

CHIEF JOHN P. EATON, having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

EXAMINATION OF CHIEF JOHN P. EATON

By Dr. Gerber:

Q What is your name, please?

A John P. Eaton.

Q Where do you live?

A 550 Vineland Road, Bay Village.

Q How long have you lived in Bay Village?

A Since 1919.

Q Do you hold an official position with the City of Bay Village?

A Chief of police.

Q How long have you been the Chief of Police?

A I have been the head of the Police Department since 1925.

Q Are you acquainted with Dr. Sam Sheppard?

A Casually. I have met him.

Q Calling your attention to the morning of July 4th, Sunday morning, July 4th, will you relate what happened?

A At about 6:00 A.M. on the morning of July 4th I was on Maple Drive in Bay Village where I happened to have a tractor, working on it there, and Patrolman Cavanaugh

drove up to pick me up, informed me that there had been a murder committed, at the Sheppard residence on Lake Road. He drove me to the Sheppard house. When I arrived the Mayor's car was in the driveway. In back of that was the City ambulance. The other police cruiser was there, and I believe Dr. Stephen Sheppard and Dr. Richard Sheppard's car was there. I don't recall what other cars if any there were.

Q Can you give me the approximate time?

A That was between 6:20 and 6:30. When I arrived I went first to the bedroom of Mrs. Sheppard and verified the fact that she had been murdered. I came downstairs and talked to Mayor Houk who was there ahead of me. He gave me a brief summary of what he knew about the facts. At that time we put a call in for the coroner's office and called the Cleveland Police Department and asked them if they could possibly give us some help.

Then we went outside and looked around the outside of the house and came back in again and the Mayor and I walked down to the beach, because in his statement Dr. Sam had related struggling with somebody on the beach and having come to in the water. There were wet foot prints or wet spots on the steps that looked like they had been made by wet feet.

I went up the stairs and into the front room,

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NO
FLASHBUZZ
WHEN
CHIP
LEAVES
→

the north room, through the north door. There were foot prints of what appeared to be two people and a dog going east from that point towards the Metropolitan Park.

Q Where were the foot prints located?

A Right on the edge of the sand as close to the shrubbery as they could walk, because the waves were rather high and if you didn't walk there you would get your feet wet. There were three persons on the west pier. The Mayor and I walked over there and talked to them to find out what they knew, and then we came back.

We later checked and found that those foot prints were made by two firemen and the Sheppard dog which had preceded us on the same mission.

The rest of the time, spent some time outside the house and around the house searching for anything we might find. I might say that before this, though, that shortly before I arrived Dr. Sam had left I believe in Dr. Steve's car to go to the hospital, and about the same time Dr. Richard with the assistance of Mr. Houk got the boy up and he disappeared I believe with Dr. Richard Sheppard. About that time Dr. Gerber came on the scene. He wished to talk to Dr. Sam Sheppard, and he and I drove to the hospital in the police cruiser. I left Dr. Gerber off at the door of the emergency entrance to the hospital, and as we stopped there Dr. Sam and Dr. Steve

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Saw
~~He~~ was
wearing
water

drove up right behind us.

Q Do you mean Dr. Sam?

A No, Dr. Richard and Dr. Stephen. Not Dr. Sam, he was in the hospital. The three of them went in and I proceeded home to change my clothes. When I arrived back which was possibly 15 or 20 minutes, Dr. Gerber met me at the door, he was ready to leave. He handed me a bundle of clothing, wet clothing, which he said was Dr. Sam's and asked me to make an inventory and hold them for him.

We drove back to the Sheppard residence and about that time Mr. Shottke and Gereau of the Cleveland Homocide Squad were there and we checked farther with them. Some time during the afternoon, I don't exactly remember the time, Shottke came in with a green bag which had some articles of jewelry in it, namely a watch, a ring, and a gold chain with keys on one end and a knife on the other. We determined then or figured they were Dr. Sam's possessions.

So the three of us went to the hospital to see him. They talked to him first and asked him if he had a watch and a ring and a key chain and he said he did, and to the best of his knowledge he had been wearing them the night before. I then showed him this bag and he identified it as being a bag which had tools for his outboard motor in it, and which normally was kept

in the desk drawer in his den. I then showed him the watch and the ring and he couldn't remember how it had gotten there, didn't remember anything about it.

Q You say, Chief, that you arrived somewhere between 6:20 and 6:30 in the morning?

A I am estimating that. I didn't look at my watch, but it should have been about that time.

Q When you arrived there was Dr. Stephen Sheppard and Dr. Richard Sheppard?

A As I recall they were.

Q Did you direct them to take Dr. Sam Sheppard to the hospital?

A No.

Q Did anyone to your knowledge?

A As far as I know, no one. When I came back from going down to the beach, one of those trips, he was gone, and I didn't know for sure how he went, even.

Q Did you notice whether or not at a later time Dr. Richard and Dr. Stephen Sheppard returned to the Sam Sheppard home?

A Yes, they were there when Dr. Gerber and I started out for the hospital to see Dr. Sam Sheppard. They must have overheard our conversation and they followed us right down. They were both in Dr. Sam's station wagon at that time, I mean, Dr. Steve's station wagon.

Q How long did it take you to go down and look around the beach and come back?

A Oh, possibly 15 minutes. We walked over to the pier and talked at some length to these two men and a boy who were there.

Q Did you then return to the house?

A We returned to the house.

Q Did you see Dr. Sam Sheppard in the house at all?

A The first time I came in the door, I believe, I have a faint recollection of him sitting in the den. That is as close as I got to him. I didn't talk to him, and I didn't see him after that, to my knowledge.

Q You didn't see him leave?

A No.

Q As far as you can recall, you only saw him fleetingly before he did leave?

A That's right.

Q Did you look into the den?

A At that time?

Q Yes.

A No.

Q Did you subsequently look into the den?

A Subsequently I searched the den several times, searched every part of the house and all the ground outside.

Q Were you in the den when Dr. Stephen Sheppard knocked over one of the drawers that was sitting on top of another drawer?

A Yes, I was there at that time, yes.

Q What time was that?

A I don't remember whether it was before the coroner and I left for the hospital, or whether, I don't recall. I think it was later.

Q Do you know what time Patrolman Drenkhan took pictures?

A When Patrolman Cavanaugh picked me up he had already stopped and picked up our camera.

Q If I were to tell you that Patrolman Drenkhan took pictures in that room at 8:05--

A That would probably be somewhere near the time.

Q Then was that drawer upset before that or after that?

A I think it was upset after that because I believe we have pictures showing that drawer before it was upset.

Q Did you walk around the living room?

A You mean at which time?

Q At any time?

A Oh, yes, quite frequently.

Q Did you notice the couch in the living room?

A Yes.

Q Did you notice the condition of the couch?

A Well, the couch was, it looked like it didn't have any creases in it or anything, it was quite smooth, and there was a pillow on the north end of the couch and a pillow at the south end. As I recall, it was up against the wall somewhat, and a coat, brown corduroy coat which was nicely folded and laid on the end of the couch, across the end of the couch.

Q Did you go up in the bedroom?

A Oh, yes.

Q Did you notice any disturbance on the bed other than Mrs. Sheppard?

A There was no sign of a struggle or anything. I mean, things were disarrayed some, but not --

Q Where were they disarrayed?

A She was lying on the bed about, her head was about one-third of the way down, her feet were over the edge of the bed, her knees were bent over the edge of the bed. Her pajama tops were pulled up. Her lower part of her body was covered by a sheet. Of course, I don't know whether it was there originally or whether somebody placed it there before I got there.

Q You understand that someone had been in that room before you got there?

A I know that Dr. Richard had been in there and pronounced her dead because I asked him about how long he

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Dr. Richard
Sheppard's
est. time
of death
4:30am -
5:00am

thought she had been dead.

Q What did he say?/

A He said about an hour and a half to two hours perhaps.

Q What time was this estimate?

A That was shortly after I got there. Maybe 6:30,

6:40. |

Q Not later than 6:40?

A That's right.

Q And he said she had been dead about two hours?

A An hour and a half to two hours.

Q Was the blood on the bed dry or tacky or sticky when you looked at it?

A It seemed to me to have been coagulated considerably.

Q Do you call that dry?

A No.

Q Sticky?

A Like mucilage.

Q Tacky, is that what you mean?

A That would be pretty close.

Q You are positive that Dr. Sheppard, Dr. Richard Sheppard said that she had been dead an hour and a half to two hours at approximately 6:30 to 6:40?

A I can't be absolutely certain of the time, but that was the statement he made, and I believe it was about that time.

Q Was anyone else present when he said that?

A I think not.

Q Do you know whether you and he were alone, in what part of the building at the time?

A I am not certain now. I think we were downstairs. I asked him just as a matter of information how long he thought she had been dead.

Q Is this the first time you related that information?

A No, that is in my statement.

Q It is in your statement?

A Yes.

Q Did you notice anything in the kitchen disarranged, distorted, or out of order?

A Nothing that seemed what would ordinarily be. I don't recall anything.

Q Did you notice -- did you finish?

A Yes.

Q Did you notice any other jackets in the living room or in any other room in the building?

A As I recall there was a jacket, I believe there were two jackets that laid or hung over a chair opposite the north door.

Q Can you describe the jackets?

A One of them had something on, it looked to be something like an athletic jacket or sweater. It had some sort of

an insignia on it. I don't recall just what the other one was, what color or anything.

Q Did you notice any other jackets?

A I believe there were two jackets there.

Q Two?

A I believe there were.

Q That was over the chair, over the arm of a chair?

A Laying over the chair, it would be just about opposite the north door of that room. Just around the corner from his hallway as you come in.

Q That was just, as you walk in that would be just to the west of the hallway?

A Yes, that's right.

Q Did you notice any other jackets?

A Well, there was some clothes, some of her clothes were up on the chair in the bedroom.

Q What condition was the clothes in the bedroom on the chair?

A There were two pair of shorts, as I recall, which were neatly folded, and there were a couple of jackets, that she had hung over the edge of the chair. They didn't seem disarrayed in any way and there didn't seem to be any blood on them.

Q Did you notice any other clothing, jacket clothing downstairs?

A In the kitchen, as I recall, there was a jacket.

Q Whose jacket was that?

A I was told it belonged to Dr. Sam.

Q Can you relate the circumstances surrounding that jacket that was found in the kitchen?

A Well, it was told to me that the jacket, that he had been wearing it in the basement when they were playing down there and when he came up he left it there. I believe, maybe one of the Ahern children brought it up and left it in the kitchen.

Q Are you acquainted with the Sheppard family?

A Only casually.

Q Were you acquainted with Marilyn Sheppard in life?

A No. I met her frequently when passing by, when her youngster was out, putting him on the bus.

Q Did you have any reason to learn of any activities of Dr. Sam Sheppard?

A What do you mean by activities? I don't understand.

Q Well, the things that he was doing?

A Well, we met him occasionally at the hospital in connection with accident cases or emergencies of one kind or another. We met occasionally on meetings of civilian defense on which he was active. I never met him socially except once when he was a guest over at the dance club I belong to about a year and a half ago, he and his wife.

Q Did you have or do you have knowledge of Dr. Sam Sheppard's disposition?

A Only what I have been able to learn from friends or acquaintances.

Q What is his general reputation?

A That he was a man of even temper and not inclined to have, he had a nice disposition and easy to get along with I am told.

Q Have you ever heard of anything to the contrary?

A Only rumors.

Q What, where were these rumors?

A I can't tell you where they came from. They just came. We tried to run some of them down and haven't been able to.

Q Can you name what these rumors refer to in reference to Sam Sheppard?

A Well, there were rumors that he and Mrs. Sheppard had had differences of opinion particularly on marital lines, that he was supposed to have made her angry about some attentions to some other women. That is strictly rumor. I have nothing to verify that.

Q Do you have any knowledge of the names of these other individuals?

A The only one I know of is the one I read about in the paper about the woman in California.

Q Do you have any personal knowledge?

A No.

Q Are you acquainted or did you know Sue Hayes?

A Never met her.

Q Did you ever see her?

A I don't recall that I ever did, no.

Q The rumors came to you, were they about Susan Hayes?

A Not directly. There has been a lot of rumors.

People would call up at different times of the day and night and give me what they think is information. They won't tell me their name or anything. But the things they tell you, if you want to call them rumors --

Q Did any of these rumors ever come to you before the death of Marilyn Sheppard?

A No.

Q Have you any information as to a violent temper of Dr. Sam Sheppard?

A I have no knowledge of that myself, no.

Q Anybody ever say anything?

A I think I have heard rumors. I can't tell you where they came from.

Q Was this prior to Marilyn's death?

A No, after.

Q Since?

A Since her death.

Q Did you learn of these rumors on Sunday, July 4th?

A I believe it was later than that. I heard them different times after that. I don't recall on Sunday that I heard such rumors.

Q Do you have anything else to add?

A No, except that I did read a couple of letters which you probably read, too. There was at some time or other--

Q Go ahead.

A -- difficulties in their married life. I believe in '51 she had ever contemplated getting a divorce. I know nothing about why.

Q Do you know where these letters came from?

A They were found among her letters in some of her files.

Q Who was the person that mailed them or sent them?

A They were sent, as I recall, one was sent from Mrs. Dorothy Sheppard and I think one was from Steve.

Q One letter was sent from Dorothy Sheppard and one was from Steve. Now, is Dorothy --

A Dorothy Sheppard is Richard's wife.

Q Dorothy Sheppard is Richard's wife?

A That's right.

Q The contents of that letter was what?

A They were exploring her not to go through with her contemplated action, for the sake of the boy, along that

line. They didn't say why she was contemplating such an action. They just asked her not to.

Q Is there anything else?

A I don't think so, unless you have some more questions.

DR. GERBER: That is all.
