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—Milly trial

(Continued from Page 1)

ception and partying with his relatives and other guests.

* * *

EARLY SUNDAY morning, another phone call from the same man asked her to please come to Warwick Ave. and get Johnny. At about 11 a.m., she said, she asked a neighbor to drive her there.

When she asked on arrival, if a man named John Henry Thompson was there, a woman came to the door with a knife, and said, "You don't marry Johnny today," Milly testified.

Upset by the name the woman called her and attempting to defend herself from the knife and the approach of other people in the house, Mrs. Collins said she started firing her gun wildly.

She testified she kept the gun in her purse since she always left her night club about 2 a.m. and needed to feel she had protection.

When Johnny came down the stairs into the front room of the Warwick Ave. house, a bullet must have hit him. Mrs. Collins said, because he fell at her feet.

Dazed by the ordeal, she said she walked to North Ave. caught a cab, went to her home and sat in a chair for two hours not realizing Johnny was dead.

* * *

JOHNNY'S FATHER called her to say he was dead and, still dazed, she told the court, "I couldn't believe he was dead."

She hung up and called the police, she stated.

She told the officer that answered the phone, "I've done a lot of shooting. I don't know how it happened, but Johnny's dead."

Mrs. Collins' court - appointed attorney, E. Thomas Maxwell, insisted in an hour-long plea to the jury that she acted in self defense in shooting wildly about the Warwick Ave. home.

He termed her an excited bride-to-be who had arrived there to get the bridegroom so that they could dress and go to the church for the wedding.

In acking for a directed verdict of not guilty, he reminded the jury she had been up two nights preparing for the affair and distressed by the situation she met at the Warwick Ave. home, she went into a frenzy.

HOWEVER, Assistant State's Attorney James W. McAllister in pressing for a first degree murder verdict told the jury, Mrs. Collins knew what she was doing.

Noting many prior convictions to Mrs. Collin's credit he declared she was no "blushing" bride.

He stated she went to the Warwick Ave. address to get Johnny and she accomplished her mission in anger.

Referring to the Warwick Ave. home as Mrs. Smith's castle, he stated she had a perfect right to kill Mrs. Collins as an intruder if she had desired to do so.

In final statements to the jury, he said, "Doom hangs over her head for wantonizing slaying the man she claimed she loved."

* * *

THE TRIAL began Tuesday and attracted the attention of hundreds who crowded the courtrooms, filled surrounding hallways and steps and even stood on the street.

Packed with emotion that overflowed in the tears of the once bride - to - be, the lengthy hearing had many crises and highlights.

Mrs. Collins collapsed on the stand midway her hour and a half testimony as she cried through her tears, "I loved him."

So pathetic was her expression many spectators were seen to weep also. One jury woman removed her glasses and dabbed at her eyes. Others kept their heads down.

A city jail nurse dressed entirely in white was quickly summoned to the courthouse.

When Mrs. Collins was asked if she intended to shoot and kill Johnny, she again burst into tears.

She said, "I never wanted to kill him. It was our wedding day. We were going to be married. I loved him."

Later when asked if she still loved him, she replied, "I still do. I love him. I love him. I love him."

* * *

TEARS AGAIN fell as Mrs. Collins, in testimony, reviewed how she, Johnny, his parents, relatives and friends prepared for the wedding.

She also disclosed on the stand that she was wearing her wedding band and large engagement ring Johnny gave her.

On both days of the trial, Mrs. Collins looked quite stunning. With the slender appearance of a dancer, she was striking in a black suit, obviously expensive, and trimmed with a white mink collar.

Her patent high heels were new and her eyebrows freshly arched.

* * *

HER APPEARANCE was in contrast to Mrs. Hilda Smith, who admitted she was Johnny's girlfriend on the stand.

Johnny was at the Smith home, 1600 Warwick Ave. when shot three hours before the wedding was scheduled.

Mrs. Smith in line of gunfire that hot July Sunday morning, caught a bullet one inch from her spine.

With the shot still lodged there, she is partially paralyzed and walks painfully and slowly with a cane.

MRS. COLLINS' attorney was granted a motion that severed the indictment for murder from the two charging assault - with - intent - to - murder Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Randall.

The trial that began Wednesday was on the charge that "on July 25, Mrs. Collins feloniously, wilfully and of deliberately premeditated malice aforethought, did kill and murder one John Henry Thompson."

Highlight of the Wednesday hearing was the testimony of Mrs. Smith who said, under oath on the stand, she had lived with Johnny as his girl friend.

Mrs. Smith appeared in court as the first witness for the state and wore a green walking suit with three-quarter coat and black fur collar.

Her detachable topknot hairdo was neatly piled high on her head and hanging gold hoop earings were in her ears.

Mrs. Smith walked slowly and seemingly painfully to the witness stand, assisted by a wooden cane in her right hand.

A policeman held her tightly by the arm and much time was consumed getting her seated.

Her testimony under questioning by the Assistant States Attorney, Mr. McAllister was as follows:

- Where do you live now?
A - 2856 W. Lanvale St.
Q - On July 25, where did you live?
A - At 1621 Warwick Ave.
Q - In your own words tell what happened (on July 25).
A - About 11:30 (morning of the murder) my daughter called to me and said a lady was at the door asking for Johnny.
Q - By Johnny, you mean the deceased man, John Henry Thompson?

CALLED HIM JOHNNY

A - Yes. We called him Johnny.
I went int he living room. I was in the kitchen. She said where was Johnny?
I looked at her. She looked at me. I said, he said he was going to the park and I asked her, why do you ask me?
She got mad and she cursed.

ASKED MILLY TO LEAVE

I started to go upstairs to tell my children and I asked her not to curse.
I turned away from the door and Marion said don't turn your back on her, she's got a gun.
I started to the phone in the next room, the bedroom, to call police. Then I felt something in my back.
I fell to the floor. Someone said, go, little girl.

PARALYZED

The next thing I knew I was at the hospital and I asked the doctor why I couldn't move my legs and he said I was paralyzed.
Q - How long did you stay at the hospital?
A - Three weeks and some days.
Q - Did you ever see Mrs. Collins before?
A - No.
Q - Did you ever call her on the phone?
A - No, I didn't.
Under cross-examination by Mrs. Collins' attorney, Mrs. Smith testified as follows:
Q - Who rented the house on Warwick?
A - Johnny and my sister.
Q - Who actually rented it?
A - Johnny was working, my sister to the real estate to rent it over two years before. (July 25).

LIVED WITH JOHNNY

Q - Rented it for whom to live there?
A - Johnny, my sister and me.
Q - Did he live there?
A - He stayed there when he got ready.
Q - About how many nights did he stay there?
A - Every night when he came from work and some week-ends. Some Fridays he did not stay over.
Q - In June and July there were times when he did not come?
A - Yes, about a month before (July 25).
Q - You're his girl friend?
A - Yes.
Q - When you broke up?
A - We broke up before this happened, a month before. We were not mad at each other but we were not going together.
Q - Why did you break up?
A - I asked him, do you have a girl friend? He said no.
Q - Actually, Mrs. Smith, he told you he was engaged to be married, didn't he?
A - No, he did not.
Q - Did you call him anytime?
Q - Did you call him any time?
A - I called his father once. Johnny said he would be there at 6 o'clock.
Q - Why did you call him?
A - He had called me some times.
Q - How long before July 25 was it?

SAW MARRIAGE LICENSE

A - About two weeks.
Q - In the AFRO, you did see where they were engaged, didn't you?
A - Yes. I picked it up and I said "wonder if it's Johnny. Then I said, no, he's not 27. He's 28."
Q - Actually, there's more than one John Henry Thompson.
A - Then I told him, I see in the AFRO you're getting married. He said it's not me.
Q - How did you get him over there on the night before July 25?

THE NIGHT BEFORE

A - He called me. He said he wasn't doing anything.
I told him we were in the kitchen drinking beer. He said do you care if I come around?
He came about 12:30.
Q - At night?
A - Yes, at night.
Q - We were drinking beer. He had a ½ pint of Old Crandad. He drank awhile and played with the German Shep dog he gave the children. He said he'd go to the park Sunday.
Q - He spent Saturday night with you?
A - Yes.

THE WEDDING DAY

Q - What time did the defendant come Sunday? (Meaning Mrs. Collins)
A - About 11:30 in the morning.
Q - Where were you?
A - I was in the kitchen.
Q - Where was she?
A - When I got in the living room she was there. She said she was Johnny's sister.
Q - As a matter of fact, didn't she say she was Johnny's fiancee and she wanted to know where her husband-to-be was, that they were going to be married that day?
A - No.
Q - Coming from the kitchen, didn't you have a knife?
A - No. I don't carry no knife.
Q - Did you know Johnny's father?
A - Yes.
Q - Didn't Johnny's father ask you to let Johnny alone, he was going to be married?
A - No.

(Further highlights from direct testimony on the witness stand will come in Tuesday's AFRO.)

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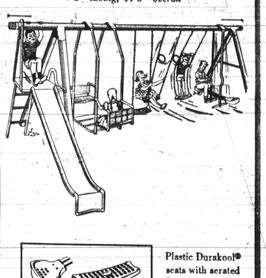

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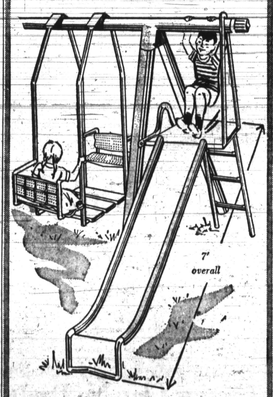

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