

1954

54/07/09 'Loved My Wife, She Loved Me,' Sheppard Tells News Reporter

Cleveland News

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THE WEATHER

TONIGHT—Fair and cool.
Low, 56.

TOMORROW—Partly cloudy,
warm. High, 80.

U. S. Weather Bureau Official Forecast

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EXCLUSIVE!

**'LOVED MY WIFE, SHE LOVED ME,'
SHEPPARD TELLS NEWS REPORTER**

Hates No One, Husband Says In Interview

BY SEVERINO P. SEVERINO
News Staff Writer

"I was in love with my wife and she was in love with me," Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard said today in an exclusive interview with this reporter.

Discussing his family life with a newspaperman for the first time since the brutal murder of his wife, Marilyn, early Sunday, the young osteopathic surgeon said:

"I couldn't hurt any human being. I have never hated anyone. My whole life has been a training to help people—not to hurt them."

Breaking into sobs, the 30-year-old "Dr. Sam" recalled the recent announcement that the couple was expecting a second child.

"We had just announced that we were going to have a baby," he explained after a moment's hesitation. "We were going to name it 'Steve,' after my brother, if it were a boy.

"We decided to name it after Steve because he and his wife had just lost their young daughter," Dr. Sam added.

Returning to a discussion of the harmony which existed between him and his late wife, the doctor explained:

"We got along wonderfully. Whatever I said she went along with. I said I wanted a sports car and, although she didn't particularly care for the idea, she said OK.

"She was always agreeable. She was that kind of a person. Just as Mayor (J. Spencer) Houk said —'I wore the pants in my family.'

"Not that I was difficult, however," he quickly added.

I was permitted to interview the young brain surgeon a short time before he returned to the scene of the murder to re-enact events preceding discovery of his wife's body which had been hacked 25 times by a sadistic killer.

As medical writer for The News, I was granted permission to question Dr. Sam in the presence of his father, Dr. Richard A. Sheppard, and his attorneys, William J. Corrigan and Arthur Petersilge.

I had requested permission for the interview during a visit to Bay View Hospital in Bay Village on Thursday. During a luncheon with Dr. Richard N. Sheppard and other hospital doctors I explained that I would like to talk to the husband about reports which have been circulated since the murder.

I also made this clear at the outset of my interview with the young surgeon in a corner of the living room of his father's aged frame home on the hospital grounds.

He answered my questions willingly and expressed a desire to "correct" some of the misconceptions which have arisen regarding the murder.

Explaining that many rumors had reached The News' office in the past few days (which he admitted he had heard), I continued:

Q.—Is it true that you asked for a divorce about a month ago?

A.—No, that's not true.

Q.—Is there anything to the stories that you quarreled frequently with your wife?

A.—Every married couple has quarrels. We had no more than the rest.

Q.—Well, I mean violent quarrels—ones that the

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Doctor Tells of Love He Had for His Wife

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neighbors could hear.

A.—No. We never quarreled that way.

Q.—Some people believe that a lot of the guilt is pointing your way because you were in the house when the murder occurred.

A.—I was in the house.

Dr. Sam sat slumped in a large over-stuffed arm-chair while he answered these questions. To his left was a picture window overlooking Lake Erie.

He appeared tired, under heavy emotional strain and his speech came in monotones.

However, he appeared alert to the questions and the conversation that went on. He sat with his neck held rigidly in place by a heavy leather-padded collar.

He wore a faded pale yellow sweat shirt over neatly-pressed charcoal-colored trousers and brown shoes. His hair, receding to each side, was tousled.

A bruise was in evidence on his lower lip at about the center and it looked very much like a "cold sore." As he spoke his arms rested limply on each side of the chair. He answered my questions directly and looked me squarely in the eyes with each. There was no hesitation in his answers.

Throughout the 15-minute interview, he remained calm and kept his voice under control except when his father mentioned an incident which recalled his dead wife.

I sat opposite him on a straight-backed chair directly facing him. Corrigan and Petersilge sat on an over-stuffed couch with their backs to the picture window overlooking the lake.

The father moved restlessly behind me.

At times he sat down and other times he stood directly behind my chair as we talked.

Midway through the interview we were interrupted by a telephone call. The father answered it and upon his return explained:

"The interview will have to be cut short because there are so many things we have to do."

Then speaking directly to his youngest son, the father added:

"I've got to make preparations for a speech in Toronto that Sam was to deliver to an osteopathic meeting there."

This reminder had an overwhelming effect on the son. For the first time he broke into tears and appeared to have difficulty in speaking. Finally, he said:

"Yes, that's right. Marilyn helped me prepare that paper."

When Dr. Sam regained his composure I assured his father and the attorneys that I would end the interview with a few more questions. I then asked the younger surgeon about the harmony or disharmony that existed in his home prior to the murder.

The subsequent questions about his family life brought forth the expression of mutual love between the couple during which the young father frequently broke into sobs.

At the conclusion, Dr. Sam left to keep a date with County Detective Carl Rossbach in the home at 28924 Lake Rd., Bay Village and to re-enact the crime which ended the couple's happy relationship.

I was told earlier that permission for the interview had been granted after it had been thoroughly discussed by the father, three brothers and the attorneys.

This morning when I arrived at the home, which lies within the shadows of the osteopathic hospital in which the father serves as chief of staff and the sons as house doctors, I was greeted on the front porch by the elder Dr. Sheppard.

I could see Dr. Sam sitting in the armchair in a corner of the living room while we talked on the porch.

After talking with me for a few minutes the father re-entered the home to again discuss the matter with his son and the two attorneys.

A few moments later, Corrigan and Petersilge emerged from the house and expressed their willingness to permit me to talk to the doctor who was released from the hospital nearby only last night.

While agreeing to the interview, the two attorneys reminded me of Dr. Sam's condition and asked that I keep it as brief as possible.

Corrigan also asked that I refrain from asking one or two questions in the interest of his client.

When the interview began Corrigan and Petersilge permitted Dr. Sam to answer my questions freely and without interruption. On only one or two occasions did they interrupt on behalf of their client.

And when it was over they appeared satisfied that at least a few of the reports that have been circulating in the small community had been refuted by the young doctor's frank and direct answers.