

CATS' DEATHS SOLVE THE ELOSSER CASE

Girl and Her Fiance Asphyxiated
by Fumes from a Gas Stove,
Doctors Find.

TESTS MADE ON ANIMALS

Put in the Same Room Where the
Young Couple Died, Cats
Also Die.

Special to The New York Times.

CUMBERLAND, Md., Jan. 28.—Experiments by Drs. Littlefield and A. H. Hawkins of this city have cleared up the mystery surrounding the deaths of Miss Grace Elosser of South Cumberland and Charles E. Twigg of Keyser, W. Va., which occurred in the parlor of the Elosser home on the afternoon of Dec. 31 on the eve of their wedding. The experiments show that death was due to poisoning from the fumes of a gas stove and not to cyanide of potassium, as decided by a Coroner's jury.

Several days ago Dr. Littlefield heard that there was a small gas stove in the parlor of the Elosser home and made a visit to the house to inspect it. He found that it was a small square stove with broken isinglass door, there being a small aperture through which the fumes could escape. Dr. Littlefield had been making a study of carbon monoxide, and came to the conclusion that this might have been the cause of death. Carbon monoxide is a product of the imperfect combustion of natural gas, and it is said to be so deadly that one-half of one per cent. in a small room will cause death.

Dr. Littlefield and Dr. Hawkins got a cat and placed it in a box on the sofa where Miss Elosser and Twigg were found dead. The gas was lighted and the room closed as on the afternoon of Dec. 31. After one hour and a half, the same length of time that the young couple were alone in the room, the cat was dead. The position of the cat in the box showed that it had died without a struggle.

A post-mortem examination was made, and the internal organs of the cat were found in the same condition as were the organs of Miss Elosser and Mr. Twigg. The blood of the cat also showed the same condition as was found in the young couple.

Armed with the result of their experiment, Dr. Littlefield and Dr. Hawkins went to State's Attorney David A. Robb and Health Officer F. E. Harrington and told them what they had had done. Mr. Robb and Dr. Harrington were impressed with the result of the experiment, and asked that another experiment be tried. This afternoon another cat was placed on the sofa. Later the cat was found dead, as in the first experiment.

Mr. Robb, however, is not fully convinced that the experiments clear up the case.

"We worked on three theories, murder, double suicide, and murder and suicide," he said. "We are now investigating a fourth theory. We have reached no conclusion. I know two cats used in the experiments are dead. I cannot say how Charles E. Twigg and Grace Elosser met their deaths."

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