



## **Shadow on the Hill: The True Story of a 1925 Kansas Murder**

*Diana Staresinic-Deane*

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It was the most brutal murder in the history of Coffey County, Kansas.

On May 30, 1925, Florence Knoblock, a farmer's wife and the mother of a young boy, was found slaughtered on her kitchen floor. Several innocent men were taken into custody before the victim's husband, John, was accused of the crime. He would endure two sensational trials before being acquitted.

Eighty years later, local historian Diana Staresinic-Deane studied the investigation, which was doomed by destroyed evidence, inexperienced lawmen, disappearing witnesses, and a community more desperate for an arrest than justice. She would also discover a witness who may have seen the murderer that fateful morning.

## **Shadow on the Hill: The True Story of a 1925 Kansas Murder Details**

Date : Published March 19th 2013 by Aventine Press (first published 2013)

ISBN : 9781593308155

Author : Diana Staresinic-Deane

Format : Paperback 340 pages

Genre : Crime, True Crime, Nonfiction, History, Historical, Mystery



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## **From Reader Review Shadow on the Hill: The True Story of a 1925 Kansas Murder for online ebook**

### **Susan says**

My daughter passed this book on to me and I'm so glad that she did. It's very obvious that years' of research went into it. I particularly liked the author's addition of news clippings, personal emails with relatives of people involved, and her footnotes of explanation. I hope to see future books by this author.

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### **Katrina Yip says**

This is the only true crime type book I have read, so I wasn't sure what to expect. It is well written and meticulously researched. I was very engaged in the story - it's hard to put down! I find it somewhat difficult knowing that the murderer was never found and frustrating that the investigation was handled so poorly. Staresinic-Deane does offer some possibilities, and left me with the feeling that it was very unlikely that the husband (the only man ever tried for the crime) could have done this. Overall, an interesting and enjoyable read.

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### **Alden says**

This was a great, fast read. I couldn't put it down. I especially appreciate how the author raises real possibilities of other suspects but doesn't really resolve the issue. The one thing that's very certain is that there wasn't anything like a satisfactory investigation of Florence Knoblock's death at the time. If you like the true crime genre, this is a great pick!

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### **Brandy says**

I generally do not read true crime novels but thoroughly enjoyed this one. Well researched and written, the author deftly pulled together a compelling story out of what was otherwise a muddled and forgotten unsolved crime. The inclusion of the author's personal correspondence and experiences while conducting her research is a thought-provoking conclusion to each chapter.

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### **Tracy Simmons says**

Diana's was a fascinating project. Shadow on the Hill tells the true story of a 1925 murder that took place just one county east of here. Florence Knoblock was brutally murdered on May 30, 1925, and her husband was tried twice, but never convicted, for the deed. It was a heart wrenching story, vividly illustrated by the author who spent nearly three years researching to pull together the facts of the case.

I downloaded the book late on a Sunday evening and began reading. After only a few chapters, I

remembered what a pansy I am. I got up to lock all the doors and windows in my house and had to find some fluff to read for a few hours before I could go to bed. Still, the opening chapters stuck in my dreams for several nights!

After that, I limited myself to daytime reading so I didn't carry the story into my dreams so completely.

Though the story is factual, bringing together countless newspaper articles, trial transcripts and interviews, it is told in narrative form. I found myself examining all the characters as they were introduced. I won't tell you who I think did it, but I loved the way Diana dropped in pieces of information and clues along the way. In fact, I spent a couple more hours reviewing the evidence once I finished the book!

Aside from the gory details of the murder, I also loved the glimpses of Emporia's past. As someone who has recently adopted Emporia as a hometown, the story filled in a lot of blanks for me regarding the status and reputation of William Lindsey White (who passed away in 1973), in particular.

I highly recommend *Shadow on the Hill* to both the history and the mystery buffs out there. It is a stellar combination of the two.

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### **Jennifer says**

Wow, what an interesting story. I'm amazed by how this book came about in the first place, finding a folder of newspaper clippings on a shelf.

I don't usually read true crime books, I don't think I've read any since my teenage years. But, I thoroughly enjoyed it.

The writing is really good, it kept me interested and wanting to know the verdict.

Personally I liked the little snippets at the end of the chapters of an email, conversation, etc that the author had with someone relevant to the case.

I'd like to thank Diana for sharing this story with us, and well done for the very thorough research. I can't imagine how long was spent on the research.

A sign of a good book is wanting to know more. I want to see photos of the people, find out more about them and the case. So I'll be spending a few hours with Google later having a look around.

I would recommend this book to anyone with an interest in crime (my mum would love it) and to those who like an interesting, nail biting story.

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### **Stacy says**

*Shadow on the Hill: The True Story of a 1925 Kansas Murder* was well written grammatically and the author presents the facts in an unbiased way with just enough dramatic flair. It is an inherently confusing case to begin with set in a time when forensic science was in its infancy. The author did a pretty fantastic job considering it was an 88 year old case with little evidence left behind.

Check out my full review at my blog:  
<http://stacysbook.blogspot.com/2013/0...>

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### **Ronnie Cramer says**

I loved the story of how this book came about (an assistant librarian stumbles upon a folder of 85-year-old news clippings about a local murder and becomes obsessed with the case). It's obviously a sincere effort but I confess I'm not a fan of reconstructed dialogue and can't abide when authors ascribe thoughts and feelings to their real-life historical subjects (unless citing a diary entry or something similar). Snippets of emails and interviews were interspersed throughout the narrative as a stylistic device and actually moved the story forward, but I found the inclusion of a psychic reading questionable and incorporation of the author's dream journal inexcusable.

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### **Piepie says**

Practically every patron at the library where I work is reading or wants to read this unsolved mystery concerning a long-ago Kansas murder. On May 30, 1925, Florence Knoblock, in her early 30's, was found dead on her kitchen floor. Florence, married with a small boy named Roger, was mourned by her family, friends, while accusing fingers pointed and dastardly rumors swirled about the community. I liked how after every chapter the author included an interview or an email regarding her research on the murder, so it was like the story switched from past to present-day. Nobody was ever convicted of the Knoblock murder, but her husband, John, was put on trial twice. The author seemed to allude to a possible murderer, mentioning one or two men who walked with a limp. Other important things were mentioned in the book: bloodhound dogs, bread dough, a bloody razor found in a bedroom. This is a very compelling read, and one you won't want to put down!!

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### **Karen says**

The fact that this takes place in my hometown made it interesting. I'm not sure if someone unfamiliar with the area and the people would enjoy the book as much.

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### **Ashley says**

This is a pretty good read. I liked it mainly because it takes place near my home town and there were some familiar names in it. It does focus mainly on the trial rather than the murder. There is some great anticipation, but not like a thriller.

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### **Olive says**

Interesting only because I lived in the area and know some of the family names in the book. I had to force myself to sit down and read it because it was slow, repetitive and tedious. Don't know if I'll be able to look at some of these people again without thinking about the murder, especially since the murder remains unsolved. Maybe Cold Case will grab onto it!

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### **Adam says**

Received a free copy of this through Goodreads' giveaway. Very interesting book, although it is weakened by the inter-narrative breakup material. These include snippets from newspapers of the time (unclear as to whether they are direct quotes, edited quotes, or paraphrases) as well as interviews with family, recordings from the author's dream journal, and an interview with a psychic. Contrary to the superb narrative making up the majority of the book, these pieces seem out of place and are almost laughably irrelevant as the closest to an actual witness we get is an old woman who was 3 at the time. Still, an interesting read on an unsolved crime.

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### **Charlene Gee says**

I don't read true crime books usually but made an exception for this one written by a friend and I'm very glad that I did! While the truth about who murdered Florence Knoblock will never be known, there is a lot of information presented in this book that enables the reader to draw their own conclusions. Well written and thoroughly researched, the only drawback I found was that I would have liked the information about "party lines" to be presented earlier rather than halfway through the book as I had no idea that early telephone service was delivered this way (until I looked it up online). I highly recommend this book if you're looking for a well researched, well written, fast paced book even if you don't like true crime books this book will grab your attention! And may even make you late for work... twice!

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### **Melanie says**

I usually enjoy the true crime genre and thought I would really like this one because it was set one county away from where I live but unfortunately this was a really dry read. Many facts were repeated over and over and there was no real resolution. I also didn't understand what the author's "dream journal" entries added to the book.

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