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Jury Returned Suicide Verdict

Find That Brantford Girl Poisoned Herself in Kitchener Tuesday

Special to The Courier.
Kitchener, Nov. 15.—We, the jury, impaneled to enquire into the death of Phyllis Irene Thomas, beg to report that after due consideration of the evidence submitted, that the said death was due to poison taken by herself for some unknown motive. This was the verdict of the coroner's jury appointed to enquire into the death of Miss Phyllis Irene Thomas, the Brantford girl who took three tablets of bichloride of mercury on Tuesday and succumbed as a result on Wednesday morning.

The mother of the girl, Mrs. B. M. Thomas, Brant Ave., stated that her daughter had left Brantford with Mr. W. G. Merrill. She had consented to her going with Mr. Merrill as she was in his employ, and the work that they were to do on the trip was to collect accounts that were owing to Mr. Merrill. Before leaving, it was agreed that the couple would stay at the Lorentz farm, Sunday night at St. Clements. This was because the Lorentz family were friends of Merrill's.

On Monday the girl wrote to her mother stating that she had spent the night at the Lorentz farm, and hearing the peace news they had hurried to Kitchener before breakfast.

Merrill recalled before leaving Brantford that they would stay at the Lorentz farm as he had to see a harrister named Mr. Groys. On their arrival in Kitchener, however, their plans were changed and they stayed at the Walker House, she in room 53 and he in room 52.

The evidence of the father corroborated the mother's evidence in almost every detail.

BONUS PAYMENTS

By Courier Leased Wire.
Ottawa, Nov. 15.—Bonus payments to the civil service began today. The Finance Department employees were the first to receive their cheques, married men receiving \$25 and others \$15. Other departments will be paid as soon as the cheques can be written.

MOONSHINE

By Courier Leased Wire.
Ottawa, Nov. 15.—A report that His Excellency the Duke of Devonshire is to return to England at the end of the year and be replaced by Prince Alexander of Teck was denied at Rideau Hall last night. It was characterized as "moonshine."

QUEEN WILLING

By Courier Leased Wire.
Copenhagen, Nov. 15.—Queen Wilhelmina of Holland, according to the Pearson Press, wished to extend hospitality to the former German emperor, whilst he remained in Holland. However, the newspaper adds, as Holland itself fears the coming days, it was found desirable that William Hohenzollern should live as a private individual.

THAT SON-IN-LAW OF PA'S

(By Wellington.)

"I'M AFRAID YOU'RE NOT GETTING THE PROPER ATTENTION DURING YOUR ILLNESS, PA. SO I'M GOING TO GET YOU A TRAINED NURSE. I THINK I'LL SEND FOR MISS CUTIE."



MISS CUTIE

OH, BOY!



"TUT, TUT, MOTHAW, DON'T SEND FOR A TRAINED NURSE! I'VE GOT A THING OR TWO TO SAY ABOUT THIS. I'LL BE DELIGHTED TO LOOK AFTER THE DEAR OLD CHAP MYSELF."



NOT AT ALL, MOTHAW, IT WILL BE A PLEASURE! I'LL STANT IN, IMMEDIATELY."



YES, AN' YOU'LL FINISH IMMEDIATELY, TOO, DANGONE YAY!



DUNCAN CASE GOES TO THE JURY THIS MORNING

Jury Charged by His Lordship Justice Lennox—Crown and Defense Concluded Their Summing up of Evidence at Last Night's Session

The Duncan murder case went to the jury this morning, and a verdict is expected before night. The jury retired to consider the case after they had been charged by Mr. Justice Lennox, who gave a masterful summing up of the entire evidence at considerable length, warning the jurors that they must discharge the duty of their office with absolute fearlessness and impartiality, giving the prisoner the benefit of any doubt which existed, but weighing carefully the evidence against him before returning a verdict. If they truly believed him guilty, they must not allow conscientious scruples to interfere with their returning a verdict accordingly.

The summing-up of Crown and defense comprised the greater part of last evening's session, which did not adjourn until after eleven o'clock. Mr. Kelly, Duncan's counsel, and Mr. Davidson for the Crown, both addressed the jury at great length, each giving a clear presentation of his case, reviewing the strongest points of evidence both for and against the prisoner.

Mrs. Duncan, known as the wife of the deceased, although she was never married to Duncan, was the principal witness for the defense yesterday afternoon. According to her testimony Isaac came to the house under the influence of liquor and provoked a quarrel with Duncan. The two fell downstairs, Duncan coming first.

had character?" asked Mr. Kelly. "I object," demurred Mr. Davidson. "The witness cannot define general knowledge," ruled His Lordship.

Constable Howling had never had any experience with Isaac until the night referred to above. He did not believe that "Duncan" had been drinking on the occasion.

J. Leslie Atwood, secretary of the Children's Aid Society, stated that Mrs. Duncan and her daughter, eleven years of age, came to the Children's Shelter on April 11. He went to their home to help straighten things up. There were blood stains on the bed on the top floor, and on the ceiling above; also on the wall on the stairway. On the bottom step of the stairs, there was a profusion of blood. He pointed out in great detail on the plan of the house, the location of the blood stains.

There was blood on the wall beside the automatic telephone. "Have you ever investigated the parentage of 'Duncan' child?" asked Mr. Davidson, cross-examining.

Mr. Kelly objected and was upheld by the Judge.

Mr. Davidson inquired whether the stains Mr. Atwood had seen might have been caused by blood having been thrown there. Witness replied in the affirmative.

Alfred Warren, 125 Oxford street, helped Mr. Atwood clear up the house and concurred in the testimony given by the last witness as to the blood stains. He also admitted that the stains might have been intentionally placed where they were.

Mrs. Clara Duncan was next called to the stand. She stated she had lived with Isaac for 11 years. She went with him on March 28 to Buffalo, where he underwent an operation for an abscess on his neck.

Mrs. Duncan, her daughter and Mrs. Gerrard went to Buffalo on Sunday. On their return, between 12.30 and one, Mrs. Summerhays, Isaac, Frank Hazel and Duncan were at the house. Frank Hazel and Mrs. Summerhays left before dinner, but Mr. Venton and Albert Hazel arrived in time for the meal.

Mrs. Duncan stated that she did not drink any liquor, although offered.

ed some. All the others drank. After dinner, after dressing her daughter for Sunday School, saw Mrs. Gerrard going upstairs with a revolver in her hand. Neither said anything regarding it.

Isaac Returned. Hazel was the first to leave the house, taking his departure shortly after 1 o'clock. Isaac went on somewhere near four o'clock, but returned an hour or so later, bringing with him a bottle of gin. He insisted on Mrs. Gerrard taking a drink, and then went upstairs to see Duncan. The latter had been up there since Venton's departure which was about 4.30.

"You'll be pinched with that bottle on you," Mrs. Duncan warned Isaac.

"I should worry, I can take care of myself," rejoined the latter, going upstairs despite Mrs. Duncan's protestations.

How Trouble Started. A short time later Duncan called to witness to bring up his coat, which she did. An orange lodge pin was on the coat, and Duncan remarked to Isaac:

"I'd like to see you wearing one of these."

Mr. Davidson expressed a doubt whether such a conversation could be accepted as evidence, but did not press the point.

"I will some day, but not with your dirty shirt," retorted Isaac. He rose to his feet and struck Duncan, upsetting him and the bottle of gin, which was on the floor. Witness went downstairs at Duncan's request. A moment later she heard Duncan ask:

"What do you want to tear my shirt for?"

"I'll tear your damned heart out," she heard Isaac retort. Witness called to her sister, who was still asleep:

"My God, Georgina, get up, there's trouble."

A moment later Duncan came tumbling down the stairs, his shirt torn open. As he rose to his feet, Isaac rushed after him and fell flat on the floor.

Witness identified the shirt previously exhibited. She stated Duncan was not wearing a collar. He asked her to call the police, but she was too nervous. He therefore went to the telephone.

"Don't call the police," urged Mrs. Gerrard. "I'm going," she added, and running to the front window, which Mr. Duncan had opened, jumped out. Witness caught at her in an attempt to stop her, breaking her hand in the endeavor. Duncan, on hearing of this, left the phone and went down to the street to look for Mrs. Gerrard. He returned, and proceeded to bathe Isaac's head. Isaac was bleeding from the nose.

"Did Duncan stamp on Isaac's head, as Mrs. Gerrard has described."

"No."

"Did Isaac move after he fell?" "No."

"Did you know Isaac well?" "Yes, very well."

He was six feet in height, and weighed 203 pounds. Witness told of the disturbance in May, 1917, already related by Constable Howling. On this occasion, Isaac had come to the house at 1 o'clock at night, and demanded admission saying that he was in trouble. He had been drinking just enough to make him "on his toes" and boasted of being the bully of Brantford.

On March 14, Isaac had been at the house to see Mrs. Gerrard. Duncan, the next day, objected to Isaac's presence.

Cross-examined by the Crown, Mrs. Duncan admitted that she had left her husband, Frank Shepherd, 13 years ago. Their daughter, an inmate of a Kitchener orphanage, would now be 16 years of age, but witness had heard she was dead. Witness met Duncan in London nearly twelve years ago.

Mrs. Duncan did not see Isaac take Mrs. Gerrard's ring, but was told by the latter that he had done so.

None of the Sunday visitors knew that there was whiskey in the house when they came. Witness and Duncan had brought two bottles of whiskey from Buffalo.

Mrs. Duncan swore that Venton had never practised any familiarity toward Mrs. Gerrard.

"Then what he said in the witness box was untrue?" "Absolutely."

"Have you spoken to your sister since the murder?" "Yes."

"About the case?" "No."

Mrs. Duncan's father came to her on the night of the crime, but she was too nervous to see him. He had treated the injury, but

For a Moment Pa Thought He'd Enjoy Being Sick.

NOT AT ALL, MOTHAW, IT WILL BE A PLEASURE! I'LL STANT IN, IMMEDIATELY."



YES, AN' YOU'LL FINISH IMMEDIATELY, TOO, DANGONE YAY!



away. She denied that he had any thing to drink. She admitted having told him that Mrs. Gerrard would be one of the principal witnesses for the Crown, but had said nothing more on the subject.

In connection with the damage done in the house during Duncan's absence in Buffalo, witness had been told that Isaac and Frank Hazel had been concerned in the affair, and that Mrs. Summerhays, who had been left in charge, had been drunk.

Mrs. Duncan swore that she had not taken a drink all day, despite what Hazel had said. When Isaac urged her to take a drink of gin she pretended to comply with the request, but did not drink.

Witness was certain that Isaac had not moved after falling down stairs. He groaned several times.

Mr. Davidson read the statement made by Mrs. Duncan to the police on the night of the crime, in which she stated that Duncan and Isaac continued to fight after falling down stairs.

"I do not remember having said that," declared Mrs. Duncan.

Mr. Kelly objected that before Mr. Davidson could use the statement, he must prove that it had been made voluntarily by Mrs. Duncan.

The latter declared that if she had said the two men continued to fight after falling downstairs, she had been mistaken. Isaac had not moved after he hit the floor. Witness accounted for the blood on Duncan's shoes by saying that he had been moving about in the blood from Isaac's head.

A small table which had fallen down stairs with Isaac, was produced by the Crown and identified by witness.

Mrs. Duncan stated that she was very nervous and excited when she made her statement to the police on the night of the crime. She was not put under oath on that occasion, nor was her statement read over to her or signed by her. She was detained over night in a cell in the police station.

Mrs. Duncan corroborated her sister's testimony in every detail except as to the latter's statement that Duncan attacked Isaac after the fall down stairs.

Dr. Fissette confirmed the evidence given by Mrs. Duncan that she had proffered her hand. He had treated the injury, but

Continued on Page Ten

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