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55/01/08 Elder Sheppard In Serious State

Cleveland News

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Elder Sheppard

News 1-8-53 City Ed.

In Serious State

Dr. Richard A. Sheppard Sr. was reported in "near critical" condition today at Bay View Hospital where he is suffering from a lung infection and grieving over the suicide of his wife.

The elder Sheppard's sons, Drs. Stephen and Richard A., were at his bedside, watching his temperature and pulse, expressing fears that his pleurisy condition may develop into pneumonia.

A third son, Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, is under suicide guard in a solitary observation cell at County Jail, under life sentence for the July 4 murder of his wife, Marilyn.

Dr. Steve broke the tragic news of his mother's suicide to his father.

Takes Tragic News Hard

"Father took her death very hard," said Dr. Richard in an

interview with News Reporter John Borkowski. "His first words were, 'Well, she is peaceful now. She is now able to rest.' "

Mrs. Ethel N. Sheppard, 65, shot and killed herself in a guest bedroom at the home of Dr. Steve in Rocky River shortly before noon yesterday. The weapon used was a .38 caliber snub-nose revolver belonging to her son. In a note, the white-haired, dignified and motherly woman wrote:

"Dear Steve. I can't manage without Dad. Thanks for everything. Mother."

Coroner Samuel R. Gerber officially ruled her death a suicide.

Dr. Sam Breaks Down

Dr. Sam learned of the tragedy from his brothers who spent 45 minutes with him in his fourth floor cell. He completely broke down, but recovered his composure.

Continued on Page 3, Column 6

news 1-8-55
Father City
In Serious Condition

Continued From Page 1.

ure later in the evening.

Jail deputies reported that Dr. Sam read a pocket size novel and Sunday newspaper supplement until 3 this morning, then he went to sleep. He was awakened at this morning for the usual jail breakfast of cereal, bread, milk and coffee. Then he slept again.

In the interview with News Reporter Borkowski, Dr. Richard N. Sheppard said:

"Mother believed 100 per cent that Sam was not guilty of murdering Marilyn. There was never any suspicion of guilt in her mind. She was never her old carefree self since the day the police barged into her home and took Dr. Sam, her baby, away from her. She always carried with her the sight of the officers placing handcuffs on her son.

Took Jury Verdict Hard

"Our mother took the final decision of the jury very hard. I tried to tell her during the trial that justice would prevail—The court's decision created a final shock to her emotional condition. She just couldn't take it."

"My mother's suicide in no way indicates to my mind that Dr. Sam was guilty of murdering his wife."

Speaking of his father's condition, Dr. Richard said:

"Dad is in fair condition at best with a lung condition and fluid accumulating in the left portion of his chest. He is near being on the critical list. I am afraid for him."

Bay View Hospital reported at noon that Dr. Richard Sr., spent a "restless night, with very little sleep. His condition is fair."

Dr. Richard said that his parents were childhood sweethearts and attended high school together in Paris, Ill. They were married 39 years ago.

"Our family will make an attempt, we hope will be fruitful, to have Dr. Sam join us in private funeral ceremonies for mother at 3 p. m. Monday," said Dr. Richard.

Cemetery to be Chosen

The funeral will be held from the Saxton Funeral Home, 13215 Detroit Ave., Lakewood. The family has not yet selected a cemetery.

Mrs. Marilyn Sheppard was buried in a mausoleum in Knollwood Cemetery.

Dr. Sam asked Sheriff Joseph Sweeney for permission to attend the funeral of his mother. He was told that only Common Pleas Judge Edward Blythin, before whom the murder trial was held, could grant the request.

Chief Defense Counsel William J. Corrigan said he had not yet decided whether to seek permission for the jail prisoner to attend the funeral.

Trial Motion Withdrawn

Almost at the moment that his mother was taking her own life at Dr. Steve's home, 19027 Inglewood Dr., Rocky River Dr., Sam's attorneys appeared before Judge Blythin and withdrew a motion for a new trial on the grounds of newly discovered evidence.

In giving up the new trial fight, the attorneys went to the Court of Appeals and asked that bond be set for Dr. Sam pending further appeal from the second degree murder conviction. Hearing on the bond was set for Jan. 17.

Dr. Sam was in a cell block with several other prisoners when he was told that his mother had committed suicide. He protested to Sheriff Sweeney when he was later removed to the "observation" cell and placed under a 24-hour guard.

The senior Dr. Sheppard has been hospitalized since Dec. 20, the day before the jury brought in their guilty verdict against Dr. Sam.



Dr. and Mrs. Richard A. Sheppard at the inquest