

Pathologists say stab victim might have lived for an hour

WACO, Texas (AP) — A pathologist said that a 17-year-old, whose stabbed and tortured body was discovered along with two other teenagers in July 1982, might have lived an hour before succumbing to the effects of her wounds.

Dr. Mary Gilliland, who performed autopsies on Jill Montgomery, Raylene Rice and Kenneth Franks, told a jury of eight women and four men Tuesday that none of the 14 stab wounds to Miss Montgomery's chest or the slashing cut to her throat caused immediate death.

Ms. Gilliland, with the Dallas County Medical Examiner's office, said that the teen-ager probably lost consciousness minutes after the initial attack.

Ms. Gilliland was one of eight witnesses to testify Tuesday in 54th State District Court during the second day of testimony in the murder trial of David Wayne Spence, the Waco Tribune-Herald reported.

Spence, 25, is charged with three counts of capital murder in the Lake Waco triple slaying on July 13, 1982, but is being tried first for the murder of Miss Montgomery, a resident of Waxahachie.

He was indicted November 1983 along with Muneer Mohammad Deeb, 25, Gilbert Melendez, 29, and Anthony Melendez, 25,

life prison terms in a plea-bargain arrangement.

He is expected to testify against Spence. McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell told jurors Monday that the state will produce evidence to indicate that the victims were tortured, and said the female victims were bitten and sexually assaulted.

Prosecutors were expected to link those bite marks with teeth samples taken from Spence through the testimony of a forensic dental specialist from New Mexico.

Also on Tuesday, two fishermen who discovered Franks' body testified that they thought the grisly sight was somebody's idea of a practical joke at first, but soon realized that they had discovered a homicide victim.

Sidney Smith, a construction worker, said he and his brother-in-law, Joseph Chambers, were on their way to a new fishing spot at Lake Waco about 5 p.m. on July 14, 1982, when they came across the body dumped near a dirt road at Speegleville Park.

Franks was bound, gagged and stabbed 19 times in the chest and once in the neck, autopsy reports revealed. After discovering the body, Smith and Chambers notified McLennan County Deputy Constable Gene Thorpe, who lived at the entrance of the park.