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54/08/20 Sent Sheppards Extortion Notes, Lett Confesses

Cleveland Plain Dealer

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Man Captured in Attempt on Kay Halle Says He Mailed Two Letters to Dr. Richard, Two to Another Bay Resident

Five extortion notes, one to Miss Kay M. Halle, two to a brother of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard and two to a Bay Village butter and egg man, were mailed to the intended victims by James Howard Lett, Cleveland Heights police reported last night.

Detective Capt. Charles Ruff of the Heights suburb said Lett's admissions relating to the Sheppards were substantiated by Dr. Richard N. Sheppard, eldest brother of the Bay Village murder suspect.

Dr. Sheppard recalled receiving two letters in the first week of August in which requests were made for sums totaling $25,000. Capt. Ruff said.

The letters "requested" a $10,000 advance. Instructions were to have been sent later detailing how the money was to be paid over.

After the $10,000 was paid, the letter writer said, he would come forward and make his identity known, at which time he would accept $15,000 more and responsibility for the death of Marilyn Reese Sheppard.

Dr. Richard told Capt. Ruff he could not recall whether he had destroyed the letters or turned them over to Attorney William J. Corrigan.

Mrs. Dorothy Sheppard, the doctor's wife, observed that Lett's photograph bore a likeness to a suspect sketched from a description of a man walking through the area of the murder given by a Sheffield Lakes couple.

Capt. Ruff said Lett also told of addressing two demands for $10,000 to Harry II. Schuster, operator of a butter-and-egg stand at the West Side Market.

Schuster never received the letters. Lett addressed the threats, similar to those received by Miss Halle, to 11000-11005 Earle Avenue N.E., the former home of Harry Schuster, a displaced person recently arrived here from the old country.

Ruff ascertained the threats had been intended for the butter and egg man when Lett related that he knew Schuster to be operator of the stand at the market and had often made purchases there. Schuster lives at 356 Pinewood Drive, Bay Village, a street diagonally across from the home of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard.

Instead, the threat was received by the Schuster formerly of Earle Avenue. The letter was forwarded to him by the post office to his new address, 11402 Tremblett Avenue N.E.

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**Comparing Notes are both allies Kay Halle (right) and Anna Richman, wearing the blond wig used to help trap extortionist. Miss Richards is a Halle store detective.**

**Strangely, heavy-set man who walks carried through their threats.** There was an advertisement placed in the Plain Dealer.

**Sgt. Charles W. Bythway and Detective George Vance, colleagues said the extortionist's message are Cleveland Heights Detective Capt. Charles L. Ruff (left) and Roger Williams, chief of Halle Bros. Co. store detectives.**

**To schedule for Lett and his woman companion today at Central Police Station may shed light on whether Lett conducted his extortion operations alone. FBI agents visited Cleveland Heights to examine the four-page threat letter received by Miss Halle.**

**Ruff said he had not yet concluded the Heights prosecutor to determine whether Lett should be charged with extortion in the suburb or turned over to federal men for prosecution under statutes governing use of the mails.**

**Text of Letter**

Lett, a 37-year-old machinist captured Wednesday night in a trap set by Heights police, Miss Nina Nelson, secretary to Heights City Manager Ray Mar- tin, and Miss Anna Richman, 23-year-old Halle Bros. Co. house detective, admitted writing the following letter to Miss Halle,

> "We have plenty of bombs."

In what we use to get this pay off, you will be watched day and night every where you go on all phone calls you make will be recorded. If you make any moves we will know of it within the hour. Then you leave we no other option and we will go to work. Please do not make anything to change this, you make and if you double cross us we will know of it within. Then you leave we no other option and we will go to work. Please do not make anything to change this."

> What we say comes true."

This note and all other written material to be returned with money when you have money for pay off you will take it to 205 Harcourt Drive and you will remain at home."

When you have done this then put ad in your personal column of Cleveland Plain Dealer as follows John Baby is very sick, come home, All is forgiven."

> Kay Jr.

When you see this ad we will know as well as in touch with you."

In what we say comes true."

"When we see this note, we will know as well as in touch with you."

**We have plenty of bombs.** was one of the threats contained in the letter received by Miss Halle. Reading the extortionist's message are Cleveland Heights Detective Capt. Charles L. Ruff (left) and Roger Williams, chief of Halle Bros. Co. store detectives.**