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1-8-1955

55/01/08 Pastor Tells of Talk With Mrs. Sheppard

Cleveland News

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Cleveland News, "55/01/08 Pastor Tells of Talk With Mrs. Sheppard" (1955). *All Articles*. 646.

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Pastor Tells of Talk With Mrs. Sheppard

Mrs. Ethel Sheppard, distinguished-looking mother of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard, was "despondent" over her son's conviction and the possibility of another trial.

Mrs. Sheppard was visited on Monday by the Rev. Howard Brown, pastor of the Methodist Church of the Saviour, 2537 Lee Rd., Cleveland Heights, who offered her spiritual comfort and guidance.

"I found her very despondent," Mr. Brown said.

Expressed Her Anxiety

According to him she said that "the boys, of course, are going ahead with the case, but I don't think I could stand that again."

He said she spoke as though she were reliving the last three months. She said "those three months—I don't think I could stand that again."

The minister said he felt he left her "on a brighter note." He told her of sympathetic inquiries he had from her friends. He said "she never talked of suicide, but she must have been considering it then."

"She was not one to act in haste without much thought," the minister said.

Believed Son Innocent

Mrs. Sheppard also reiterated her faith in her youngest son's

innocence, he said, and repeated her belief that Dr. Sam was a victim of persecution.

The minister said both Mrs. Sheppard and her husband, Dr. Richard, have been active in his church, particularly in mission work.

Her husband whose personal comfort she had been lacking due to his illness was in Bay View Hospital at the time of her death. He has been a patient there since Dec. 20. She had never visited Dr. Sam at jail, although Dr. Richard Sr. had been a spectator in the Criminal Courts Bldg. during the jury impaneling and first days of the trial.

Mrs. Sheppard had been staying with Dr. Steve and her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Betty Sheppard over the Christmas holidays, and her own big white house next to Bay View Hospital had been closed up.

Chip Only One at Home

Dr. Sam's son, Chip, was the only member of the Sheppard family at home when the second tragedy struck. The seven-year-old boy, home from school because of a cold, found himself once again in a strange, solemn, ill-fated role. He had been sleeping in the bedroom next to his mother, Mrs. Marilyn Sheppard on July 4th, when she was bludgeoned to death.

Yesterday he had been playing with boxes in the basement and kitchen, and was scolded by the maid, Mrs. Maggie Schumpert for making too much noise. Neither one heard any sound of

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a gun discharging, the maid said.

The boy was taken to the home of friends, while his two cousins, Janet, 9 and Leslie, 7, returned to classes at a Rocky River school in the afternoon. They were whisked into their home at 19027 Inglewood Dr., Rocky River, by their father who had just returned from a visit with Dr. Sam.

House Attracts Sightseers

While Dr. Steve and his wife, and Dr. Richard and his wife, Mrs. Dorothy Sheppard, were breaking the news to Dr. Sam, the suicide home was the center of neighborhood attention. Traffic increased on Inglewood Dr. and a CTS training bus had difficulty threading its way between parked cars of newsmen, radio and television reporters.

William H. Corrigan, son of William J. Corrigan, was among those first on the scene. He left when his father and Fred W. Garmone, Dr. Sam's defense counsel, showed up and chased photographers and reporters from the house.

"Don't you have any decency left," Corrigan shouted.

The lawyers were joined by relatives of the dead woman and a minister. An osteopath from Bay View Hospital demanded that a photographer turn over his photo plates to him.