

val

20

RALPH R. FRIED

SHOT TO DEATH
KILLED WHILE AT WORK IN OFFICE
Murdered Man Well Known Here Where
He Had Relatives, Local Bar As-
sociation Takes Action.

James A. Finch, a disbarred attorney, while on the influence of

drink or drugs, is in the Multnomah county jail, charged with the murder of Ralph Fisher, a well known Portland lawyer whom he killed last Saturday. The murder of Fisher is not without local interest here as the wife of the victim of Finch's mad frenzy is a sister of C. T. Roberts of Good River and his mother a first cousin of the mother of K. H. Cochrane. On learning of the tragedy, Mr. and Mrs. Roberts went at once to lend their aid and sympathy to the grief stricken wife of Fisher, who with a babe of a few months is left to mourn the loss of a devoted husband and father.

The murder of Fisher, who is said to have been a man of fine character and exemplary habits as told by the Journal is as follows:

Finch murdered Ralph B. Fisher in the latter's office, 322 Mohawk building, at 430 7th ave. Saturday afternoon. The assassin was given no time no chance for his life but shot him to death from behind as Mr. Fisher sat at his desk. Mr. Fisher never even saw the man who killed him. Finch entered the office where Fisher and his stenographer, Miss Verna H. Buckhardt, were and said 'hello, Ralph.' At the same instant he reached in his hip pocket and pulled

"The first bullet struck the lawyer on the forehead, just above the base of the skull. As the mortally wounded man half rose from his chair at the impact of the bullet, the second bullet struck him in the chest, Finch fired again, but missed, the third bullet breaking the plate glass of the window. A third time the assassin pulled the trigger, and Mr. Fisher fell to the floor stone dead, a bullet through his brain. He fell half on his right shoulder, his legs under the desk and partly bent. He must have been dead before his head reached the floor, and he never moved again.

enough to make sure that he had completed his work, then, with the smoking revolver still in his hand, left the office and ran down the corridor to the elevator, which he entered at the same time as did Miss Burkhardt, the stenographer who had witnessed the crime and who, frightened almost to hysterics, had fled from the room with the sound of the shots echoing in her ears.

"It does not appear that Finch had any definite plan of escape other than merely to run away from the scene of his crime. But he got no further than the head of the stairs, for Dr.

that of the murdered man and when he had heard the shots and the screaming of Miss Buckhardt, ran out into the corridor and seeing Finch running down the hall, realized that the man whom he had committed some crime, and ran after him.

"As he laid his hand on Finch to hold him, the murderer reached for his pocket to draw the revolver again, but at this instant Victor V. Dolph ran out of his office and seized Finch by the arm. D. Leonard and Mr. Dolph proceeded in wresting the gun from Finch's grasp and led him back down the corridor toward the door of the man whom he had slain.

The police were immediately notified by Dr. John Davis that a man had been shot, though when he telephoned, Dr. Davis did not know where it was. Officer Casey, Patrolman Thorpe, Harms and Leisy and Detective Schenker arrived within a few minutes and took charge of the murderer, who was seized by Dr. R. Kelly, Dr. W. A. Roberts and Mr. Dolph. Finch was taken into the room where his victim lay dead upon the floor, his head in a thickening pool of blood and allowed to view his work. But he expressed no regret at what he had done, took no interest in the body of the man whose

The motive which prompted Finch to shoot Fisher is said to be on account of the fact that the latter was a prosecutor for the bar association of Portland instituted the proceedings that caused his disbarment from practicing his profession.

The assassin's law partner, C. H. Piggett, who will represent Finch in

of the shooting was the breaking of faith by the dead prosecutor in a agreement between him and Finch concerning the prosecution of the defendant proceedings against the latter. Mr. Piggett furthermore expressed the opinion that Finch was not in his right mind and had been in a dazed condition for several days prior to the tragedy.

At a meeting of the Hood River County Bar Association held Monday the following resolutions were adopted in connection with Mr. Fisher's tragic death.

Whereas, Mr. Ralph B. Fisher, late

Whereas, the apparent reason for such unprecedented and cowardly deed was that the deceased had the courage of his convictions and dared to stand for the right:

Whereas, the state has been deprived of a useful citizen; a wife and child have been deprived of an affectionate husband and father, and the Bar of the State of Oregon, of a just conscientious and able member:

Now therefore, be it resolved by the Hood River County Bar Association, that they will consider and do, death of

(Continued on Page 2.)