

The Ott Workman Story ... No. 3
3d Confession of Gunman
Put 'Finger' on Workman

(Continued From Page One) ... strong interest in this aspect of the case.

Members of Souderdike's family persist to this day in the conviction that Frank Souderdike was promised every effort possible to get him clemency if he would put the finger on Workman. But like Workman, Souderdike still is

Persistent Rumors of Politics Enter Case

ROLE played by the detectives does not necessarily dispel the persistent rumors of politics in the original Workman case. At least one of them was close to the political picture of that day and none of them at that time could be said to be immune from local political pressure if it were brought to bear.

On the other hand, the belief was even then growing that Workman had furnished the thinking power for Souderdike on other occasions. Souderdike, in turn, was linked definitely with the ambush holdup of a Davies County farmer and his wife and the torture-robbery of an aged filling station attendant.

Stories were circulated which, whether intentional or not, had the effect of linking Workman indirectly with two unsolved murders in the county. One of the victims was a bootlegger who a short time before he was brought down by pistol shots from ambush was reported to have had a bitter argument with Workman.

Nothing ever was proved in the court about any possible Workman connection with these affairs. But the rumors were believed by influential citizens. A natural desire by many of them to bring such a man to heel at any cost contributed to drawing

Insist Accused Incriminated Himself

DURING the course of the pre-trial investigation, Workman was taken to state police headquarters in Indianapolis and confronted there with Frank Souderdike, his accuser. Witnesses to that meeting insist Workman incriminated himself with some remarks to the effect that "If you had followed my plan you wouldn't be in this trouble."

But none of these persons ever took an oath and testified in the trial that they heard any such remark. Efforts to make a dictaphone record of the conversation failed but about the only conversation established to have occurred was a request by Souderdike for Workman to turn over to him a note for \$325. Souderdike had owed Workman the \$325 for some time. Workman refused.

Later, official investigation turned up evidence that Workman was struck at least once by one of the detectives.

He was given a lie detector test which was said to have indicated that he had guilty knowledge of the crime. No effort was made to introduce this into evidence and even expert crime technicians hesitate to stake an important case on a lie detector.

Oddest quirk of all, however, was the reaction of one of the three detectives when a suggestion was made that Frank Souderdike be given a lie detector test. The detective was said to

in prison. Only Geoffrey Brothers, the man who drove Souderdike to Hayville on that fateful Dec. 5, 1933, has been paroled. Rumors of politics also have sprung from the fact that Workman, as a rich and influential Democrat in little Rutherford Township, Martin County, was a ruthless power in the local partisan picture.

As the case progressed, Judge Eldo Wood of Dubois County, in which the Basch shooting actually took place, appointed Carl Gray of Petersburg as a special prosecutor in the case. He was to assist Prosecutor Leo Stemie, now a state senator, of Jasper.

Mr. Gray had been retained by the injured Mr. Basch in the prosecution of Geoffrey Brothers. His work for the prosecution in that trial, which sent Brothers to prison on his own admission and the incriminating testimony of Souderdike, led to the Gray ap- any cost contributed to drawing

have shrugged off the suggestion with the remark: "No, it wouldn't be any use to use it on a liar, a criminal, a thief and a murderer." So it came about that the lie detector drew another knot in the case against Ott Workman. The man whose testimony was the only incriminating evidence introduced in the trial was branded a "liar" by an investigator. And no lie detector test was given to Frank Souderdike.

Tomorrow: The trial.

Authors Withdraw 'Delinquency' Bill

A bill co-authored by two female members of the Indiana Senate which would have made contributing to the delinquency of children a felony and permitted a \$200 fine and up to five years in prison was withdrawn today. Authors of the bill were Sens. Dorothy Gardner (R. Ft. Wayne) and Mary Garrett (D. Indianapolis).

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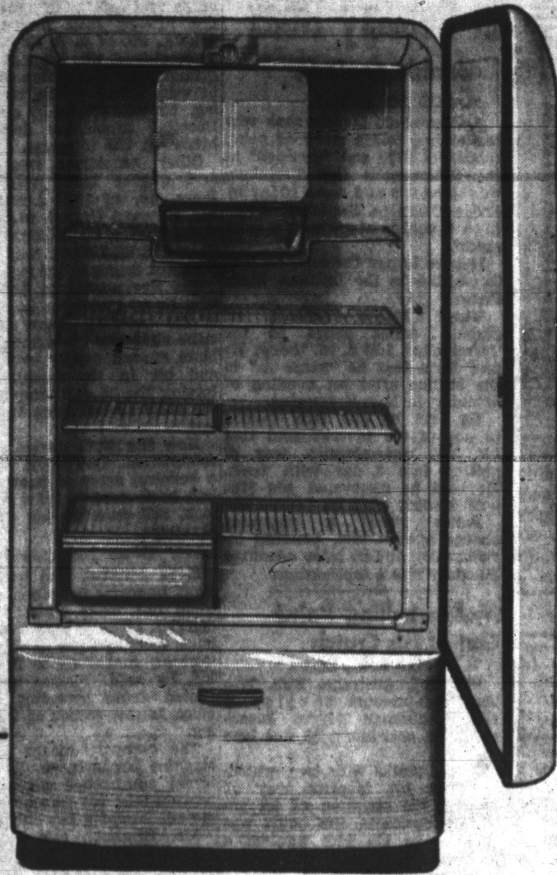
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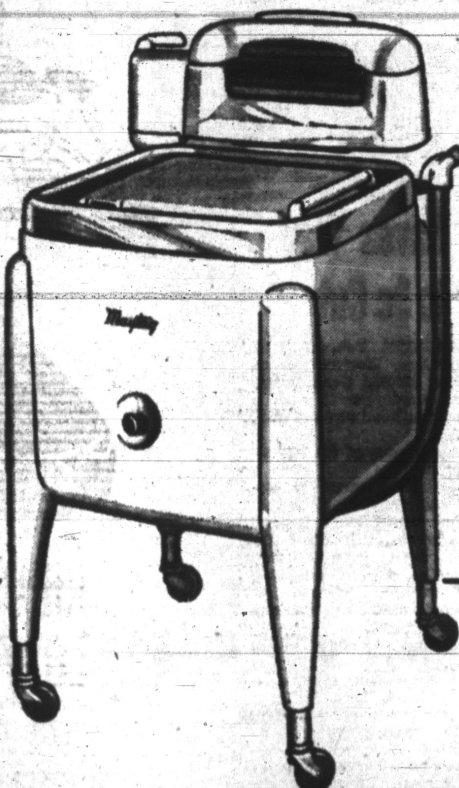
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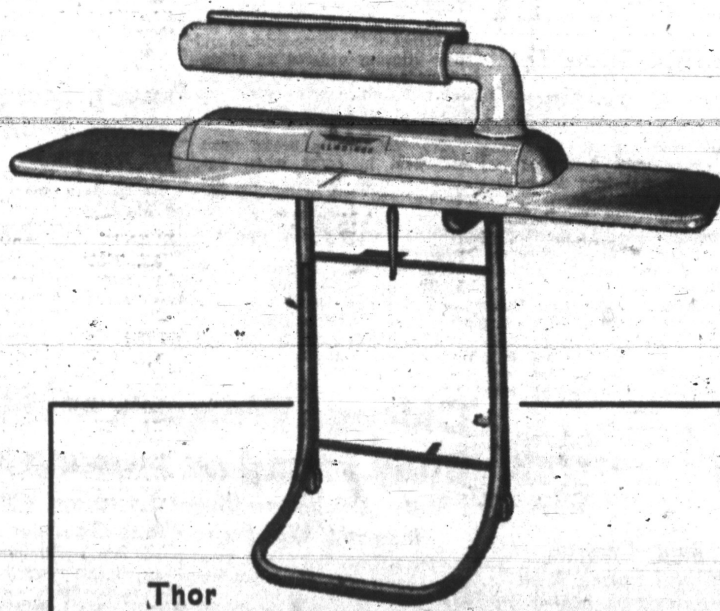
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