

SERIOUS CRIME TAKES HOLIDAY

By HALE SCARBROUGH

Serious crime took a well deserved holiday in Klamath county during 1947, but the petty stuff—bad checks, burglaries and car thefts—really flourished.

Only one homicide went into the books and that one is still in the doubtful category. On July 7, Melvin Larson died from injuries received in a fight and Wayne Fetters was charged with murder in connection with the death. The charge was later reduced to manslaughter and Fetters is out on bail awaiting grand jury action.

The year started off with a vengeance, when Donald Yancey was given a life sentence for second degree murder of Miss Mary McComb. The killing occurred in December, 1946, and Yancey was sentenced last January 3.

Only one other life sentence was delivered in the local circuit court, that to Charles Samuel as a habitual criminal July 1.

Murder

Early last January the El Rancho Tule murder and robbery of the year previous broke into the news when Sheriff Lloyd Low went to Washington to question a suspect. But no arrest was made then or since. The El Rancho Tule crime is still one of the major unsolved cases of the Klamath basin.

Jack Kyle Perry, a Klamath Falls resident, was sent to San Quentin for the rest of his life last February for a degenerate attack on a local high school girl near Dorris. Perry was sentenced from Siskiyou county.

On February 3, Donald Gordon Roberts, in custody and awaiting sentence for car theft, made a break for liberty at the courthouse and was shot and killed by Deputy Sheriff Marion Barnes. The officer was later exonerated by a coroner's jury in a report that he acted in line of duty.

City Police Officer Vern Wagner, indicted late in 1946 for assaulting a city prisoner, was found guilty after a trial in March and was put on parole for one year.

On March 31, two San Quentin

escapees, Alfred Paine and Norman Jacklin, had a gun battle with officers here in town. Jacklin was captured and Paine was later found in Russellville, Ark. Both went back to San Quentin.

Probably the most sensational criminal case of the year came in May when a Portland minister was arrested for contributing to the delinquency of a 10-year-old local girl. Nagel was found guilty after a prolonged trial and is appealing to the state supreme court.

The Indian reservation came into the news early in June when Roland Hicks was sought for the shooting of Eveland Chiloquin. Hicks gave up after an all-night standoff in a

Chiloquin rooming house. Chiloquin recovered and a federal grand jury did not indict Hicks.

June 15 saw the start of a criminal case which had the entire Pacific coast upset. It was the "Little Miss X" beating and abandonment—a two-year-old girl was found nearly dead in a clump of bushes back of a Weed, Calif. dance hall. After a sensational run of some two weeks, that story ended when Hugh Gilreath and Mrs. Louise Medlin were arrested near Grants Pass. They are serving 20-year terms in the Oregon prison and "Miss X" has been identified as Mary Jane Medlin.

In September, Ernest Huston Clark was captured inside a Main street jewelry store with some \$20,000 worth of rings and watches stuffed in his pockets. He got five years.

Girl Killed

Latest of the crimes of a sensational nature to hit the headlines was the disappearance from Klamath Falls of Lulu Mae Easley, 26-year-old Stockton waitress, in November. Later the disappearance changed to murder when the girl's body was found near Roseville, Calif. She had been shot six times and her male companion, Kenneth

Allen Miller, is being sought as the triggerman.

The county grand jury has not been in session since June and consequently will have around 20 felonies to consider sometime this month. However, there are very few crimes of any great consequence hanging over into the new year.

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