



CSU
College of Law Library

Cleveland State University
EngagedScholarship@CSU

[All Articles](#)

[Newspaper Coverage](#)

1-9-1955

55/01/09 Saw His Mother 'Ebb,' Sam Says

Cleveland Plain Dealer

Follow this and additional works at: https://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/newspaper_coverage

[How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!](#)

Recommended Citation

Cleveland Plain Dealer, "55/01/09 Saw His Mother 'Ebb,' Sam Says" (1955). *All Articles*. 648.

https://engagedscholarship.csuohio.edu/newspaper_coverage/648

This Book is brought to you for free and open access
by the Newspaper Coverage at
EngagedScholarship@CSU. It has been accepted for
inclusion in All Articles by an authorized administrator
of EngagedScholarship@CSU. For more information,
please contact library.es@csuohio.edu.



SAW HIS MOTHER

'EBB,' SAM SAYS

PA ————— *1-9-55*
Believes Spirit Crumpled

After Jury's Verdict

BY WILLIAM L. MACKEY

His mother's will to live started to ebb two months ago and it was noticeable to him, Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard told a close friend and adviser yesterday.

She held control, however, until her son's wife-murder jury found him guilty and then her spirit crumpled, Dr. Sam said.

Handcuffed to two deputy sheriffs, the youthful osteopath tomorrow will go to his mother's funeral.

Confers With Pastor

Private rites for Mrs. Richard A. (Ethel) Sheppard, 64, who killed herself Friday, will be conducted at 3 p. m. in the Saxton funeral home, 13215 Detroit Avenue, Lakewood.

Burial will be in Sunset Memorial Park in suburban Olmsted Township. Dr. Sam will be there, too.

He conferred for about an hour in County Jail yesterday with Rev. Alfred C. Kreke, pastor of Bay Methodist Church, Bay Village.

Dr. Sam broke down and cried while he was there, Rev. Mr. Kreke said.

Suicide was not in his mother's nature, Dr. Sam told the Minister. The doctor blamed a stroke Mrs. Sheppard suffered before his trial for her state of mind.

The stroke was brought on by a combination of events beginning with the murder of his wife, Marilyn, on July 4, the osteopath told Rev. Mr. Kreke.

Dr. Sam was positive the pressure of public opinion, publicity and her fears for him led to

(Continued on Page 8, Column 4)

Saw Mother's Spirit Ebbing Two Months Ago, Sam Says

PD

1-9-55

(Continued From First Page)

the stroke she suffered and ultimately to her suicide, according to the minister.

"Not the Same"

"Although he had not seen her since his incarceration, he said he could tell after the stroke that she was not the same—she was losing the will to live," Rev. Mr. Kreke said of his conversation with the doctor.

Dr. Sam spoke to his mother by telephone frequently after he was jailed, he said.

The osteopath told Rev. Mr. Kreke his mother had pinned all her hopes on the belief that her son's murder jury would acquit him.

Dr. Sam was puzzled that his mother would take her life with a gun.

Abhorred Firearms

"He said she abhorred the use of firearms of any kind," the minister related.

He quoted Dr. Sam as saying: "I have been digging for spiritual resources since this thing began. I guess I will have to dig a little deeper."

Permission to leave his County Jail cell for the funeral service and burial was granted yesterday by Common Pleas Judge Harry A. Hanna.

Blythin Questions Order

Judge Hanna's consent to the 32-year-old doctor's plea to visit the bier of his mother drew this comment from Judge Edward Blythin, who presided at Dr. Sam's wife-murder trial:

"I have no quarrel whatever with the order.

"But I do not believe that any judge has any authority to issue such an order other than the trial judge, for the simple reason that the subject is now under sentence to the penitentiary and that sentence has been stayed by me subject only to further orders.

"If I should cancel that stay now there would neither be attendance at the funeral nor further stay in County Jail."

At the funeral services Dr. Sam will be party to a sad reunion with his brothers, Dr. Richard N. and Dr. Stephen A.

It was at Dr. Steve's Rocky River home that the doctor's mother shot herself, apparently from despondency over Marilyn Sheppard's murder, Dr. Sam's arrest and conviction and the problems those incidents created for her and her family.

Dr. Sam was visited Friday night, soon after he learned of his mother's death, by Robert Drew, a minister of the Church of God on Cleveland's East Side.

The osteopath had not asked for Drew's spiritual counsel but spent some time talking with him, jail deputies said.

One who was closest to Mrs. Ethel Sheppard, her husband, will not be present at his wife's funeral.

Dr. Richard A. Sheppard, recovering from a respiratory condition and the shock of learning of his wife's suicide, will remain at Bay View Hospital.

Condition Improved

The elder Sheppard's condition was improved yesterday, according to his son, Dr. Richard N.

"He is coming along nicely after the initial shock when Steve told him about mother," Dr. Richard said.

"We just have to carry on,"

the elder Sheppard told Rev. Mr. Kreke when the minister visited him at the hospital.

Asks Copy of Sermon

The ailing doctor, founder of the hospital in which he is confined, asked for a copy of a sermon, "The Power of the Tongue" delivered by Rev. Mr. Kreke a few weeks ago from the pulpit of his Bay Village church.

The sermon considered the place of gossip, unfounded rumor and deliberate misstatement of facts in today's society, the minister said.

Although the family was aware Mrs. Sheppard was upset by the lengthy trial and ultimate conviction of her son none suspected she contemplated taking her own life, according to Dr. Richard.

"She was a proud woman. She believed in Dr. Sam as the rest of us do," Dr. Richard said. "She was too burdened."

Sheriff Consulted

Judge Hanna said he consented to Dr. Sam's request after consulting with Sheriff Joseph M. Sweeney.

"I asked the sheriff if there was anything about the conduct or nature of this man which would lead to the conclusion he should not be permitted to leave the jail," the judge said.

He told Sweeney to arrange for the trip to the funeral home and burial site with plans for a security guard on the prisoner.

Jail officials said Dr. Sam would be handcuffed to two guards from the time he leaves the jail until he returns.

Still Under Scrutiny

He is still in an observation cell where he was taken after he was informed of his mother's suicide. His personal property was left in his old cell on the fourth floor, indicating he will be returned there.

Tomorrow's trek will mark the third funeral Dr. Sam has attended under unnatural circumstances since July 4.

The first was his wife's in July. He was in a wheel chair then and went to the service from Bay View Hospital, where he had been confined with injuries he said he suffered battling Marilyn's killer, a story he stuck to in his trial.

Next, in October, he was whisked from the jail before his trial started to attend services for Marilyn's grandfather, Harry P. Blake.