

Nurse Held on Murder and Abortion

Inquest Fixes Blame for Death of Woman

Medical evidence, spun out during an inquest, resulted in the arrest of Mrs. Elizabeth Strong, 57, on murder and abortion charges Thursday.

The arrest culminated a three-week investigation into the death of Mrs. Priscilla Young, 37, prominent clubwoman and mother of four. Mrs. Young died in the home of Mrs. Strong, a practical nurse, of 2216 W. 236th pl., March 31. The arrest was made after Dr. Howard Kade, autopsy physician, testified that Mrs. Young died within seconds, or at the most, minutes after she had undergone an abortion.

Great-Grandmother
Mrs. Strong, a plump great-grandmother, said she was "shocked" at the arrest. She repeated under oath that Mrs. Young, whom she termed a close friend of five to six years, came to her home on the evening of March 30, and spent the night with her.

The grey-haired nurse said she found the deceased's body at approximately 8:30 a.m. on March 31, on the floor of her guest bedroom.

Capt. Ernest Ashton, who arrested Mrs. Strong at the conclusion of Thursday's inquest, said that she did not call police until approximately two hours after Mrs. Young died.

Preliminary Hearing
"This would have given her plenty of opportunity to get rid of the instruments and clean up the house," the investigator said. Mrs. Strong will face preliminary hearing Wednesday at 10 a.m. before Municipal Judge John A. Shidler, before whom she was arraigned Friday morning. Her bail was set at \$5000. A request for reduction of bail by the defendant's attorney, Ray Choate, was refused.

The coroner's verdict was that death was caused by cardiac and cerebral air emboli, due to incomplete abortion, other conditions, cervical lacerations due to instrumentation, and found that the death was homicidal and that Mrs. Strong was probably criminally responsible.

Clubwoman
Mrs. Young, a divorcee, worked in her parents' Wilmington restaurant. She was prominent in several women's organizations and was described as very popular. Ashton said that he had been waiting for the autopsy report before making the arrest. "We've got her sworn state-

ment that she alone in the house with her for 12 hours preceding her death," he said.

Dr. Kade's testimony held that death was almost instantaneous. Mrs. Strong denied the accusation against her while talking to reporters before her arraignment.

"Contrary to public opinion, I love children," she said. She said she has three daughters, 10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, and that she had received her nursing training in a children's hospital.

While waiting for her arraignment, she chain-smoked nervously, and denied that she had stalled for two hours before making a call to police.

She emphatically denied performing the abortion, and insisted that Mrs. Young came to her some to spend the evening.

Ashton said that a second degree murder conviction will be sought.

Lomita Pioneer Dies Thursday

Mrs. Pearl Montonya, 78, died Thursday night in her home, 2321 Forest dr., Lomita. Born in Illinois, she came to California as a small child. She had lived in her Lomita home for the past 25 years.

She leaves a son, Fred M. Montonya and a nephew, Forrest Perkins of Lomita and a sister, Juanita Parsons of Wichita, Kan. A Rebekah funeral will be held at 10 a.m. Monday from the Halbertson funeral home and burial will be in Roosevelt cemetery.

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EXCELLENT HORSEMANSHIP—Virgil Bolles, left, president of the Torrance Mounted Police, shows first-place trophy the equestrian unit won Sunday at the San Bernardino Sheriff's Rodeo to Police Chief Percy Bennett. This is the 33rd first prize trophy won by the Torrance horsemen in the past four years. —Press Photo

City Bids for New Award

Torrance's bid as the "Typical American City of 100,000 population," will be sent off today by civic and city officials.

The U. S. Junior Chamber of Commerce is making the selection of a city to be used by the Voice of America program for educational purposes for Iron Curtain countries.

The letter, asking that Torrance be selected, was signed by Frank Dussel, president of the Junior Chamber of Commerce, O. E. Trueblood, president of the Chamber of Commerce, Dick Fitzgerald, Chamber manager, and Mayor Albert Isen.

The signers stressed that Torrance was selected for All-American honors for its consistent civic improvement, and that this city is typical as a "melting pot" for virtually all creeds, color and races.

It will be shown that it is a youthful city with a median age of 25.6 years. More than half the population is under the age of 21.

They stressed that Torrance has one of the lowest crime rates in California and small fire losses.

Gee Cleared of Embezzlement

Jack Gee, 52, who was fired as Torrance's bail collector, was found not guilty of embezzlement charges in a court trial before Superior Judge Lewis Drucker this week.

Gee, who claimed that some ball receipts were stolen from his car, produced several initial receipts during his trial.

Investigation into the ball collection procedures was triggered after a man who was arrested on traffic warrants, claimed that he had paid Gee, and produced a receipt.

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DEATH PROBED—Capt. Ernest Ashton of the Torrance Police Department, talks to Mrs. Mary Strong, held on charges of murder and abortion, while she awaited arraignment in municipal court. Preliminary hearing was set for Wednesday. —Press photo

Local Boy Goes On Active Duty

Pvt. I. Doyle E. Wood, son of Mr. and Mrs. John C. Wood, 1519 W. 208th st., Torrance, departs for six months active duty for training at Fort Ord on April 26.

Wood is a member of Hq. and Hq. Co., First Battalion, 253rd Infantry Regiment's communication platoon stationed at the Army Reserve Center, Fort MacArthur.

Private Wood graduated from Narbonne High School, Harbor City.

Upon completion of his six months active duty for training, he will finish the remainder of his reserve obligation at Fort MacArthur.



AWAITS HEARING—Mrs. Mary Strong, a practical nurse, awaits arraignment on charges of murder and abortion, following her arrest at a coroner's inquest Thursday. She is held for death of Mrs. Priscilla Young. —Press photo

Dope-Crazed Bandit Slugs and Robs Pharmacist Here

A dope-crazed bandit viciously slugged a pharmacist during a robbery Thursday night and escaped with a haul of cash and narcotics.

Al Patronsky, 48, on duty at the Torrance Professional Pharmacy, 2055 Torrance blvd., told police the holdup man held a long-barreled .38 caliber revolver in his hand when he approached the rear of the store.

"Give me your narcotics, give me your narcotics," he panted. Asked if he was kidding, the bandit cocked his gun and snarled:

"Give me your morphine and cocaine."

Patronsky handed him three bottles of morphine tablets and a partially filled cocaine bottle. The bandit, who had long, blond hair, instructed the pharmacist to put the narcotics in

a sack and then ordered him to turn over the cash.

He stuffed \$200 in bills into the sack, and while Patronsky had his back turned, slugged him over the top of the head.

The bandit then left by the rear door.

Youth Pulls Knife

Torrance police were searching for a 16-year-old boy who pulled a knife when caught syphoning gasoline from a parked car.

The incident was reported by Jean Bateman of 18926 Wilton place.

HOGS MOVED OUT

Hogs became the victims of Torrance's progress during the past year when the City Council ordered the ranches closed down, for less agricultural uses of the land.

Permits Reveal Hidden Assets

Torrance's \$9,413,850 in new building permit valuations for the first quarter of 1958 and the growing debt they represent are protected by vast reserves of "hidden assets" in the form of U. S. Savings Bonds.

U. S. Bond Chairman George

W. Post said in this community the holdings amount to about \$16,950,000 but are rarely counted in official tabulation of assets. The estimate is based on the national average of one-fourth of the population owning an average of \$1000 per saver.

"Undoubtedly a great part of our sound national economic health is due to the fact that 40 million Americans are now holding a total of more than \$40 billion in United States Savings Bonds."

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