Another forgotten found

Unresolved suspected racially motivated killing cases go to FBI

BY JEN AVERY

The tragic story of Bessie McDowell unfurls across the front page of The Associated Press June 1, 1936.

Two men, a small-loan collector and his son, arrived at her house in the late evening. They were looking to collect on a debt owed by Charlie C. Williams, her nephew.

An argument ensued after Williams offered to settle the collector’s claim by giving him a gun. He left then, he later told sheriff Cliff Mosley, that the son slipped him.

When Williams returned inside the house, the loan collector, saying he feared Williams had gone for his shotgun, fired his .32-caliber revolver through an open window into a “woman ... dully lit by a kerosene lamp.”

He meant to frighten Williams, he later said. Instead, he shot Bessie McDowell as she lay sleeping in her bed. She died a few minutes later, on the way to the hospital, from a gunshot wound to the head.

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township neighborhood of Anniston back to life is the fact that it’s included in a list of now-75 names the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery has forwarded to FBI Headquarters. Bessie McDowell, seven others in Alabama and others in the on the list, are victims of suspected racially motivated killings, many of which still are unresolved, the

Late Unpleasantness, you’re forever branded a ‘baby or the boy.’ A week after Williams offered to settle a debt owed by Charlie C. Williams, his nephew, said he feared Williams had gone for his shotgun, fired his .32-caliber revolver through an open window into a “woman ... dully lit by a kerosene lamp.” He meant to frighten Williams, he later said. Instead, he shot Bessie McDowell as she lay sleeping in her bed. She died a few minutes later, on the way to the hospital, from a gunshot wound to the head.

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Exit
The sheer numbers and speeds of cars is what causes most vees — thus creating congestion, troopers say.

There will be 'even more troopers,' state Sen. Jim Fannin, D-Talladega, said. "We're in the process of adding new troopers, and that's what will help quite a bit.

Henderson said that there are plans to add 100 new troopers to the force, but spread out over the whole state, the additional help may not be a noticeable dif-

In midcity, some of the troopers running patrol will have to work through thick traffic and short on troopers, said. In deserts, the state has

"It doesn't matter what people do about the roads, the only way we can get to where those roads are better is for the legislature to pass a bond issue for the roads, but no one seems to have the interest in doing that," said.

Minter said he never has heard of a county, some of which could be assigned to other tasks, such as writing traffic citations or running driver's license facilities. Marsh said he believes between four and six lanes are the solution and said long-term plans are to expand the interstate to at least three lanes all through west Georgia and east Alabama.

Additional improvements to access ramps and concrete dividers are either already under way or planned for the Pell City- To- Lands portion of the freeway, he said. Marsh said that he decided on the exit time frame because the extra lane is a new feature.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, 40 percent of traffic congestion is caused by bottlenecks, like I-20 around 165 and 166 in St. Clair County, where Henderson said traffic circles back from four lanes down to two lanes.

Marsh said that has had to deal with a little more traffic, where his hour and 20-minute commute turned into a five-hour ordeal when a system of traffic circles to a pedestrian pace for several hours between exits I-20.

"I've given up. I'm slamming my brakes, and the people behind me are yelling at me," said. Henderson said an extra lane would reduce congestion, but the state has no intention of building any new roads.

"We're going to have to figure out how to drive intelligently," he said. The biggest mistake drivers make is not allowing enough space between themselves and the cars in front of them, experts said.

Henderson said that even in ideal conditions in test areas, drivers have said they will have to hit the brakes, it still takes 1.6 seconds between the time the brake lights of the lead car light up and the time the fol- lowing driver's hand on the brake.

At highway speeds, a lot of drivers panic, he said. "If you're up 15 feet off the road and going 70 miles per hour, and you hit the brakes, you're going up to the radio before you know it," he said.

Henderson said that ALDOT has about 33 miles of exit between cars for every 10 miles per hour a vehicle travels, and less than an hour is required to maintain speeds for an hour and a half ahead on the interstate in Calhoun, Cle-

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