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12-22-1954

54/12/22 Sam is Elated, Then Shattered

Cleveland Plain Dealer

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SAM IS ELATED, THEN SHATTERED

Second Part of Verdict Dashes Reunion Hope

BY JOHN G. BLAIR

"We, the jury . . . do find the defendant . . . not guilty of murder in the first degree . . ."

For a fleeting moment, Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard thought he had been freed late yesterday.

He opened his eyes, which he had closed waiting for the verdict. His features lightened and there was a hint of elation around his full lips.

"But, guilty of murder in the second degree . . ."

Judge Edward Blythin's words came crashing down on the defendant seated expectantly at the trial table.

Mouth Falls Open

Dr. Sam's mouth fell open, and he gasped audibly.

There was a look of stunned disbelief . . . it could not be true . . . but it was.

Dr. Sam stared hard at the jurors, who had just crushed his hopes of reunion with his family and resumption of his career.

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William H. Corrigan, one of Dr. Sam's defense attorneys, leaned forward and clasped his hand on Dr. Sam's left shoulder.

Dr. Sam wet his lips repeatedly.

Still staring at the jurors, Dr. Sam started shaking his handsome head back and forth.

Corrigan Stands Up

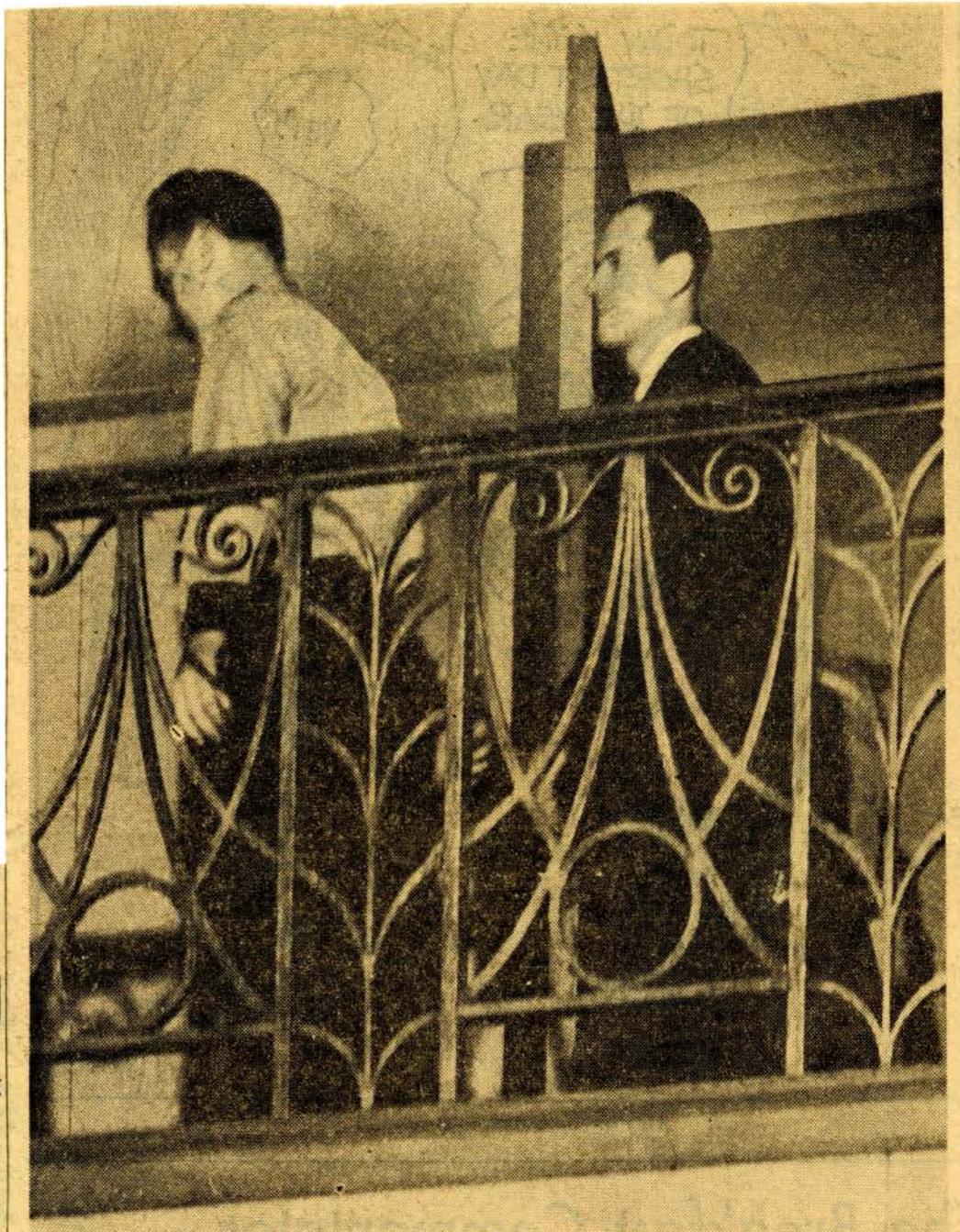
He closed his eyes and clasped his hands before him as through the heavy silence Dr. Sam heard his defense chief, William J. Corrigan, scrape his chair back and inform the court that he would like to file a motion for a new trial.

"* * * sometime after Christmas * * *," Corrigan suggested for the hearing on the motion.

Sometime after Christmas—the words must have repeated themselves over and over in Dr. Sam's mind, like a nightmarish whirlpool.

Judge Blythin told the defendant to step forward.

Dr. Sam seemed to regain the



BACK TO CELL. Deputy Sheriff James Kilroy (left) escorts the murder defendant, Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, to his one-man cell after the verdict is returned.

hold he had had on himself throughout the trial.

He rose and was directed to stand before the bench.

Dr. Sam looked directly at the angular face of Judge Blythin as the jurist asked if the defendant had anything to say.

"I'd like to say, sir, that I am not guilty," Dr. Sam began looking at the judge.

Then he turned and finished his statement, looking through the haze at the five women and seven men who had just sealed his fate.

Deputies Close in

The jury looked back, emotion blanketed.

A few minutes later, sentence pronounced, Dr. Sam was shackled to Deputy Sheriff James Kilroy. Deputies crowded around him and he was out of the room, up the stairs, out in a third-floor corridor to a waiting elevator and back to his fourth-floor cell.

As he entered the cell block, he told the other prisoners:

"They found me guilty in the second degree."

Dr. Sam took off the charcoal gray suit he had worn throughout the long trial and put on a blue sport shirt and lightweight blue trousers.

"Back to Normal"

"He's back to normal," Chief Deputy Sheriff Harvey Weitzel reported later.

Downstairs there was bedlam as newsmen frantically sought out Dr. Sam's family and jurors. But on the fourth floor there was quiet.

As the verdict was announced Dr. Sam's brothers and their wives sat a few feet away from him.

Dr. Stephen A. Sheppard and his wife, Betty, sat next to Dr. Richard N. Sheppard.

Mrs. Dorothy Sheppard, Richard's wife, sat in the first row of spectators.

Dorothy Begins to Weep

Dorothy started to weep as the verdict was announced. Tears welled in her eyes. She was pushed forward by the horde of reporters fighting to get near Dr. Sam and his lawyers as Blythin left the bench.

Dr. Steve and his wife clenched hands as they sat while the proceeding continued after the verdict was told and the jury polled.

The two brothers' faces flushed, Dr. Richard put his hands to his mouth. But Dr. Steve sat like a stone. His face was drawn but emotionless.

Dr. Steve and Betty quickly left the courtroom, but Dr. Richard and Dorothy were caught up in the crowd of reporters wanting comment.

Charges Injustice

"I feel that a great injustice has been done," Dr. Richard said.

Then he asked:

"Did you hear anything in that evidence that would justify such a verdict?"

He shook his head in disbelief. Then he and his wife went to Bailiff Simon Steenstra's office, where the group had sweated out the jury's deliberation.

Inside, Dorothy broke down, sobbing.

Dr. Steve and Betty hurriedly left with a quick "Let's get out of here."

Dr. Sam's father, Dr. Richard A. Sheppard, received the news from his eldest son, Dr. Richard.

Father "Hit Hard"

In bed with pleurisy at Bay View Hospital and under sedation, the father was told.

"It hit him hard," Dr. Richard said.

"But he said that we would

just have to carry on, that's all," he added.

Dr. Sam's father felt the "cards were stacked against him" from the start, the brother reported.

The defendant's mother, also bedridden in the hospital recovering from the effects of a cerebral stroke induced by strain and anxiety, was informed of the verdict by Dorothy.

She wept at the news.



GUILFORD R. BROWN, an uncle by marriage of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, was a courtroom roofer for the murder defendant.



MRS. MARY BROWN, only sister of the late mother of Mrs. Marilyn Sheppard, was a witness for the defense.