

Jane Doe

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Within minutes, a tractor was covering the casket with dirt and the workers were folding up the empty chairs and removing the tent.

Bryant said the county decided to bury the woman before they could identify her because the body had begun to decay. Bryant said he hopes publicity of her funeral will help in their search to identify the woman and her murderer.

"Somebody loves her. She belongs to somebody somewhere; everybody does and they just might not know that she's dead," he said. "I believe somebody's got to know who she is. She was a fine looking girl."

Rankin County Sherriff J. B. Torrence said his department "has tried every way in the world to get her identity but so far it's all been in vain."

The sheriff's department has eliminated more than 35 people from Mississippi and surrounding states who believed they might have known the woman who was found wrapped in a blanket a mile south of the Old Swinging Bridge in Byram. She had been beaten to death.

It has been particularly difficult to indentify the woman who received severe head injuries, Torrence said, because she bore no operation scars, had no dental work done, her feet, toenails and hands were in good shape and her legs were clean shaven. Her fingerprints did not match any on file with local, state or federal law enforcement agencies. Examiners did determine that she had given birth within the past 12 months.

A sketch of the woman's physical appearance indicates she was about 20-25 years old, weighed from 110 to 125 pounds, 5'3" to 5'6" in height and had medium length dark brown hair with reddish tint. The only other significant identification, Torrence said, was one lower tooth that grew in twisted with the tooth beside it grown in behind.

Torrence said he is hoping that a check with local gynecologists will show a birth record "and just maybe one chance in a million we'll find that she never married and had her baby adopted and the doctors can identify it."

But authorities can't even guarantee that the woman is from the Hinds-Rankin area.

Telephone 825-6711

30/ The Rankin County Sheriff's Of-
40 fice is requesting everyone's assis-
50 tance to help identify the body of a
60 woman found Sept. 6 on the Rankin
70 County side of the Byram swinging
80 bridge.

90 Sheriff J.B. Torrence said the
100 woman is between 20 and 25 years
110 of age, has no dental work, and is 5-
120 foot-4. She had been dead about
130 seven days when discovered. If you
140 have any information regarding
150 this person, please contact the Ran-
160 kin County Sheriff's Office at 825-
170 6711.