

ASK ARMY TO HELP SOLVE GIRL MURDER

Fingerprints and Pictures of Farm Hand Sought in Hunt for Suspect.

GET CLUE FROM A WOMAN

Parents Visit Scene of Crime After Burial of Victim—Father Denies Suicide Compact.

Believing that they have eliminated most other suspects in the Elizabeth Johnson murder case, the authorities of Middlesex County, New Jersey, have asked the assistance of the War Department in finding Harvey Selhaver of Spencer, Iowa, whom they are eager to question. Selhaver was a farmhand on the Johnson place, and was discharged because of his attentions to the 15-year-old girl, just a week before Elizabeth was slain on the edge of Carnegie Lake in Kingston, N. J.

County Detective Ferd David has requested Washington to send fingerprints and photographs of Selhaver, who is understood to have served in the Field Artillery overseas and to have been shell-shocked. David said a nationwide search would be instituted for Selhaver as soon as proper means of identification had been obtained.

Little progress was made in the case yesterday, although the detectives were working last night on a new clue and a new rumor. The clue was a report that a woman had seen a man resembling Selhaver walking hurriedly and nervously toward Kingston on the morning after Elizabeth was shot through the head on the outskirts of the town. The rumor was that Selhaver had been seen recently in New Brunswick and might not be far away.

While Detective David is understood to have established that Selhaver bought a .22-calibre pistol from a farmer in the neighborhood of the Johnson place, a disagreement arose among the investigators as to whether Elizabeth actually had been slain with a .22 bullet as had been supposed. Coroner John V. Hubbard said he was of the opinion that a .32-calibre bullet caused death. Detective David insisted that the weight of the bullet showed that it was a .22. County Physician J. F. Suydam agreed with David. He explained that a soft-nosed bullet would naturally spread in striking the skull, making a hole of larger dimensions than would be made by a steel-jacketed bullet. Dr. Suydam said that the fact that the bullet did not pierce the base of the skull on its outward passage indicated that the calibre was very small.

Joseph A. Johnson, Elizabeth's father, is positive that the girl did not enter into any suicide compact with Selhaver or any one else. "Elizabeth was too fond of life for that," he said. "She was naturally of a happy disposition and high spirited. There is no doubt as to the genuineness of the letter which was found signed H. S. and suggesting that Elizabeth and the writer die together. It was Selhaver's handwriting and he is the only person in the house who had an indelible pencil, but my daughter was murdered. "I think she left home to meet Selhaver because she pitied him. He had played upon her sympathies all along and posed as a homeless, friendless lover who was being persecuted by her parents. I think Elizabeth went because she thought that to bid him good-by would be a kindness, but that she refused to leave home and go away with him."

Just before Elizabeth's body was buried from the Hubbard morgue at New Brunswick yesterday Mr. and Mrs. Johnson spent nearly an hour in conference with David. They identified a pair of trousers found yesterday in their barn as Selhaver's and also a skeleton key, a key to the hired man's room in the Johnson home and another key, which were found in the pockets of the trousers. These trousers are expected to help prove that Selhaver slept in the Johnson barn after he had been ordered away.

At Hubbard's morgue the Rev. A. Raymond Eckles, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Plainsboro, read the funeral services. They were very simple, the 23d Psalm and a text from the fifteenth chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians. The coffin was borne to the hearse by the undertaker and his assistant. It was explained that the Johnsons were poor, had few friends and would have had to pay pallbearers. There were no flowers and the little family clad in their Sunday clothes filed silently into the automobile that had been provided for them.

At the cemetery a tent had been erected over the grave to insure privacy. Mrs. Johnson broke down. When she had regained sufficient composure to return to the automobile the family went to the scene of the crime for the first time. Then they went home.

In the little parlor of the Johnson farmhouse newspaper reports of the murder are being preserved in a pile. "I am keeping every one of them," Mrs. Johnson said. "Not everything there is true, but much of it is, and when my other girls get older I shall show the papers to them. Perhaps from the lesson learned by Elizabeth's death they may be able to save themselves from such a fate."

It was disclosed yesterday that Selhaver was ambitious to become a detective so that he might bring fame to himself and fortune to the girl he loved. He spent his nights in the Johnson farmhouse poring over lessons from a correspondence school near Chicago, studying methods of disguise, tracking criminals and fingerprint reading.