

THE CAUSE OF BLANCHE LAMONT'S DEATH.

Dr. Barrett Testifies That She Died From Strangulation.

THE FINGER-NAIL MARKS

A Searching Cross-Examination of the Autopsy Physician.

BIG CROWDS OF SPECTATORS.

Officer Russell's Working Model of the Tower and Belfry of Emmanuel Church.

THE DURANT CASE IN A MINUTE—THREE WITNESSES EXAMINED.

Yesterday the crowd that sought admission to Judge Murphy's court was larger than ever. Three witnesses were examined. The first of these was C. G. Noble, uncle by marriage of Blanche Lamont. He had seen and identified the body. There was no cross-examination, the defense thus practically admitting the identity.

The second witness was Dr. J. S. Barrett, the physician who performed the autopsy. He testified that there were finger-nail marks on the dead girl's throat, and that there were



DR. BARRETT ON THE WITNESS-STAND.

many other evidences that death had been the result of asphyxiation, produced by strangulation.

He was cross-examined at great length by Mr. Deuprey, whose questions were directed toward showing that the cause of death was uncertain. Dr. Barrett, however, maintained his original position with firmness and answered all the questions satisfactorily.

Policeman Russell, the draftsman of the department, explained the practicable model of the tower and belfry of Emmanuel Church that he had constructed for the trial. The model was introduced as an exhibit, as were maps and photographs of the neighborhood of the church.

When court opens this morning the Coroner's assistants who found the clothing and effects of Blanche Lamont in the church will testify.

District Attorney Barnes expects to consume nearly three weeks in making out the people's case.

NOTE TO THE READER—If you wish only to know what was actually accomplished in the Durant case yesterday the foregoing summary will give you that information. If, however, it is your desire to learn the particulars of this interesting trial you will find subjoined a clear, succinct, impartial account of all important matters. Under no circumstances will the offensive details be admitted. They are not essential to an intelligent understanding of the progress of the case and will be accorded no place in these columns.

SECOND DAY OF THE TRIAL.

Even a Larger Crowd Than Usual. Three Witnesses Are Examined.

The number of people who are willing to stand in a big crowd for hours at a time, just to catch a glimpse of Durant, the little, mild-faced, boyish-looking individual accused of two fiendish murders, is surprising, even to one accustomed to such things—and what is more, the number is constantly increasing.

Yesterday morning as early as 9 o'clock the long, dark corridors leading toward Judge Murphy's court began to be congested by an anxious, neck-craneing, tip-toeing, eager-eyed throng of men and women.

Presently in their midst a number of blue-coated policemen appeared, and for the remainder of the day a squad of perhaps a dozen patrolmen were employed in keeping the passageways cleared and holding the crowd within bounds. But even their efforts failed to make it possible for an attorney or an attaché of the court to enter the room without pushing and elbowing his way through the crowd.

Judge Murphy's announcement that a larger room had been secured for the remainder of the trial brought out even a larger crowd in the afternoon, so that in the end fully as large a percentage of men and women as heretofore failed to gain admission. And most of these remained outside all afternoon, content to stand on the cold stone floor, in front of the courtroom to catch a glimpse of the interior of the courtroom whenever the door opened to let in or out a witness or messenger-boy.

And when the court adjourned for the day this crowd, augmented by those who had been inside, still remained in the corridors just to catch another view of Durant as he was led back to the prison van. The entire day's proceedings were of a perfunctory nature and consisted of testimony tending merely to prove that a murder had been committed and that the victim was Blanche Lamont.

The latter fact was proved first by the evidence of C. G. Noble, the uncle by marriage of the murdered girl. His testi-

mony was confined to the identification of the body, which he saw first on the 14th of April in the belfry of Emmanuel Church. Three times after that, prior to burial, he viewed the body. It was that of his niece, Blanche Lamont, and he had last seen her alive on the morning of April 3, when she left his house, at 209 Twenty-first street, to go to the High School.

The second witness was Dr. J. S. Barrett, the autopsy physician of this City and County. He described at length the condition in which he found the body at the Morgue, where he made a post mortem examination. In his opinion death was caused by asphyxiation produced by strangulation. Not alone the finger-nail marks on the throat made this conclusion the only plausible one to Dr. Barrett but also the many other physical evidences, such as the condition in which the various organs were found. All conspired to show that the girl had been strangled to death.

Attorney Deuprey led the cross-examination of this witness. He did it skillfully and at great length, entering fully into every particular connected with the autopsy.

Manifestly his purpose was to throw doubt upon the cause of death. But Dr. Barrett was not confused by the questioning and had always a clear answer ready for every inquiry. To the end of his long examination he maintained that every evidence pointed to the one cause of death—strangulation.

At the conclusion of his examination in the afternoon Policeman George W. Russell took the stand and explained the different parts of the practicable model of

the tower and belfry of Emmanuel Church that he had constructed for use during the trial.

Mr. Russell also identified a line map of the territory immediately surrounding the church, and this, with the model of the tower and some photographs of the church and its vicinity, offered by Attorney Dickinson, were all admitted as exhibits in the case.

This concluded the day's proceedings. In the morning the Coroner and his assistants will take the stand to describe where the clothing and personal effects of the dead girl were found by them.

So far the case has not presented many of its revolting details, but some of these will doubtless develop to-day. Much of Dr. Barrett's testimony was necessarily of a nature that may not be printed for general circulation, though it was all couched in technical language.

His description of the cruel finger-nail marks on the poor girl's throat was the most dramatic thing of the day, though even this was dramatic from the picture it presented to the minds of the listeners rather than from the manner in which the witness told it. He spoke carefully, slowly, and in a most matter-of-fact way.

And the women in court as spectators listened to it all, every word of it. One of the most interesting features of this trial to an observer must be the conduct of the women who sit through it all, who crane their necks to let no syllable escape them, and who linger in the courtroom after adjournment until the bailiffs find it necessary to ask them to go out.

THE MORNING SESSION.

The Uncle of the Murdered Girl and the Autopsy Physician

Testify.

When court convened Judge Murphy absented himself from the room a few moments, long enough to go over to Judge Sanderson's court and complete the arrangements for occupying that room in the afternoon. The Judge was successful in his errand and so announced when he resumed his seat at the bench.

C. G. Noble, the husband of the aunt of the murdered girl, took the stand first to prove the identification. After his testimony Attorney Dickinson asked that the witnesses should be excluded from the courtroom. Judge Murphy gave the order and presently there were several vacant chairs in the room.

Still Attorney Dickinson was not satisfied. He wanted the seats occupied by Captain Lees and Detective Seymour vacated. But District Attorney Barnes objected to this. He wanted them to remain, and the court decided they should, to which Attorney Dickinson was very careful to take a formal objection.

Mr. Noble's testimony was brief, and there was no cross-examination, the question of identification being thereby tacitly admitted.

"Did you know Blanche Lamont in life?" asked Mr. Barnes.

"Yes, she was my niece by marriage. When did you last see her alive?"

"On the morning of the 3d day of April. Is she now living?"

"No, she is dead."

"Did you see her body after death?"

"Yes, I did. How many times did you see the corpse?"

"Four times. Was it proved first by the evidence of C. G. Noble, the uncle by marriage of the murdered girl. His testi-

Yes. What was the date upon which you first saw the body?"

"Sunday, I think it was on April 14, in the year 1895."

"Was it on Easter Sunday?"

"Yes, it was."

"Where had Blanche Lamont first resided?"

"At 209 Twenty-first street. When do you remember first having seen her there?"

"About the middle of September, 1894. Judge J. Murphy. Where did you first see the dead body of Blanche Lamont? In the belfry of the church?"

"Yes, in the belfry."

"No cross-examination," said Mr. Deuprey.

Dr. J. S. Barrett, the autopsy physician at the Morgue, who made the post-mortem examination on the body of Blanche Lamont was the second witness. He was examined by Assistant District Attorney Peixotto, whose questions were frequently interrupted by the technical objections of Mr. Deuprey. Between objections Dr. Barrett managed to get before the jury the condition in which he found the body of the murdered girl.

Decomposition was well set in, he said, and life had probably been extinct for about two weeks. He found seven finger-nail incisions on the left side of the throat and five on the right side. Death was caused by asphyxiation due to strangulation.

Mr. Deuprey did the cross-examination. He went into the history of Dr. Barrett from the time he graduated from the Cooper Medical College in 1893.

Witness said he was house surgeon at the City and County Hospital from January 1, 1894, to January 1 of this year, and had performed about 300 autopsies. There was but one case of strangulation among the number. It was of a man who had hanged himself at the Mission and died in the hospital. Witness had also had a number of cases of strangulation at the Morgue before that of Miss Lamont.

Then Mr. Deuprey wanted to know what was the difference between asphyxiation and strangulation. Dr. Barrett defined them both. Then the inquirer led the witness by a tortuous route over the entire autopsy, making him explain each step fully and describe the condition in which all the organs were found.

Durant appeared very much interested in all this surgical and anatomical examination, much of which was directed toward eliciting information that would tend to show the impossibility of fixing even approximately the time of death.

"Did you ascertain the color of the eyes or the weight of the body?" asked Deuprey.

"I looked at the eyes, but do not remember the color. I had no opportunity to observe that the body weighed about 140 pounds. I made no note of the height or complexion of the body."

"Was there any evidence of clotted blood about the body?"

"There was none except about the mouth and nose. I think it had been coughed or otherwise brought forth by the girl before death and after a struggle."

"How soon would death occur in such a case?"

"It might be half an hour before actual death occurred."

"Were the finger marks alike in size?"

"One, I think that of a thumb-nail, was very much plainer than the others. I think it was low down on the left side."

"How about the shape of the nails?"

"I think so far as I could determine, that the nails were square and not round. I placed my nails in the marks, but did not measure them."

"In your opinion, were the marks all made by finger-nails but one, and that was the thumb-nail you speak of?"

"Yes."

"The examination of the throat showed there was evidently a struggle," asked Deuprey.

"I did," replied the witness.

"Did it indicate that the victim at the time was crying out and that the hands on the throat were pressed tighter to stifle the outcry?"

"I have no opinion as to that."

Then concerning the nail incision again, Attorney Deuprey said:

"You suppose, then, that the seven nail incisions must have been made by more than one person?"

"We object," said Mr. Barnes.

And the court sustained the objection, ruling that such a question should not be asked of a medical expert witness, and was a matter for the jury to decide for itself. But later on Mr. Deuprey got at the same conclusion in a different way, and then the witness said that the two hands of one person could easily enough produce such severe incisions on the throat, and to prove this Dr. Barrett placed his hands upon the long throat of Attorney Deuprey in such a way that, had they been pressed tightly, would have produced the same kind of marks as those found on the neck of the murdered girl.

Another point brought out clearly by the cross-examination attorney was that, in the opinion of the witness, Blanche La-

mont was in a perfectly healthy condition before she died.

Mr. Deuprey was most searching in his questions. He wanted to know every possible detail connected with the autopsy, and Dr. Barrett answered the questions carefully and thoughtfully.

"And so," said Mr. Deuprey, after a long line of questioning, "it is a fact that from the condition you found the body in it was impossible to arrive at a definite conclusion concerning the cause of death, is it not?"

"No, sir," replied the witness. "I said death was caused by asphyxiation, resulting from strangulation."

"If you have said that the right chamber of the heart was not distended by clotted blood?" asked the attorney.

"Yes, sir."

"Now, is not the distention of the right chamber of the heart the most important indication of asphyxiation?"

Witness admitted that it was an important indication, but not the most important one. In view of all the indications—the finger-marks on the throat, the congestion of the windpipe and other signs—Dr. Barrett had no hesitancy in saying what caused death.

"You speak of the congestion of the windpipe," said Deuprey. "Do you consider that an important indication?"

"Yes, quite important in this case."

"Would not congestion of the windpipe have been caused by the decomposition? Is it not always produced by decomposition?"

"Yes," replied the witness, "but there was a very marked difference in the nature of this congestion. The congestion caused by decomposition makes the organ appear—"

"—and then ensued a technical medical exposition which, for the time being at any rate, rather demolished Mr. Deuprey's point in the cause of death could not be ascertained."

When the hour for the noon adjournment arrived Dr. Barrett was still being cross-examined by Mr. Deuprey.

THE AFTERNOON SESSION.

Dr. Barrett's Examination Concluded—The Model of the Tower and Belfry.

The afternoon session opened in the much more airy quarters formerly occupied by department 7 of the Superior Court. Almost a thousand would-be spectators gathered in front of the door to this room and in the dark corridor leading thereto. They pushed and crowded for fully half an hour before a couple of hundred or more of them were finally admitted and the rest shut out. There is scarcely a room large enough in the City Hall building to accommodate the crowd that sought admission to Judge Murphy's court yesterday afternoon.

When the jury, attorneys and the attaches of the court had pushed and crowded their way through the throng they found in the courtroom an admirably constructed skeleton model of the tower and belfry of Emmanuel Church. It proved to be the work of Officer Russell, the draftsman of the Police Department, who made the cunningly constructed model the subject of a lengthy description after the examination of Dr. Barrett had been concluded.

"How do you conclude that the incisions on the neck were made by a human hand?" was Mr. Deuprey's first question.

"The wounds were just the size, just about as deep and had the same general appearance as those produced by the finger-nails," answered the witness.

"Could not some other sharp instruments have produced the same similar wounds?"

"Possibly so," the witness admitted.

"Then it is true, is it not, that there is nothing to prove conclusively that these incisions were made by finger-nails?" asked the attorney.

"Except, as I have said, their size and general appearance, which indicated very strongly that they were produced by finger-nails."

"But you have said you did not measure the wounds; do you not know that there is a great difference in the size of finger-nails?"

"The witness thought there was not such a great difference. Then Attorney Deuprey asked him to examine the finger-nails of the clerk and the nearest deputy sheriff and tell the jury whether they were of the same size."

Witness did this, and then explained for the second time that the decomposition of the body had proceeded far enough to make minute measurements of the wounds impracticable.

"Did you insert anything in the wounds?" asked Deuprey.

"My own finger-nails."

"You say the wounds were one above the other?"

"Yes, sir."

"Could a human hand have made such wounds—with such regularity?"

Witness thought it could.

Then Mr. Deuprey spread out five of his fingers and clutched them against the other hand, at the same time asking the witness if a hand in that position could have made these regular occurring wounds.

Dr. Barrett answered also in pantomime and speech. He closed his fingers and clutched them, showing that in such a position the same kind of wounds could easily be made.

"And do you think that a hand held in that fashion would have strength enough

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