



MID-WEST: Bonnie & Clyde bullets, Brodhead, Winsconsin.

Wes: Our first investigation takes us back in time to an event that took place on a country road in rural Louisiana in the dark days of the Depression. It's 1934 and a deluxe Ford V-8 tears down a quiet back road. Its occupants are two young lovers on their way back from the local store. They recognize a friend's truck broken down by the side of the road and they pull up to offer help. Suddenly, gunfire erupts from the trees and the couple are gunned down in a carefully planned ambush. Their names are Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow. Their killing captivated the nation and an American legend was born. Seven decades later, the story has wound up in the sleepy town of Broadhead in northern Wisconsin. Single mother Cassandra Goss is the owner of five bullets that she believes killed Bonnie and Clyde.

Tukufu: I'm Tukufu Zuberi, and Wes Cowan and I have come to check out Cassandra's story.

Cassandra: My grandfather-in-law J.D. Goss, sat down and told me a story about Bonnie and Clyde and then took out this little wooden box and there were several bullets in this box. I really couldn't believe it. I just thought it was fascinating that he was a part of that whole scenario.

Wes: So what do you know about these bullets?

Cassandra: These bullets, I was told by James Dean Goss, my grandfather-in-law, that these bullets actually came out of the bodies of Bonnie and Clyde.

Tukufu: Whoa! You're kidding.

Cassandra: No, i'm not kidding.

Wes: All right. Now, my next question is, you know, why in the world would your grandfather-in-law, J.D. Goss, have any connection to Bonnie and Clyde and these bullets?

Cassandra: Well, the story goes that J.D. worked for the Dallas Police Department at the time of their shooting. And that's one of the reasons why I've asked you here today, because I want to find out what the connection is. I would like to have some substantiated proof basically that they did come out of the bodies of Bonnie and Clyde.

Wes: Cassandra, did J.D. Goss give you any other information or artifacts that connected these bullets directly to Bonnie and Clyde?

Cassandra: Well, I do have some photos and some of those photos have forensic stamps on them as well.

Wes: Can we look at those?

Cassandra: Sure.

Tukufu: Oh, man, here's -- that's really gruesome. And there's Bonnie. Here's Clyde with the crowd crushing in around him. And now here's those stamps that you're talking about, "George Lacy, Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory, Houston, Texas." and he's got that on the front and on the back of this one.

Wes: these official photographs make me think there might be something to Cassandra's story. But could her grandfather-in-law, J.D. Goss, really have taken these bullets from the bodies of Bonnie and Clyde? And why would a police officer have removed evidence from the corpses? Was he just after a souvenir?

Tukufu: Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow, two young lovers on a crime spree in the Great Depression of the 1930s. Their exploits made front page news nationwide, and as they robbed their way across states making fools of bankers and lawmen, the fugitive couple captured the imagination of ordinary people struggling to survive. It all came to a violent end in that 1934 deluxe Ford V-8 on May 23, 1934, when the law finally caught up with them.

Wes: While Tukufu takes the bullets for forensic analysis, I've come to Louisiana to meet investigative writer John Neil

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Phillips. I want to find out exactly what happened on that fateful day. When could J.D. Goss possibly have taken those slugs out of the bodies?

John Neil Phillips: It was right here Bonnie and Clyde were shot. The officers were hiding right up there on that rise there, and they had a decoy truck parked on the road, a truck that they knew Clyde would recognize. And Bonnie and Clyde came around that curve right there. Car rolls up here. Sure enough, Clyde spots the truck. Decoy works. He stops. The tension so great with the officers that Prentiss Oakley jumps up prematurely, fires off two shots. The others jump up and let go with all their weapons. Sounds like dynamite going off. The car starts rolling off down the hill and Ted Hinton thinks, "Oh, my God, they're getting away again". So he pulls out his Colt .45 and he's chasing after the car, shooting, shooting, shooting. And he empties his whole weapon into the back of the car and then slowly the car just drifts into the embankment there and everybody knew that was the end of them, the end of Bonnie and Clyde.

Wes: So now, who were the members of the posse?

John: Well, there was the Sheriff of Bienville Parish, that was Henderson Jordan, and his deputy, Prentiss Oakley; two former Texas Rangers, Frank Hamer and Manny Gault; and two Dallas Deputy Sheriffs, Bob Alcorn and Ted Hinton.

Wes: No J.D. Goss.

John: No J.D. Goss.

Wes: J.D. Goss was not at the ambush site, so he definitely didn't take the bullets from the bodies here. Could he have had access to the bodies at the autopsy? This story was huge at the time and well-documented. John and I are going to check out the Coroner's records to see if he was there.

Tukufu: I'm taking Cassandra's bullets to top ballistics expert Chris Lucky to find out what kind of guns fired our bullets. Wes has sent me a list of firearms used in the ambush. I'm hoping our bullets will match up with the weapons that killed Bonnie and Clyde. Chris, what can you tell me about these bullets?

Chris Lucky: Typically, the first thing we do with fired bullets is try to determine caliber by measuring the base of the fired bullets and by taking a weight of the fired bullets.

Tukufu: Chris measures the damaged bullets in two places for pinpoint accuracy.

Chris: So you have two .45 caliber fired bullets and three .38/.357 caliber fired bullets.

Tukufu: This is a great start. There weren't any .38s fired at the ambush, so we can eliminate three of Cassandra's bullets from the investigation. That leaves two .45 bullets, and we know that Ted Hinton fired a model 1911 Colt .45. Did our bullets come from a 1911 Colt .45? Chris tells me that there are ridges inside the barrel of a gun that leave markings on the fired bullet, kind of like a fingerprint. Of these markings can tell us the make and model of gun that fired the bullets.

Chris: As you can see, we've got a very, very wide impression. Here we have a very, very narrow impression.

Tukufu: So we can say based on this examination, we have two different firearms. Cassandra's two .45s come from two different guns.

Chris: Yes, they did.

Tukufu: Okay. Now do we know which guns they came from?

Chris: Let's go through the .45s. Based on our measurements, we have a Colt manufacturer firearm, Combat Commander and the model 1911.



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Tukufu: This is fantastic. A 1911 Colt .45 was the gun fired by Ted Hinton straight into the back of Bonnie and Clyde's car. So at least one of Cassandra's bullets could have come from the ambush. But This is just speculation. To back it up, we need to prove that Goss had access to the corpses.

Wes: John and I have come to the County Courthouse in Arcadia, Louisiana. Inside these walls is the original Coroner's report on Bonnie and Clyde. If James Dean Goss was here, it should be recorded in these files. Well, let's see. We've got the coroner's report, Bonnie and Clyde. This is it. Let's see if we can find J.D. Goss. Let's see what we've got here. This is Clyde's. Looks like I've got the notes for Bonnie here. There's two gunshot wounds to the head. Five bullet wounds about middle of left thigh. Seven gunshot wounds, five gunshot wounds. Six shots entering three inches back of neck. Boy, she was really shot up. So was Clyde. Let's see what else we've got here. "We, the under-signed Coroner's Jury..." ah, so there may be something else here, "...after diligent inquiry..." oh, look it. Here's the signatures of the jury. [laughter] J.R. Goff. For a minute -- my heart stopped for just a second thinking J.D. Goss, but, no, it's J.R. Goff, so still no J.D. Same paper for Clyde, same signatures. J.D. Goss was nowhere near this place. Nope.

Wes: There's no evidence to suggest that J.D. removed the bullets at the Coroner's inquest, but could he have gotten them later? I need to go right back to basics. Was J.D. Goss even with the Dallas Police Department in 1934? To find out, I've come to the Dallas Public Library to check out the old city directories. These list not only names and addresses, but key for me, their occupations as well. We want to find J.D. Goss "Gorman, Gormley, Goss," here we go. Alrighty. Let's see if we can find J.D. Oh, my God! James D. Goss, Ballistician. A ballistics expert, and boy, does that really explain how he could have had those bullets. This is the first piece of hard evidence that Cassandra's story could be true. And if J.D. was the ballistics expert on the Bonnie and Clyde case, it would have been reported somewhere. I need to go through the papers for the day after the ambush to see if Goss is mentioned. After hours searching through the newspaper archives, I find something that takes our story in a whole different direction. Take a look at this. "J.D. Goss left Dallas Wednesday to aid George Lacy "in tests of bullets taken from the scene of the killing of two State Highway Officers." George Lacy. It's his crime lab stamps that are on Cassandra's photographs. It goes on. "Jess Martin, District attorney at Fort Worth" sent the bullets to Lacy along with bullets "fired from the guns found in the car" of Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow when they were killed in Louisiana last Wednesday". So Goss is connected to Bonnie and Clyde, but not with their killing. J.D. is the ballistics expert testing bullets from Bonnie and Clyde's own guns to solve a totally different case: the murder of two Highway Patrol officers on Easter Sunday, two weeks before Bonnie and Clyde were ambushed. And look who turns out to be on trial for those Easter murders. Bonnie's sister, Billie Mace. But it looks like J.D.'s ballistics evidence actually saves Billie. It says here that J.D. analyzed test bullets fired from Bonnie and Clyde's guns and they match the bullets that killed the Highway Patrol officers. Goss' evidence meant that Billie Mace went free and the double murder was pinned on Bonnie and Clyde. Could Cassandra's bullets have been part of the ballistics evidence in this case? I need to found out what caliber of bullets J.D. tested. If they were .38s or .45s like Cassandra's, then we might have the answer to our investigation. Look, an article about the killing of the two Highway Patrol officers. It says that five .45 caliber shells were found at the crime scene. This is great. It means That Cassandra's .45s could be the ones that J.D. Goss tested which set Bonnie Parker's sister free.

Tukufu: Bonnie and Clyde had seven Colt .45s in their car. Three of those have been lost, three belong to private collectors and one is right here in my hand. Chris is going to fire a test bullet to see if it will match the markings on Cassandra's bullets. The odds are against us, But there's a one-in-seven chance. We got to give it a try. [gunshots] The tank holds 350 gallons of water to slow the velocity of the fired bullet and capture it in a steel basket.

Chris: We have an interesting development here. These are Cassandra's two fired bullets and this is our standard bullet we just fired. On the standard, we have right-hand twist. On Cassandra's bullets, we have left-hand twist. There is no way this gun fired these two bullets.

Tukufu: Well, that's a very clear piece of evidence. Well, it was a long shot. This gun doesn't match the .45 bullet, but all the other evidence strongly suggests that J.D. Goss got those .45 bullets from his ballistics investigation of the Easter murders committed by Bonnie and Clyde. I hope Cassandra will be pleased with what we found out.

Tukufu: You know, your family tradition that J.D. Goss removed these bullets from the bodies of Bonnie and Clyde, we found out J.D. Goss was nowhere near the bodies of Bonnie and Clyde.



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Cassandra: Wow. Wow. I'm speechless almost. You know?

Tukufu: But we did find something else that we think is equally as exciting. We believe that some of these bullets may have been used to exonerate Billie Mace, Bonnie Parker's sister, for the double murder of two Texas Highway Patrolmen on Easter Sunday, 1934.

Cassandra: Well, that makes me feel much better, especially that the bullets that I do have went to free someone that was accused of a crime they didn't commit.

Tukufu: That is really a neat thing.

Cassandra: I bet she thought so, too.

Tukufu: I'll bet she did. [laughter] she got free. The bullets and the photographs make a great collectible package. These are the first first-generation photographs that I've seen of Bonnie and Clyde in 25 years. We want to add some value to the package and so we have a small present for you.

Cassandra: Oh, wow. This is really neat!

Tukufu: It's a wanted poster, 1934, May 21st, couple days before they were shot. We want to present that to you.

Cassandra: Oh, this is great!

Tukufu: Bonnie and Clyde, American legends and cold-blooded killers. They met in January, 1930, Clyde 21, Bonnie 19, the same year the authorities first caught up with Clyde, and he was locked up for burglary. That was short-lived. Bonnie smuggled him a gun and he busted out. Before long, he was back in the slammer, this time for 14 years. Clyde was so bent on avoiding the horrendous work detail that he had a fellow inmate cut off two of his toes. He shouldn't have bothered. Two weeks later, Clyde was pardoned after a heartfelt plea by his mother. Bonnie and Clyde stole a car and began the most infamous crime spree in American history. They were joined by Clyde's brother Buck, his sister-in-law Blanche, a young gunman, Raymond Hamilton, and later, W.D. Jones. And so the notorious Barrow gang was formed. Over the next two years, the gang blasted their way across five states, robbing banks, stealing cars, and murdering at least 13 people, including nine police officers. By the end of 1933, only Bonnie and Clyde remained. Buck had been killed and the others captured. But on May 23rd, 1934, their luck ran out. On that fateful day, 167 rounds were pumped into Clyde's Ford V-8. The two outlaws could not have been more dead. Bonnie was 23 years old, Clyde 24.

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