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## 55/01/08 Sam Put Under 'Suicide Watch'

Cleveland Plain Dealer

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# SAM PUT UNDER 'SUICIDE WATCH'

*Sheppard Asks Court for Freedom on Bail*



MRS. ETHEL N. SHEPPARD, mother of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, shot herself to death yesterday.

**GOES IN SPECIAL CELL;  
MOTHER KILLS HERSELF  
WITH DR. STEVE'S GUN**

Osteopath Convicted of Murdering Wife Asks  
Sheriff's Permission to Attend Funeral; Court  
Order Necessary, Sweeney Says; Gunshot  
Barely Noticed as 'Chip' Plays

## BY JOHN G. BLAIR

Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard last night was placed in a closely watched County Jail observation cell following the tragic suicide of his mother, Mrs. Ethel Niles Sheppard.

Overriding Dr. Sam's objections, Sheriff Joseph M. Sweeney ordered the convicted Bay Village osteopath transferred to the observation cell, under constant surveillance.

Request to attend the funeral of his mother, who shot herself to death yesterday morning, was made by Dr. Sam to the sheriff.

Sheriff Sweeney said a court order would be necessary.

Private services for Mrs. Sheppard will be Monday. Members of the family would not disclose the time or place of the funeral and burial.

William J. Corrigan, Dr. Sam's defense chief counsel, said he had not seen his client following the suicide. He said he had no plans to request permission for Dr. Sam to attend the funeral.

Reported by his family to have "broken down completely" when told how his mother shot herself through the head, Dr. Sam had regained his composure when he was transferred to the special cell.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Harvey G. Weitzel said Dr. Sam proclaimed his innocence of the July 4 murder of his wife, Marilyn, even as he grieved over his mother.

The handsome, white-haired 64-year-old mother of Dr. Sam was found dead on her bed at the home of another son, Dr. Stephen A. Sheppard, 19027 Inglewood Drive, Rocky River.

### Pistol in Hand

Her right hand clutching a 38-caliber Smith & Wesson revolver, Mrs. Sheppard was found lying on her back in the guest room of the house.

The bullet, which had entered her head at the base of the right ear, had emerged from the back of the head and was imbedded in a wall behind the bed. Four bullets remained in the five-chamber snub-nose gun.

A note was found in a check-book on a table near the front window of the room. In Mrs. Sheppard's careful handwriting, it read:

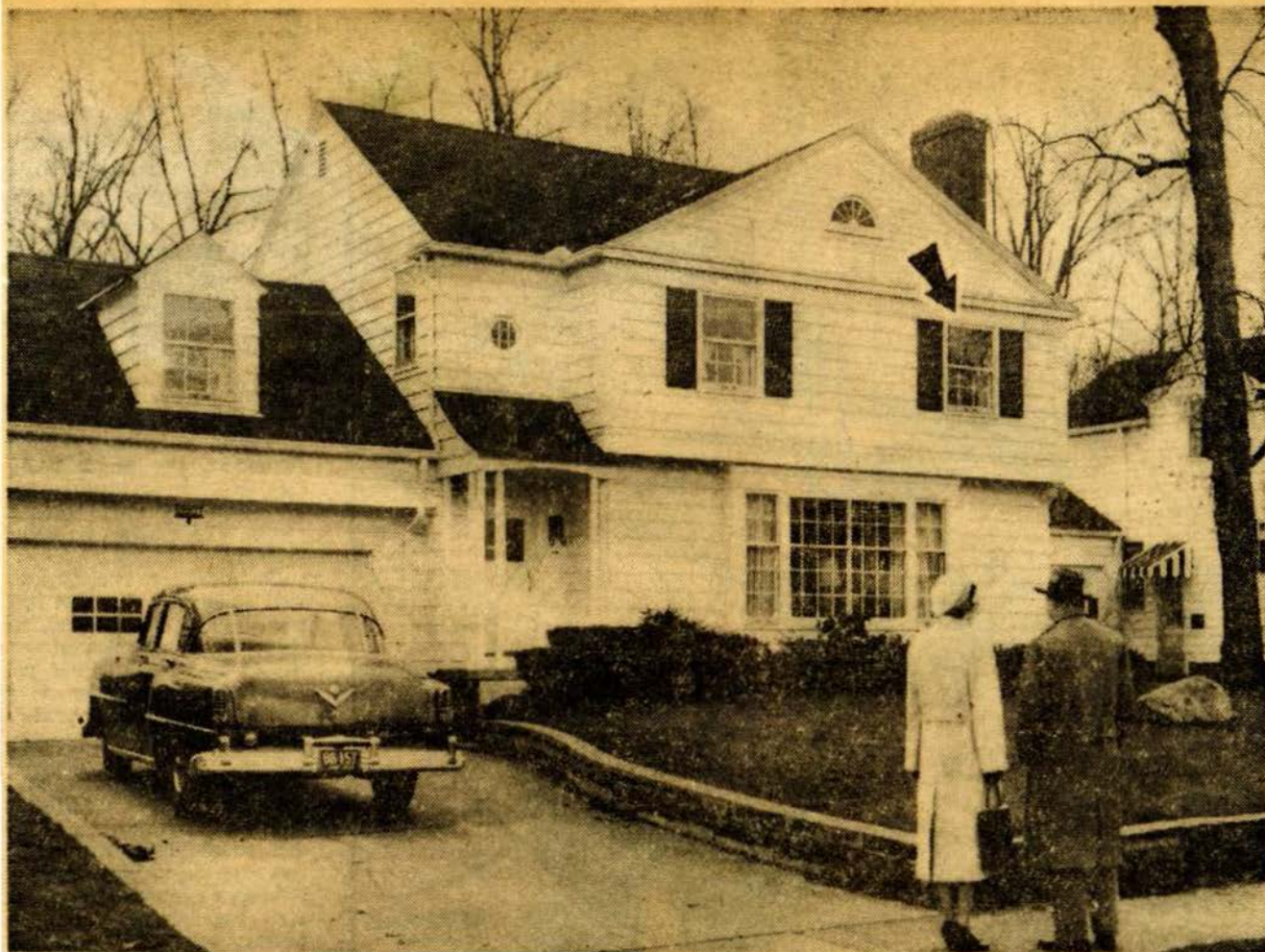
"Dear Steve—

"I can't manage without Dad—thanks for everything.

"Mother"

The letter was on Dr. Steve's personal stationery.

(Continued on Page 7, Column 2)



WORD of his wife's death was received by Dr. Richard A. Sheppard at Bay View Hospital, where he is a patient.

ROOM where Mrs. Ethel N. Sheppard committed suicide is indicated by arrow. This is the Rocky River home of Dr. Stephen A. Sheppard, a son, at 19027 Inglewood Drive.

# 'Suicide Guard' Put on Sam After Mother Kills Self

(Continued From First Page)

A paraffin test made by Dr. Samuel R. Gerber at the coroner's office showed that Mrs. Sheppard had fired the gun. There were powder burns where the bullet entered her head.

## Rules on Death

Dr. Gerber ruled the death a suicide.

Fears were expressed for the health of Dr. Richard A. Sheppard, husband of the dead woman. The elder Dr. Sheppard is in Bay View Hospital, suffering from pleurisy and complications.

Dr. Steve broke the news of his mother's death to his father. Physicians kept a close watch on the father because of his weakened condition.

Dr. Richard N. Sheppard, eldest of the osteopath sons, said his father told him the family would "have to try to carry on." The couple had been married 39 years and had lived here 30 years.

"Mother was very proud," Dr. Richard, the son, said. "She had complete faith in Sam's innocence, but all of this was just too much for her."

## Cite Her Despondency

The family said Mrs. Sheppard's despondency had deepened after his conviction Dec. 21 for second-degree murder.

"She felt so helpless," Dr. Richard said. "She couldn't help Sam, and this was too much for her."

Mrs. Sheppard apparently had made physical gains since she suffered a cerebral stroke two months ago. She was in good spirits yesterday morning as she breakfasted with Dr. Steve, his wife, Betty, their two children, Janet, 9, and Leslie, 7, and young Chip Sheppard, 7. Chip, son of Dr. Sam and Marilyn, has lived with Dr. Steve since a few days after his mother's murder.

Dr. Steve left for Bay View Hospital to perform surgery about 10 a. m. Shortly afterward, Betty went shopping. The two girls had gone to school, but Chip remained home because of a cold.

## Maid Hears Noise

Mrs. Maggie Schumpert, 50, of 2169 E. 40th Street, a maid, was in the home with Chip and the elder Mrs. Sheppard. The mother had retired to the bedroom after Betty's departure.

Around 10:30, Mrs. Schumpert said, she heard a noise while she was in the basement laundry room.

"I thought it was Chip making noises with some boxes he was playing with in the kitchen," Mrs. Schumpert said. "I hollered to him to be quieter, but he said he hadn't made any noise."

A few minutes later Mrs.

Schumpert answered a telephone call from Mrs. Julianna Crabtree, a niece of the dead woman. Mrs. Crabtree wanted to talk to Mrs. Sheppard. The maid went up to the bedroom and knocked, but received no response.

## Finds Doors Locked

The maid told the caller Mrs. Sheppard apparently was asleep and to call back.

At 11:20 Betty Sheppard returned home from the grocery. When Janet Sheppard came home from school she was told to wake her grandmother for lunch, but she found the bedroom door locked.

Betty ran upstairs and obtained a key. Opening the door, she saw her mother-in-law lying on her back across the maple four-poster bed, her arms outstretched and her legs hanging over the edge of the bed. Mrs. Sheppard had on a gray dress.

The gun belonged to Dr. Steve and had been taken from a dresser drawer in his bedroom.

Closing the door, Betty telephoned Dr. Steve at Bay View. He rushed home and called Rocky River police after determining his mother was dead.

Police Lieut. C. A. Woods said he received the call at 12:35 p. m.

## Reports Suicide

"This is Dr. Steve Sheppard, we've had a suicide up here," Lieut. Woods quoted the osteopath.

Woods, accompanied by Patrolmen Richard Byers and George Jindra, went to the house. Lieut. Woods said rigor mortis had set in. The body was removed to the coroner's office, where it was examined by Dr. Lester Adelson, deputy coroner, who pronounced Mrs. Sheppard dead on arrival at 2:10 p. m.

Young Chip was taken to the house of friends as were Dr. Steve's two girls. For the second time the boy had been the innocent victim of tragic circumstances. When his mother was bludgeoned to death on July 4, Chip slept through the murder in an adjacent bedroom. He was playing in the kitchen, apparently, when his grandmother shot herself.

The elder Mrs. Sheppard, throughout the months of ordeal, had been a quiet tower of spiritual strength to Dr. Sam and other members of the closely knit family.

Avoiding publicity, she nevertheless stood by her husband and sons during the days of near hysteria following the murder of Marilyn.

She saw her son Sam led away in handcuffs from her comfortable lake-front home, 23048 West Lake Road, to be arraigned on the murder charge



GRIEF STRICKEN, Dr. Richard N. Sheppard and his wife, Dorothy, leave County Jail after telling Dr. Sam that his mother had killed herself.

July 30. When Dr. Sam was released on bail Aug. 16 for a few hours he went to her home, and his mother was waiting with open arms on the front porch.

But Mrs. Sheppard never visited Dr. Sam at jail. The family said he did not want her to see him in the surroundings. Then the stroke and ill health confined her to the hospital and home.

## Sent Sam Tracts

On several occasions Dr. Sam talked by telephone with his mother. She sent him religious tracts to read. The leaflet titled "The Achievement of Poise," which Dr. Sam read in the long trial, was from his mother.

Mrs. Sheppard met her husband in her home town of Paris, Ill. Rev. Richard D. Sheppard, a Methodist minister, was preaching there and Ethel Leah Niles was courted by Richard A. Sheppard, the minister's son.

Before her marriage Mrs. Sheppard taught school at Paris. She was graduated from Hanover College in 1912. She and Dr. Sheppard moved to Upper Sandusky, where the father of Dr. Sam practiced before coming here.

In the days Dr. Sheppard was building up his practice, his wife aided him. She laundered linens from the Sheppards' first hospital here.

She was active in guild activities at Bay View and also in the Alpha Delta Pi Alumnae Association here.



SNUB-NOSED REVOLVER used by Mrs. Sheppard to kill

herself is held by Coroner Samuel R. Gerber. A note left

by Mrs. Sheppard is in the envelope held by Dr. Gerber.