellefonte to go to their homes in the Mt. Eagle vicinity. On the way to Howard, Miss Rager and Miss Robinson told police, their car was followed by a tan sedan which tooted its horn at intervals on the trip.

The Robinson and Rager girls got out of the car at the end of the concrete road about a mile this side of Mt. Eagle, and proceeded from there afoot along the highway which is now under construction, to the Robinson home in Mt. Eagle, where the two girls spent the night.

After dropping her two friends, Miss Gates turned left off the highway to the detour which leads past the Gates family home just North of Mt. Eagle. She had proceeded to a point within less than a mile of her home, at the top of a hill overlooking what is known as "Spook Hollow" when her assailant evidently overtook her.

Absence of traces of the car other than Miss Gates' leads officers to surmise that possibly the slayer parked his car somewhere in the vicinity and was afoot at the time he joined the girl.

The fact that Miss Gates' car evidently had been turned around in the road, to face Milesburg, after she was slugged to death, is somewhat puzzling to investigators. The ignition key was in the switch of the car, and there was nothing, apparently, to prevent the murderer from using the machine in making his getaway.

Russel and Roger Yorks, aged 18, twin brothers, of Milesburg, told police they saw Miss Gates in the Pe-Ro Dairy Store and later turning their car at the railroad station here just after 12 o'clock. The York boys have known the victim for some time. Russel is an employe of the Pe-Ro store, while Roger is employed at the City Bakery here.

Miss Gates apparently had made no engagement for the evening, for a friend reported that he had invited her to accompany a group of young people to Lewistown, and that the girl declined, declaring she did not want to bout too late.

The parents of the girl did not learn of the tragedy until about 9 o'clock yesterday morning, and aside from officers and newspapermen few persons visited the lonely scene before about 10 o'clock. At that time cars lined the narrow detour and jammed traffic considerably.

Major Adams, after a preliminary survey, upon learning that the Howard Nursery CCC camp is located only a few miles from the scene of the murder, issued orders to have camp members investigated.

State Motor Police from various parts of Pennsylvania began to arrive here during the morning to aid in what shows indications of becoming the most widespread and most intensive man hunt in the County's history. One officer remarked unofficially that since the Rachael Taylor and the Gates slayings presented many points of similarity, there is considerable basis for the assumption that both crimes were committed by the same person.

Coroner Charles Sheckler also concurred in the belief that the same person is responsible for both slayings.

Another unofficial comment is to the effect that the search for the Taylor murderer at State College has run against a stone wall, and that police are considering an intensive search in the Bellefonte area. The basis for whatever suspicion they may have that the slayer is a resident of this vicinity was not revealed.

Miss Gates and her father, William Gates, both are employes of the Federal Match Company here. She is survived by her parents and by five sisters and a brother, namely: Mrs. Virginia Schneider, of York; Mrs. Fred Graffius, of Mt. Eagle; and Lois, Betty, Patricia and Robert Gates, all at home.

### Autopsy Begins at Noon

Coroner Sheckler announced at noon today that an autopsy upon this morning's murder victim was to begin at once, at the Neff Funeral Home, at Howard.

Dr. J. W. Schwartz, of Bellefonte, physician at Rockview penitentiary, and Dr. Joseph A. Parrish, of Bellefonte, were to conduct the post mortem examination. Dr. Johnson, chief medican examiner for the State Police at Harrisburg, and his assistant were to be present, the Coroner said.