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54/07/06 Doctor Describes Wife's Killer

Cleveland Plain Dealer

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Cleveland Plain Dealer, "54/07/06 Doctor Describes Wife's Killer" (1954). *All Articles*. 18.

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113TH YEAR—NO. 187

Entered as Second Class Matter Post
Office under Act of March 3, 1879.

CLEVELAND, TUESDAY MORNING, JULY 6, 1954

40 PAGES

Main 1-4500

SEVEN CENTS

DOCTOR DESCRIBES WIFE'S KILLER

PICTURES SLAYER AS TALL, MIDDLE-AGED MAN IN WHITE SHIRT

Attorney William J. Corrigan Sees Husband at Hospital; Banning of Visitors Follows; Patient Reported in 'Fair' Condition; Tooth Chip Clew Ruled Out; Weapon Still Missing

BY JOHN G. BLAIR

Detectives investigating the sadistic killing of Mrs. Marilyn R. Sheppard in her Bay Village home were given their first description of her slayer yesterday.

Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, 30, husband of the woman who was found dead in bed at dawn Sunday, told Deputy Sheriff Carl A. Rossbach that the man who killed his comely wife was middle-aged, six feet three inches tall, had dark bushy hair and wore a white shirt.

Dr. Sheppard gave the description to Rossbach from his bed at Bay View Hospital, where he was reported in "fair" condition early today.

Visitors Are Barred

Soon after he gave the description to Rossbach, Dr. Sheppard's room was barred to all visitors.

The ban followed a visit to Dr. Sheppard's room by William J. Corrigan, noted Cleveland criminal and labor lawyer.

Corrigan appeared while Rossbach was questioning Dr. Sheppard.

The lawyer said he had been asked to visit Dr. Sheppard by Arthur E. Petersilge, an attorney who represents the hospital and members of the Sheppard family. The family has been prominent in the founding and operation of the institution.

Dr. Richard D. Sheppard, brother of the injured doctor, said Corrigan had given instructions that the husband was not to be questioned without counsel being present.

Corrigan Hears Questioning

Rossbach said Corrigan had told him that Dr. Sheppard was not in condition to be questioned, but that questioning would be permitted when his health improved.

Corrigan said he listened to Rossbach's questioning and noted Dr. Sheppard was not "in good shape." He said he suggested to Rossbach that the detective wait until the patient "gets out of bed" before questioning him further.

The lawyer said that he was not retained "in any way" and that he accompanied Petersilge, a friend, at the latter's request.

The county detective said he would keep after Corrigan to question Dr. Sheppard since the osteopathic neurosurgeon was the only person who could supply vital information.

Demerol Reported Missing

Rossbach said it had been reported 30 cubic centimeters of demerol, a synthetic morphine, was missing from the Sheppard residence, 28924 West Lake Road, Bay Village.

Only Dr. Sheppard can verify if the drug was in the house, Rossbach pointed out.

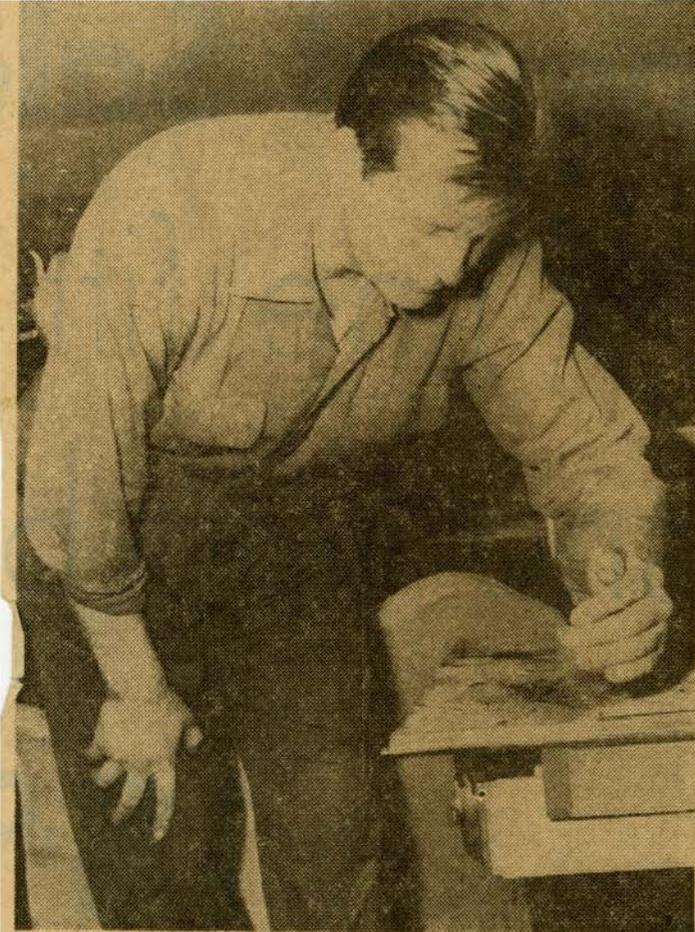
Dr. Sheppard was reported badly shaken emotionally.

Dr. Richard Sheppard, the brother, said the beaten doctor frequently broke down and sobbed. He was reported to be under sedatives. For that reason further questioning was not advisable, the brother said.

Dr. Stephen H. Sheppard, another brother, who has been caring for the injured doctor, said his brother could see no one.

Rossbach took over direction of the investigation after Bay Village and Cleveland detectives had done preliminary work. He

(Continued on Page 4, Column 4)



BAY MURDER INVESTIGATION. Left: Patrolman James H. Cowles of Bay Village examines a palm print found on a desk in the living room of the home of Mrs. Marilyn R. Sheppard, slain Sunday morning. Right: Dr. Samuel R. Gerber, Cuyahoga County coroner, demonstrates how Mrs. Sheppard may have been struck by a heavy piece of wood or some other weapon.

GET DESCRIPTION OF WIFE'S SLAYER

Detectives Told That Bay Killer Is Middle-Aged

(Continued From First Page)

was on the Cleveland police force 26 years and was a detective sergeant.

In the afternoon he and Patrolman Fred Drenkhan of Bay Village interviewed persons who had knowledge of the case. Among these were Mr. and Mrs. Donald Ahern, 29146 West Lake, who had been supper guests at the Sheppard residence Saturday night.

The Aherns told Rossbach that Dr. Sheppard had been at their home before supper and had a couple of drinks.

Dr. Samuel R. Gerber, Cuyahoga County coroner, said no alcohol was found in Mrs. Sheppard's stomach at an autopsy performed yesterday morning at the County Morgue.

Tooth Chips Are Victim's

Two tooth chips found under Mrs. Sheppard's body, which had been lying face up on a bed, when she was turned over for examination proved to have been from the woman.

At first it had been thought these might be vital clues to the killer. Dr. Gerber fitted the splinters in two front teeth of the slain woman.

He reported the fetus of the four-month pregnant woman was male.

Mrs. Sheppard's left wrist bore marks which led police to think her wrist watch had been ripped off after she was hacked 25 times in the face and head by some object thought to have a sharp edge.

Mrs. Sheppard's watch was found on the floor of the doctor's office-study on the first floor.

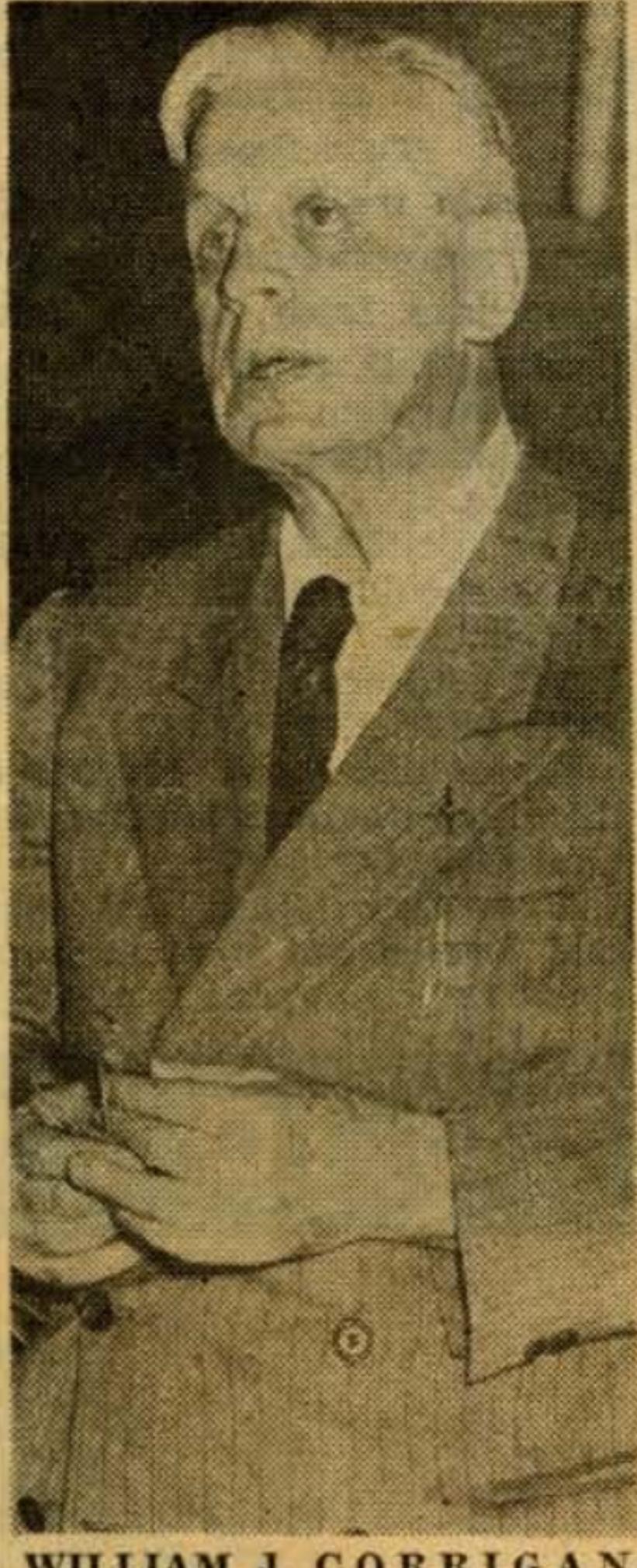
Dr. Gerber said the wounds might have been inflicted with a heavy piece of wood.

Hunt Murder Weapon

Search for the murder weapon continued. Neighborhood youths beat their way through weeds on the slope behind the house, which overlooks Lake Erie.

Dr. Sheppard's wristwatch, which was discovered in a cloth bag with other personal jewelry in the weeds behind the house, was found to have coagulated blood on the metal expansion band and blood smears on the crystal. There was some moisture within the crystal, Dr. Gerber said.

Police Chief John P. Eaton of Bay Village said Dr. Sheppard had been wearing the watch



WILLIAM J. CORRIGAN, noted criminal lawyer here, yesterday was called in to advise Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, husband of the murdered Marilyn R. Sheppard.

when he fell asleep on a downstairs couch while the Aherns and the Sheppards were listening to a baseball game on the radio while the doctor slept, the Aherns and Mrs. Sheppard watched a television movie titled "Strange Holiday." Ironically, the murder was on July 4 morning.

Left Around Midnight

The Aherns left around midnight, Mrs. Sheppard seeing them to the door while the doctor remained asleep on the couch.

It was learned the green cloth bag in which the jewelry was found was a container for tools for Dr. Sheppard's outboard motor. It normally was kept in the desk in the office. It was thought Mrs. Sheppard's watch fell on the floor when someone swept the jewelry into the bag.

Efforts to obtain an electromagnet to be used in searching the lake off the Sheppards' private beach were unsuccessful. Chief Eaton said he was continuing efforts to get one in the hope that the murder weapon might be found, if it was thrown into the water.

T-Shirt Still Missing

Still missing, Dr. Gerber said, is a T-shirt which Dr. Sheppard wore when he fell asleep in the evening. When he was found the doctor wore only cord trousers, loafers and socks, all wet.

Dr. Sheppard, in earlier questioning yesterday, reiterated details of awaking from his sleep in the dark, vaguely feeling that his wife had been screaming. As he ran upstairs, he said, he was struck by someone and blacked out.

Later he remembered chasing someone through the back yard and wrestling with him on the beachhouse landing, some 50 feet below the back yard.

Comes To on Beach

Dr. Sheppard said he blacked out again and awoke to find himself lying on the beach in the water. Returning to the house, he went to the bedroom and found his wife, chopped to death.

He blacked out again and next remembered telephoning Mayor J. Spencer Houk of Bay Village, a close friend, to come to his aid.

When Houk and his wife, Esther, entered the house, Dr. Sheppard was flopped on the living room floor leaning against a chair.

KoKo, the Sheppards' pet dog, often called Coke, was running around the room, Houk said.

Plain Dealer reporters discov

ered late yesterday that the dog apparently had been injured during the bizarre slaying.

Dog Appears Dejected

The dog, being kept at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur G Paine, 28913 West Lake, apparently had been kicked or hit on its right rear thigh. The pet favored the limb and snapped when it was touched.

Apparently sensing the tragedy, the dog appeared dejected and listless. The Paines said it had been sick yesterday.

Paine said the animal's nature was that if it was struck it would cower in a corner rather than fight back.

This was seen as a possible explanation of the failure of the dog to bark during the murder and beating.

While Dr. Sheppard's watch, a ring, some keys, and a chain with fraternity keys had been taken from the house, cash in his wallet and in a jar in the office was untouched, Chief Eaton said.

\$63 in Wallet

Three dollars was in the bill section of the wallet. Sixty dollars was folded in another compartment of the wallet.

Mrs. Sheppard's wallet was found in the kitchen of the rambling home, a popular spot for Bay's younger professional set. No money was in the wallet, but it appeared untouched, Chief Eaton said. The jar in the office contained \$37, he said.

Roszbach said that, in his opinion, no motive for the killing had been established.

Bay Village had five residential burglaries last February, Chief Eaton said. In each case the home was unoccupied and no violence was involved, he added. He said two parole violators were picked up in neighboring Rocky River. While not directly linked to the burglaries, the men were returned to jail.

Samuel, jr., the couple's 6½-year-old son, was told of his mother's death yesterday. The son, known as Chip, was staying at the home of Dr. Stephen Sheppard, 19027 Englewood Drive, Rocky River.

Private services for Mrs. Sheppard will be held tomorrow afternoon. Friends will be received at the Saxton funeral home, 13215 Detroit Avenue, Lakewood, from 7 to 10 tonight.

In place of flowers the family requested that contributions be made to the Marilyn Reese Sheppard Memorial in care of Bay View Hospital.