



The Indianapolis Times

HOME

Unsettled with light rain tonight and possibly Saturday morning; lowest temperature tonight about 40, somewhat colder Saturday.

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INDIANAPOLIS, FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 1931

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County 3 Cents

BEAUTY QUEEN MAY NOT FACE MURDER TRIAL

Investigation Bears Out
Charlotte Nash's Self-
Defense Claim.

CALLER 'GOOD MOTHER'

Family of Slain Husband Is
Unlikely to Push
Prosecution.

By United Press

NICE, France, March 13.—Police investigation of the death of Fred G. Nixon-Nirdlinger indicated today that his widow, the former Charlotte Nash of St. Louis, who admitted shooting her husband, might never face trial for the killing.

As police were re-enacting the shooting at the home of the couple on the Promenade Des Anglais, it appeared likely that the traditional French attitude toward "crime passionnel" would come to the aid of the girl who won second honors in the 1924 Atlantic City beauty pageant. Preliminary investigation was said to bear out her contention that she shot in self-defense.

It was pointed out that the police had partly verified Mrs. Nixon-Nirdlinger's story by determining the angle at which a bullet found in the wall of the room had been fired. She said she fired the first shot from the bed while her husband was choking her. Doctors also said that the bruises on her neck indicated she had been severely handled.

Charge Not to Be Pushed

Furthermore, Charles Loeb, the American lawyer representing the Nixon-Nirdlinger family in Philadelphia, did not indicate that he would push the prosecution. He arranged to have the body of the theatrical man sent to Philadelphia. Police questioned friends of the couple at Nice and Saint Moritz, where they were frequently seen at sports events, and received a favorable report on Mrs. Nixon-Nirdlinger, who was widely praised as a good mother.

It was said that most of their friends also testified to her husband's jealousy and blamed the tragedy on "another case of 54 marrying 20."

The Philadelphia and his wife had returned only a few days before the shooting from St. Moritz, where Mrs. Nixon-Nirdlinger was one of the best beauty skaters.

"Never Marry Beauty Queen"

It was recalled that soon after their return an Englishman acquaintance had complimented the American on having such a beautiful wife.

"Let me warn you, young man, never marry a beauty queen," Nixon-Nirdlinger was said to have replied. "Nature can not give intellectual companionship and a perfect face."

The American girl was often mistaken for the daughter of Nixon-Nirdlinger, who was more than thirty years her senior, but he always appeared to be amused by the error.

Their two children, one 18 months old and the other 3 years, were in charge of a Swedish nurse at the villa where the tragedy occurred.

Mrs. Nixon-Nirdlinger was clad in pink pajamas when police arrived at the villa.

Mrs. Nixon-Nirdlinger wrote her confession in jail, using a jeweled fountain pen which was a gift from her husband.

"We had dined together," she wrote. "My husband had been drinking wine and whisky and later I went to the boudoir to put on my pajamas. I returned to the living room, where my husband was working on a crossword puzzle. I started to study Italian when he said: 'You must have an Italian lover. I will change my will and disinherit your children.'"

Fired Several Times

"Then he stalked into the kitchen and drank more whisky. I went to the bedroom and placed the revolver under my pillow, because several times before he had threatened to kill me. My husband came into the room and undressed, saying, 'I will kill you rather than let you have an Italian lover.'"

"I answered that I need have no fears on that score. Then he started choking me. I grabbed the revolver and fired point blank. He staggered out of the room and I pursued him, firing several times. Then I faintly. As soon as I revived I started searching for the conchery, but fainted again."

FIGHT HARVARD CHAPEL

Proposed Memorial to War Dead Is
Opposed by Student Editors.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., March 13.—The proposed Harvard World War Memorial chapel would represent religious discrimination, editors of The Crimson, undergraduate daily, charged today existing student opposition to the project.

Work on the \$1,000,000 chapel, to commemorate Harvard's hero dead in the World war, was to start in June.

TOM MIX SPEAKS HERE

Western Star Addresses Members of
Optimist Club.

Tom Mix, screen star, addressed members of the Optimist Club today at the Claypool. Roy L. Davidson was master of ceremonies.

Hourly Temperatures
6 a. m. 38 10 a. m. 43
7 a. m. 38 11 a. m. 44
8 a. m. 40 12 noon 45
9 a. m. 41 1 p. m. 45

All's Lost

Jobless, Destitute Man
Suicide for Allowing
Wife's Disgrace.

By United Press

KRON, O., March 13.—A jaded romance that led a wife to disgrace and her husband to suicide, today provided one of the most dramatic tragedies on Akron police records.

Jobless and driven to remorse for having permitted his wife to disgrace herself for love of him, Amos N. Shenk appeared at the women's detention home, where she was taken after her arrest, and asked for her.

"I want to bid farewell to my wife," he told Mrs. Anna Deneen, custodian. "I am going to kill myself in a few minutes."

He handed her his purse containing \$23, his watch and a diamond ring.

Alarmed, the matron retired from the room to call police. Seeing them arrive Shenk lifted a vial to his lips and gulped the contents.

"You're too late, boy," he said calmly. "It's the most deadly poison known."

He staggered to the police car, where he was taken to the city hospital emergency ward and died two hours later in the arms of his wife.

An impassioned note of love and self-condemnation was found on his person. It read:

"Oh, how I love you, but I am not worthy to be your husband. If I could only hold you in my arms again, I love you, I love you, I love you."

Weeping bitterly, Mrs. Shenk told officers she had gone to a disorderly house after her husband. He had sought work and their funds were exhausted. She was arrested in a police raid.

MURDER SPOT BELIEVED FOUND

Police Think Virginia
Brooks Was in Shack.

By United Press

SAN DIEGO, Cal., March 13.—In the belief they may have located a shack in which 10-year-old Virginia Brooks was held captive prior to her murder, police today sought identification by the girl's mother of portions of the undergarment found in the building.

During the night, chemist Macey of the police department subjected the fabric to a chemical analysis. Investigators received a setback Thursday night when Dr. Earnest Mundkowsky announced after an examination that the girl's body had not, as at first believed, been mutilated. Its condition, he said, was due to the natural decomposition.

Jerry L. Davis, 21, under sentence to San Quentin prison for burglary, was questioned by police in connection with the slaying.

Davis' admission that he was in San Diego, Feb. 11, when Virginia disappeared and that he had herded sheep on the Mesa at Camp Kearney, where her body was found, led police to delay his removal to San Quentin pending word from San Diego authorities.

Going Places

When 10-year-old Leroy Boardman, 1206 Cruff street, left home this morning he had as company two small playmates and \$630.

Ostensibly he was school bound, but when his mother missed the purse with the money she was dubious. A telephone call revealed he did not show up at school. Police were asked to search for him.

MILLION ASK LOANS

\$40,358,811 Paid to Veterans, Gen. Hines Says.

By United Press

WASHINGTON, March 13.—

Nearly a million applications for government loans to veterans in the relief program were received within the first week of the operation of the new law, Brigadier General Frank T. Hines, administrator of veterans' affairs, today reported to President Hoover.

The bureau mailed 105,766 checks totaling \$40,358,811.79 during this period, up to the close of business March 7, Hines said.

Young Man Dies

BLOOMINGTON, Ind., March 13.—Funeral services were held today for Clarence Minnick, 24, who died after a long illness. He leaves his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher Minnick; Herbert and Lotis, and a sister, Mrs. Ethel Cavannah.

Three of the applicants were booked for interviews during the day.

Bushman's offer to "marry for money" created a danger, however, that the motive—failure to obtain continued success in motion pictures—may be removed, for at least one film colony offered to star the former matinee idol, providing its terms were agreeable.

"But after all," said Bushman, "it might be only temporary."

Nevertheless, he promised to confer with the film producers.

Some of them even stormed his dressing room at the Kedzie theater. One group met him at the stage door.

"Ladies, ladies," said Bushman.

LIBERALS AIM DEFINITELY AT THIRD PARTY

Immediate Formation Is
Barred by Electoral
College System.

ALL DENOUNCE HOOVER

'Full Dawn' Is Visioned by
Norris at Progressive
Conference.

By RAY TUCKER

Times Staff Correspondent

WASHINGTON, March 13.—

Creation of a permanent, bipartisan organization to mobilize and advance liberal thought and legislation loomed today as a probable outgrowth of the progressive conference held here by Republican, Democratic and Farmer-Labor members of congress and outside experts.

Although the conference did not discuss third parties or candidates specifically, the movement definitely was headed in that direction by Senator George W. Norris (Rep., Neb.), conference chairman.

Only the electoral college system prevents immediate formation of a third party, he said, and one of the chief legislative proposals adopted by the conference contemplates abolition of that machinery for election of the President.

'Full Dawn to Come'

In the moving scene that marked Norris' turning over of "the torch of liberal thought" to Senator Robert M. La Follette (Rep., Wis.), the Nebraska spoke of the "full dawn" to come.

He predicted that the progressives could "sweep the nation" if the Democrats nominated a conservative like President Hoover, and if the electoral college system did not bar a third party.

It was generally believed that the progressives, consciously or not, had served notice on the Democrats that, if that party wants the support of liberals throughout the country, it must nominate a liberal candidate.

It also was felt that, in view of the friendly exchange between the conference promoters and Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt, of New York, he would stand the greatest chance of obtaining progressive support.

Denounce Hoover's Policies

Almost every speaker, including the senators and industrial and agricultural spokesmen, denounced the Hoover administration's policies. Owen D. Young of New York, General Electric chairman, also was assailed, by many who took part in the public utilities discussion. Without mentioning names Norris indicated he thought the "power trust" was seeking to nominate Hoover on one side and Young on the other.

As Norris pointed out, the conference simply laid the groundwork for the task of arousing public opinion behind a definite program to be framed in detail between now and December.

Meanwhile, the unemployment committee headed by La Follette will make a rapid survey of conditions with a view to demanding a special session of congress for direct federal relief, if necessary. La Follette's report said there were "unemployment funds available for 'only a month,' and that suffering might become even more acute after that period. He impressed on his committee the need of immediate action.

Deplores Federal Action

"This committee," his report read, "goes on record as imploring the federal authorities to make provision for the millions of American citizens who are on the verge of starvation at a time of general agricultural and industrial breakdown. The adjournment of congress at a time of a great national crisis is an evasion of its primary duties."

The La Follette committee proposed creation of necessary public machinery for planning and control and a national system of coordinated employment exchanges.

It will make an investigation of the advantage of unemployment or insurance funds, the problems involved in a stabilizing industry, the place of public works in industrial stabilization, means to increase purchasing power, a shorter work-day and week, co-ordination of local, state and federal relief activities.

The tariff report of the committee headed by Senator Edward P. Costigan (Dem., Colo.), urged downward revision, summing up its proposals concretely.

"Administrative and other changes (of the Hawley-Smoot act) should include more certain standards for prompt and efficient determination of excessive tariff rates, and the resumption by congress of the tariff-changing powers now exercised by the President," the report said.

13TH AND TWINS!

Friday the Thirteenth is all the way you look at it.

And one city couple, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Herbst, 3022 Phippis street, can't see it as one day when your "blessings" are doubled.

For at three minutes past midnight, twins were born to Mrs. Herbst at the home.

"The boy weighs seven pounds and the girl six, and we're not superstitious about it even though they do add up thirteen," Papa Herbst said.

"No bad luck in that. Maybe we'll give them the names Josephine and John—those names total thirteen letters," he said beamingly.

Herbst is attorney for the Grain Dealers' National Insurance Company.

'MARRY A MILLION' BUSHMAN SWAMPED IN RUSH OF APPLICANTS

By United Press

CHICAGO, March 13.—This was Francis X. Bushman's busy day.

He was picking a wife wealthy enough to support him in Hollywood style.

Schroeder Hears the Bad News



BANK ROBBER SUSPECT HELD

Confession Is Claimed in
Attempted Holdup at
New Augusta.

Attempted holdup of the New Augusta (Ind.) bank, Jan. 22, was solved today, police claimed, with arrest and purported confession of Ralph Gifford, 25, of near Cicero, Ind., alleged participant, and the questioning of three other suspects.

That Gifford and an accomplice whom he refused to name, also might have been implicated in hold-up of the Farmers State bank at Schererville, Feb. 19, when \$14,000 was stolen, and in the Broad Ripple State bank, Feb. 12, was belief of Charles Bolte and Ben McMillan of the state bureau of criminal identification, who obtained the tip leading to the arrests.

Bolte and McMillan worked with Detectives William Miller and John Gish in the investigation.

Stole Auto Jan. 21

Police said Gifford, in his purported confession, admitted he and the unnamed accomplice stole an automobile here Jan. 21 and the following day engaged in a gun battle with bank officials at New Augusta in the attempted holdup.

Bandits in the New Augusta robbery fled when they found bullet-proof glass resisted their "blasts," officers said.

Officers also said Gifford admitted he and William King, living west of Ben Davis, held up a poker game in a pool room at Honeycreek, Ind., New Year's eve, shooting the proprietor in the leg when he resisted. King and his brother, Laurel King, are held for questioning.

Three Bandits Fled

In the Broad Ripple holdup three bandits fled after Morris Dodd, bank teller, sounded a burglar alarm. Patrolman Mowrey Johnston engaged in a running gun battle with the bandits, pursuing the car in which they made their getaway with a commandeered truck. Johnson said he believed he wounded one of the bandits. The bank custodian was wounded by the bandits' bullets.

Officers Thursday searched a shack on Sheridan road one mile east of State Rd. 31 which the suspects are alleged to have used as headquarters.

Gifford, officers said, admitted he had served a one-to-ten-year sentence for burglary in 1928.

Guilty!

Verdict of the criminal court jury that Thursday night found Harold Herbert Schroeder guilty of voluntary manslaughter shook the defendant and sent his sobbing to his shoulder as these exclusive pictures of the courtroom scene show.

In the top photo, Mrs. Schroeder is shown, weeping, with her husband's arm around her. Schroeder's jaw sagged as he heard the verdict, and the depth of his emotion plainly was visible.

In the center picture, another glimpse of Schroeder and his wife. The same sullen, despondent mien characterizes the defendant here.

Lower picture, Edward W. Pierson, Pike township farmer and foreman of the jury, handing the verdict to Roy Lowe, court bailiff.

LESIE SIGNS MEASURE
HIKING LICENSE COSTS

Bill Provides Secretary of State to
Collect Extra 25-Cent Fee.

Auto license costs will be boosted after Governor Harry G. Leslie today signed the house bill providing for the secretary of state to collect a 25-cent service charge on all auto license plates, applications and permanent registration certificates.

The law also gives auto license distribution branches authority to receive the same service fees and requires motorists to call for the plates.

Leslie also signed senate Bill 207, which gives the secretary of state increased powers "to protect surface or physical portions" of highways.

'We're Not Superstitious,'
Father Beams.

Friday the Thirteenth is all the way you look at it.

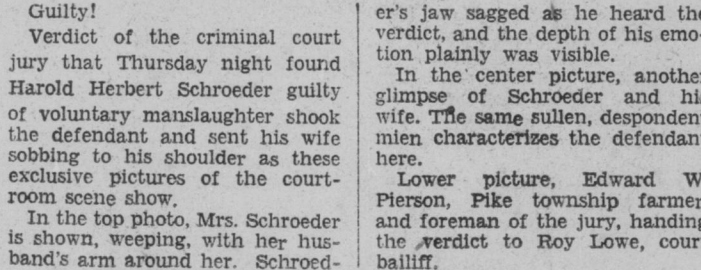
And one city couple, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Herbst, 3022 Phippis street, can't see it as one day when your "blessings" are doubled.

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"No bad luck in that. Maybe we'll give them the names Josephine and John—those names total thirteen letters," he said beamingly.

Herbst is attorney for the Grain Dealers' National Insurance Company.



LYNCHING CHARGE DROPPED BY STATE

By United Press

MARION, Ind., March 13.—Affidavits against six Marion men and Jacob C. Campbell, former Grant county sheriff, filed by the state after the lynching of two Negroes here last August, were dismissed today in Grant circuit court upon written motion of Merle Wall and Earl Stroup, deputy attorney-general.

Charges of participation in the lynching were dismissed against Chester Pease, Arnold Walters, Phillip Boyd, Everett Clark, Asa Davis and a sixth man known only as Prame. All but Prame have been arrested and Walters has been held in jail since Dec. 20.

The affidavit charging Campbell with neglect of duty because the Negro prisoners were removed from the county jail, also was dismissed.

Wall and Stroup, in their motion, said dismissal was made because there appeared no likelihood of obtaining convictions.

Two men have been tried, Robert Beshire and Charles Lennon, and were acquitted of the lynching charges.

\$1 Fine for Coal Theft

GREENSBURG, Ind., March 13.—Charles Christman, owner of a restaurant, pleaded guilty in city court to a charge of petit larceny and was fined \$1 and costs. He was convicted of stealing coal from a train stopped near his place of business. Earl Robbins, facing a similar charge, is to be tried later.

ONE million dollars, Bushman answered promptly.

Bushman was asked if any of the women who had made known their applications in person were, in his opinion, beautiful.

"Only one," sighed Bushman, "and she had almost no money."

"Were any of them young?"

"Yes, young and giddy, and not wealthy enough. There were

widows, too, who had inherited fortunes from their late husbands, and wrote that they felt would be an ideal companion."

Bushman ended the interview in order to receive cameramen.

He was very mysterious about when he will make his decision, but one gathered that he wants to interview at least one "million dollar" applicant and weigh her charms and beauty—if any—against those of known charm and beauty with smaller fortunes.

JURY RULES SCHROEDER IS GUILTY OF MANSLAUGHTER; 2 TO 21 YEARS IS PENALTY

Verdict Reached After 3½ Hours' Deliberation in Torch Car Murder Case;
Sentence Monday.

HOLMES BLAMED BY DEFENDANT

Pitifully Weak Defense Held Reason for
Conviction; New Clew to
Victim Is Probed.

By EDWARD C. FULKE

Two to twenty-one years in prison is the punishment that Harold Herbert Schroeder of Mobile, Ala., faces today under the verdict of a criminal court jury.

When twelve men filed into the jury box at 8 p. m. Thursday, their verdict of "guilty of voluntary manslaughter" was the last chapter to the gruesome High School road torch car crime of nine months ago.

Schroeder's guilt of the murder of an unknown man, as charged by the state of Indiana, was deliberated by his peers for 3 hours 35 minutes. Sentence will be pronounced Monday morning by Judge Frank P. Baker.

Dissatisfaction over his representation in court seemed to be the convicted man's only grudge.

To his attorney, Ira Holmes, who presented a pitifully weak defense against a pyramid of circumstantial evidence, Schroeder had this to say:

"If it hadn't been for you and your attitude, I would be a free man today."

And Holmes' answer is: "You are lucky that you didn't get life."

No Appeal, Is Decision

As though stunned, Holmes announced no appeal will be taken, and declared further prosecution of Schroeder is possible.

"The state has an ironclad arson case against Schroeder and the penalty on that charge is three to ten years."

At 3 p. m. Thursday when the jury retired to its deliberations on instructions of Baker, fourteen days of trial and nine months of waiting had ended, and the state had asked for Schroeder's life.

Schroeder's peers cast six ballots, first three of which were seven for guilty on any charge and five for acquittal. On the fourth ballot, jurymen sought a compromise, and two held out for life imprisonment.

Compromise on Sixth Ballot

On the fifth ballot five jurymen voted for involuntary manslaughter—seven for acquittal. Involuntary manslaughter is the lightest penalty under Indiana murder statutes.

On the sixth ballot a compromise was reached: the voluntary manslaughter verdict.

While the deliberating was under way a tense mob awaited a verdict. Scores milled around the courtroom, while Schroeder sat for an hour and a half with relatives.

At 4:30 Schroeder was taken back to jail for his dinner. At 6 Baker adjourned court until 8 p. m. When the jurors returned from their dinner at that time their verdict apparently was ready, and shortly after reaching the deliberating room they sounded the buzzer for the bailiff.

Defendant Pales

Tense moments followed as the jury filed into the box and the verdict was handed to Baker's clerk. Cameras clicked and flashes blinded spectators. The verdict was read, and Schroeder paled.

His wife, Mrs. Leah Schroeder, broke into sobs and dropped to the convicted man's lap as spectators shoved forward to the nearby railing. Several women sobbed as they looked on, while members of the male contingent gave Schroeder sympathy for his "tough break."

Schroeder then clashed with his attorney.

Immediately afterward a photograph of a man believed by a mother to have been the torch car victim was shown to Schroeder.

Thinks Son Is Victim

The mother, Mrs. Louise Crooks, R. R. 2, Box 673, had been in court a few hours before with a photograph which she gave to Baker. She believed, she said, her son was the hitch hiker whose charred torso was dragged from Schroeder's flaming sedan on the morning of May 31.

"No, that isn't him," Schroeder said, glancing at the picture. "I never saw that man," he added.

Authorities credited the clew as one of the strongest found in nine months of attempting to establish the unknown man's identity. Prosecutor Herbert Wilson said Schroeder will be questioned about it.

The mother said her boy, Harold Webb, 23, wrote her a letter last

Other stories of the Schroeder Verdict will be found on Page 1, Section 2.

May from Mt. Vernon, Ind., declaring he intended to hitch hike his way to Indianapolis for the speedway races. He might have carried a rosary, as he had attended a Catholic school in Vincennes, she said. Remnants of a rosary were found in Schroeder's burning car.

Mrs. Crooks' description of her son tallied almost identically with the partial description authorities hold of the unknown victim.

She said the boy weighed about 145 pounds, was 5 feet 8 inches tall, with reddish-brown hair and blue eyes. From the races, her son was going to the wheat fields in the west, Mrs. Crooks said.

Schroeder told authorities the man who died in his car was going to the wheat fields.

Identity May Never Be Known

Identity of the man probably never will be known. Authorities have traced hundreds of clews without success.

To frame the bulwark of state's case, thirty-nine witnesses took the stand. Their testimony covered the crime from the time Schroeder rode into Indianapolis until he was captured in a wheat patch in Mobile, Alabama authorities testified to taking Schroeder's only statement of the crime.

Indianapolis authorities narrated how Schroeder was returned to Indianapolis, and told of fist fights, legal tilts that occurred during Schroeder's nine months' imprisonment.

Probably most damaging of all state's evidence was the testimony of a motorist to seeing a man of Schroeder's