

Police Hold Death Probe

AUBURN, Ala. (AP)—Auburn police and state investigators have begun reconstructing the night of Dec. 23 in the life of a 40-year-old Auburn Negro—perhaps the last night of his life.

The body of Norman Dowdell, an employe of the U. S. Agriculture Department's regional laboratory near here, was found Monday beneath a bridge in Elmore County. Authorities said Dowdell had suffered four deep stab wounds in the chest.

Auburn Police Chief Fred Hammock said late Monday, "We're doing the legwork and groundwork on it now. We don't know yet if this is our case or Elmore County's case."

Hammock said his department received a missing person report on Dowdell on Dec. 27, four days after he departed on a series of visits in the Auburn area.

The body, which Elmore County Sheriff Sidney Thrash said was remarkably well preserved by cold weather, was discovered Monday by a pedestrian on a county road east of Wetumpka between the Claude and Fleahop communities.

The victim was identified by his wife and father-in-law, and the body was returned Tuesday to Auburn.