

LOVE SLAYERS MINGLE TEARS IN MOYAMENSING AS MRS. ROSIER PLEADS FOR AN EARLY TRIAL

Woman Who Killed Husband and Pretty Typist Begs Lawyers to End Legal Quibbling and Let Her Tell Jury Story That Caused Tragedy

HAS PICTURE OF VICTIM PASTED IN HER BIBLE TO COMFORT HER IN PRISON

Even if Acquitted, She Must Face Contest to Break Death-Bed Will to Save Her Home for Herself and Her Infant Son

WHILE her lawyers have asked again and again for a postponement of her trial for her life and liberty, Catharine Rosier sits wearily in her little six by ten foot cell in Moyamensing Prison and cries for a decision one way or another at once.

"Why can't I tell my story to the world now?" she pleaded with her mother, Mrs. Sue Reid, last Friday. "Why can't I go home to my baby? Why must I stay in this terrible place?"

Catharine Rosier, apparently, is unaware of the complexities and the maneuverings of the law. Her lawyers may have the best reasons in the world for delaying this woman's trial, but they are nothing to her.

All Philadelphia knows the Rosier tragedy. On the 21st of last January Mrs. Rosier killed her husband, Oscar, in the offices of his advertising agency in Walnut street near Thirteenth, and then slew his typist, pretty Mildred Reckitt. She shot them both.

"I did it because I loved him so," Catharine says over and over. She believed that Rosier and Mildred were in love, and that she, the wife, was to be cast aside.

As evidence of her love for the man she caught unawares and shot down, Mrs. Rosier turns often to the inside of the front cover of the little Bible which is her constant companion in that Moyamensing cell. On the inside of that cover is her husband's photograph.

"Every time I visit Catharine I find her so," said Mrs. Reid. Always on Friday Mrs. Reid goes to the prison. She is not permitted to enter her daughter's cell. Instead, she must talk with her through a tiny opening in the heavy iron door.

Mrs. Reid has been faithful not only in her visits to her daughter, but also in caring for her daughter's infant son Richard and Rosier's ten-year-old son Oscar.

Sobs for Her Baby Boy and Husband's Other Son

"They are killing my daughter by keeping her confined in that prison," said Mrs. Reid. "She wants to come home to her babies and she wants to try to make amends, but she cannot do anything as long as she is kept in jail."

"When I saw her Friday she seemed to be on the verge of another breakdown. 'Mother,' she said to me, 'tell me the truth; are they going to keep me here forever? I have been in this cell for months and I can't stand it much longer.'"

"My attorney tells me that everything will come out all right in the end, but I want that end as quickly as possible. I can't stand the anguish of not having my baby. My heart just yearns for him and he needs me. They won't let me have him here with me, yet they won't give me a chance before a jury. When I know I would be set free. What am I to do?"

"They are good to me down here. They let me have my Bible and one of the matrons pasted Oscar's photograph in it so I could have it with me all the time. Without this little Bible I know I would die."

Ever since she entered prison Mrs. Rosier has been more or less under the care of a physician. Finally they decided that perhaps companionship would help restore her health and they assigned Clara Woodward to the same cell. She also is charged with killing a man because she feared he was going to leave her.

Shares Tiny Cell With Another Love Victim

The change has helped because it affords Mrs. Rosier an opportunity to tell her troubles to one who is in a similar plight. The prison laws are strict regarding conversation between prisoners, but in this case the lines are not drawn closely because even the matrons, hardened by years of experience, haven't the heart to enforce a rule that would prevent these women from sharing, and thus lightening, one another's sorrows.

Catharine Rosier fortunately does not know that her pretty home on Kent road, Stonehurst, is about to be taken away from her. She does not know that the interest due on the mortgage has not been paid, nor does she know that payment in the building and loan association has been defaulted and has almost reached a point where foreclosure is inevitable.

This has been kept from her by the advice of her counsel, who realize that her burden already is about as much as she can stand.

When Mrs. Rosier entered her husband's office that afternoon and killed two persons, her mother had a pretty home in Atlantic City.

Mrs. Reid was told of the shooting at the hands of her daughter when she came to Philadelphia to see her and to stand by her as her counsel, complained "not

Two "Love Slayers" Are Cellmates in Moyamensing

MRS. ROSIER'S six by ten foot cell in Moyamensing is being shared by another woman, who, too, shot and killed when she thought the man she loved was about to leave her.

Mrs. Clara Woodward, thirty-five years old, who killed William Pepperman in her apartment at 311 North Ninth street on the night of March 28, was put with Mrs. Rosier because the authorities thought they could help to brighten one another's moments while awaiting trial.

They take turns cleaning and mopping up their cell, and in one of her talks with her mother Mrs. Rosier said that Mrs. Woodward was a wonderful companion and that she hoped the woman would soon be given her freedom.

Mrs. Reid has a son who has been bedridden for six years, but this did not deter her. She had the boy brought here too, and since January has had the care of her daughter's son and stepson, and her own child.

Baby Son's Sickness Added to Her Grief

Sickness has left its mark in the little household in Stonehurst. For several weeks following Mrs. Rosier's arrest her baby Richard was seriously ill. Mrs. Rosier kept asking to see the child.

The infant had been taken down to the jail shortly before he fell ill, and when Mrs. Reid appeared at her daughter's cell door the following week without the baby, Catharine seemed to know by a mother's instinct that her baby was sick.

"Is Richard sick? Is he dead? Where is he?" she asked her mother, and all of her questions were in the same breath.

Mrs. Reid told her daughter that the child was all right, but that the prison authorities had forbidden her to bring him.

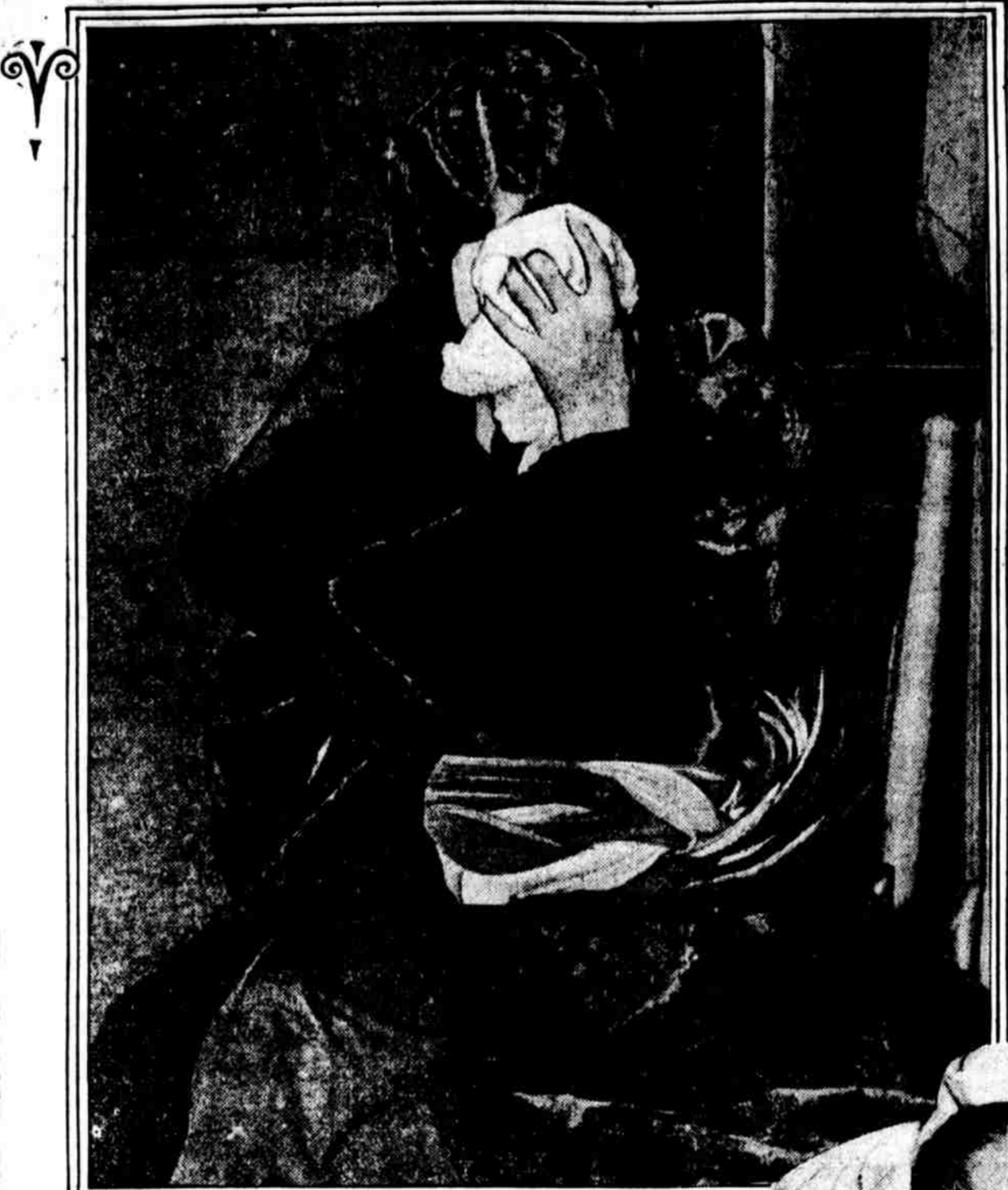
"That is not so," cried Mrs. Rosier, according to her mother. "They told me I could have him every visiting day. Something has happened to him. Tell me what it is?"

"I could not tell her because I was afraid she would die," said Mrs. Reid, "and I kept putting her off from week to week until the child finally recovered, and then I took him with me to prison."

But Catharine made such a scene that it was decided best that I should not take Richard to the jail any more. My daughter tried to keep the child. She said he was all she had and that she wanted him with her all of the time. Even now when I go down I must always frame a suitable excuse when she starts to talk about baby. Last week she said to me:

"Richard is all I have. Of course I love little Oscar (her stepson), too, but Richard looks so much like Daddy (her husband) that I want him with me all the time. I can see every line of Daddy's face in Richard's features."

Mrs. Rosier doesn't seem to realize that when she is called upon to face a jury she will be on trial for her life. When she was taken into court to plead guilty she was leaning heavily on the arm of her counsel, complained "not



Catharine Rosier—a study in remorse

Remorseful But Sure She Will Gain Liberty

She is remorseful, yet she has confidence that the jury will see the circumstances which she says caused her to commit this double crime with the same eyes with which she views them. Her mother, too, believes that Mrs. Rosier will be sent home to her family.

With her shattered health and inability to work in the event of acquittal, Mrs. Rosier realizes that she will have a fight on her hands to share in her husband's estate.

Rosier, on his deathbed in the Jefferson Hospital, penciled a will in which he left everything he possessed to his brother, Arthur.

John R. K. Scott and William T. Connor, Catharine's attorneys, have already begun steps to prevent the probating of the will and have filed caveats both here and in Media, the seat of Delaware County, so that in the event of Mrs. Rosier escaping conviction they will be able to fight for her share and that of her son Richard.

"It is a little early to talk about the will of the Rosier estate," said Mrs. Rosier's counsel, "but at the proper time we will contest for the woman's right to share. Of course, we realize that in the event of a conviction on the charge of murder, Mrs. Rosier will have no claim whatever to a share."

Since the double murder the Rosier Advertising Agency has passed into bankruptcy, and all that is left is an equity in the home, on which a foreclosure is imminent, and about \$20,000 in life insurance. Arthur Rosier, who was named as the beneficiary, has engaged counsel and is determined to fight to have the deathbed will recognized.

District Attorney Rotun, who is showing deep interest in this trial owing to the many delays, has assigned Marilee Speiser to represent the Commonwealth in the prosecution.

Delay After Delay Has Marked Time Since Crime

Speiser has spent several months in preparation of the case and fully expected to have started the trial long before this.

As a matter of fact Judge Rogers set the first date as February 27, but Mr. Scott got a postponement. He contended that the District Attorney was making an effort to railroad the case, and intimated that some one was playing to the gallery.

When Judge Davis set a date in March, Mr. Scott made a further attempt to get a postponement and declared that he could not locate his witnesses. Furthermore he announced that the Commonwealth was tampering with certain witnesses.

Finally Mr. Scott went before the Supreme Court, and that tribunal ordered that the District Attorney set a date not earlier than May 15. Since that time no date has been announced, although it was rumored that Mr. Rosier would be listed for trial this month. Mr. Rotun, however, said that it is hardly likely that the case will be reached before fall, owing to the pressure of other cases.

"We are now trying to clear the lists of murder cases," said the District Attorney, "and the Rosier case will have to wait its turn. This office has made every effort possible to try to reach before fall, owing to the pressure of other cases."

Now we find that if we attempt to start this trial, which I understand will occupy at least three weeks, everything else in the way of a prison case will be at a standstill."

Thousands have been spent on the incidental work of preparing the case. County Detective James McGettigan, who is in charge of the murder squad in the District Attorney's office, has

been handling the witnesses, several score in number, who will testify for the Commonwealth.

McGettigan has dug in deep in order to solidify the State's case. He has personally interviewed every one who has been connected in any way with the shooting.

Statements have been obtained from all, and those whose testimony has been considered particularly important have been interviewed by Mr. Speiser.

The Assistant District Attorney has devoted more time to this case than to any to which he has been assigned since he entered office. He knows well that it is a difficult task to convict a woman of a capital crime, and for this reason, has left nothing undone to assure the Commonwealth every iota of evidence that can be scraped up.

Associates of "Jerry" Reckitt have, according to the District Attorney's office, rallied strongly in her defense and will be a power in her behalf at the trial. Rosier's brother Arthur, who was bitterly assailed by Mrs. Rosier's counsel when he testified at the Coroner's inquest, has been an almost daily visitor at the District Attorney's office.

Frank Schrenk, who was Oscar Rosier's personal counsel, is engaged as private prosecutor, but is leaving everything in the hands of Mr. Speiser.

Mr. Schrenk is prepared to show that at the time he met his death Rosier was about to begin action for divorce and that he had informed his wife of his purpose. This was the actual motive for the crime, it is said.

The fact that the defendant is a



woman, according to Mr. Speiser, does not enter into his consideration of the case at all.
Woman's Lawyer Promises To Do His Best for Her
Mr. Scott, who will probably conduct the defense because of the illness of Mr. Connor, who originally was in charge, will make little comment on the case. He, like Mr. Speiser, has worked for months, preparing Mrs. Rosier's story.
"I have been greatly handicapped in the preparation of the case," he



Oscar Rosier, Jr., and half-brother, Dick

Deathbed Will by Slain Man Enters Into the Case

WHEN Oscar Rosier lay dying on the operating table in the Jefferson Hospital, he gasped: "I want to make a will!"

His associate in business, Bill Tolins, who was standing by the side of the dying man, pulled forth a little book and, at the direction of Rosier, wrote: "I leave all that I have to Arthur, my brother, and my boy, Junior."

Doctors, nurses and police officials were grouped about the table and watched the man with the shadow of death make two attempts before he finally succeeded in affixing his signature to this death-bed document.

said, "by the illness of Mr. Connor, who was stricken a few weeks after Mrs. Rosier was arrested. He had full charge of the case and had interviewed many witnesses."

"Of course all of this was lost and we were unable to pick it up again until Mr. Connor was in a condition to talk. I am not in the habit of prejudging the cases where I am engaged and I will not violate that rule for this trial. All that I can say is that we have been up against a stiff handicap because of the fact that we do not actually know when we will be set down for trial."

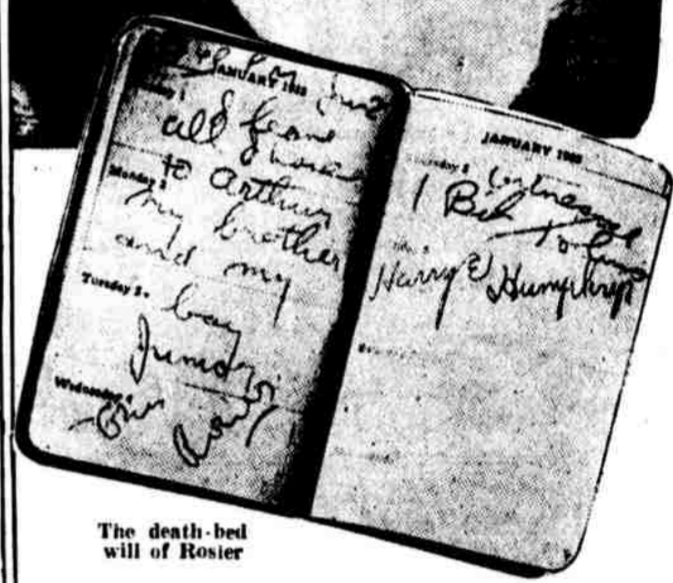
"Of course it is necessary that every panel of jurors drawn by the sheriff for service in the Criminal Court be investigated. I don't know how many times this has been done in this case. 'All that I would like to know now is what date Mr. Rotun will set for Mrs. Rosier's trial.'"

Mr. Scott was reminded that two dates had already been fixed and that the matter had been set back at his request.
"That is true," said Mr. Scott, "but I fought to have a further delay the first time because I felt that an effort was being made to railroad this woman. The idea made me fight for her and I fought for justice. Putting this woman on trial for a double murder within a month after the commission of the crime was more than I could stand. I succeeded in having the case postponed so I could properly examine my witnesses. Some of them had to be brought from points as far distant as the Pacific Coast."

"The second postponement was unavoidable. Mr. Connor was stricken with a dangerous illness. As a matter of fact, his life was despaired of and it was utterly impossible for me to have gone on with the trial without him."

"So then I appealed to the Supreme Court, which saw fit to give me the extension I believed I was entitled to. This delay has enabled me to acquaint myself with the many points in our case and now I do not think that a further delay is necessary as far as the defense is concerned."

It is said that a plea of emotional insanity will be made in the defendant's behalf, which, if used, would be for the purpose of showing that Mrs. Rosier's mind was inflamed to a point bordering on insanity by stories said to have been told her concerning her husband's conduct with other women.



The death-bed will of Rosier



Mrs. Rosier at Central Station

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Mrs. Rosier, her lawyer and guard, leaving prison



Clara Woodward also a "love slayer"