

MARGARET DOROTHY MEEHAN on her oath saith :-

To Mr. Carnett - I am a single woman, a State school teacher at Chet-

wynd. The deceased was my sister. She was of a cheerful disposition,

not likely to commit suicide. She was in good health when I last

saw her. She was very much attached to her husband, and always spoke

of him in the highest terms. I never saw her alive after she was

married. After her death I went to Mr. Tierney's on the following

Sunday. I asked Mr. Tierney what was the cause of her death: he said

he did not know, that he had been to the doctor the day before, and

he had a conversation with him on three ^{occasions} ~~conversations~~ that day.

That the doctor told him she was all right, that she had had a

touch of ptomaine poisoning, but all the symptoms had disappeared,

and that she was quite well, but the symptoms she had before her

death were similar to those she had ~~before~~ before she went to the ~~de-~~

doctor. During the evening of the Sunday I saw Mary Bertram in the

spare bedroom. I spoke to her about the death of my sister. She told

me about the illness before going to Natimuk. She told me about my

sister having breakfast on Friday morning, that she had her break

fast by herself and she ^{had} ~~and~~ some tart, which had a very bitter taste.

She told me that Mrs. Tierney had taken salts that morning. Miss

Bertram had also taken salts and they felt ill after taking them.

I think before they had taken salts they had complained of a ner-

vous feeling and went out to where Mr. Tierney and Russell Bertram

were working. They ^{took} ~~took~~ the salts after coming back to the house.

Mary Bertram felt very ill herself and she vomited, and felt better.

My sister did not vomit, but continued to get worse. Then she told

me they went in to the doctor, and the doctor suggested that they

had been poisoned by ptomaine poison. There must have been some-

thing wrong with the fruit in the tart. They came back on the Sa-

turday and had dinner, and in the afternoon they prepared to take

some

some salts . She said my sister had a half packet of salts, and as she was prepring the salts, or just before she took it, she said "I hope this will not affect me as it did at Gymbowen". I understood she meant the half packet of salts. I said "By the way, she brought it from Gymbowen". She said "Yes". She said she was not sure whether my sister had brought it from Gymbowen or not. Mary Bertram told me about the kitchen door and the cupboard doors being open, and the tarts being found on the floor on Friday morning. She said she tasted a piece of one of the tarts, but it was so bitter that she could not swallow it. I remember being in Mr. Tierney's bedroom on the Sunday about Eight o'clock in the evening. Mary Bertram came in while I was in the room. I was talking to her. When she went out I put my head down on the pillow. I was sitting on the bed when she came in, and she came and sat beside me. We were talking for awhile about what had happened. Mr. Jeremiah Tierney was in the room at the same time. We seemed to get the impression that something was wrong with the Epsom salts that had been taken. Mary Bertram remarked that on each occasion after taking the salts my sister became very ill. (I remember picking up a piece of paper.)

X Just after that Mary Bertram came in, and sat on the bed. She remained there for about one minute. X Then she went out past the dressing table. She seemed to pause for a very short time at the dressing table. Immediately she went out I walked down towards the door. As I did so I came in contact with a piece of pink paper on the floor. It was the cover of a newspaper. I think it was pink, I am not quite sure. It was in front of the dressing table at the foot of the bed near the door. It was the room Mr. Tierney occupied prior to his marriage. I picked up the paper. I noticed something greasy on it . There was no light in the room, but I felt something moist was on it. It was not very much crumpled: it was not perfectly

perfectly straight. I picked it up and looked at it and then kicked it under the bed. I did not take it away from under the bed. Mr. Tierney came into the room almost immediately after that. He told me he had come to get the piece of tart he had left on the box on the dressing-table. He put out his hand to take the piece of tart and he found it was not there. He was very much distressed over its disappearance. He searched about. I do not know whether Mr. Tierney or I picked up the piece of paper under the bed. Mr. Tierney said "That is the piece of paper the tart was wrapped in". Then Mary Bertram came. Others came and assisted in the search for the tart. I did not notice the tart on the table myself. I remember Mary Bertram speaking about what happened on Friday. She told me the remark that my sister had passed. She said that my sister said "Well Mary, if one of us should die now it will save a p. M.". I said I could hardly credit my sister passing a remark like that. She must have made a mistake. Mary Bertram left Mr. Tierney's place on the Thursday after the death. Mary Bertram told me she had not been in my sister's room on the night of the Gymbowen social. I asked her had she been in the room that night. I have seen Miss Bertram wearing a grey jacket. I should say the one I saw her in this morning was the one.

To the Jury - I understood the piece of ^{Paper} ~~paper~~ I picked up was the piece the tart was wrapped up in. It was ~~larger~~ larger than a page of foolscap. I should think it was about as large as half the cover of the "Bulletin". I thought it was that.

To Mr. Garnett - The jacket Miss Bertram used to wear would look dark at night I should think. On the night of the day of the funeral Miss Bertram was wearing a pair of my sister's shoes: they were her best pair I think.

To the Jury - Constable Dunham was one of the persons looking for the tart, and Jeremiah Tierney, and Mary Bertram. We all looked for it

in the room, and outside we found something on the verandah that looked ^{like} ~~like~~ the crust of ^a ~~the~~ tart that had been ground under foot. When we found it had disappeared I asked Mary Bertram what she thought had become of it. She said very likely the cat had taken it. Mr. Jeremiah Tierney said "I do not think the cat would eat apple tart". She said "Very likely the dog has taken it. There have been several ~~stray~~ dogs about to-day". I did not see any cats or dogs about the house.

To Mr. Garnett - On the evening that I arrived at Springbank Miss Bertram appeared to be walking lame. She appeared to be suffering from some nervous excitement. She said she had been ill and she thought it was the illness that had made her lame. On one occasion I noticed her not appearing quite herself. She appeared to be trembling very violently. That was after the funeral. The funeral was on Tuesday. She said she had had a kind of nightmare. On another occasion I noticed her trembling very much, and I remarked to her that she was trembling, and asked what caused it. She said she felt splendid. I heard her calling on one occasion, and I went into the room and she was trembling, and looked very excited, and she said she thought she had heard my poor sister calling her. I asked Mary Bertram to get up and come out to the fire. My sister Elinor was there. I went into my mother's room then. I do not know what she said to Elinor.

To the Jury - Mr. William Tierney saw the piece of paper in the bedroom

To Mr. Power - When Mr. Tierney came in, looking for the tart, I did not ask Miss Bertram if she had taken the tart. It was then I remembered Miss Bertram had hesitated in front of the toilet table. I asked her did she know what had become of it, and she said that probably the cat had taken it. I did not say "I saw you stopping in front of the table". I noticed that Miss Bertram was wearing my sister's boots on the night of the funeral. I did not make any inquiries

inquiries about it. I did not know that my sister had given them
to her to go into Natimuk. I do not draw any conclusion from her
wearing my sister's boots.

(signed) Margaret Dorothy Meehan.

Taken and sworn before me at Goroke
on Friday the fourteenth day of July 1905.

J E R E M I A H T I E R N E Y on his oath further saith:-

To the Jury - I was present when they were looking for the tart. We did not succeed in finding it. I could not say we were very long searching for it. We saw traces as if a piece of tart had been broken outside what was called Will's room. We never found the tart. We did not look under the bed. I did not see the paper lying under the bed. I do not remember seeing any paper at all. I remember making the remark that I did not think the cat would take it, but a dog might. I have not seen any cats or dogs about the place: there might have been without my seeing them.

But a dog might have
To the Coroner - Miss Bertram did not say who brought the salts on the Saturday. I am not clear whether she said she or Mrs. Tierney prepared the salts.

To Mr. Power - I did not notice any pieces of tart on the floor inside the room: outside there was a mark as if something had been ground up.

(signed) Jeremiah Tierney.

Taken and sworn before me at Goroke
on Friday the Fourteenth day of July 1905.

92

EDWARD JAMES DUNHAM on his oath saith :-

To Mr. Garnett - I am a mounted constable stationed at Goroke. I went to Mr. Tierney's place on Sunday the 21st. of May between One and Two .I saw Tierney. I asked him to explain the circumstances surrounding the death of his wife. He explained to me that his wife had eaten some apple tart for breakfast on Friday morning, that he had gone down the paddock, come back shortly afterwards and saw ~~his~~ his wife making faces. He said "What are you making those faces for". She said "Oh, Will you ought to taste this tart, it is most horribly bitter". Shortly afterwards Tierney left and went to his work. About noon he returned. Prior to his returning the deceased and Miss Bertram went down to the paddock where he was working. There was something mentioned by the deceased about the tart, and she then said "Oh we have had a cup of tea since, and that was bitter, but we went to the house and got another teapot and some other cups and the tea was lovely". I was present when Tierney gave his evidence: that is quite correct .

To the Jury - I was informed^e of the death of Mrs. Tierney on the Saturday evening about Eight o'clock..I went out between One and Two o'clock on Sunday.

To Mr. Garnett - Mr. George Bailey informed me. On the Saturday evening about 8.30 Mr. Bailey came down to the police station, and informed me that Mrs. Tierney had died very suddenly. I said to Mr. Bailey at "Has she been ill at all". He said "She was down to see the doctor's on Friday morning, and I am going down first thing in the morning to see the doctor". I said "Probably the doctor will give a certificate. If you do not receive a certificate, as soon as you return let me know". From rumours I heard after that I proceeded out between One and Two and enquired into the circumstances of the death and reported.

To

~~To Mr. Carnell~~ 4 I saw Mary Bertram on Sunday the 21st. of May. I did not speak to her. I saw Mr. Jelbart. In company with him and Mr. Tierney I looked for some tart alongside the hedge where it was supposed to have been thrown by the deceased after returning from Natimuk on Saturday, but I failed to find it, with the exception of a small piece of crust, with hardly any apple on it. I handed it to Mr. Tierney to put with other pieces that he had, until I took the statement down. The piece would be one inch and a half by two inches in size. Mr. Tierney took it into what he called his own room at the end of the verandah. He did not put it in anything that I saw. He had a piece of his own at the same time. I asked him to wrap up the piece with the other in a piece of paper. Mrs. Buffham pointed out the place where ~~she~~ had found the piece of tart. That was sometime after: I cannot give the exact date: it might have been a week afterwards. She said ~~she~~ found the piece of tart there on the Monday. I had searched that particular spot that she pointed out to me prior to the time when she said she found it there. I searched it on the Sunday afternoon and evening. I am positive there was no ~~tart~~ ^{tart} there when I searched there before. I searched all round there, and I can swear there was no tart there. I got exhibits "B". "E". and "F" from Dr. Bird. Exhibit "F" is the paper containing the piece of tart. I took them down to the Government Analyst's office, and handed them to an assistant, and I have his receipt which I now produce (exhibit "P"). I was there again on Monday the 22nd. with Mr. Tierney. I saw Mr. Jeremiah Tierney. I saw him fetch in the salts tin into the room where the doctor was. He put it on the table and drew my attention to it. The tin produced is the one. I took it down with the other things to the Analyst, Mr. Wilkinson. The tin was labelled "salts". I examined what was in it. I could see some crystal stuff very fine, something like a white powder. I got

a bottle of strychnine from Mr. Tierney: the bottle produced is the one. ~~It~~ (exhibit "L") It is in the same condition now as when I saw it. I handed it to Mr. Dungey.

To Mr. Power - I found the small crust of tart in the garden, and in company with Sub-inspector Dungey I looked at the sand near the stable. I did not find anything. I assisted to look for the piece of tart that was lost from the room. When I had finished the statement of Mr. Tierney I asked for the tart in the paper. The paper was found in the room and brought out with a small particle of apple on it. We searched the verandah near the door and round and about the verandah, but failed to find any with the exception of a small piece near the door that looked as if it had been trodden on. We did not look under the hedge at that time. The paper produced is the ~~one~~ piece the tart was wrapped in

(signed) E. J. Lunham M. C. 4868.

Taken and sworn before me at Goroke
on Friday the Fourteenth day of July 1905.