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54/07/15 Probes Tale Of Plot In Sheppard Murder

Cleveland Plain Dealer

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PROBES TALE OF PLOT IN SHEPPARD MURDER

Prosecutor's Aide Confronts Caller in Baltimore

(Photos on Picture Page)

BY JOHN G. BLAIR
AND PAT GARLING



GEORGE W. ENNIS



THOMAS J. PARRINO

QUESTIONED in connection with the Sheppard murder case in Baltimore, where he was picked up by police, was Ennis. Assistant County Prosecutor Parrino flew there to quiz Ennis.

George W. Ennis, 36, on probation on an embezzlement charge here, late yesterday was arrested by Baltimore police for questioning in connection with the murder of Marilyn Sheppard.

Baltimore police acted after Ennis had telephoned the Plain Dealer using a fictitious name and told a fantastic story about a murder plot.

Assistant County Prosecutor Thomas J. Parrino began questioning Ennis at midnight after flying to Baltimore.

Parrino said Detective Lieut. Gordon Mintiehs had told him that Ennis had changed his story several times under questioning.

Ennis, alias Patrick O'Brien McGinty, was picked up as he walked along St. Paul Street in downtown Baltimore.

Dictates Questions

A few minutes earlier he had told Plain Dealer reporters a story of intrigue which led to the brutal chopping to death of the pretty wife of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, Bay Village osteopath.

Shown a Bertillon photograph of Ennis by Plain Dealer Reporter Robert J. Drake, Dr. Sheppard said: "The face looks strangely familiar."

He added that Ennis' name was "vaguely familiar."

The startling development came soon after the recovery of a stained, ripped T-shirt from Lake Erie. The shirt resembled one which was worn by Dr. Sheppard the night of his wife's murder but which was missing when Dr. Sheppard was found on the living room floor of their home, 28924 West Lake Road, Bay Village.

Tests "Inconclusive"

Bay Village Patrolman Cy Lipaj discovered the tattered garment, ripped from top to bottom. The shirt was snagged on wire reinforcing of the concrete pier behind the home of Mr. and Mrs. Karl R. Schuele, 28944 West Lake, immediately next door to the Sheppards.

Coroner Samuel R. Gerber had tests made to determine if the stains were blood. Medical Technician Mary E. Cowan said first tests were "inconclusive." She said there "was not enough there to interpret." The garment will be submitted to further soaking and tests to determine if there is blood on it.

The investigation took a new tangent with Ennis' collect phone call to the Plain Dealer. The call was received at 2:25 p. m.

Held on Phone

Using the name George Harrison, he told the Plain Dealer about a plot.

While the reporter held Ennis on the phone, Baltimore police were telephoned and asked to pick up the caller, who said he was telephoning from a drug-store at Mount Royal and St. Paul Streets, Baltimore.

Baltimore police said they had to have a request from Cleveland authorities before they would

(Continued on Page 4, Column 5)

THURSDAY, JULY 15, 1954

Tale of Sheppard Murder Plot Probed in Baltimore

(Continued From First Page)

act. Assistant County Prosecutor John J. Mahon was notified as Ennis repeated his fantastic tale. Baltimore police were then called by Detective Chief James E. McArthur.

Learns His Direction

By this time Ennis had hung up. The Plain Dealer learned he had telephoned from a gasoline station and was walking south on St. Paul. This information led to his being picked up.

Taken to Baltimore police headquarters, Ennis was questioned by Inspector George J. Murphy, head of the Baltimore detective bureau, and Capt. Mintons.

Ennis at first denied he had telephoned the Plain Dealer, but soon changed his story and admitted he was the "George Harrison" who had called.

He then denied knowledge of the plot he had detailed to reporters and said he knew nothing of the Sheppard murder.

Admits Drinking

However, it was brought out that he had been here on July 4—the day Mrs. Sheppard was hacked to death by 25 savage blows in the face and head.

Ennis told detectives that he had been drinking and "wanted to be a big shot," so he had called the Plain Dealer.

Ennis was questioned until 5:30 p. m. and then booked for violation of probation and held for Cleveland authorities.

Described as a "floater," he is on probation until Nov. 5, 1955, on condition that he does not drink and makes restitution of money taken here last fall.

Pleaded Guilty

He pleaded guilty before Common Pleas Judge Earl R. Hoover last Nov. 5 on a charge of embezzling \$370.18 from the Spacarb Co. of Cleveland, beverage machine operators. He also was charged with grand larceny in taking \$67.25 from machines of the company.

Ennis was born in Salisbury, Md., and lived most of his life in Wilmington, Del., his record here shows.

In 1946 he was arrested on a traffic manslaughter charge in Wilmington, but the case was nolle.

Works as Electrician

After enlisting in the army in 1935, Ennis was absent without leave for a year. He was court-martialed and dishonorably discharged in September, 1938, his probation record shows.

Before coming here in June, 1953, Ennis was an electrician in Baltimore and Dundalk, Md. He worked here as an electrician for a month at the Aluminum Smelting & Refining Co., 5463 Dunham Road, Maple Heights.

Ennis said he was living in Phoenix, Md., and had come back to Maryland to marry his fiancée, who lives there.

His last known address here was 1670 W. 69th Street, probation records show. He moved from there in May.

Described as five feet eight inches tall, Ennis weighs 135 pounds, wears glasses and has false teeth. He has hazel eyes.

Has "Bushy Hair"

A Baltimore Evening Sun reporter, Lew Cedrone, described Ennis as having "bushy hair." "Cut short" was Cedrone's further description.

Ennis, when arrested, was

Doctor Offers Theory

Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard last night theorized that the slayer of his wife may have been a psychotic who had admired her from afar.

Talking to newsmen as he left the hospital, he suggested that the man may have seen her shopping each day. Then, for some reason, the psychotic decided she had to be killed.

wearing work pants and a white T-shirt.

Whether the T-shirt found in Lake Erie was Dr. Sheppard's was still undetermined.

Deputy Sheriff Carl A. Rossbach said the T-shirts in the Sheppards' laundry were marked "large." The T-shirt taken from the home, with the brand name "Lord Dorchester," also is "large."

The shirt found in the lake was marked "Large 42-44" and possibly could be Dr. Sheppard's, it was said.

Wife Bought Shirts

Dr. Sheppard himself said he could not be certain if he had any "large" T-shirts. He said that his wife took care of the buying and that when he wanted a clean shirt he opened a drawer and "there one was."

He was wearing his now-familiar leather collar, which supports his injured neck, and sunglasses when he came out of surgery at Bay View Hospital just before midnight. He had set the fractured wrists of William E. Morehouse, 9, of 31760 Walker Road, Avon Lake, who was injured when he fell from a tree.

Mahon said he was continuing his check on Dr. Sheppard's activities in California last March, when the doctor and his wife attended a medical convention in Los Angeles.

The prosecutor said he had talked to S. Ernest Roll, district attorney of Los Angeles County, and had asked him to question pretty Susan Hayes, former Bay View technician, again.

Explains Gift

Miss Hayes, 24, was questioned Tuesday by Roll about her friendship with Dr. Sheppard. She told Roll that she had received a gift of a wrist watch from Dr. Sheppard after she lost hers while attending a wedding in San Diego in Dr. Sheppard's company. Mrs. Sheppard was not along.

The Rocky River High School graduate said Dr. Sheppard had telephoned her and had asked her to go to the wedding. She said she did not know if Mrs. Sheppard knew about it at the time.

Later Mrs. Sheppard found out about the gift and was angry. Dr. Sheppard told investigators at a nine-hour quiz Saturday.

Roll also questioned Mrs. Dorothy Shabla, another former Bay View technician, with whom Miss Hayes lives at Downey, a suburb of Los Angeles. Both professed only casual friendship with the sports-car-loving doctor.

Finding of the T-shirt renewed hopes that the weapon used to hack Mrs. Sheppard to death might be recovered from the lake. Investigators have theorized that the waters behind the comfortable Sheppard home offered the slayer the best hiding place for the weapon.

Search of the lake farther out was directed by Police Chief John P. Eaton of Bay Village.