

ERICSON AFTER EJECTING WIFE AND MOTHER

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In said to have spent nights in the company of a woman who later went to Portland after Ericson went to Spokane. Whether he married this woman is not known here.

Lived Over Office. With his family Ericson lived over the undertaking establishment and was supposed to spend his nights in the office. He plugged the telephones so the stable boys would not be awakened. Then he would leave the office and not return until morning.

It was often necessary for his employers to purchase food for his family and deduct the cost from his salary, as he would otherwise dispose of his money. His actions finally became so unbearable that his wife accepted a "second ticket" when a corpse was to be shipped east and returned to her parents in Minneapolis. Before she left, the employer gave Ericson \$15 for his wife's expenses on the train. He pocketed the money and was about to allow his wife to leave penniless when the employer learned the facts and forced Ericson to turn over the money.

Was Unreliable. "While Ericson was with us, he was unreliable. He carried a suitcase of money he did not turn over, but was left off without prosecution." A local undertaker whose name for the present is withheld, said: "I do not wish to charge the man named Ericson with a theft. While he was with us about \$30 was missing from the safe. If it lay between Ericson and another person."

"Ericson often asked for a leave of absence to visit his sick mother. He went to her only once to our knowledge. He also plugged the telephone so as not to awaken the barn boys."

"His wife, I am informed, got a divorce. Anyway, he married again in Portland."

"He had a sister working in the Unemployment Bureau but she has left town, I believe. Another sister was living here and for some time kept house for John L. Wilson in Seattle. The last I heard of her she was again employed by Wilson."

ERICSON DECLINES TO TALK ANY MORE ABOUT SMITH CASE

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to his connection with the mysterious disappearance of Mrs. Hanna Smith. His latest attitude has increased the confusion and uncertainty of the case. It is now the opinion of the detectives that Ericson alone can explain the disappearance of Mrs. Smith, and that an explanation must come from him, or it will never be obtained.

Ericson, it appears, was the borrower of the widow's \$1200. He was the custodian of her property and her trusted adviser and confidant. Ericson administered to Mrs. Smith four days before her disappearance, and it made her deathly sick. No one has come forward to say that they ever saw Mrs. Smith leave the office of Ericson Sunday night. May 8. The neighbors of the missing woman say that she never returned to her room at Thirteenth and Davis streets.

Neighbors Admissions

Ericson admits that he caused the fake telegram to be sent from Los Angeles to Mrs. Anna Harper, the niece of the Swedish widow. He says that he paid her \$450 on Sunday night when she came to see him. He denies that he ever borrowed any money from her, but his statement is flatly contradicted by Mrs. Ockwig, Mrs. A. Nelson, Mrs. Boden, N. C. Hanson and others whom Mrs. Smith had told that she lent her money to Ericson on 7 per cent interest. Mrs. A. Nelson of 387 Patton road said this morning that she tried to borrow the \$1200 which Mrs. Smith received from the sale of her Portland Heights property at 6 per cent interest, but was told that Ericson had it, the rate of interest promised being 7 per cent.

Mrs. Augusta Ober, James D. Ogden and others testify that Ericson tried to keep Mrs. Smith from buying property with her money when he represented to Mrs. Smith that he was helping her. All of the witnesses mentioned declare that Mrs. Smith was completely dominated by Ericson, that the widow explained this by saying that Ericson had borrowed her money, and she must consult him about everything before she could get it.

Did Not Borrow \$25

It was the opinion of Mrs. Ockwig that Mrs. Smith did not borrow \$25 to pay down on the Mount Scott property, but that she made the mistake of thinking she had in order that he might believe her destitute.

The Mount Scott property was purchased from Mrs. Croft by Mrs. Smith, and the remainder of the \$650 purchase price was to have been paid Monday, May 8. The date for the conclusion of the transaction was set then for Tuesday. Attorney C. P. Olson completed the abstract of title and turned it over to Ericson, who has never explained what he did with it.

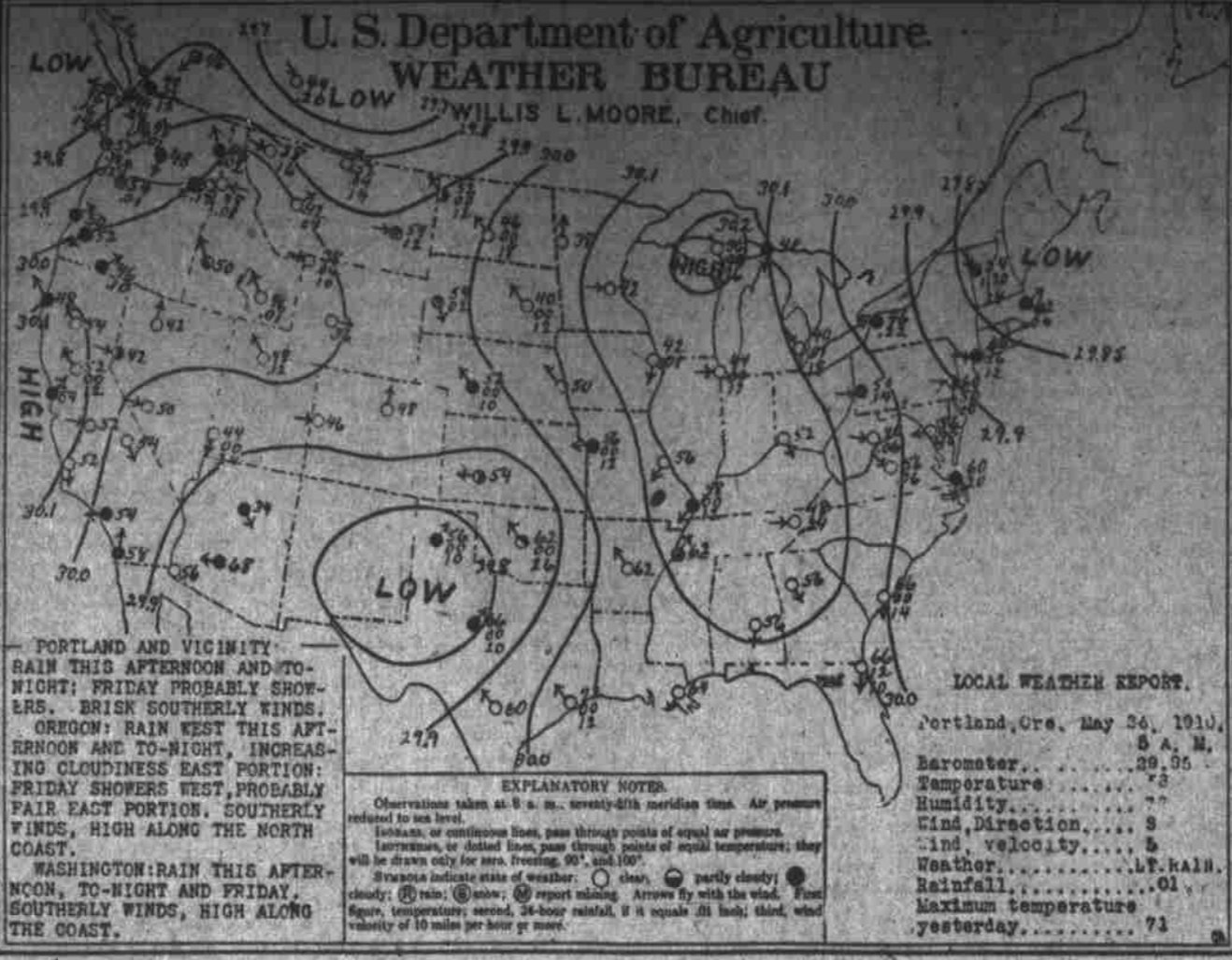
Ericson now has in his safe, tied up in little blue sacks, a little more than \$207, which he says is all the property Mrs. Smith had left of her \$1200. He also has the widow's gold watch. This was found under her pillow by Mrs. Boden, when the room was searched after Mrs. Smith disappeared.

Mrs. Smith and her husband a short time before the death of the latter called upon Judge Fred Olson in reference to their property. The husband was very anxious that all his property be left to his wife. As he expressed to Judge Olson, she had worked hard, and his children by his former wife were able to take care of themselves.

The property was made out in the name of Mrs. Smith. Soon after the death of her husband, however, the widow was bothered much by the children, who were attempting to effect a settlement. They were advised that everything was left to the widow, and nothing more was heard from them. Mrs. Smith had told the judge that Ericson was taking care of her property, and that was the last he saw of her.

NEIGHBORS TELL OF MRS. SMITH'S VIOLENT ILLNESS

Matilda Nelson, a Swedish working girl, was the last person who saw Mrs. Hanna Smith before she made the mysterious Sunday night call upon E. E. Ericson. Whether she was the "well formed blond" who called for Mrs.



Smith at the corner of Tenth and Alder is not determined. None of the girl's friends have been able to locate her since immediately after Mrs. Smith disappeared. It is believed that if Matilda Nelson is discovered night will be shed on incidents connected with the Swedish widow's disappearance.

Neighbors Heard Groans

Mrs. W. R. Breed, Mrs. Caroline Shulsted and her daughter, Georgia Shulsted, who lived as neighbors to Mrs. Smith at the rear of the vacant church on Thirteenth and Davis, all made statements this morning showing that the wine which Ericson gave the widow a few days before she dropped out of sight not only made her exceedingly sick at the time, but she never recovered from the illness.

"I heard Mrs. Smith groaning all that night," Georgia Shulsted related. "And she was sick all the next day. We heard her groaning as she moved around. Ericson came early that morning and asked for Mrs. Smith. She was down in the basement getting wood with which to build a fire and he told them who he was. Then he got a bucket and fetched some water. He said that Mrs. Smith had been taken ill the night before and he brought her home."

Widow Was Inoffensive

Georgia Shulsted's story was corroborated by her mother and Mrs. Breed. All said that Mrs. Smith was quiet and inoffensive, attending strictly to her own business. None of them saw any one approaching the description of Matilda Nelson with her Sunday afternoon.

At the livery stable where Ericson keeps his teams and harness it was stated that no record is kept of the dates when he has them in use. He could have all or any part of his equipment out at any time of the day or night and no account was kept of the fact.

Allying a suspicion that Ericson might have had Mrs. Smith's body surreptitiously cremated, the superintendent of the cremation association in Sellwood, where all such work is done, keeps his teams and harness it was stated that no record is kept of the dates when he has them in use. He could have all or any part of his equipment out at any time of the day or night and no account was kept of the fact.

MRS. HANNA SMITH HAD PRESENTMENT THAT DEATH APPROACHING

A few days after Mrs. Hanna Smith drank poisoned wine in E. E. Ericson's undertaking establishment, she began to tell her friends that she was afraid death, in some weird way, was approaching her.

"I am afraid to go home. Some way I feel as though God will take me home to heaven pretty soon," she telephoned on Friday, May 16, two days before she disappeared, to Mrs. Anna Ockwig, 225 Albina avenue. "I am so sad and disappointed about my home because Ericson doesn't let me have my money."

"I never heard her talk that way before in all the 32 years that I have known her," said Mrs. Ockwig at her home this morning. "She was always

so bright and cheerful, but she wanted a home more than anything else in the world."

"Ericson says he never borrowed any money from Mrs. Smith, but she sat right here in my home on April 22 and told me that before she went back to Sweden a year ago that she loaned him the whole \$1200 she got for her Portland Heights property and she was to have 7 per cent interest on it. She said to me:

"Do you know he never has said a word about that interest, and when I go to ask him about it he is so nice like a son to me that I can't say to mention it. He takes me down in the basement and says I can have silk for waists and fine black stockings or anything else I want. When I tell him I want the money I lent him again he says there is such a hard time and he has so much money out that I can't keep asking him because I am afraid to see him. And then he tells me two or three times if I wait two or three days he can get it."

"I tell you," Mrs. Ockwig continued, "we made up our minds a good while before anything happened to Mrs. Smith that Ericson was planning never to give her back her money. I believe, as sure as I am alive, that Mrs. Smith is dead and that I will never see her again."

I think it is funny that no one has been arrested. The Scandinavian people here in Portland are stirred up over this. This holiday murder has been committed.

WOMAN PLANNING TO BUY HOME WHEN SHE DROPPED FROM SIGHT

How E. E. Ericson, while apparently helping Mrs. Smith find a house, worked hard to keep her from making a purchase, was told yesterday by Mrs. Augusta Ober, 783 Montana avenue.

"We had a little place to sell for \$1000 and Mrs. Smith came over to see about buying it," said Mrs. Ober. "She told us she had \$1200 to spend for a home, but that she wanted to have \$100 to buy some furniture. She said, too, that she wouldn't buy any place until she consulted Ericson."

"Ericson came over. He objected to the place. When they started to go he came back and shut the door. Then he said to me, 'Don't make any deal with her. She is cranky and hard to get along with and she would make a bad neighbor. I wouldn't want her near me, for she is a great nuisance.'"

"Mrs. Smith came over again and my husband made some plans for a little three room cottage which he could build for \$500 on a lot which she was to buy from James D. Ogden, 543 Mississippi avenue. She said she had \$1200 to spend and she must not buy anything beyond that or without speaking to Ericson."

"Why do you have to speak to Ericson about everything?" I asked her. "Oh, he has my money," she said. "I lent him my money and I must get it from him before I can buy anything." "Ericson came out two or three times, and he went to Ogden and told him what he told me, about not selling Mrs. Smith anything because she was cranky, and a bad neighbor."

"She was going to come back on Monday, May 9, to wind up the bargain for the lot and the little house. When she didn't come I called up Ericson. I said, 'Isn't Mrs. Smith going to buy the lot on Borthwick street?' She is lost," he answered. Just as soon as he said that I thought of the wife that Mrs. Boden said he gave Mrs. Smith and how sick it made her. There was something so funny about his manner that I thought something awful had happened to Mrs. Smith."

"Then he went on and told that Mrs. Smith had more troubles than anyone knew, and added, 'She said some time she was going to jump into the river.' "Finally he told me about giving her money three different times and that her trip to the old country cost \$200. I see now that he says he gave her money a great many times and \$200 for the trip to Europe."

Something Not Needed. From the St. Louis Star. "Why is it that poets never comb their hair?" "The poor fellows worry themselves bald headed before they get the price of a comb."

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