

Bone Fragments From at Least One Human Skeleton

By JIM DeWOLF
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Gallatin County authorities conducting the search for Sandra Dykman Smallegan of Manhattan said today the 1200 bone fragments they have collected are from two skeletons, one of which was definitely human.

County Attorney Tom Olson, Sheriff L.D.W. Anderson Deputy Sergeant Carl Smith, and city-county investigative team member Ron Green made the statement at a 45-minute press conference this morning.

Following the conference the press was given a guided tour of the Lockhart Ranch on which the bones were found.

Olson said, "On Feb. 19, at 3:40 p.m., small fragments of bone were found by law officers in a burned pile near the ranch house. Further investigation showed bone fragments were in a large area near the farm house. On Feb. 20, law officers began a meticulous search of the area on their hands and knees. The search has been going on every since, and still continues.

"Over 1200 bone fragments, none which were greater than two inches, were found. Most were burned and charred. What little flesh there was, also was charred. The bones included what appear to be human teeth.

"Dr John Pfaff said in his findings that some of the bones were from a human skeleton of recent origin."

Olson said the other bones found by the investigators had come from a more aged skeleton, and that it had been impossible for Pfaff to tell

whether or not the second skeleton was human.

"An attempt is being made now to use part of a human jaw bone to determine if the human remains are those of the Smallegan woman," Olson stated. "The dentists are working with the pathologists and it is going to take some time to make the determination."

Olson told reporters the older bones will be shipped to a forensic anthropologist on the east coast. "We are going to ask him if the remaining fragments are animal or human, and whether it is possible to tell."

Reporters raised the possibility that some of the bones may be those of Susan Jaeger. Olson declined to speculate, but did say the FBI has intensified its investigation into the Jaeger case, and is checking for a possible connection.

Olson recounted the events leading up to the discovery of the bones. he said that on Feb. 11, the Smallegan woman's disappearance was reported to the sheriff's office. He said she was last seen on Saturday night, Feb. 9, when she attended a basketball game in Belgrade

and then went to American Legion Club in Manhattan. "She was not seen leaving the club with anyone," the county attorney stated.

Olson noted the first real break in the case was on Saturday, Feb. 16, when her car was discovered hidden in the barn of an abandoned homestead, known as the Lockhart Ranch. The ranch is located five miles northeast of Logan in the Horseshoe Hills. Olson said prior to discovering the car, searchers found a pair of panties (identified by the woman's family) near the front

of the ranch house.

Concerning the car, Olson said, "It was in the barn, which was nailed shut. If was under a tarp, bits of wood and straw, a steel drum and a steel wheelbarrow.

Investigators didn't find the bones for several days, Olson told reporters, because that wasn't what they were looking for. "They had no idea what they would find. They were searching for a body."

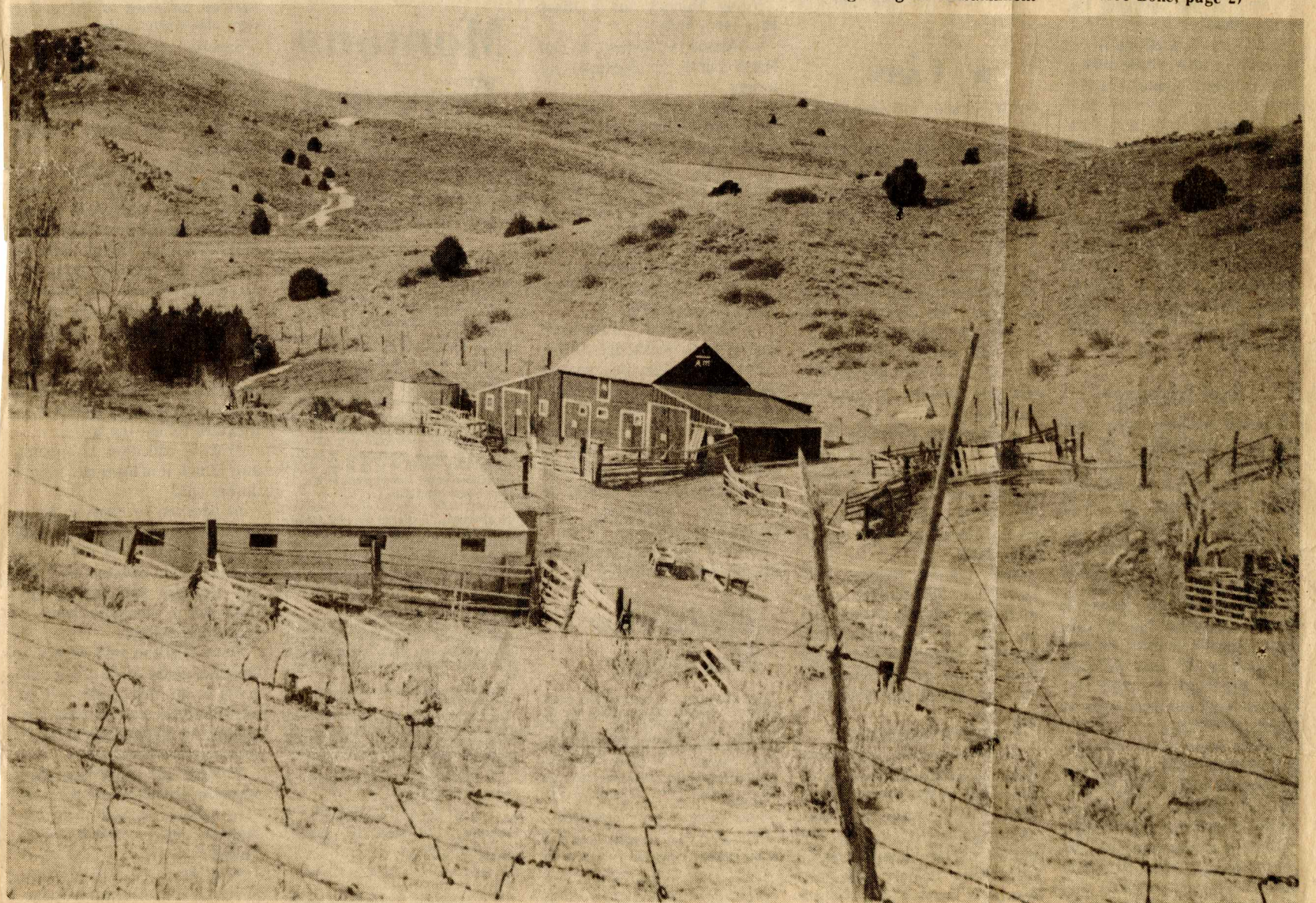
At the site, deputies showed reporters an area approximately 80 feet long, running along an embankment

at the rear of the ranch house.

Sergeant Carl Smith said most of the bones had been found in that area, but that some others had been discovered behind a small cabin located a 100 feet away. He showed reporters the fire pit next to the ranch house, in which investigators had initially discovered the bones. The pit, roughly two feet across and circular in shape, had been raked clean by the investigators.

Newsmen were also shown

(See Bone; page 2)



Scene of Investigation

The English Ford belonging to Sandra Smallegan of Manhattan was hidden in the red barn (background) located on the abandoned Lockhart Ranch in the Horseshoe Hills five miles northeast of Logan. The white squares on the front of the

building are keep out signs posted by the sheriff's department. Newsmen were not allowed to look inside, but deputies said the barn had been nailed shut and the car hidden under tarp, straw, wood, a steel drum and a wheelbarrow.