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4-27-1955

## 55/04/27 Killer signed name in blood

Cleveland Press

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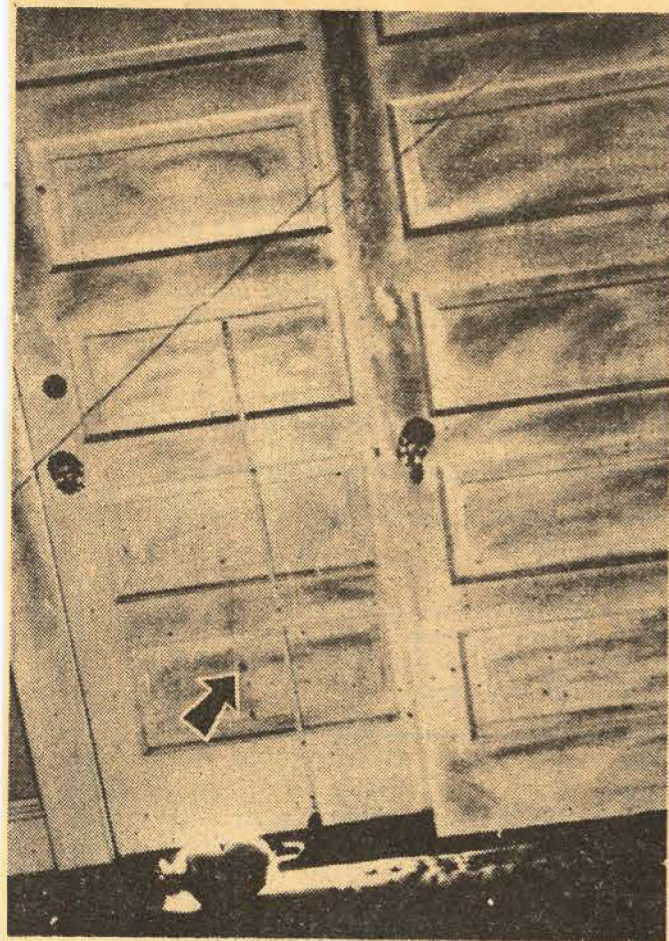
Cleveland Press, "55/04/27 Killer signed name in blood" (1955). *All Articles*. 608.

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# "KILLER SIGNED NAME IN BLOOD"



**ARROW POINTS** to blood splotch Prof. Kirk says came from the killer's hand.



**KILLER'S SIGNATURE** in blood is three-fourths of an inch wide, one inch high, says Prof. Kirk's report.

## Sam Claims He Has New Evidence

By **SAM GIAIMO** and **AL OSTROW**

The "real killer" of Marilyn Reese Sheppard left his "signature in blood" in her murder bedroom.

Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, under sentence to life imprisonment for his wife's July 4 murder, today offered this claim as "new evidence" in support of his plea for a new trial.

Dr. Sam was brought from his fourth-floor cell at the Criminal Courts Bldg. to hear this testimony presented to Common Pleas Judge Edward Blythin by his new scientific champion, Prof. Paul L. Kirk of the University of California.

Blythin was expected to take the new trial issue under advisement after giving prosecution experts an opportunity to attempt to contradict Kirk's findings.

Early arrivals among the spectators included Dr. Richard and Dr. Stephen Sheppard, the defendant's older brothers, and Mrs. Henrietta Munn, aunt of the murdered Marilyn.

As the hearing opened, Dr. Sam smiled at his relatives and friends, and listened to a discussion by his attorneys over whether Kirk's findings would be submitted in the form of his prepared affidavit, or in witness stand testimony.

Kirk's claim was that his investigation in the murder home at 28924 Lake Rd., Bay Village, and tests in his laboratory at Berkeley, Calif., definitely proved that:

A **FINGER** of the "real killer" was bitten by Mrs. Sheppard as she fought for her life against a rain of savage blows—probably administered by a flashlight.

**BLOOD** from the bitten finger dripped in the murder bedroom—and at least one large

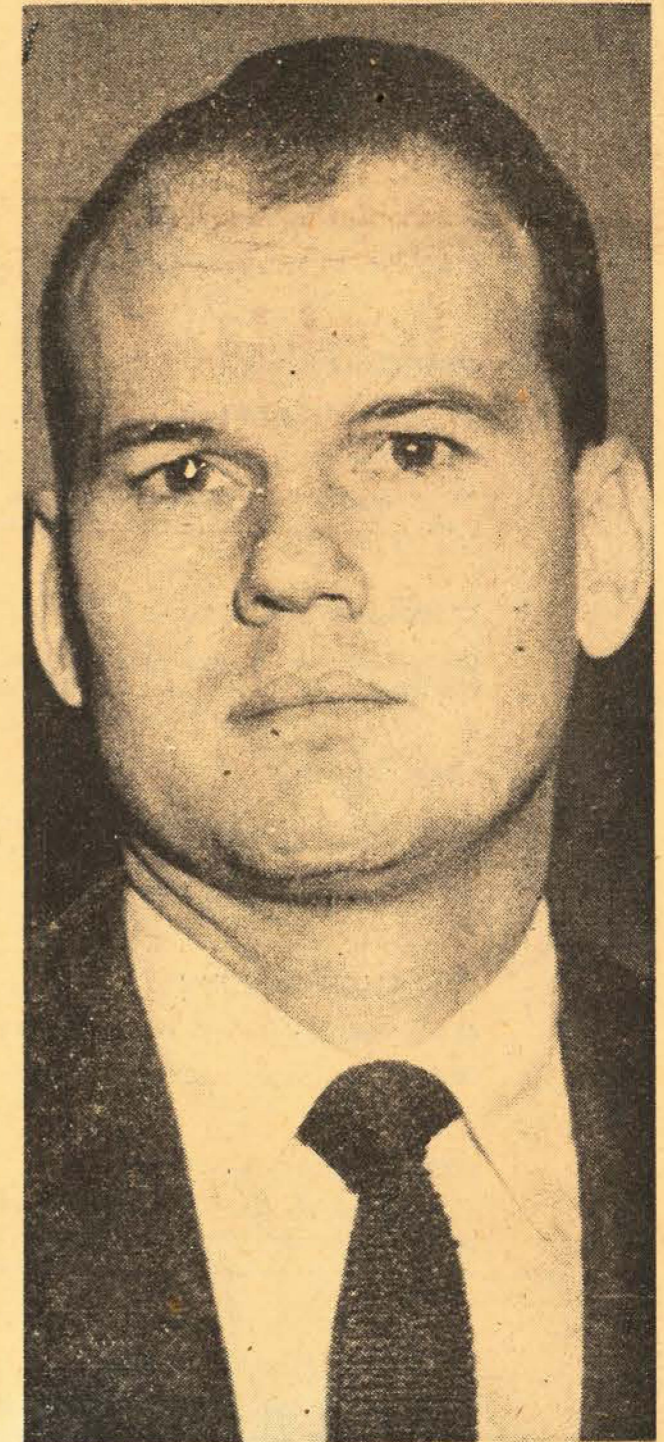
blood spot on the wardrobe door came from the slayer's wound, rather than the victim or her husband.

**THE MURDERER** was left-handed, and apparently acquainted with the family and probably "jealous of their athletic tendencies and abilities," as indicated by his smashing of Sam and Marilyn's trophies.

Assistant Prosecutor Saul S. Danaceau contended that Kirk must present "new facts, not mere interpretations and opinions," to support successfully Dr. Sam's entitlement to a retrial on the basis of "newly discovered evidence not available at the time of the original trial."

Danaceau had his own corps of experts on hand.

They included Dr. Alan R. Moritz, Western Reserve University professor of pathology, who won international fame as



**DR. SAM SHEPPARD** today staked his bid for freedom on his "Crime Professor's" report.

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# Killer Signed Name in Blood, Sam Argues

(Continued From Page One)

a laboratory investigator of crime at Harvard University.

Also back-stopping the prosecution were Coroner Samuel R. Gerber, Deputy Inspector James McArthur, and the staff of the Cleveland Crime Laboratory.

Chief Defense Counsel William J. Corrigan staked his present bid for a new trial on the affidavit and testimony of the gray-mustached, pipe-smoking California professor.

Should Blythin, who presided at the 10-week trial which resulted in a second degree murder conviction, refuse to set aside the jury's verdict, Dr. Sam has another appeal pending before the Court of Appeals. A hearing on this appeal is set for May 23 at Lakeside Courthouse.

Kirk conceded that he had been hired by the defense to make his investigation, and was receiving a fee for his testimony.

## "Entirely Objective"

However, he said, it was "with the specific understanding" that his inquiry would be "entirely objective, and his determination would be without bias or prejudice . . . that his investigation, examination and research would be strictly impersonal, and that the facts would be reported exactly as he found them to be."

Kirk contended that the Cleveland Police Department failed to investigate properly evidence available immediately after the murder, and apparently constructed "a fabric of errors of omission, commission or both."

He termed the prosecution evidence "superficial, incomplete and erroneous in interpretation."

The "most significant evidence" improperly assessed by the prosecution, Kirk contended, was "the blood distribution in the murder room."

## Killer Left-Handed?

Pattern of the blood spots on the walls and doors, he said, showed that the killer was left-handed (Dr. Sam is right-handed).

At least one large blood spot, "unique in size and appearance," on the wardrobe door definitely came from the killer's bitten hand, Kirk said.

"It measured about one inch in diameter at its largest dimension," he related. "It was essentially round, showed no beading. . . . This spot could not have come from impact splatter.

"It is highly improbable that it could have been thrown off a weapon, since so much blood would not have adhered during the back swing for so long a distance, and then separated suddenly at just the right moment to deposit as it did.

"This spot requires an explanation different from the majority of spots on the doors. It almost certainly came from a bleeding hand, and most probably occurred at a time different than the time the hand was wielding a weapon.

"The bleeding hand could only have belonged to the attacker."

## Sam Not Wounded

There were no wounds noted on Dr. Sam's hands on the morning of July 4.

Kirk said his conclusions were "not pure speculation, but a reasoned approach to the established facts."

"It must represent at least a close approximation to the truth," he said.

Kirk said the disturbed position of Mrs. Sheppard's bedclothes "substantiates the idea that the crime started as a sex attack, rather than as a murder."

He intimated that Bay Village police might have caught the "real killer" on the murder morning if they had made a more thorough investigation of physical evidence in the death room.