

SEARCH FOR MAN IN CAR CRIME.

Missing Darracq Found in Swansea Lane.

MOTOR MYSTERY.

Story of Night Fare on Salisbury Plain.

From Our Special Correspondent.

ANDOVER, Monday.

Who was it that robbed and murdered Sidney George Spicer, a young taxi-driver, while driving his car across Salisbury Plain late at night and then, in the hope of hiding the terrible crime, dragged his body for thirty-six yards and finally threw it under a hedge?

That is the question that the joint detective forces of Hampshire and Wiltshire are striving to answer.

The facts connected with this grim drama are few, but simple. Sidney Spicer, the dead man, was a powerfully-built young fellow—a kind of Wiltshire John Bull, who feared nothing. He stood nearly 6ft., weighed about 14st., and was twenty-seven years of age. He was married and had one child.

Since leaving the Army he had worked for different firms at Salisbury, but about a week ago he entered the employment of Mr. E. S. Rogers, a local proprietor.

Since then Spicer, with his 12-h.p. Darracq, could be seen most nights driving home soldiers to one or other of the military camps on the Plain.

When he drove out of Salisbury about 9.15 last Saturday night his fare consisted of five persons. Two of them were women. They were taken to Bulford.

This fact is beyond question. It was after he deposited his fare and started on his ill-fated journey home that the mystery surrounding his death begins.

FATAL RETURN JOURNEY.

I have motored to-day across the Plain from Salisbury—first to Bulford, and then along the narrow, chalky roads to the spot where the body was found.

It is a bleak and lonely place. A few miles away is Stonehenge and also the spot where the ghostly drummer of legendary lore is said at times to tap out his nocturnal "calls."

Bloodstains on the roadside mark the spot where Spicer, after being shot in the head from behind at close range, either fell or was dragged from his seat.

Similar marks at irregular intervals indicate the track made by the dragging of his body along the road, then through a wire fence, and finally to the place of concealment under the hedge where a cyclist discovered it some nine or ten hours later.

Near by is a heap of roadside sand, and, in the hope of destroying evidence of the crime, the assailant or assailants sprinkled some of this chalky deposit over the largest and most conspicuous bloodstain.

The scene of the tragedy is on the main road between London and Exeter, and careful investigations by detectives, under the direction of Superintendent J. L. Cox, of Andover, resulted in an important discovery.

There were marks which showed that the car had been turned round and driven off in the direction of London.

YOUNG MAN WITH A BAG.

With commendable propititude, Superintendent Cox circulated a description of the missing car.

After leaving Bulford, about ten o'clock on the fatal night, Spicer was seen to pick up a young man carrying a bag.

The stranger was heard to say that he wanted driving to Andover Junction Station, some eleven miles away. Whether Spicer actually drove this stranger to Andover and then picked up another "fare" who wanted to be driven over the Plain is not known.

There was no train leaving Andover Station after that particular hour that night.

The motive for the crime—whatever committed it—is fairly obvious. Spicer was known to have had money in his possession, and, so far as can be ascertained, he had about £10 on him on the fatal night.

Every penny of this was taken. His pockets were turned inside out. Even his driver's licence, only issued that day, was missing.

There was only one bullet wound, and the person who sent him to his death either sat beside him on the driver's seat or fired at him from the back seat on the near side of the car.

The police have issued the following description of a man stated to be wanted in connection with the tragedy:—

Between twenty-five and forty years of age, stands about 5ft. 8ins. or 5ft. 9ins. in height, and of medium build.

He is dressed in a "British warm," and khaki trousers.

On his arm he wears a crown, denoting his rank as that of company sergeant-major.

Spicer's body now lies in a barn at Thruxton Down, near the spot where it was found, and the inquest is expected to be held to-day.

It was this afternoon that I heard that the Darracq had been found abandoned in a lane at Swansea, in Wales, and the police there are looking for two soldiers who were seen in the car during the day.

One of the soldiers is said to have been wearing an A.S.C. badge in his cap.

WOMEN OR MEN J.P.s.

For Whom Would Bad Children Vote as Magistrates?

"I DON'T MIND FATHER."

Are women magistrates too sentimental to mete out justice in a children's police court? Would the young offenders themselves rather be judged by a woman than by a man?

These are questions which are being universally discussed since the Home Secretary's announcement that a number of special juvenile courts, presided over by "skilled and sympathetic magistrates and women," are shortly to be established in London.

"In my opinion, women are the only people who are properly fitted to administer justice to child offenders up to the age of sixteen years," Mrs. Lee, of the National Adoption Society, told *The Daily Mirror*.

"A pretty child always knows that she has a better chance of leniency with a man than a woman, and—she usually gets it."

A well-known writer on social problems, seen by *The Daily Mirror*, said that if children themselves were asked whom they would rather have as judges they would all vote for men.

"A young friend of mine, who is not always a saint, said to me the other day: 'I'm afraid of mother, but I don't mind father. I've found out he's the quite tame!'"

"I think that sums up the whole question."

RICHBOROUGH FLEET.

Mr. Harmsworth Asks Why Ships Run to France Empty.

Replying to a question by Mr. Esmond Harmsworth, whether vessels of the Richborough fleet run to France empty, Mr. Hope, for the Ministry of Munitions, said in the House of Commons, yesterday, that large cargoes have been transported by these vessels to France. However, often it is not possible to wait for export cargoes in view of the demands for space on the French side.

Permission to export Kent coal has been withheld on account of the demand inland.

NEW PLAY AT RAMSGATE.

Miss Laurette Taylor's Triumph in Mr. Manners' "One Night in Rome."

From Our Own Correspondent.

RAMSGATE, Monday.

Miss Laurette Taylor had a wonderful reception at Ramsgate to-night when she appeared in Mr. J. Hartley Manners' very successful new play, "One Night in Rome."

She plays the part of L'Enigme, a fortune-teller, and her appearance was the signal for a tremendous outburst of applause.

After each act—and they are very effective—there were many calls, and when the play came to an end the audience demanded a speech from her.

"It is so nice of you to like it," she said, with a smile, "because it gives me a new lease of life on the stage, since I should have been forced to give up playing Peg in a few years."

Mr. Hartley Manners was in the building, but despite many cries of "Author" he did not appear.

"BRIGHT, JOLLY LONDON."

Novelist on City's Greatest Sight—Fashionable Bloomsbury.

Londoners live in one of the jolliest and brightest of towns, and do not know it, said Mr. Pett Ridge yesterday at a meeting of the Socialist Institutes Union. The most extraordinary sight in London, he added, was the citizens themselves.

"Bloomsbury, where it was formerly possible to be 'done for' at 30s. a week, was now becoming the home of the aristocracy. Retired Ministers flocked there, and Coram-street might in time become a fashionable resort."

WOMEN HOUSE PAINTERS.

Golden-Haired Girls Busy on West End Millinery Shop.

Perched on a plank, two golden-haired girls clad in khaki-coloured smocked overalls, corduroy breeches, brown leather leggings and black tan o'shaners, were busily engaged in decorating the exterior of a small shop in Albemarle-street, London, yesterday.

"This is my first outside job," one of the girls told *The Daily Mirror*.

The little shop is shortly to be opened as a millinery establishment by Mrs. West, the widow of Lieutenant Colonel P. A. West, V.C., D.S.O., M.C., and her friend, Mrs. Wright, whose husband is an invalid through war service.

WHAT LAND VALUATION COSTS.

The cost of the Land Valuation Department staff for current financial year is £468,000, said the Chancellor of the Exchequer, replying to questions in the House of Commons yesterday. The receipts from Land Valuation duties up to the end of March, 1920, were estimated at £1,529,000.

WEDDING OMENS.

Burned Bride Who Wore Wedding Gown Twice.

SWEEP'S KISS LUCKY.

The recent tragic story of a young bride who, on the eve of her wedding, was burned to death, has set going the tongues of the superstitions.

There is, perhaps, no ceremony so fraught with old-time superstition as a wedding, and brides-to-be are often bewildered by the many "don'ts" and "do's" showered upon them by well-meaning friends.

In the case of Janet Fairbairn, the Scottish bride whose nightdress caught fire while she was engaged in writing letters of thanks for her wedding gifts, *The Daily Mirror* learns of a series of unlucky events which preceded the tragedy.

The wedding had been postponed on two different occasions—a traditionally unlucky procedure—and then, owing to forgetfulness on the part of the minister of the parish church, the announcement of the marriage was proclaimed at the end instead of the commencement of the service, and the bride herself completed the chain by trying on her entire wedding apparel.

Brave, indeed, is the bride-to-be who, in the face of a time-honoured superstition, elects to be married in the month of May.

Tradition decrees that, should a bride on her way to church, encounter a sweep, she must, should she wish for happiness, put her arms round his neck and kiss him three times. But, to lodge the soot, she is permitted to bow three times to the blackened arbuter of her destiny, blowing him a discreet kiss as she does so.

TWO NEW R.A.s.

Mr. Julius Olsson and Mr. R. Jack Promoted.

Mr. Julius Olsson, A.R.A., and Mr. Richard Jack, A.R.A., were yesterday elected Royal Academicians.

Mr. Olsson is a marine painter, whose moon-



Mr. Richard Jack, whose light seascapes have been very popular in recent exhibitions. Mr. Richard Jack is the painter of "The Cure," "Beneath with Nikkei," "The Sun is Shining" and "The Nation."

HIS TELL-TALE POCKET.

Wife's Story of Search for Husband's Cash—Her Cigarette Ban.

A wife who said she searched her soldier husband's pockets figured in the King's Bench Division yesterday, when Mr. Justice Sankey gave judgment for £18-18s. 4d. in favour of Mrs. Olive Sarah Tynan, of Chesham, Bucks, who alleged that her husband, Mr. James Edward Tynan, of Cambridge-street, Warwick-square, had detained some of her furniture.

One of Mrs. Tynan's letters read by counsel ran:—"I am going to get two or three chairs for the sitting-room, and also a sideboard with flowers on it. Heaven help you if you rest your cigarettes on it." (Laughter.)

Mrs. Tynan said she understood when her husband came home on leave that he drew 200 francs for his expenses. "But when I went through his pockets I found he must have drawn nearly 1,000." (Laughter.)

£16,000 JEWEL ROBBERY.

Loss of West End Hotel Guests—Reward of £1,500 Offered.

Scotland Yard is investigating the theft of £16,000 worth of jewellery, the property of M. and Mme. Vladimir V. Ber, who are staying at a London hotel.

They had with them a very fine collection of jewels, which were carefully locked up in their apartment when they went out on Saturday afternoon. They returned to the hotel shortly before seven o'clock, and it was then found that the whole of their jewels, including many very fine diamonds, had been stolen.

A reward of £1,500 is offered in connection with the loss.

£375 FOR SCHOOLBOY'S EYE.

A schoolboy obtained £375 damages yesterday against the Mayor and Corporation of Bootle, the Bootle Education Committee and a school teacher for damages for personal injuries.

The teacher struck plaintiff's hand with a cane, causing a pen to rebound into his eye. The judge said it was a momentary lapse on the teacher's part, but was neglect of duty.

WEST END SHOP-GIRLS ON STRIKE.

Staff of 400 Ceases Work at John Lewis'.

DOCK STOPPAGES.

Shipping Paralysed at Hull—Trouble at Plymouth.

Four hundred employees of Messrs. John Lewis, the well-known Oxford-street drapers, came out on strike yesterday morning.

Save for the silk department, the shop was closed, the coffee-coloured blinds being drawn and the doors securely locked.

"The things we are striking for," *The Daily Mirror* was told, "are premiums or their equivalent, recognition of the union, time off and the ability to leave the shop during the luncheon hour, and the appointment of a staff committee to deal with the living-in system."

"ACCUSED TRADE UNIONS."

A note issued to the employees by Mr. John Lewis, who is eighty-four, read:—

"TO OUR YOUNG MEN AND MAIDENS. I have just learned with amazement that it is said I am disposed to make changes in the staff on very trivial causes. Nothing can be further from the truth."

"Take the ladies first. No small number of them have lived on here from girlhood to advanced old age. (Loud laughter.) What is it, then, that has caused this unhealthy atmosphere? It is the workings of the accused trade unions."

Their vocation is to make mischief and otherwise lead idle lives at your expense, by drawing from you money that might be saved for better purposes. They lie when they say that your interests are opposed to mine."

Now, as regards the men. Every responsible man in any employment gives the lie direct to the assertion that I am given to making unnecessary changes in my staff. There is no employer who so persistently aims at improving the position and prospects of the young men-like myself."

"Look around you! Look around and see the men who entered my employment as boys, and with whom I have never had an unfriendly word."

In answer to this Mr. Hoffman claimed that at the present moment there were only fifty-four employees who were with the firm in 1914.

Upon inquiry at Weymouth-street, Harley-street, last night, it was stated that the girls employed by Messrs. John Lewis and Company were sleeping there as usual, and that a similar state of affairs prevailed at the other establishments rented by Messrs. Lewis for the accommodation of the remainder of the staff.

HULL DOCKERS IDLE.

Work Stopped on Fruit Boats—Liner Passengers' Plight.

Disatisfied with the delay before the recent award of 18s. a day becomes operative, Hull dockers unofficially declared a strike yesterday.

A telegram was received during the day from Mr. Sexton, M.P., and Mr. Bevin, the "dockers K.C.," urging the strikers to resume work.

Work was stopped on fruit boats, though employers offered the advance asked for.

Dock labourers at Plymouth also went on strike, and Sir Walter R. Lawrence, director of the P. and O. Line, and several other notabilities who landed on the liner Kashmir had to trouble their own luggage to the train.

Cotton Crisis.—Hopes of a settlement of the cotton trade dispute were improved yesterday when 300,000 Manchester operatives agreed to arbitration if the employers will consent to terms. Strike notices have been deferred from May 1 to May 8.

THE £300-A-YEAR LOOK.

Witness' Estimate of Man Who "Went Shopping in a Taxi."

Giving evidence at Wandsworth County Court yesterday as to a defendant's means, a witness said from his general appearance the defendant seemed to be earning £300 to £400 a year.

Judge Harrington: What leads you to say that? Witness: He generally came shopping in a taxicab.

OTHER NEWS IN BRIEF.

To-day's Weather.—Fresh or strong north-westerly winds, some showers; bright intervals, moderate temperature.

Miss Maude Royden is to preach in Geneva Cathedral on June 2.

£1,300 was left to his wife by the will of a South Kensington coachman, Walter Lansley.

Captain Roald Amundsen is about to abandon his effort to reach the North Pole, say wireless messages.

Theft of £93 from a messenger's pocket was the charge against a boy of fourteen at Jarrow yesterday. He was remanded.

£50,000 in Shillings.—An appeal is being made to all London schools to contribute about £50,000 to the hospitals at the rate of 1s. per child.

Young Woman Shot.—Through getting in the line of fire, a young woman farm hand was shot at Southill yesterday by a party of sprout-shooters. She died later.