

WIFE.

In Custody Pending Inquiry Into Death of George Armstrong.

PECULIAR FEATURES CAUSE SUSPICION.

Mrs. Pearl Armstrong and Her Niece, Florence Harris,

Tell Conflicting Stories.

NIECE IS ALSO BEING HELD BY POLICE.

George Armstrong, aged forty-four years, and an employe in the Ohio Falls rolling mills for a number of years, died suddenly about 12 o'clock last night at his home, 47 West First street, under circumstances that caused suspicion that his death was due to foul play, and his wife, Mrs. Pearl Armstrong, and her niece, Miss Florence Myrtle Harris, were taken into custody by Chief of Police William Adams under orders of Coroner Will Richards and Dr. C. C. Funk, secretary of the city board of health, to await the result of an autopsy which will be held on Armstrong's body at Lottich Brothers' undertaking establishment this afternoon.

The women have told conflicting stories regarding Armstrong's illness and while Mrs. Armstrong insists that her husband's death was due to carbolic acid taken with suicidal intent there were indications that his death was due [to] strychnine poisoning. Suspicion in the case was first aroused when Mrs. Armstrong urged that no mention be made of carbolic acid in the death certificate. Armstrong was a member of New Albany Camp, Modern Woodmen of America, in which he carried a life insurance policy for \$1,000.

Last evening about 7 o'clock Mrs. Armstrong telephoned to Dr. H. B. Shacklett that her husband had taken carbolic acid some time before. When Dr. Shacklett reached the house Mrs. Armstrong told him that her husband had been taking calomel for several days. Armstrong also told the physician he had been taking calomel but said nothing about having swallowed any carbolic acid and Dr. Shacklett was unable to detect any trace of the fiery fluid. About 11 o'clock last night Mrs. Armstrong called Dr. Shacklett's home again and said that her husband had taken another dose of the acid but as the physician was absent on another call he did not go to the house and an hour later Armstrong died. Before Armstrong died his wife notified her parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Sullivan, who live on West Eighth street, and also several neighbors. Armstrong's mother, Mrs. John Gaskell, living at 409 Culbertson avenue, was not notified and did not learn of her son's death until this morning.

Shortly before his death Armstrong suffered from several convulsions and after his death his muscles were rigid and his limbs were drawn up. The police learned of the peculiar circumstances surrounding the case and Chief of Police Adams and Prosecuting Attorney Walter B. Bulleit closely questioned Mrs. Armstrong and Miss Harris, a sixteen-year-old girl, and their conflicting stories convinced the officials that the entire truth about the affair had not been told and they were taken into custody. Mrs. Armstrong was placed in a cell at the police station and Miss Harris was allowed to remain in the private front office.

Mrs. Armstrong said that her husband poured carbolic acid into capsules and swallowed them. She said that he made six of them and swallowed all of them at one time. No trace whatever of the acid could be found in Armstrong's mouth or throat or on his fingers. There was also no trace of the phial in which the acid had been kept.

Miss Harris, who has been staying at Armstrong's home for several weeks, disclaimed any knowledge of the affair. She denied a statement of Mrs. Armstrong that she also saw Armstrong swallow any capsules. Miss Harris is sixteen years old and her home is in the French Creek settlement, west of the city. It is said by Armstrong's relatives that he was opposed to her staying at his home but his wishes were not regarded by his wife.

Armstrong, besides his mother, leaves two sisters, Mrs. Jessie Weber and Ida Goulding, and one brother, Charles Armstrong, all of this city. Mrs. Armstrong is his second wife, his first wife being a daughter of Jacob Bloat, of this city. His relatives are not making any accusations of foul play but they believe the peculiar features in the case and the unusual circumstances attending the death of Armstrong demand a thorough investigation by the officials.

It is feared an autopsy will not reveal the cause of death as the body had been embalmed early this morning before there were any suspicions aroused that foul play might have cut a figure in the case. Embalming fluids used by undertakers are made of ingredients that are deadly poisons.

It was stated this afternoon by Chief of Police Adams that convincing evidence had been secured that Armstrong's death was not due to carbolic acid self-administered and further questioning of Mrs. Armstrong and Miss Harris is expected to bring out the straight story of the manner of his death.

POISONS.

Were Fed to George Armstrong by His Wife for Several Days.

NIECE RELATES DAMAGING STORY.

Rough on Rats, Carbolic Acid and Strychnine Were Administered.

MRS. ARMSTRONG ASSERTS INNOCENCE.

Rough on rats, carbolic acid and strychnine were the agencies used by Mrs. Pearl Armstrong to end the life of her husband, George Armstrong, according to an additional sworn statement made to Prosecuting Attorney Walter V. Bulleit by Miss Florence Harris, niece of Mrs. Armstrong, today.

After the young woman had been subjected to a severe cross questioning yesterday afternoon by Prosecuting Attorney Bulleit, Chief of Police William Adams, Capt. James McLaughlin, Coroner Will Richards and Dr. C. C. Funk, secretary of the board of health, she told some of the details of the affair but the officials were convinced that she had not told all she knew and she was again closeted with the same officials in Chief of Police Adams' private office this morning. She apparently at first tried to shield her aunt as much as possible but finally began talking more freely.

She said that Mrs. Armstrong first started her cold blooded work as far back as last Thursday night when she administered rough on rats to her husband. He had been ill and on the advice of his wife was taking calomel and the fact that he had been taking medicine made it easier for Mrs. Armstrong to give the poison.

On Sunday afternoon Miss Harris said Mrs. Armstrong gave her husband two capsules filled with carbolic acid and on Sunday evening she filled four more capsules and administered them. An hour or two before Armstrong died Miss Harris says that Mrs. Armstrong filled a capsule with strychnine and gave it to her husband. Shortly after he had taken it he was seized by convulsions.

Miss Harris said that Mrs. Armstrong threw the box of rough on rats and bottle of poisons in the vault in the rear of the house. The vault was searched this morning by order of the coroner and the box and bottles were recovered. A pair of gloves were also found and Miss Harris says these were worn by Mrs. Armstrong to prevent her hands from being burned at the time she was filling the capsules with carbolic acid.

Miss Harris said she had tried to persuade her aunt on Sunday not to give the carbolic acid, but her aunt said she had started to end her husband's life and might as well finish the work. Her only explanation for not informing the authorities of her aunt's deed was that she was under her influence.

Mrs. Armstrong was taken yesterday afternoon from the cell in the police station to the county jail and Sheriff Sittason was instructed to permit no one to see her or talk to her. She became hysterical while in the cell and it was necessary to administer sedatives to quiet her. At first she was defiant and demanded to know by what right she was being deprived of her liberty, but she finally weakened and was in a state of collapse when taken to jail and was supported across the street by Capt. McLaughlin and Patrolman Sinex. She still insists her husband took the carbolic acid with suicidal intent.

Before her arrest yesterday morning she displayed no agitation in discussing her husband's death and said it was due to an overdose of calomel. She called at the office of Dr. H. B. Shacklett, who had attended Armstrong Sunday evening, and urged that the death certificate make no mention of carbolic acid although she had told Dr. Shacklett the night before that her husband had taken carbolic acid. She also called on F. E. Durment, of New Albany Camp, Modern Woodmen of America, of which her husband was a member and made inquiries as to the payment of the \$1,000 life insurance he carried in the order.

The stomach of Armstrong was sent last evening to the laboratory at the Indiana University at Bloomington for analysis. The funeral of Armstrong will take place tomorrow afternoon at 2:30 o'clock from his late home at 47 West First street.

Prosecuting Attorney Bulleit completed his examination of Miss Harris shortly after noon today and he and the other officials who heard her story are satisfied that she has given them a straight account of the affair and they said no motive had been brought out in the examination that would cause her to wrongfully accuse her aunt.

Miss Harris, in the cross-questioning, said the deed had been contemplated by Mrs. Armstrong for several months and that the latter had frequently expressed a wish to be rid of her husband. Miss Harris said no definite plans were made to take his life until about two weeks ago when Mrs. Armstrong induced her husband, who had been ill, to take calomel. While he was taking the calomel she also gave him vinegar and other sour fluids to bring about salivation. Later she started to giving the other poisons as stated in the foregoing article.

Mrs. Armstrong is in a delicate condition and it may be necessary to remove her to the hospital for treatment. The excitement and stress of mind under which she labored has brought about a physical condition that may terminate seriously unless she is placed where she can receive medical treatment.

Miss Harris said that Mrs. Armstrong purchased all the poison with the exception of the box of rough on rats which she said was bought by her brother, Thomas Harris, who was sent by Mrs. Armstrong to make the purchase. Miss Harris denied that she had purchased any of the poison that was used by Mrs. Armstrong. Miss Harris was again closeted with Prosecuting Attorney Bulleit and the police this afternoon and it is expected that her story in every detail will be in possession of the authorities as she is showing more willingness to tell the story of the entire transaction from its inception.