

# Mystery of Neal Death at Peru Grows Deeper

### Letter Found in Home Reveals Family Affairs—Stepson Shares in Estate.

(Continued From Page One.)  
Dr. Vance said that when he arrived at the place of the tragedy about 50 minutes after the alarm had been sent in he found Neal cold and stiff. Rigor mortis had set in and the tongue of the dead man was swollen. The alarm was sent in shortly after 11:30 on the night of August 11. Within a minutes there were persons at the house.

### Time of Tragedy Varies.

Mrs. Neal fixes the time of the tragedy at about 11:30 o'clock. Yet the body had the appearance of having been dead two hours. Mrs. Neal said she heard only one shot in the bedroom which she occupied with her husband. Her 16-year-old daughter, Ava, said she heard two shots and then a noise as though some one had fallen. Both Mrs. Neal and her daughter testified that they ran from the house as fast as they could to the home of a neighbor, Charles Buck, 300 yards distant, and made no investigation nor observation of what had happened to Neal.

Ava Neal testified that on the way to Bucks she asked her mother what had happened and her mother told her Mr. Neal had shot himself or some one had shot him.

### Denies Talking to Daughter.

Mrs. Neal denies that she talked with Ava on the way, but says she did tell Mr. Buck, the neighbor, that Mr. Neal had shot himself or some one had shot him. She gives no reason for the latter statement or conclusion on her part and said her husband had no great enemy.

She swore that he occupied the inside of the bed. There were blood stains on the sheet where it lapped over the bed on the side on which she says she slept. The bed, when examined by the party called to the home after the tragedy, showed no signs of having been disturbed. There was also no trace of the bullet which Ava says was fired. There were other spots of blood on the floor, small spots leading from the side of the bed, where Mrs. Neal alleges she slept, to the place at the foot of the bed and the door of the bedroom where Neal was found. There was the imprint of a human hand on the door casing and faint bloodstains on the wall paper on the south wall of the room near the floor.

### Imprint of Left Hand.

Hans Nielsen, Bertillon expert for the State Bureau of Criminal Identification and connected with the office of State Sheriff Hyers, says the latter imprint is of the left hand of some person. There was no blood on Neal's left hand, it is said, although his right hand was bloody.

It is alleged that when Mrs. Neal heard Nielsen was coming to examine the finger prints in the room she called Sheriff Davis and asked him to go to her home in Brownville and there try to find a pistol, the property of her former husband, John Wright, which she said was in a chest in an upper room of the house. She told the sheriff that the pistol had been in the chest a few weeks before and that she had handled it. It is alleged and that her finger prints might be found on the pistol. She described the gun as a cheap, small-calibered, nickel-plated affair.

The sheriff made a search of the room and chest and found no pistol. The state alleges that the pistol held in the hand of Ben Neal when he was found dead was the pistol that had been owned by his predecessor, John Wright, first husband of Mrs. Neal.

### Jealous of Wife.

These bits of circumstantial evidence, together with a mass of other evidence which the state claims possession of and which it is guarding, will make the case against the woman. Men who are familiar with the temperament of Ben Neal and who understood the details of his tempestuous marital career say that he would never have committed suicide without first having killed his wife, of whom he was intensely jealous. He had been an old-time gambler, it is said, and also something of a gunman and had the contempt of his class for small-calibered, cheap, uncertain pistols. Acquaintances contend that such a weapon would have been the last that he, in his peculiar psychology, would have selected as an instrument of death.

### Sympathy With Mrs. Neal.

Public sympathy is more or less in favor of Mrs. Neal and she will possess this to the extent except in the event that a conspiracy against the life of her husband in cold blood can be proven against her, the majority of persons here recalling her unhappy life and its frequent quarrels and near tragedies with her husband. It is contended that in a fight with him she might have been driven to defend her life, or that in a fit of emotional insanity, caused by a succession of troubles, she may have been tempted to do away with him and they contend that, should such have been the case, a jury would exonerate her and hold her blameless.

But the story that she told at the inquest is one they feel was incomplete and showed that she had mentally reserved much that was important for fear of consequences and in this they think she has made a mistake. Matters are still coming to light which may bring about further puzzles and speculation in this mystifying case.

### Make Letter Public.

Text of a letter in her dead husband's handwriting, purporting to trace the movements of Mrs. Lucy Neal previous to her husband's death by a gunshot wound last August 11, and which may have an important bearing on the case, was made public today.

The letter was discovered by Ezra Huston, one of two lawyers who searched the Neal house, in an un-

used room next to the dining room, behind a bunch of crumpled papers with which the flue was stopped.

It is addressed to no one, and there is no signature. Following is the letter:

"Ben was fool enough to send me to Kearney to see Leland and of course I had to repay him. I went Tuesday morning at 7 a. m. and got to Kearney at 5:30 p. m.

### Met Sweetest Man.

"I met the sweetest little man who told me he was state sheriff and would take Leland out of the reform school and put him in a bunch of negro convicts from the penitentiary and I had such a nice time at the Windsor hotel, Lincoln, that I did not get home until 7:40 Friday evening, but I had it all fixed with the sweet little man to come to Brownville and stop at my house and to let me know so I could work Ben and be there. But I didn't get his letter and came and found Ava, who was in school there, and I had her call me by phone and talked to her so Ben thought it was needle-craft meeting and worked him all O. K. If I hadn't been so anxious to try to get the sweet little man to come and get me at 10 o'clock at night, but Ben heard us talking and the sweet little man was afraid to come and get me so Ben took me up to see him next day, but I didn't have as nice a time as I had at Kearney and Lincoln for Ben was along and when the sweet little man seen Ben he was afraid of him and went right back to Lincoln.

"The man was not state sheriff or anything else, but I had an awful sweet time and I thought I hadn't paid Ben enough so on next Tuesday, when he was away from the house at work, I left and tried to get a neighbor to take me away in his car, but he would have nothing to do with me.

### Tells of Gun Threat.

"Then I went to Auburn and swore that Ben drew a loaded gun on me, when he had stolen the gun last summer and he never had seen it since, and it will cost him at least \$50 to pay my lawyers and the court costs for my swearing to the lie about the gun.

"Then I went to his own uncle at Shubert and tried to turn Ben against him and Walter and everyone all the black lies I could make and made Ben all the enemies I could. I put in seven weeks of this and then I thought I wanted some little papers and stuff and that maybe I got mixed so I couldn't rob him as good. I might fix it by going back to the sweet little man's address is 204 South Eleventh street, room 208. His name is A. E. Butler."

### Leland Mrs. Neal's Son.

The Leland of whom the letter speaks is Mrs. Neal's son. He was arrested last fall for stealing a gold watch from a hired man at the home of Charles Faulkner, farmer living eight miles north of Auburn, and sentenced to a term in the boys' industrial school at Kearney.

Ava is her 16-year-old daughter by a former marriage. Last spring Mrs. Neal brought divorce proceedings against Ben Neal in the district court of Nemaha county, alleging that he abused her, that their temperaments were incompatible and that she could no longer live with him. She requested a divorce, division of the property and alimony.

### Divorce Case Withdrawn.

Before the case was scheduled to come up, she withdrew it. She did so, she says, because he promised to be more gentle in his treatment of her in the future, and to "be a different man."

Shortly after their reconciliation she went to Kearney to visit her son, Leland, in the industrial school. On her return, A. E. Butler of Lincoln is alleged to have visited her in Brownville. It is alleged that he represented himself to be an estate agent in the employ of State Sheriff Hyers' office. It is also alleged he offered to procure Leland a parole and a place as bookkeeper in one of the convict road gangs of the state at a substantial salary.

It is even alleged that he offered Mrs. Neal a position as cook in one of the camps.

### Visit Causes Trouble.

Mr. Neal, it is said, heard of this and it caused a good deal of trouble at Brownville between the different parties involved. Mrs. Neal made complaint to the state sheriff, who investigated Butler.

It is alleged Butler admitted he had no connection with State Sheriff Hyers' office, but that he was in a confidential position where he could influence the board of parole to grant a pardon to Leland. Butler is reported to have been severely reprimanded by State Sheriff Hyers.

This incident became fixed in Mrs. Neal's mind and he brooded over it to such an extent that he would talk about it to all his neighbors and friends who would listen. He was advised by his attorney to dismiss the matter from his mind, as it was of small moment.

The letter found in the house after his death evidently is in Mrs. Neal's handwriting.

Mrs. Neal, at the inquest, identified it as having been written by her husband.

### Theories of Letter.

The supposition is that he had a premonition that some tragedy would happen and wrote the letter to leave behind as a clue, or having her sign it as a confession, he would have killed her and then himself; or, because of his unstable mental condition, and his insane jealousy of her, he may have written it for the purpose of committing suicide under such circumstances and leaving behind such details of evidence of a circumstantial nature as would place the burden of suspicion on his widow.

Neal, in all his conversations regarding his wife, was careful to impress upon whoever he talked to, the fact that she was a chaste woman and true to him.

Mrs. Neal married Ben Neal about 12 years ago. She was the widow of John Wright of Brownville.

There was a disparity of about 30 years between her age and that of her second husband. At the time of her marriage, she had a home of her own in Brownville. Neal's home, where the tragedy occurred, was about two and one-half miles southeast of Peru, Neb.

at Brownville, charging her with stealing a pair of checkered blankets, and threatening, if she did not return them, to expose her.

She sent the letter to her husband, who, on Saturday, August 6, brought it to Auburn and submitted it to Postmaster Harmon and Judge Kilgus, his attorney, asking whether or not Young could be prosecuted.

### Brooded Over Letter.

They advised him to submit the letter to the postmaster at Brownville, from where it was sent, and see if he could not bring the matter to higher postal officials.

Neal brooded a good deal over this letter, it is said, and it is alleged, by his wife and by neighbors, that he threatened either to shoot or cut up the sender of the letter.

It was during a discussion of this letter on the night of the tragedy that Mrs. Neal says she fell asleep after first telling her husband that she would not bother about discussing a man of the small caliber of Young. Two hours later she rushed screaming from the house, according to her story, after hearing the shot fired which she claims awakened her from her sleep.

In her testimony at the inquest, she said both she and her daughter, were awakened by the shot and fled from the house without stopping to see whether Mr. Neal was living or dead. They took refuge in the home of Charles Buck, a neighbor, 300 yards distant.

### Search for Weapons Feature Opening of Bailey Murder Trial

Mount Vernon, Ky., Aug. 22.—The first day of the John Bailey murder trial, growing out of the Bailey-White mountain feud, was productive of nothing more thrilling than the search of every person who entered the court room for weapons. Soldiers and deputies stopped each clansman as he entered the doorway. None resisted the search and no weapons except a few pocket knives, were found. Even the women were not exempt.

When the case was called, both the commonwealth and the defense asked for a continuance because essential witnesses were absent. The prosecution asked for attachments for four and the defense for nine, material witnesses. Circuit Judge Bethuram appointed Sheriff Walker to deputize two soldiers to bring the desired witnesses into court and adjourned court until tomorrow.

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# Ex-Police Chief Of Grand Island Shot by Officer

### Shooting Occurs as Raid Is Made on Card Game in Hotel—Woman Is Held.

Grand Island, Neb., Aug. 22.—Former Chief of Police Maloney is injured, Police Officer J. E. Buswell has a gunshot wound in his leg and the other was broken by a fall, Vivian Doggett, landlady of the Savoy hotel and companion of Maloney is under arrest, together with four other witnesses, all as the result of a clean-up effort by the police department last night under Chief Martin, successor of Chief Maloney.

The shooting occurred in the alley back of the Savoy hotel several hours after the raid was made. Maloney and three white men, Murphy, Welsh and Baird of Hastings and one negro, Jones, were sitting in a card game in the alley when Buswell came along on his regular beat. They declare they do not know who began the firing. Buswell states that two shots were fired at him before he shot Maloney.

Inquiry at the hospital at noon today revealed the fact that Maloney's condition was not regarded as serious. Late today the county attorney and police obtained a written confession from one of the eye-witnesses who were sitting on the running board of the car from which, in the alley behind the Savoy hotel, Maloney shot Buswell, being later shot in return. This confession includes the statement that Maloney opened fire on the policeman as he came through the alley without saying a word or without having been addressed by Buswell.

An operation was performed on Maloney this afternoon for relief from suffering on account of gases. His condition is tonight reported the same. Buswell's injuries may be more serious than at first supposed, one of the shots striking him near the hip. It is expected to require three months before he will be able to resume his duties.

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# Ford Tells How to Run the Railroads

(Continued From Page One.)

formulate calling for increased pay, reduced waste in labor and materials and more efficient service at less cost, all increasing the volume of business.

"The Ford Motor company learned about railroading from the shippers' side and we conceived the idea that if shippers were to be served trains had to be started and kept moving until they arrived somewhere," said Mr. Ford. "Neither the railroads nor the shippers were benefited by trains lying idle in the yards or upon sidetracks."

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### Exploitation Is Blamed.

"What's the matter with railroad organization?" he was asked. "Exploitation, exploitation," was his answer, grasping the opportunity for paying his respects to the banking element which he holds responsible for most of the evils of our system.

"All business has too many stockholders who never do anything but injure the business and draw down dividends," he continued. "Railroads have not been operated with a view to giving service. They have been operated for the purpose of exploitation and to deliver the percentage of gain which absentee stockholders must have."

"The D. T. & I. was for many years a dismal failure merely because it failed to serve. When receivership came one after another they pointed to its running from some remote spot on the Ohio river to a spot near Detroit, through unproductive territory with no cities to feed it. Well, the same D. T. & I. is succeeding now. Why? Because it serves."

### Mercury Hits 100 Mark In Shade at (Special Telegram).

Beatrice, Neb., Aug. 22.—(Special Telegram.)—With the temperature standing at the 100 degree mark in the shade, hot winds prevailed in this section of the state this afternoon. It is believed the corn is too far advanced to be damaged.

# Nebraska Men Not Satisfied With Bus Lines

### Guardsmen Experience Difficulty in Commuting From Camp Dodge to Des Moines—Service Is Poor.

Camp Dodge, Ia., Aug. 22.—(Special.)—The transportation service between Camp Dodge and Des Moines is not very satisfactory to the Nebraska National guardsmen in camp at Camp Dodge. The Lincoln and Omaha men especially feel the difference between the bus line service and the street car service at home. Here the busses and interurban cars are the only means of travel afforded the men at Camp Dodge.

The long intervals between cars on the interurban and the unpunctual arrival and departure of busses makes trips to the city somewhat wearying affairs. Men are forced to wait long periods before they are able to catch a bus and when they do, it may be crowded to capacity. The interurban cars are also very often overcrowded by men on leave.

Liberty was granted to a large number of Nebraska guardsmen Saturday and Sunday, extending from 2 p. m. Saturday until midnight of the following night. This long leave from camp was appreciated by the Nebraska men to the extent that every pass allowed was taken up.

The long drills and infrequent visits to the city made the special favor of long passes especially welcome. During the week no long passes are granted, but the Sunday leave enabled many guardsmen to visit relatives and friends in Des Moines as well as giving them a change from the camp life to the civilian atmosphere.

### Continue Case Against City Attorney at Grand Island

Grand Island, Neb., Aug. 22.—(Special Telegram.)—The preliminary hearing of Harold Prince, city attorney, on the charge growing out of the automobile accident in which William Sothmann, contractor, was killed in a collision with Prince's car, has been continued by agreement until Saturday on the request of the defendant's attorney.

# Nearly All Farms in Lincoln County Are Bearing Mortgages

North Platte, Neb., Aug. 22.—(Special.)—Over five million dollars are loaned out in city, farm and chattel mortgages in Lincoln county. This amount is more than double that of 12 years ago. In 1910 there was \$947,000 loaned out on farms, \$266,000 on town property, and \$885,000 in chattel loans. At the present time there is \$3,719,000 out on farm loans, \$958,000 on town and city loans while the chattel loans amount to \$2,000,000. Over 97 per cent of the farms are covered by some form of mortgage. The effect of the war is clearly seen in the amounts loaned. From 1910 the amount dropped till the close of 1917 and then started on a quick up grade.

### El Paso Youth Is Murdered By Bandits in Mexico Aug. 18

El Paso, Aug. 22.—Bennett Boyd, 18, of El Paso, was ambushed and murdered by bandits in Mexico on August 18, according to messages received in El Paso by his father today.

### Plan Legion Barbecue

North Platte, Neb., Aug. 22.—(Special.)—The second annual American Legion barbecue will be held here for all of the Lincoln county members on October 2.

# Red Cross Treasurer Accused of Larceny

Washington, Aug. 22.—C. W. Secord, assistant treasurer of the American Red Cross, was arrested today charged with larceny following an audit of hisit of his books which showed, according to Director Livingston Farrand, a shortage of about \$14,000. The warrant specifically charged the theft of \$800, but Red Cross officials said this was only one of a number of charges against him. According to police, Wilson admitted shortage of more than \$13,000 and attributed his misfortune to gambling on horse races.

### Johnson County Farmers' Union Plans Big Picnic

Tecumseh, Neb., Aug. 22.—The Johnson County Farmers' union will hold its annual picnic in Tecumseh Thursday. A good program has been provided. The Tecumseh Military band will furnish the music. C. J. Osborne, president of the Nebraska Farmers' union, and Charles Watts, manager of the Farmers' Union Live Stock commission, will be the speakers.

A program will be given which will include vocal and instrumental music, readings and stunts by the Wahoo Camp Fire Girls. There will be two base ball games, automobile and horse races, track events, free moving pictures and a dance in the evening.



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You come to know this all-too-human girl, to pity her, then admire her. How she becomes a great woman, in spite of obstacles, is brought about by a means never before employed by a novelist. No more tremendous emotional experiences ever fell to the lot of a girl than are hers. To her there is but one thought, one hope, one prayer—Redemption.

# The Red Book Magazine

## For September—Out Today

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