7-5-1954

54/07/06 (6) 11:59pm, Dr. Stephen A. Sheppard

Bay Village Police Department

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The following is the statement of Dr. Stephen A. Sheppard, age 34, residing at 19027 Inglewood Drive, Rocky River 16, Ohio with reference to the homicide of Marilyn Sheppard.

At approximately 6 a.m. July 4, 1954, I received a call from my sister-in-law, Dorothy Sheppard. She stated that a call had just been received at their house from Mayor Houk, and that they had been told that something terrible had happened at the home of my brother, Sam.

She said, "they think Marilyn has been killed." I hung up, gave this information to my wife. We both dressed immediately, and I went to my closet, and got out a 38 police special, loaded it, put it in my pocket, and we drove directly to Dr. Sam's home.

As we arrived in front of the house I saw police cars and the Bay Police ambulance. I remarked to my wife that she must be too far gone otherwise the ambulance would have already have taken her in. We ran from my car into the house. Through the door that faces the road. And as we passed through the hall I glanced into the study and saw my brother, Sam, lying face down on the floor. I turned him over, spoke to him, and he responded. I thereupon rushed through the living room on up the stairs, and into the northwest bedroom. Where I saw my sister-in-law. She was lying with her head approximately in the middle of her twin bed which was a four-poster, with solid headboard, and a single bar across the foot. She had apparently been attacked and was dead. Her head having received multiple blows which had produced many deep lacerations. There was a great deal of blood about her head. Her hair and her face was covered. Her arms from her elbows down and her hands gave evidence of having received many severe crushing and lacerating injuries. I saw no mark upon her body which was exposed from the waist up. The lower portion of the body was covered with a sheet. I touched her wrist, nothing more. The legs were visible from about the knee down. They extended over the foot of the bed. The injuries to her head were for the most part confined to an area above the brows. There was no major injury to the lower portion of the face.

I then returned to the study on the first floor. I spoke again to my brother, Sam, and he again responded in a sluggish, incoherent way. I asked if he could walk, he mumbled that he thought so. I noticed that his trousers were wet. He was bare from the waist up. He was shivering as though extremely cold. His pulse was fast and thready, and weak. I concluded that he was suffering from shock.

With the aid of Dr. Robert Carver I lifted Dr. Sam to his feet and directed my wife to obtain a coat or jacket from the closet. Dr. Carver and I half-carried and half-lead Dr. Sam out to my car. It seemed that he was poorly coordinated and incoherent. As we went by the closet my wife was attempting to select a garment and I reached in, grabbed a top coat, and threw that about his shoulders.
We took him immediately to Bay View Hospital. I believe I used my siren, but I can't be certain. We were met at the emergency room door by my Father, and a number of staff attendants. They brought a gurney cart to the side of the car and we lifted him out of the car, covered him, and took him into the hospital, put him to bed. I helped the nurse disrobe him. I ordered hot water bottles, as he was still chilling severely and sufficiently to shake the entire bed. I ordered 100 milligrams of Demerol to be administered by hypodermic injection immediately. His clothing was placed on a chair in the room and a nurse placed an identifying paper in one of the loafer type shoes he had been wearing.

I believe the paper said Dr. Sam R 115. I then conducted a cursory and superficial examination and wrote specific orders on his chart, for further supervision and care. My examination revealed him to be in a condition of shock. On the right side of his face was evidence of a blow. There was blood on his lips and his teeth. Two teeth in his upper jaw on the right hand side had been broken. I found no evidence of the fragments. He complained bitterly of pain at the base of the skull and held his hands at the back of his neck, as though to support the weight of his head. When I took his hands away to examine the area he was unable to support his head. I found evidence in this area of swelling and great muscle spasm. The root of the neck anteriorly gave evidence of superficial contusion, particularly on the left. The left s.c.m. muscle was swollen, spastic, and tender on palpation. There was no break in the skin surface but there was a mucous membrane laceration inside the mouth, on the right. He was still incoherent. Poorly coordinated, and continued to complain of extreme pain at the base of the skull. And what he described as a pounding headache. I examined his body and there was no evidence of injury. I determined at this time there was no major departure from normal with regard to the deep tendon reflexes. He was able to move his hands, arms, feet and legs but was still poorly coordinated. I can only guess at the time but it must have been by this time close to 7 a.m.

I completed my examination by carefully searching his scalp, his skin of the entire body for evidence of injury or other abnormal marks. Other than those previously described there were none.

I gave instructions that certain preliminary x-ray studies of an emergency nature be obtained as soon as his condition would permit. I then searched for my wife, encountered her somewhere in the hall. And we returned to the scene. Upon our return even more automobiles and many more people were seen to be gathered in front of the house. Many people were passing in and out through the back door, which faces the road. As we entered the house things registered which I do not remember seeing before on my first visit. A doctor's bag which I presumed to be my brother's was in the hall upended and opened. The contents having been strewn about the area. I went into the study and I saw the drawers of Dr. Sam's desk which had been removed from the desk and stacked or dropped on the floor.
I touched nothing and proceeded into the living room. Where I found what appeared to be a ledger book or check book lying approximately in the middle of the living room floor. I remember seeing a number of sales tax stamps near by. I noticed also that the drawers of the desk had been pulled out and apparently inspected. But not in tremendous disarray. I recall that the desk was an open front type which provided a writing surface when the front portion was let down. This surface had been let down and was supported at an angle by the back of a chair. One of the officers pointed out what appeared to be water. This water produced a discoloration and darkening of the rug in the living room. I followed this trail of stains out through the door that led to the lake and saw patches of it on the porch, and it appeared to be water. I went down the steps to the beach and I again saw the splotches of water, and continued down the steps until I reached the beach itself. I saw nothing of significance on the beach. I noticed that the wind was coming from the northeast and that there were waves washing up to within several feet of the concrete bulkheads. I saw many tracks in the sand on the beach but attached no significance to these as I could see police officers trudging down the sand in either direction. I walked around the beach house and under it. Saw nothing.

I returned to the house, forgot about the water splotches, and returned to the bedroom in which I had previously seen the body which was still there. I inspected the room. I noticed the door of the room opened inward and there was what appeared to be blood on that portion of the door which would have been outside had it been closed. I looked behind the door and found that there was no blood on that portion of the wall behind the door. With the exception of that portion of wall behind the door there was what appeared to be blood on all four walls of the room. I could see on the walls where it had struck in spots, run almost horizontally producing streaks. I did not look at the ceiling. At least I have no recollection of doing so. I got on my hands and knees and looked under the beds from a point just inside the door. At this time I was reminded of the water I had previously seen as I had placed my left hand in a cool moist spot on the rug. There was no sticky sensation and I presumed this to be more of the same water I had seen previously in the lower levels. I saw nothing under the beds, but I have a vague recollection of a pair of soft mocassin type slippers. These were of a size and type as I recall which led me to believe that they were Marilyn's. I inspected the other bed which had not been slept in. The covers were turned down, and there were blood spatters over the bed, and over that portion of sheet which had been exposed in the turning down of the covers.

I then went into the next room to the east. This room is separated from the room in which Marilyn's body was found by two closets. This room was the bedroom of their son. His bed had been slept in. I saw nothing of significance in this room and I touched nothing.

I went on down the hall into the bedroom which temporarily had been occupied by Dr. Lester Hoversten. The bed had been slept in at some time, and had not been made up since.
I noticed his luggage was in the room and appeared to be in order.

I then went back down the hall, went into the bathroom, and asked an officer if I might use the facilities. The officer pointed out that there was a cigarette, in the toilet bowl which they wished to preserve. I left the bathroom, proceeded down the hall to the west end and entered the spare room. I saw nothing of note. And then returned down to the first floor, asked one of the officers if any one had been down to the basement. He said no. Together we proceeded through the door which led from the kitchen down the basement stairway and noticed that lights were on, throughout the basement. I went into every room in the basement, saw nothing of interest, and touched nothing. I went into the toilet room in the basement and made use of the facilities there. Then walked out of the house, walked around the house, entered the garage, looked at the three cars, touched nothing, but saw nothing unusual.

I stepped into the lavatory in the front portion of the garage pulled a string to light a light, saw nothing of significance. Turned the light out. And went up the stairs to the apartment over the garage. I opened the closest door at the head of the stairs. I saw nothing. I went into the two rooms of the apartment both doors of which were closed. Again I saw nothing unusual. I opened the closest door in the room toward the lake and again saw nothing unusual. I descended the stairs, again walked around the house, inspected the grounds, went into the teahouse, and around the teahouse, back by the incinerator, and saw nothing, unusual. I then descended the stairs to the beach for a second time and made a more careful search of the area on either side of the steps, and around the beach house. At one point of the deck of the beach house and while I was on my hands and knees leaning over and looking under the deck I saw two pairs of gloves. One pair was a common white cotton material, the other was a leather driving type glove. I did not touch these gloves. I believed them to belong to my brother, Sam. I could see that the white cotton gloves were discolored with splotches of a reddish color. I considered what if anything I should do about this discovery and determined I should tell Chief Eaton of the Bay Village Police Dept. I ascended the stairs reentered the house sought Chief Eaton and told him of my discovery. I accompanied him to the place where I had found the gloves and noticed him reach into the desk and retrieve them. We returned to the house.

We entered the study. As I walked across the floor I stepped over the pile of drawers previously described. As I did so the cuff of my left trouser leg brushed against the topmost drawer in the pile and pulled it over. I realized what I had done, and apologized to Chief Eaton. At this point Chief Eaton suggested that we all leave the room and at this point coroner Gerber arrived with another man. Coroner Gerber immediately ordered the police officers to clear the place. This was done.

I left the house, sat on the steps of the porch overlooking the lake and was engaged in conversation by Mayor Houk and his wife, Esther.
I then drifted around to the front of the house and talked briefly to various friends and neighbors, who were standing in groups about the lawn. I noticed coroner Gerber’s stepping footprints near a bush at the south east corner of the house, and joined a group which watched him point these out with the aid of a flashlight to Dr. Gerber. Shortly thereafter I returned to my car and found the family pet, Koko, whom I had not seen previously, sitting in the back of my car. I opened the door and called her out. I rejoined the groups on the lawn. Shortly thereafter I overheard Dr. Gerber request Chief Eaton to take him to the hospital. I got in my car and followed them to the hospital. As they parked in the back lot I pulled in next to them. And Chief Eaton requested me to take Dr. Gerber into the hospital while Chief Eaton returned to his home to clean up and dress in his uniform. Just before he left Chief Eaton requested the clothing that had been removed from my brother, Sam.

I went to his room, obtained the clothing from the nurse, returned to the emergency entrance and not seeing Chief Eaton immediately, gave the clothing to my Father. Chief Eaton then stepped into the hall, and my Father gave the clothing to Chief Eaton and asked if there would be any objection to removing the personal effects from the trousers. Chief Eaton made no objection and my Father withdrew the contents of the pockets of the trousers. He removed the wallet, a green colored handkerchief marked with the letter S, from the hip pockets. He removed a wadded up mass of three one-dollar bills from the right trouser pocket. He stuffed these things into the side pockets of his suit. Coroner Gerber at this time put in an appearance or shortly thereafter, and indicated that he wanted to take care of the personal effects, and requested that they be given to him. My Father thereupon removed the materials which had been in my brother’s pocket and gave them to Dr. Gerber. The three of us then walked to the nurses’ aide station at the top of the hall and Dr. Gerber inspected the material. He opened the wallet and glanced at Dr. Sam’s badge. He opened the wallet which was empty with the exception of a check made out to Dr. Sam in the amount of $1,000. The wallet and its contents as well as the other materials were wet. The check was limp and faded, and discolored. A reddish brown stain apparently emanating from the wallet, and which I now remember also noticing on the hip pocket of the trousers appeared to be on the wallet itself. I further recall that when my Father removed the wallet from the hip pocket that we noticed this reddish brown stain on the pocket itself. And remarked on the fact that it did not seem to show on the outside surface of the trousers. Coroner Gerber, having completed his preliminary inspection replaced the three dollars in the wallet, and started to insert the check. The check would not go in easily and I suggested to him that the check be laid across the inside surface of the wallet and the wallet folded across it in the hope that the check might dry out. He laid the check across the inside portion of the wallet, folded the wallet across its middle and disposed of the other material. I think he briefly placed these things in his pocket and then I accompanied him to Dr. Sam’s room where Dr. Gerber questioned him. I was present. At the completion of this question period we left the room together and at that time I asked the nurse in charge to transfer Dr. Sam to a room closer to the nurse’s station.
as soon as he could be moved. I spent the remainder of the day with Dr. Sam with the exception of a brief period during which time I returned to my home, showered and dressed. During the afternoon he was again interrogated on two occasions by officers Gareau and Schottke. What food I ate that day was taken on a tray in his room. I stayed with him until well past midnight. At which time it was necessary for me to leave him to perform two major operations. I visited him at intervals between and after these operations. Following the second operation I went to the home of Dr. and Mrs. Frank Bennett where I ate the first real meal of the day. This was preceded by two shots, the first alcohol I had consumed that day. I returned to the hospital, returned to Dr. Sam's room, stayed with him until after four o'clock, Monday, July 5.

Since the incident occurred to this time I have a total of no more than 5 hours sleep, I have performed at least 6 major operations, I have taken care of my own patients and those of Dr. Sam, and although my timing and sequence may not be exact this statement represents my best recollection of the entire day following the brutal murder of my sister-in-law, Marilyn Sheppard. And I hope that I may have the opportunity in the event that further or more accurate recollections occur to me to communicate those to the officers in charge of this investigation.

Q. At the time that you examined Marilyn's body when was she pronounced dead?
A. Within minutes. To the best of my knowledge Dr. Richard N. Sheppard pronounced her dead.

Q. After you made an examination of Dr. Sam you ordered certain preliminary x-ray study, have you since heard what the result of the studies are?
A. Yes sir, I examined them myself and found a fracture of the second cervical vertebra.

Q. What would you consider his condition at this time?
A. Fair.

Q. How long did you know Dr. Sam's wife, Marilyn?
A. From high school. In fact, I dated her before he did. About 15 or 17 years.

Q. Do you know anything about their private life?
A. Yes.

Q. Do you know of any difficulty that might have existed between them?
A. Nothing out of the ordinary.

Q. Is there anything else you can tell us that would be of benefit in this case?
A. Nothing at this time.

Q. Having read this statement, is it true?
A. Yes

Signed [Signature]

Witness [Signature]

Witness [Signature]

Taken by 1do
11:59 p.m.