54/12/10 Police Offered Him 'Deal' to Confess, Sheppard Says

Cleveland News

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Sometime in the course of tragic human events a man must come face to face with a jury that is to decide his liberty, imprisonment or death. Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard has reached that judgment day at his murder trial. He talked directly to the six women and seven men in the jury box. Jurors looked back at him, but their faces told him nothing—neither belief nor disbelief for the story he was telling. Who can tell what a jury is thinking? Experts in criminal trials have often tried, and failed.
Manslaughter Charge Proposed, Jury Told

BULLETIN

Cleveland homicide detectives questioned him for 11 hours and offered him an indictment for manslaughter if he would confess, Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard charged late today. He said "I couldn't confess to something I didn't do, and I could stand the ordeal of the questioning because Marilyn was with me."

Dr. Sam also charged that during the marathon police grilling, detectives forced him to look at photographs of the battered body of his wife. "I was forced to look at them momentarily, then I closed my eyes," he said.

BY HOWARD BEAUFAIT

A quantity of narcotics were missing from a medical bag shortly after his wife was beaten to death, Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard testified late today at his murder trial. It was the first time the defense had injected a possible motive into the brutal crime—theft of drugs by a crazed killer.

The Bay Village doctor told the jury that a box of emergency morphine ampules and a bottle of demerol, synthetic morphine, were missing from his bag, found by police upset in the hallway of his home. Shortly after this testimony the boyish-faced defendant electrified the courtroom when he announced he felt the spirit of murdered Marilyn Sheppard "was standing in my corner right now."

The state contends that a check by federal narcotic agents showed no drugs were missing from the doctor's home the day of the murder, July 4.

Under questioning by William J. Corrigan, chief defense counsel, Dr. Sam said he returned to his home from Bay View Hospital July 9 with Coroner Samuel R. Gerber and County Detective Carl Rossbach.

He said the officials asked him to look around and see if anything was missing. He checked his medical bag, which he contends had been ransacked by a murderous burglar, and found the morphine gone.

He accused Rossbach of attempting to "trick" him when he was asked if a packet of surgical instruments was also missing. He said Rossbach had deliberately

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Drugs Missing After Murder, Sheppard Testifies

Charges Police Used '3d-Degree Methods'

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Marilyn and I weren't the only ones that could be loving and she sat on Mr. Ahern’s lap. "I recall I would be more comforable on the couch, being somewhat tired. I watched television for a time and must have fallen asleep."

He testified that between the time he fell asleep and the time he was awakened by Marilyn’s cries, he had a recollection that he was aroused by her eli who notified him she was going to the bathroom."

Calls Inquest "Persecution"

At one point in his testimony, Dr. Sam attacked the inquest conducted by Corrigan Gerber into the crime.

"I felt I was being subjected to persecution, beyond all conception," he told the jury. "I have been given the benefit of a court of law, allowed to represent myself and present the facts as I know them."

He testified that a week after the murder he indicated to Mayor J. Spencer Housk of Bay Village that he "intended not to rest until we get to the bottom of who murdered Marilyn." He said the mayor told him about "the slums and gossip" that were going around the suburb about him.

"Marilyn in My Corner"

"He told me Marilyn was beside me and she was standing with me," Dr. Sam testified. Do you feel she is in your corner now?" asked Corrigan in a dramatic voice.

"Absolutely. She is standing in my corner right now," Dr. Sam replied.

Corrigan drew from the witness testimony that he had operated fully with police in the early days of the investigation, when he was recovering from injuries suffered at the hands of the family of her wife.

"Tells of Hospital 'Hassle'"

"In the hospital there was a hassle over my bed," he said. "Dr. Gerber was on one side, Attorneys Peterselle and Corrigan on the other... I was very disturbed. My wife was sleeping in a second floor bedroom."

The doctor also charged that Cleveland detectives used third-degree methods in questioning "used profanity, indicated I was the dullest, most low-down individual." He said they also insulted his family and his profession.

Before the defense moved into a possible drug-crazed killer motive, Dr. Sheppard gave an entirely new version of events the night his wife was beaten to death in her bedroom.

The doctor’s voice was light and high pitched as he recalled for the benefit of the jury the dark hours of the morning of July 4 in his Bay Village home. Dr. Sam said he was asleep on a downstairs couch. His wife was sleeping in a second floor bedroom.

Dr. SAMUEL H. SHEPPARD

On witness stand

attorneys, when Dr. Sam said he couldn't testify as to what Detective Becker said without using profanity. When the court ruled that he might use profanity, the defense attempted to withdraw the question, but instead had the entire testimony regarding Becker's last reference to the family and profession stricken from the record.

Dr. Sam added that Detective Robert Schottke had told him (Schottke) was "personally doing everything possible to implicate Dr. Steve but hadn't been able to do so." Corrigan asked that Detective Robert Schottke had told him (Schottke) was "personally doing everything possible to implicate Dr. Steve but hadn't been able to do so." Corrigan asked that.

Continuing in his testimony, Dr. Sam left the impression that they were trying to trap him by "trying to get me to say I had something I didn’t say." Leading up to the murder, Corrigan asked Dr. Sheppard to examine the belt, shoes, slacks, shirts and white wool socks he wore that night.

The witness said he couldn’t find the belt or the shoes, but he did point out a spot on the sole of the right shoe "that could have been blood." Before he actually approached the murder scene, Corrigan asked the defendant how many times he had told the story of the events of July 4 before telling it in the courtroom. Dr. Sam ticked off at least a dozen times he had related it to police. Coroner Samuel R. Gerber, deputy sheriffs, and his own relatives.

Dr. Sam at this point in his recital left the witness box at his attorney's request, to point to the jurors in a photograph of his Bay Village house the upstairs room occupied by his house guest, Dr. Lester Hoversten.

"He was at rest on the bed. The defendant described conditions in the room at that time as a 'mass of confusion.'" Dr. Sam said he could only vaguely recall Dr. Steve suggesting he be brought in who had been running in a utility truck.

"The boy's heart had stopped beating," he said. "The father was hysterical. I ran and took the boy's face and restored the heart beat by opening the chest and stimulating the heart. We kept the boy alive for an hour, then expired. We placed a needle at the base of the brain and drained off a large amount of fluid." Dr. Sam under Corrigan interrogation, also recalled several other emergency operations he had performed in the early days of July.

The first person he notified of the murder was Mayor J. Spence Housk who lived nearby. Then he said the mayor, his wife and police arrived. Speaking through tightly clenched lips, Dr. Sam testified that he collapsed when informed of Marilyn's death.

"I remember my brother Dr. Richard coming into the den," he said. "He told me Marilyn was gone. I remember falling to the floor."

The defendant described conditions in the room at that time as "a mass of confusion." Dr. Sam said he could only vaguely recall Dr. Steve suggesting he be brought in who had been running in a utility truck.

"I remember feeling it, but I don't remember saying it," Dr. Sam replied.

A pair of canvas gloves found on the Sheppard property on July 5, on which a blood spot was found, Dr. Sam explained that in his type of work it was not unusual to get blood on his clothing or anything he might be carrying.

"He said the gloves were kept in various places around the house and that he often carried them in the pocket of a dungaree work jacket which he wore when working around the house."