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## Suspect, friend's family crossed paths

SYCAMORE – Kathy Chapman said she is overwhelmed by the recent arrest of a former neighbor charged with the 1957 murder of her friend, Maria Ridulph.

But the arrest of Jack McCullough, formerly John Tessier, is not the first time the suspect and Chapman's family have crossed paths.

That collision, quite literally, took place before Chapman was born.

According to a story in the April 1, 1947, edition of the Sycamore True Republican, 8-year-old Johnny Tessier, son of Mrs. Ralph Tessier, was in the hospital "recovering from shock and a serious bruising" after he was struck by a taxi driven by Henry Sigman.

Sigman was a chauffeur for the Taylor Taxi Service, and his vehicle struck Tessier as he was walking home from school crossing State Street at the intersection with California Street.

Chapman, who now lives in St. Charles, is the daughter of Henry "Bud" Sigman and was with Maria moments before she was abducted. She said her father was an auto mechanic at Taylor Motors in Sycamore before becoming owner of the Phillips 66 gas station on Main Street in the 1950s.

"He lived with Art and Edith Taylor before he was married," Chapman said. "He always worked for the Taylors when I was a kid."

The article says Sigman "made a strenuous attempt to avoid the accident," but Tessier was struck and "landed on the paving so as to strike his head a sickening blow."

X-rays showed no skull fracture, and his mother said he was regaining his strength and would recover rapidly.

Tessier changed his name in 1994 to Jack Daniel McCullough. He was arrested last week and charged with kidnapping and killing 7-year-old Maria Ridulph.

Ridulph was last seen the evening of Dec. 3, 1957, when she and her best friend, Kathy Sigman, were playing near the intersection of Center Cross Street and Archie Place, near their homes. Kathy said a man who called himself Johnny approached both girls as they played. Kathy went home to get gloves, and when she returned her friend and the man were both gone. Maria's body was found nearly five months later in rural Jo Daviess County.

Chapman said she does not recall the car accident incident ever being discussed, but she had no doubt the driver who had struck Tessier was her father, who died in December at age 84.

"Isn't that a strange coincidence," Chapman said.

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