

DR. SIMS IS SLAIN

Police Believe Murderer Is Dope Fiend Refused Drug at Victim's Store.

Brutally beaten over the head with an improvised bludgeon held in the hands of one of two thugs, Dr. R. P. Sims, a pioneer druggist, received such injuries early Sunday morning that he died Sunday night.

The police are today searching for clues in support of two theories for the murder, the most plausible of which is voiced by Detective Captain George G. Miles, who expressed the opinion that the crime was the act of a dope fiend who had been refused drugs at the victim's store recently.

The prostrate form of the unconscious man was found lying in a pool of blood on the sidewalk a half block from his home, E1724 Dalton avenue. Olaf Bloom, night janitor of the Coeur d'Alene hotel, on his way home, discovered Dr. Sims lying apparently lifeless, about 7 a. m.

Mrs. Sims was summoned from the home. Her husband was so mercilessly beaten that it was several minutes before she could positively identify him. The police and the emergency hospital corps were summoned and later Dr. J. M. Gunning attended. The exposure of several hours, as the case must have been, together with a hemorrhage of the brain, caused his death at 8 o'clock last night.

May Have Resisted.

The druggist and his assailants engaged in a desperate struggle before he was finally overpowered, according to the deductions of the detectives engaged in investigating the case. The place where the first spots of blood were found is several feet from the place where Dr. Sims was found. His head revealed several wounds, all of which had evidently been inflicted by the same club, which was clotted with hair and blood. On the end of Dr. Sims' cane was found a spot which indicates that he perhaps struck one of the assailants during the encounter.

The instrument used to fell Dr. Sims was a piece of flagpole used in the back yard of Mrs. Albert J. Sims, E1826 Dalton avenue, as a clothes line support. The pole had been removed from wire fastenings and carried into the street, where by placing it on the curbing and jumping or stepping on it, the assailant or assailants had broken off an end about two feet long, at the end of which was a knob. The material is light and would never have been selected by one who planned murder, as several blows at least would be necessary to fell a person, according to the theory of the police.

Foot tracks in the snow leading to and from the back yard in the Albert Sims home have furnished the police with a clue which may lead to some developments today. One of the men wore a long narrow shoe of a shape which indicates it was one of the new English styles. The other track was made by a rubber overshoe and the dimensions show a large foot.

Dr. Sims' pockets were turned inside out. His shoes were unlaced, as if the assailants had even searched there for valuables. His clothes were unbuttoned, indicating that there had been a search made for a money belt. The search of the shoes and the inner clothing may have been made for a "blind" to lead the investigators to conclude that the robbers sought money alone.

Carried Little Money.

His watch and keys were not taken. The amount of money he carried is not known, but Dr. Sims was not in the habit of carrying more than \$3 or \$4 with him at a time.

"It is unreasonable to presume that a highwayman would have selected a club of the kind that was used on



Dr. Sims, druggist, who was murdered on way home from his store.

Dr. Sims," said Detective Captain Miles this morning. "Further, it is not customary for a highwayman to continue such an assault on his victim after laying him low. Dr. Sims was struck a number of times.

"Again, I do not believe that robbers would have gone on such a mission unless they had made preparations for the assault. It is plain that these men were not otherwise armed, or the use of the club would not have been necessary.

"Should the murder have been committed by an enemy surely that person would not have relied on a light club broken from the end of a clothes pole in the very neighborhood of the victim. Such an assailant would have gone armed with more certain weapons.

Murderer Uses Dope?

"It does sound reasonable that such an assault and murder would have been the work of a 'fiend'—a 'dope' user. Perhaps we may find as we continue into our investigation that Dr. Sims had been threatened by one of these fiends. It is not unlikely that we may learn that users of the drug had followed him to his home or had waylaid him, thinking perhaps they might have found some of the drugs on his person.

"It is not unlikely that should such have been the case, the assailants would have beaten him so mercilessly and left him to die in the street. It is not unlikely that they would have turned his pockets inside out to leave the impression that the job had been done by thugs in quest of money."

Detectives Cecil Thompson and Buchholz have worked on the case, but as yet have been unable to find the conductor or motorman on the street car which Dr. Sims is believed to have taken Saturday night about midnight, nor have they determined definitely which car, the Hillyard or the Astor line, he took. Upon this the police look to get some valuable information.

"A month ago Dr. Sims was beaten up in his store on Main avenue," said Mrs. Sims, "and I would not be surprised if the same persons were responsible. We did not let the last affair get into the papers. I have some

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Beginning next Monday, the Chronicle will feature a story a week by Rex Beach, the popular fiction writer.

opinions of my own regarding my husband's death and perhaps developments may bear me out in them.

"Dr. Sims was not in the habit of carrying much money with him. He seldom had more than a little silver in his pocket. Perhaps the men who killed him thought he had a large amount of money with him.

"The clerk at the store told me the doctor closed up about midnight Saturday and started in the direction of the car that brings him home. Another man saw him just before closing time and a collector for the Washington Water Power company told the clerk he was walking briskly toward the street car when he last saw him, just after midnight.

"He must have turned back just as the men struck him, as one of the cuts is on his forehead. The three must have fought for a few minutes."

The body of Dr. Sims is held at the Turnbull undertaking rooms awaiting an inquest which will be held by coroner M. B. Grieve.

Dr. Sims was 52 years old. He was born in Memphis, Tenn., and in 1888 moved to Lewiston, Idaho. For four years he practiced medicine there and then came to Spokane, where he has been in the drug business since. He leaves a widow and three children, Emalita, aged 15; Richard, age 11, and Maude, age 7.

"Dr. Sims has talked to me several times about the drug 'fiends,' who have come to his place for drugs," said Captain Miles. "He said he had been threatened by some and had always feared that perhaps some day one of them would harm him."

JULIAN TIFFANY HAS NOT REPLIED

Wife's Attorney Asks That He Be Declared in Default and Divorce Granted.

Declaring that Julian O. Tiffany of this city has filed no answer to the divorce suit brought against him in the superior court by his wife, Cary Tiffany, and has made no appearance in any other manner, Attorney Cary Smith, for the wife, today filed motion, asking that he be declared in default.

An affidavit, accompanying the motion, declares that the summons and complaint in the suit were served personally on Mr. Tiffany on December 24. The law allows 20 days in which the defendant may appear.

The motion will be presented to court Thursday, according to a filing today. Default divorce cases are heard on that day and it is expected that Mrs. Tiffany will ask for a decree at that time.

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