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57/07/18 Passes Lie Test in Sam Case

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Cleveland News, "57/07/18 Passes Lie Test in Sam Case" (1957). *All Articles*. 73.

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news 7-18-57

PASSES LIE TEST IN SAM CASE

Suspect To Take Another

Donald Wedler's confession that he clubbed a Greater Cleveland woman three years ago during a burglary is true as far as a lie detector test is concerned, but it is still uncertain whether he had anything to do with the murder of Marilyn Sheppard.

This was announced today by a lie detector expert, who charted Wedler's respiratory reactions in a three-hour examination at Deland, Fla., where he is being held as a fugitive robber from a Florida labor camp.

Alex Gregory, the expert employed by the Court of Last Resort, a magazine promotion, said, however, he wanted to subject the 22-year-old Wedler to another polygraph test before making a final evaluation.

Sheppards Belittled Tests

Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, serving a life term for the bludgeon murder of his wife in their Bay Village home July 4, 1954, and members of his family refused lie tests during investigation of the crime on the grounds that they were worthless and illegal.

Two brothers of the convicted husband, Drs. Stephen and Richard Sheppard, and their wives, recently took polygraph tests in Chicago given by Gregory who announced they, too, had told the complete truth.

Dr. Stephen Sheppard said he would fly to Florida tomorrow because Wedler's confession "may be the means of finally freeing his brother from the Ohio Penitentiary. He has always maintained his faith in Dr. Sam's innocence.

Latest of Several Admissions

Wedler's "confession" is the latest of several admissions to the Cleveland crime made usually by mentally deranged persons who wanted to get into the spotlight of a celebrated homicide. All other confessions were proven false.

After the first lie test, Gregory said "In no place in the examination did Wedler tell a n y t h i n g except the truth.

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Suspect Passes Lie Test

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However, I am not satisfied one way or the other right now. This is too serious a case to jump to a hasty conclusion."

Herman Lewis a publicity man for the National Broadcasting Co., and for the Court of Last Resort, said Gregory had wired his findings to Erle Stanley Gardner, mystery story

writer who is head of the court, and that Gardner from California had informed Gov. C. William O'Neill in Columbus of the development.

Sheriff Watches Test

Wedler was given the test in the presence of Sheriff Rodney B. Thursby of Volusia County, and Park Street, the Court's legal advisor. The

sheriff said later he would "have no statement until something conclusive develops."

Wedler said he remembered being in Cleveland early in July, 1954, stealing a car, obtaining some narcotics and driving to a suburban home. There, he saw a man sleeping on a downstairs couch (Dr. Sam claimed he slept there during the murder) and a sleeping woman upstairs.

Wedler said the woman awoke while he was ransacking her bedroom and that he struck her once with an iron pipe.

Weapon Never Found

Marilyn Sheppard was viciously clubbed 35 times about the head and face with a semi-sharp instrument which has never been found.

Sheriff Thursby said that Wedler told of the Cleveland assault on an unknown woman to "ease his conscience" and that "it could be that I killed Dr. Sheppard's wife."

The only other burglar-assault in Bay Village was reported by Miles Davis, 17, of 375 Kenilworth Road, who testified at Dr. Sam's trial that he grappled with a heavy-set, bushy haired man in his home in September, two months after the murder. No woman was in the house.

Wedler, a native of Washington, D.C., is awaiting trial for prison escape. He was serving 10 years for a robbery at Tampa.

Dr. Sam Sheppard testified at his trial that a "dark, bushy-haired man" murdered his wife and knocked him out during his escape from the house.

Wedler is a blond, 5 feet 11 inches tall, and weighs 160 pounds. Dr. Sam described his attacker as a big, heavy man taller than himself. He is 6 feet 3 inches tall.