

### MURDER OF GIRL FOLLOWED PLOT DREISER'S NOVEL

#### Death Penalty Will Be Sought in Pennsylvania Trial 'American Tragedy' Murder Case, Slated Soon

By JOSEPH S. WADSWORTH, United Press Staff Correspondent. WILKES-BARRE, Pa.—(UP)—The "American Tragedy" murder case of Bobbie Edwards will be called for trial soon.

Bobbie, according to police charges, by his own confession, spun a triangular web about himself. He killed his childhood sweetheart in order to be free to continue another romance. Theodore Dreiser's novel "An American Tragedy" was re-enacted in almost every detail, police say, by the 23-year-old mining engineer, although the youth contends he never has read the story.

#### Childhood Sweethearts.

Robert A. Edwards and Freda McKechnie, 26, an Edwinstown church worker, were childhood sweethearts. They had planned to marry and Freda was to become a mother in four months.

But Bobbie met another girl while he was attending college and carried on a dual courtship.

Edwards, like Clyde Griffiths in the novel, posed as a sophisticated, masterful youth who knew much of life. But when he found out that Freda was "in trouble" he was at a loss.

#### The Lake—a Boat.

Like Dreiser's Roberta, there was Miss McKechnie facing motherhood, pleading for marriage. Then Edwards, police charge, planned, much like the novel—"the lake—a boat—tell her you intend to marry her—and if necessary strike a light blow so as to stun her—so that falling into the water she will drown the more easily."

Bobbie, according to police, said in his confession that he was torn between two desires. The "other girl" in the triangle was Margaret Crain, 23, a music teacher of East Aurora, N. Y.

Thomas M. Lewis, Luzerne county prosecutor, charges that Bobbie wanted to get rid of Freda so he would be free to marry Margaret.

On the night of July 30, police charge that Bobbie and Freda drove to Harvey's lake, a summer resort near here. Despite a storm they went in swimming. They charge that Bobbie had hidden a blackjack in his bathing suit.

#### First Admission.

Lewis charges Edwards now admits he "walloped her on the head." In his first confession, police say, the youth claimed Freda fainted in a row boat and he then hit her, intending to make her death appear accidental.

Then, like Sanders in the novel, Margaret Crain rushed to Edwards' aid. At the time of her sweetheart's arrest she was visiting a brother in Rochester, N. Y. He drove the girl 225 miles to the Wyoming State Police barracks so that she could talk with and comfort Bobbie.

"I'll stick by him no matter what happens," Miss Crain said when she left Edwards. The news and her arrest and she promised to return. Bobbie hasn't heard from her since.

#### Final Chapter.

The final chapter in Pennsylvania's own "American Tragedy" will be written in the court room here. Dreiser's mythical character "Clyde" was electrocuted.

The Commonwealth announced it would demand the death penalty for Edwards, following a grand jury indictment for murder. The defense has given no intimation of what case it will present.

Edwards has shown no remorse for the act with which he is charged, and which he freely admits. His one concern, according to keepers, is whether Margaret will attend the trial.

### MODERN JOB REPAYS FLOCK OF BILLS WITH MEAGER \$90 SALARY

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—(UP)—The Home Owners' Loan corporation reports the case of a modern job, a car repair man living in southeastern Kansas, whose salary is \$90 a month.

In April, 1929, the applicant's daughter was knocked down by a motor car, suffering injuries that made her practically an invalid for a year. Medical bills, \$250.

Two months later the applicant's son was injured by a tractor. Treatment for a crushed jawbone, \$1,000. In August the applicant's home burned, destroying all of the family's furniture, clothing and personal property. Only half of a \$1,000 loss was covered by insurance.

In March, 1931, the applicant's mother died. Applicant's share of funeral expenses, \$200. At the same time the applicant's wife became ill and had to have household help for three months. Later she broke her arm.

In November, 1932, a daughter had her tonsils removed. Cost, \$35. Three other children in the family suffered attacks of measles. When that epidemic was out of the way five of them became ill of smallpox. Recently the applicant's wife entered a hospital for an operation. While she was there the second home of the family burned down. The applicant claims he has paid all of his expenses so far.

#### Beer Taste Caused Trouble

BOSTON (UP)—Perhaps George Ason's taste for beer led him to serious trouble. He was sentenced to serve five years and a day at the Concord Reformatory for stealing 14 bottles of beer.

### NATION'S FORESTS SEE INCREASE OF FIRES THIS YEAR

WASHINGTON—(UP)—A 75 per cent increase in forest fires has been reported by the forest service.

Up to Aug. 1, the service said, the total area burned over within the nation's 145 national forests totaled 142,522 acres, or about 24,000 acres more than the average for the preceding three years. The number of fires, however, increased from an average of 3668 in the first seven months to 6077. Man-caused blazes increased about 50 per cent from 2229 to 3347.

"There is cautious rejoicing in the forest service that we are managing to keep losses down fairly close to the records of more favorable years, despite this year's extremely unfavorable climatic conditions," Roy Headley, assistant forester, said. "The early beginning of dry weather in the west, with poor woodsmanship on the part of some of the millions of users of the national forests, resulted in a 50 per cent increase in man-caused fires this year."

"Carelessness of a relatively few smokers and others results in such a number of needless fires that the whole public is made to appear ignorant of how to use their wooded areas without destroying them."

The forest service said lightning was one of the principal causes of the more serious fires. Critical conditions were reported by all western forest regions and in certain areas of the east and south.

### Talent

TALENT, Sept. 7.—(Sp.)—Mr. and Mrs. Ross Lewis of Iowa have leased the Doyle service station.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Goode and Juanita Bates spent the week-end at Lake o' the Woods.

Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Kinkaid and children accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Art Lewis of Medford to Diamond lake over labor day.

Miss Verna Paulson, who has been visiting relatives and friends in Bend, returned home Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. McMahon visited friends in Grants Pass Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Childers returned home Saturday from two weeks of vacation at the coast.

Mrs. Ray Shoemaker was brought home from the Community hospital in Medford Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hollingsworth of San Pedro, Calif., was visiting friends in Talent Wednesday. Mrs. Hollingsworth will be remembered as Pearl Hughes.

Mrs. Helen Bagdale and children of Eagle Point visited Mrs. Mary Higgins Sunday.

Friends of Ronald Parks were surprised to learn of his marriage to Miss Harriet Bevington of Ashland August 26. The marriage took place at the Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, Calif., the ceremony being performed by the Rev. Enoch Jones. Mr. and Mrs. Parks left for Malin, where Mrs. Parks will teach in the primary department and Mr. Parks will teach in the upper grades and coach.

Carl Beeson left September 6 for the veterans' hospital in Roseburg. Mrs. Beeson left for San Francisco, where her daughter, Rose is very ill. Shorty McReynolds of Grants Pass was visiting friends in Talent over the week-end.

Mrs. Block was home from Crater lake Sunday.

Mrs. Churchill and children left for San Francisco, having leased her service station to Mr. and Mrs. Richardson of Texas.

Brad Dixon returned Saturday from Salem.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Withrow returned from Portland Friday. Miss Mildred Withrow, who has been visiting relatives in Portland for the past three weeks, returned home with them.

Ray Shoemaker of Ray's Market, will open another store in Phoenix Saturday.

Henry Warner, who has been in Happy Camp for the past month, returned home Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. N. Ashcraft were transacting business in Grants Pass Wednesday.

Hearing On Bus Permit Sought

SALEM, Sept. 7.—(AP)—A petition requesting a rehearing on the permit issued the National Bus Lines, Inc., to operate in Oregon on a Seattle to Los Angeles route, has been filed with the public utilities commission by four competing bus lines.

The four were the Pacific Greyhound Lines, North Coast Transportation company, Oregon Motor Stages and the Oregon Bus association.

#### Sophie Tucker Gets Black Eye

LONDON, Eng., Sept. 7.—(AP)—Sophie Tucker, the original "blues" singer on the American stage, got a black eye last night intervening in a fight between two women seeking her autograph.

The actress' peace-making efforts were nearly disastrous when one of the women, aiming a hairmaker at the other, landed flush on her optic.

#### Pomona Grange

The Pomona Grange lecture hour will start promptly at 8 p. m. Saturday at the Central Point Grange hall. Mrs. O. C. West, Pomona lecturer, announced today. The Pomona H. E. C. committee will present the program. The lecture hour is open to the public.

#### Cockroaches Her Assistants

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. (UP)—Beated by her neighbors in an over-the-fence quarrel, Mrs. Ellen Zienka enlisted the aid of cockroaches to "get even." She dumped an apronful on the neighbor's porch and was arrested for breach of peace.

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