Boston's Strangler Described as Young And Business-Like

By CARL COBB

Boston –UPI– He has honey-colored hair. He is tall, well-spoken and business-like.

He knocks on an apartment door and tells the woman who answers he's here to do the painting. If she says no, he starts "talking funny."

That is the profile of a young man who homicide detectives believe may have slain seven — possibly nine — women in Boston and its sprawling suburbs since last June 14.

His image haunts thousands of other women living alone behind double-bolted doors. He's known, for lack of better identification, as "the strangler."

Clues Meager

The description of the would-be housepainter was given to police by Mrs. Marcella Wawrzinak-Lulka, a 30-year-old housewife and a neighbor of victim No. 7. It is one of few tangible clues in the search for a man, possibly men, whose series of stranglings and rapes have turned Boston into a city of fear. There's been a run on door locks, bedside telephones and small pistols.

Meter readers, bill collectors and door-to-door salesmen have been turned away from hundreds of bolted, unopened doors. But the garrotings continued and police search without a serious suspect for a killer reminiscent of Britain's Jack the Ripper or, more recently, John Cristie who strangled his victims and plastered them into the walls of his flat.

Marcella Wawrzinak-Lulka lives next door to the Back Bay area apartment where Sophie Clark, 21, was raped and strangled with her stocking and petticoat Dec. 5. That day, Marcella said, she heard a knock on the door of her own second-floor suite. She opened it and a man pushed past her.

"I'm Thompson," he said. "I'm here to do the painting."

Mrs. Wawrzinak-Lulka insisted she didn't want any painting done. She said the man "started talking funny and said how tall I am and what a good model I'd make."

She told the man she'd have to talk to her husband in the next room and left him standing alone by the door. When she returned, he had gone.

Mrs. Wawrzinak-Lulka said the self-styled housepainter who called himself Thompson looked like a student.

"He was very polite and business-like at first," she said. "If I ever see him again, I will certainly recognize him."

Cases Similar

The first seven cases showed remarkable similarities. In each, the killer was admitted to the apartment or walked in through open or unlocked doors. There was no serious struggle, sometimes apparently none at all.

The killer used a stocking or another article of clothing to strangle five of the women. Once he used his bare hands; one a pillow case. At least four of the victims had been raped. Except for Miss Clark, the first seven victims were older women — between 55 and 75 — suggesting perhaps that the killer had a "mother hatred" complex.

Miss Clark's death weakened that theory, but it fit a pattern in another way. Four of the first seven victims were hospital workers and a fifth frequently visited relatives at a hospital near her home. Miss Clark attended a school for medical assistants and worked in a hospital.

Other than Miss Clark, who had two roommates, all of the first seven victims lived alone. This suggested to police that the killer had some way of learning where and how the victims lived.

The eighth strangling was similar to the first seven but police have reason to think it may have been staged to look like the work of "the strangler." The ninth victim, a 16-year-old girl, was strangled Jan. 5 while en route home from an early evening shopping trip in this city's Roxbury district. Her death is believed to be unrelated to the others.

STRIKE PROMPTS BILL

Washington – UPI – Senate Republican Leader Everett M. Dirksen (Ill.) Monday introduced a bill that would make arbitration of maritime strikes compulsory.

LATE FOR CEREMONY

London –UPI– The Welsh Guards band was 10 minutes late this week for the changing of the guard ceremony at Buckingham Palace. Bandsmen had to thaw 30 brass instruments which had frozen.

PLANTS MODERNIZE

New York – UPI – Modernization and expansion costs for plants and facilities of the nation's steel industry were approximately $925 million in 1962, according to the American Iron and Steel Institute.

4,720 Log Brands Are Still Active

Salem–Of the nearly 10,000 log brands registered since the inception of the act in 1943, 4,720 are currently active, according to the state department of forestry. These were either renewed between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, 1961, for a five-year period or registered thereafter. Of the remaining delinquent brands a large number were abandoned last year making available quite a choice selection.

The log branding act provides that every person who transports raw forest products in western Oregon by motor vehicle or rail, or who dumps such products into any waters of the state, must mark or brand the logs or other products. Registration of the brands with the state forestry department is required.

Operators hauling on private roads are exempt, but may brand for their own protection. The branding of forest products also is optional for operators hauling east of the Cascade mountains.

Operators desiring a brand are asked to submit two or more diagrams of their choice to the state forester's office, post office, box 2289, Salem.

Diagrams are then checked against brands previously registered for availability. Upon approval of the diagram, the state forester furnishes registration application forms to the operator.

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