7-15-1954

Supplementary Offense Report, July 19th, 1954, Bay Village Police Department, Jessie Dill Interview at Painesville

Patrolman Fred Drenkhan
Bay Village Police Department

Sergeant Jay Hubach
Bay Village Police Department

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The following is the statement of Jessie Dill, White, Female, Age 23, residing at 948 North State St., Painesville, Ohio, pertaining to the homicide of Marilyn Sheppard.

I met Mrs. Sheppard on a Monday or Tuesday. Date uncertain, but it was on the week of June 13. On the beach of Fairport Harbor, Ohio, in early afternoon before 4 p.m., Mrs. Sheppard began a conversation by asking me where I bought my Coca Cola. My girl friend and I were sitting on the beach drinking Coca Cola. My girl friend's name is Ann Beckwith, same address, lower floor. I told her the place was on the beach. And pointed out one of them to her. She thanked me, stating that she thought the place was closed, because the screened window was shut, and no one was there. While we were talking, my daughter came up from the water. And asked me to watch her go under. My girl and boy were both in the water. They were diving under. Mrs. Sheppard stated that she thought it was nice how the children were diving under. And asked me if I taught them. I told her no, my Brother's children taught them. She stated to me then that she had a little boy and asked me how old my children were. I explained to her that my daughter's name was Grace, 6 years old, and my boy's name was Max, 4 years old. Because she thought they were twins. Then she told me that her boy's name was Chip, that he was 6, too, but larger than my girl. At this point my son shooed a bit on the water and my girl cried out that he was sick. She thought that he was having another attack from his heart condition. He has an enlarged heart. She has been around when he has been caught short of breath. I told her not to worry, that he has just swallowed some water, and would be all right. Mrs. Sheppard was puzzled because Gracie had said he is going to die. I explained to her that she just gets excited when he chokes. I explained to her that after he was released from the hospital when we first heard of his condition that I had contacted my own local doctor, about Max, and decided to wait for reexamination, before future treatment. Mrs. Sheppard stated that her husband was a doctor. But not that kind. However, he would be able to advise me whom to contact. I asked her for her name but she said she would rather not tell me now. I started to return to my girl friend's blanket when she told me that she wanted to talk to me. She appeared interested in my little boy, and held him on her lap. During the conversation I mentioned that Max had been in the hospital. At this point my daughter said that she had been in the hospital, too. Then Mrs. Sheppard said to her what for, honey. I interrupted, and told her that my daughter did not remember being there, but had only heard me talk about it. Because when she was born we had trouble with her feet. She asked me what kind of trouble. And I explained the condition of them to her. And told her that we took her to Elyria Crippled Children's Hospital when she was between 3 and 6 weeks old. Talking about my children's condition made her state that we all think we have trouble until we meet someone else who has a little more. I told her that I didn't think they were troubles now but they seemed like big ones when the children were babies. Because of her statement I asked what is the matter, are you in trouble or something? I can't remember her reply to that. She asked me what the boy's father thought of his condition. And said she bet he was the apple of his daddy's eye. Because he sure was cute. I told her my husband and I were divorced. She asked me why we were divorced.
I told her that I found out my husband was dating another girl, and that he had started drinking, giving her the particulars of the matter. Then she stated to me that her trouble was of the same nature and in turn told me about it. She said her trouble started in California although she was flirtatious even before they were married. The name she mentioned to me were Dolly, whom her husband had bought a present for. She found out about her because she found a receipt from a jewelry store, where a pin or ring had been bought. Confronting him with receipt she asked him what it was. He was evasive. So she went to the jewelry store and found out. It was a gift that he had purchased and had had sent to Dolly. Her last name was not stated. Another woman she mentioned was (this woman's name was mentioned first), a girl he liked at the hospital. The third party that she mentioned was either a Mrs. Huddleston or Hudston ton, I don't recall which one, but something like that. I gathered that this woman was married, because she stated that married women that chased other women's husbands gripped her and she couldn't understand why one man wasn't enough for them at one time. Then I asked her if he was going with a married woman and she said these Huddlestons were always in her hair. She said all her troubles started out there, in California. She was thinking of getting a divorce but they talked her out of it. I don't know who they were. They told her that he was just "sowing his wild oats." And that he would settle down and that she should think of the baby. So she forgot about it, and said to this day she did not know if she had done the right thing or not. Because sometimes she thinks it would have saved her a lot of trouble now. I asked her what her trouble was now. She said that she was 4 months pregnant now. I said she did not look it. She said she had been running around for the last 9 months with another man. And that this man wanted her to marry him. She didn't know whether to or not because if she did, by the time she got her divorce she would be married only a month by the time the baby was born. And then the children would have different names. But if she stayed married they would have the same names. At this point I advised her to talk to her husband. She just said no, that I didn't understand, but that she couldn't do that. Then I told her that when I had my trouble the Family Service Counselor was suggested to me, and told her to talk to them. She said no, she couldn't because they take down names, and keep records of everything. I suggested that she forget the past, these other women and go on from there. Then she said she couldn't because he was up to the same thing again. So I said why not go to a lawyer. He declined for the same reasons. I suggested that she visit my attorney, as he was far away from Cleveland. She seemed undecided about going to him as she didn't know him. I partially convinced her that she could trust him. She half-way consented to go if I went with her. She still seemed nervous and up set, and wanted to talk with someone. So I suggested that my minister lived at the top of the hill and he was nice in my case, and would advise her in her, and told her I would go with her. She said I'm going to talk to Arnold about it, and she would let me know in a few days. I asked her who Arnold was, and she said a good friend. And I asked her why she didn't tell me her name. She said last, not now. I explained to her the hardships of being divorced, the problem of making ends meet, and paying bills. She told me she wasn't worried about that.
She said that I should believe that she was really coming back out and asked how to get in touch with me. I told her I worked at the restaurant at the top of the hill, she could get me there in the afternoon, and that I lived in Painesville. She asked for my address, and I wrote it for her and gave it to her, on a pink scrap of paper. She said she would come out and pick me up some day, we'll have lunch at her house, and then go swimming, and let the children play together. I said I wanted to speak to another girl, we said goodbye, and I went to talk to that girl. When I noticed later, she was gone.

Q. How did you know this was Mrs. Marilyn Sheppard?
A. I didn't know because I asked her 4 or 5 times, and she wouldn't tell me. But when I read the paper Friday, July 9, and noticed the boy's name, and that the woman's husband was a doctor, I assumed it. Later I saw her picture in the paper, although her hair seemed shorter, and her face thinner than the newspaper picture of the Cleveland Press July 10, I recognized her to be the same woman I was talking to.

Q. Did this woman state at any time what kind of doctor her husband was?
A. No.

Q. How did you know this woman lived in Cleveland?
A. She stated to me that she had been invited to the Mardi Gras and asked when it was, I asked her where she was from. She said the other side of Cleveland.

Q. Would you describe this woman that you met and talked to at Fairport Harbor on the beach?
A. She was about 5'4½" or so tall. Weighed about 130 or 135. She had nicely shaped legs. They weren't fat. She had a scratch on the outer side of the top of her right foot. Her hair was medium brown. She wore a printed head scarf. A white tailored short-sleeved blouse. Navy blue skirt. Beige brown shoes. Her handbag that she had her wallet in was about the same color as her shoes. The blanket we sat on was dark green, with red and green stripes on either end. A box-type octagon shaped purse, of black patent leather, was sitting on the blanket. No one came near us all the time we were sitting there. The wallet was green, had a picture of her son in it. His hair was short, looked like he had cut part of it off himself, on one side. The nail on her little finger of her right hand was born partially off. She cried frequently during the latter part of the conversation, and appeared upset and nervous. My first impression of her was that she might be drinking. But as I sat beside her on the blanket I could not smell anything on her.

Q. Did she at any time tell you she was waiting for anyone or did anyone appear while you were with her?
A. No.

Q. Did this woman say anything else about any men that you would like to add to this statement?
A. She gave me the impression that they were a bunch of rats and she wouldn't trust any of them. By telling me of a friend of her husband's who invited himself to their house and stayed every once in a while. She said she just couldn't stand his type of a man. His type being cocky, thinking himself good-looking and conceited.
This man while visiting at their home gave her the impression that he liked her too. She appeared disgusted with this man, stating that he thought he was a Don Juan or Casanova, although 42, thought he was 20, and chased after a girl about 15 or 16.

Q. Did she tell you this man's name?
A. I vaguely remember the name Frank and Halverson, but I can't tie them in any place.

Q. Approximately how long did you talk with this woman?
A. Approximately 1 hour to 1½ hours.

Q. Have you anything else to add to this statement?
A. Nothing, except I was wearing sun glasses at the time, and it may have made her hair look a little darker.

Q. Have you read the above statement and is it true?
A. Yes

Signed

Jesse Dill

Witness

Fred F. Fruchta

Taken by Ido
11:05 a.m. July 16, 1954
City Hall, Bay Village, Ohio