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57/07/19 Pal Named in Confession is Phantom, Police Find

Cleveland Plain Dealer

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Pal Named in Confession Is Phantom, Police Find

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Cleveland homicide detectives spent yesterday afternoon trying to find the name, "Charlie Fremont," given in the statement of a youth who says he beat a woman here the same morning Marilyn Sheppard was murdered.

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Though they checked it by varying the spelling eight different ways, they could find no listing of such a name in the area.

It also was checked with Veterans Administration personnel because Charlie Fremont was a Marine Corps veteran and was receiving a pension for a kneecap injury, according to the youth.

Officials here and in Washington knew of no such person.

The name was mentioned in the statement of 22-year-old Donald Wedler to Sheriff Rodney Thursby at Deland, Fla. Cleveland police received the statement yesterday from the sheriff.

Erle Stanley Gardner's Court of Last Resort, whose experts are giving Wedler lie detector tests at Deland, reportedly wired Gov. C. William O'Neill asking permission to give Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard a similar test in the Ohio Penitentiary.

A similar request already has been turned down by Penitentiary Warden Ralph W. Alvis.

Wedler 'Passes' Test

Gov. O'Neill said he had only two telegrams from Gardner. These merely indicated that results of tests already made and others yet to be made at that time would be forwarded to the governor.

"I have nothing before me now that I would consider a request" (to test Dr. Sam), the governor said.

Police Chief Frank W. Story

termed Wedler's statement "highly improbable" after studying it.

Wedler told of hitchhiking from California and arriving in Cleveland on July 1 of 1954. He "bummed around" two or three days and stayed in an old apartment with Charlie Fremont.

Wedler said he stole a car, drove over a large bridge and up to a lake. There he began looking for a house to burglarize. He picked a white, two-story house, his statement continued.

Then he went in, went up the stairs and began ransacking drawers in a bedroom.

"A woman moved on the bed, and I hit her two or three times with the piece of 9-inch long pipe I had," he said.

He said he ran down the stairs, struggled with a man on the "landing," hit him with the pipe and ran out to the front, where the car was parked. He threw the pipe into the lake. Then he drove to Cleveland, changed his clothes and hitchhiked to a town 50 miles away, he said.

Wedler said he thought he could find the pipe in the lake, but he could not find the home where he committed the supposed crime. He said the pipe was 1½ inches "through."

Besides discrepancies with the Sheppard case facts, Wedler's story was generally vague and his answers were ambiguous in Story's estimation.

"Just another pipe dream," remarked Homicide Chief David E. Kerr.

Gardner is to fly to Deland today to "look at this guy."

Gardner's lie detector expert, Alex Gregory, plans another test for Wedler today, the As-

sociated Press reported. Gregory said a long test yesterday showed Wedler told the truth about a Cleveland beating.

Trip Canceled

Dr. Stephen A. Sheppard, brother of the convicted wife murdered, and Fred W. Garmone, called off their trip to Deland.

"We're not going now," said Dr. Stephen. "When we heard that the Court of Last Resort was in it, we thought it best to stay away. We originally planned to go because we were getting no cooperation from the people up here."

On another tack, efforts failed to locate Ernest James Kolofolias, said by Lt. Gov. Paul M. Herbert to be a "mysterious hitchhiker" who may have taken a ride with the bushy-haired killer Dr. Sam mentioned.