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WAS IT MURDER OR SUICIDE?

Girl's Body Discovered Stuffed Inside Furnace

HOUSE OF DEATH

In this 2-storey frame dwelling, 736 W. Seventh, police are investigating the mystery death of little Emiko Yamada, whose body was discovered stuffed into the firebox of the furnace. A brother, who found the body, slept in an upstairs bedroom with three other members of the family.

Only the girl's feet were visible in the open door of the furnace. Her body was almost unrecognizable, a mass of blackened burns.



Vancouver Today Night Plane Arouses City

Curiosity of Kerrisdale, Shaughnessy and South Vancouver residents was aroused late Tuesday night by the hum of powerful motors of an airplane circling overhead.

The noise was caused by the Trans-Canada Airlines' evening flight to Winnipeg and Eastern Canadian cities, which took off from the airport three hours late and circled over the city to gain altitude before heading east.

From Duke of Windsor

Most cherished of Christmas greetings received by Army and Navy Veterans in Vancouver is a letter from the Duke of Windsor.

"From my several visits to the Dominion, I know the Army and Navy Veterans in Canada to be a fine ex-servicemen's organization and the useful work that it does amongst old comrades," the letter says.

"To the members of the Vancouver unit Army and Navy Veterans, I send my best wishes for Christmas with the

Vance Probes Death of City Japanese;
Fire Was Still Smouldering

CORPSE CUT FROM FIERY TOMB

MURDER or suicide?

Inspector J. F. C. B. Vance, city police analyst, set about to decide that question today in the mysterious "furnace death" of Emiko Yamada, quiet, studious, 16-year-old Japanese girl, who was found stuffed into the firebox in the basement of her home at 736 West Seventh avenue at 9:30 this morning.

The body was found by Eichi Yamada, 15-year-old brother of the girl, and her father. Only her feet could be seen protruding through the opening. A fire was smouldering and buckets of water were needed to extinguish it.

A. F. Hann, inspector of detectives, stated that there was "suspicion of murder." Police are still interviewing occupants of the house.

The body was left in the furnace for examination by Inspector Vance and Coroner J. D. Whitbread. After a half-hour's examination of the small basement and furnace, Inspector Vance left for headquarters for scientific equipment and returned shortly after noon.

FURNACE CUT OPEN.

Acetelyne workers from the city garage came at 11:50 to cut through the furnace in order that the body could be removed. The body was taken out after thirty minutes work. It had been stuffed in the furnace head down, arms doubled underneath. It was taken to the morgue for an autopsy.

"As far as we know, the girl went to bed at 11:30 last night," Dr. Whitbread said. "There were three others in the room."

"The furnace usually died out at midnight."

"This morning, when the girl was missing, the father and brother went down to the basement to look for her and found her head down in the furnace. She was badly burned. There had been blankets around her body but they had been partly destroyed."

OLD FURNACE.

The furnace was a wood and coal model, of the old type. The dingy basement was littered with old boards, flower pots, and odds and ends.

The young girl's running shoes were found beside the furnace.

Emiko was the eldest of Mr. and Mrs. G. Yamada's three children. Her father is night foreman of the Japanese laborers at a False Creek lumber yard.

Other members of the family are Eichi, aged 15, and Shauko, a girl, aged 8.

Neighbors expressed surprise and bewilderment when they heard of the mysterious death.

"They were nice, quiet neighbors and good people," Mrs. F. W. Finnegan said. "She was a lovely little girl, with a beautiful voice."

OLD-FASHIONED GIRL.

"She was very old-fashioned in her ways. She dressed in the old style. Every Sunday she went to the Fairview Bukkyokai."

(Continued on Page 2.)
(See MURDER.)

SAILOR GAVE UP LIFE IN RESCUE ATTEMPT

FORESTRY CAMP WORKER KILLED

Four Companions Hurt
As Machine Skids
Off Island Road.

DUNCAN, Dec. 27.—(CP)—H. Leonard Margolis, 21, an employee of the Provincial Government's forestry project No. 17 at Sahtlam River bottom, was killed and four companions were injured, when the truck in which they were driving skidded off Gibbens road Sunday about 6 p.m.

Margolis died en route to Duncan hospital.

Those injured were Nick Kulywich, Ian Cameron, driver of the truck and timekeeper at the camp; Arthur Cook and Edward Thiessen.

Kulywich, the only one requiring surgical treatment, suffered a severe gash on the head. The others suffered chiefly from shock.

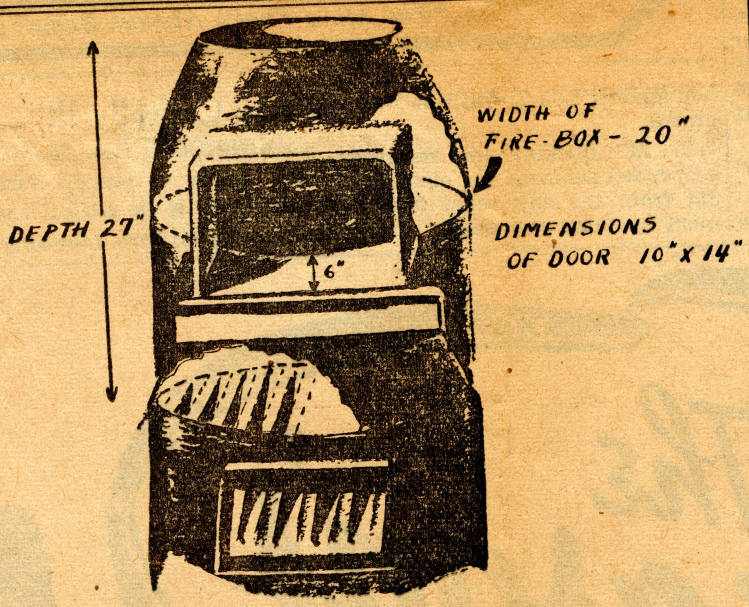
It was believed all five were from the mainland. Margolis is survived by relatives in Saskatchewan.

Travelling on a downhill grade, the truck apparently skidded on a turn, left the road and turned over several times before it came

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FURNACE OF DEATH—Here is an artist's reproduction of the furnace in which Emiko Yamada met her death at 736 West Seventh avenue Tuesday morning. Dimensions of the door, showing a width of fourteen inches and a height of ten inches, will give some idea of the difficulty of squeezing a body through the opening. Yet the fact that the furnace door was open at the time the body was discovered would tend to indicate suicide.

MURDER

(Continued from Page 1.)

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From Kelowna, records of the provincial police came to show that the weird idea of a "furnace death" is not entirely new to British Columbia.

In 1929, a middle-aged East Indian slipped from his bed at Kelowna Hospital and fled to the basement, where he tried to climb in a roaring furnace. A nurse prevented him, and he fled into the night.

He was later found in a barn, half buried in hay, suffering terribly from burns. He was committed to Essondale Mental Hospital.

SUPER-SENSITIVE.

But students of the Yamada case are inclined to believe that the secret of the bizarre death may lie in psychology—in the psychology of a shy, sensitive little Japanese adolescent who was so bashful that she "always talked with her head down, and would never look anybody in the face."

While doubting the suicide theory, R. Hirohara of the Buddhist church told a Daily Province representative that she was the most quiet and retiring of any young person in the community.

"Most of the little girls would come to class early, so they could laugh and chat with their friends," he said. "But not Emiko. She would wait until she heard the bell ring and then dash across the street."

It is this extreme sensitiveness, coupled with her belief in the old Japanese form and customs, that lead detectives to think

that she may have committed suicide.

In support of their theory they put forth the following considerations:

FEEBLE BLAZE.

A murderer would have made sure of a good blaze, yet the only material found in the furnace was oil-soaked rags and paper. Apparently the girl's body had been in the furnace for more than an hour if the girl rose at the usual time, but the blaze had only been strong enough to burn the front portion of her body.

Some of the detectives find it hard to believe that a murderer would have taken the time to carefully pin paper to the girl's shoulders and also wrap matches in the paper.

Unlit matches were found on the grating underneath the body which might have dropped from the girl's hand after she had set fire to the material in the fire-box.

One of the strongest bits of theory for suicide is that the girl's hands were underneath her stomach and head. It is reasoned that if she were stuffed into the furnace she would have to be unconscious and if she were so her hands would have been limp at her sides. There appear to be no bruises on the shoulders to indicate that she had been pushed in.

All the material used for the cremation were a few steps from Emiko's bedroom. She was wearing running shoes and her steps would hardly be heard by sleeping persons.

The safety pins, similar to the ones pinned to her sweater, were in a sewing-machine in the dining-room adjoining the bedroom. The wrapping paper was in a

FIRE

(Continued from Page 1.)

lay George, the baby, well swathed in blankets. He had smothered.

Doreen and Dorothy lay dead in the front bedroom, the bodies of two children, one on the bed; the other under the bed.

WHOLE FAMILY ILL.

Reports were that the entire family had been suffering from measles and had been confined to the house for some time. The father was a coal dealer.

Not since eight died and ten were injured in the Medway Court Apartment House fire September 1, 1929, has the city experienced such a death toll.

Other serious fires in Winnipeg were in St. Boniface College, November 25, 1922, ten dead; Winnipeg Theatre fire, December 24, 1926, four dead; and Casa Loma Block fire, April 14, 1928, five dead.

One Dead as Fire Drives 100 Into Cold

NEW YORK, Dec. 30.—(AP)—

One man was fatally injured, several persons were carried to safety in spectacular rescues, and more than 100 were driven into the cold in night dress when fire destroyed the bar and grill of the seven-storey Hotel Lido at Sixty-fifth street and Columbus avenue early today.

Manheim Wexler, 65, died of shock and smoke poisoning. Firemen carried Wexler down an aerial ladder from the top floor and applied first-aid measures, but he died a short while later.

Mrs. Lillian Bernstein also was rescued from the top floor and taken to the hospital suffering smoke poisoning.

closet in the same room, while the matches, of the same type found in the furnace, were in the pantry. A door leads from the dining-room into the pantry.

If the girl had planned a suicide it would have been easy for her to gather the necessary material within a few minutes without disturbing her relatives asleep in the bedroom.

The fact that the girl did a large part of the housework may account for the fact that some of the material used was neatly replaced. A jar of oil was found in the basement in a box. No oil had apparently been spilled as might have been the case had someone splashed it on her after knocking her unconscious.

The lack of noise as evidence given by all the persons in the house also points to the suicide theory, for if there had been a struggle or the girl had been struck, it is likely that she would have fallen and the sound heard