

Title:W W Rogers Sworn In For The State, 6th To Testify
Category:LEO FRANK TRIAL BRIEF OF EVIDENCE

W. W. ROGERS, sworn for the State.

I am now connected with Judge Girardeau's court. I was at the station house Saturday night, April 26th, 1913 and went to the National Pencil Company's place of business. It was between five and five thirty that I heard Mr. Starnes have a conversation over the phone. I heard him say, "If you come I will send an automobile after you. " It took us five or six minutes to get out to Mr. Frank's residence at 86 E. Georgia Avenue. Mr. Black was with me. Mrs. Frank opened the door. She wore a heavy bath robe. Mr. Black asked if Mr. Frank was in. Mr. Frank stepped into the hall through the curtain. He was dressed for the street with the exception of his collar, tie, coat and hat. He had on no vest. Mr. Frank asked Mr. Black if anything had happened at the factory. Mr. Black didn't answer. He asked me had anything happened at the factory. I didn't answer. Mr. Frank said, "Did the night watchman call up and report anything to you?" Mr. Black said, "Mr. Frank, you had better get your clothes on and let us go to the factory and see what has happened. " Mr. Frank said that he thought he dreamt in the morning about 3 a. m. about hearing the telephone ring. Mr. Black said something about whiskey to Mrs. Frank in Mr. Frank's presence. Mrs. Frank said Mr. Frank hadn't had any breakfast and would we allow him to get breakfast. I told Mr. Black that I was hungry myself. Mr. Frank said let me have a cup of coffee. Mr. Black in a kind of sideways, said, "I think a drink of whiskey would do him good," and Mrs. Frank made the remark that she didn't think there was any whiskey in the house. Mr. Frank seemed to be extremely nervous. His questions were jumpy. I never heard him speak in my life until that morning. His voice was a refined voice, it was not coarse. He was rubbing his hands when he came through the curtains. He moved about briskly. He seemed to be excited. He asked questions in rapid succession, but gave plenty of time between questions to have received an answer. Mr. Frank and Mr. Black got on the rear seat and I took the front seat and as I was fixing to turn around, one of us asked Mr. Frank if he knew a little girl by the name of Mary Phagan. Mr. Frank says: "Does she work at the factory?" and I said, "I think she does. " Mr. Frank said, "I cannot tell whether or not she works there until I look on my pay roll book, I know very few of the girls that work there. I pay them off, but I very seldom go back in the factory and I know very few of them, but I can look on my pay roll book and tell you if a girl by the name of Mary Phagan works there. " One of us suggested that we take Mr. Frank by the undertaking establishment and let him see if he knew this young lady. Mr. Frank readily consented, so we stopped at the telephone exchange, Mr. Frank, Mr. Black and myself got out and went in the undertaking establishment. I saw the corpse. The corpse was lying in a little kind of side out room to the right of a large room. The light was not lit in this little room where the body was laying, and Mr. Gheesling stepped in ahead of me and went around behind the corpse and lit the light above her head and her head was lying then towards the wall. I stepped up on the opposite side of the corpse with a door to my left. Mr. Gheesling caught the face of the dead girl and turned it over towards me. I looked then to see if anybody followed me and I saw Mr. Frank step from outside of the door into what I thought was a closet, but I have afterwards found it was where Mr. Gheesling slept, or where somebody slept. There was a

little single bed in there. I immediately turned around and came back out, in front of the office. I didn't see Frank look at the corpse. I don't remember that Mr. Frank ever followed me in this room. He may have stopped on the outside of the door, but my back was toward him and I don't know where he stopped. Mr. Gheesling turned the head of the dead girl over towards me and I looked around to see who was behind me and I saw Mr. Frank as he made that movement behind me. He didn't go into the closet as far as I could see, but he got out of my view. He could have looked at the corpse from the time that Mr. Gheesling was going around behind, but he could not have seen her face because it was lying over towards the wall. The face was away from me and I presume that was the cause of Mr. Gheesling turning it over. There was some question asked Mr. Frank if he knew the girl, and I think he replied that he didn't know whether he did or not but that he could tell whether she worked at the factory by looking at his pay roll book. As we were leaving Mr. Frank's house, Mr. Frank asked Mrs. Frank to telephone Mr. Darley to come to the factory. Mr. Frank was apparently still nervous at the undertaking establishment, he stepped lively. It was just his general manner that indicated to me that he was nervous. I never saw Mr. Frank in my life until that morning. After we got out of Mr. Frank's house and was in my car, was the first time Mr. Frank had been told that the young lady was named Mary Phagan and that there had been any murder committed at the factory. From the undertaker's we went to the pencil factory in my car. We went into Mr. Frank's office, he went up to the safe, turned the combination, opened the safe, took out his time book, laid the book down on the table, ran his finger down until he came to the name Mary Phagan, and said, "Yes, Mary Phagan worked here, she was here yesterday to get her pay. " He said, "I will tell you about the exact time she left there. My stenographer left about twelve o'clock, and a few minutes after she left the office boy left and Mary came in and got her money and left. " He said she got \$1. 20 and he asked whether anybody had found the envelope that the money was in. Frank still seemed to be nervous like the first time I seen him. It was just his quick manner of stepping around and his manner of speech like he had done at the house that indicated to me that he was nervous. He then wanted to see where the girl was found. Mr. Frank went around by the elevator, where there was a switch box on the wall and Mr. Frank put the switch in. The box was not locked. Somebody asked him if he was used to keeping the switch box locked. He said they had kept it locked up to a certain time until the insurance company told him that he would have to leave it unlocked, that it was a violation of the law to keep an electric switch box locked. We then stepped on the elevator. He still stepped about lively and spoke up lively, answering questions, just like he had always done. After we got on the elevator, he jerked at the rope and it hung and he called Mr. Darley to start it and we all stepped out of the elevator. Mr. Darley came and pulled at the rope two or three times and the elevator started. As to whether anybody made any statement down in the basement as to who was responsible for the murder, I think Mr. Frank made the remark that Mr. Darley had worked Newt Lee for sometime out at the Oakland plant and that if Lee knew anything about the murder that Darley would stand a better chance of getting it out of him than anybody else. After we came back from the basement it was suggested that we go to the station house and as we started out Mr. Frank says, "I had better put in a new slip, hadn't I, Darley?" Darley told him yes to put in a slip. Frank took his keys out, unlocked the door of the right-hand clock and lifted out the slip, looked

at it and made the remark that the slip was punched correctly. Mr. Darley and Newt Lee was standing there at the time Mr. Frank said the punches had been made correctly. Mr. Frank then put in a new slip, closed the door, locked it and took his pencil and wrote on the slip that he had already taken out of the machine, "April 26, 1913. " I looked at the slip that Mr. Frank took out (Defendant's Exhibit I), the first punch was 6:01, the second one was 6:32 or 6:33. He took the slip back in his office. I glanced all the way down and there was a punch for every number. While we were walking through the factory Mr. Frank asked two or three times to get a cup of coffee. As to what Mr. Frank said about the murder, I don't know that I heard him express himself except down in the basement. The officers showed him where the body was found and he made the remark that it was too bad or something to that effect. When we left the factory to go to police headquarters, Newt Lee was under arrest. I never considered Mr. Frank as being under arrest at that time. There had never been said anything to him in my presence about putting him under arrest. Mr. Frank's appearance at the station house was exactly like it was when I first saw him. He stepped quickly, when the door of the automobile was open, he jumped lightly off Mr. Darley's lap, went up the steps pretty rapid.

CROSS EXAMINATION.

I never saw Mr. Frank until that morning. I don't know whether his natural movements or manner of speech were quick or not. We didn't know whether the girl was a white girl or not until we rubbed the dirt from the child's face and pulled down her stocking a little piece. The tongue was not sticking out, it was wedged between the teeth. She had dirt in her eye and mouth. The cord around her neck was drawn so tight it was sunk in her flesh and the piece of underskirt was loose over her hair. I don't know whether Mr. Frank went upstairs or not after we reached his house. I think he called to his wife to get him his collar and tie. He got his coat and vest some place, but I don't know where. At the time Mrs. Frank was calling Mr. Darley, Mr. Frank was putting on his collar and tie down in the reception hall. We were at the house 15 or 20 minutes. After Mrs. Frank had said something about Mr. Frank getting his breakfast before he went, Mr. Black said something about a drink would do good. Mrs. Frank then called her mother, who said that there wasn't any liquor in the house, that Mr. Selig had an acute attack of indigestion the night before and used it all up. Mr. Frank readily consented to go to the undertakers with us. When we got in the car we told him it was Mary Phagan and he said he could tell whether she was an employee or not by looking at his book, that he knew very few of the girls. Yes, anybody facing the door of the little chapel at the undertakers could have seen the corpse. As to whether I know that Mr. Frank didn't see the corpse, he could have got a glance at the whole corpse, but when Mr. Gheesling turned the face over no one could have got a good look at the face unless they stepped in the room. Mr. Gheesling turned the young lady's face directly toward me, Mr. Frank was standing somewhere behind me, outside of the room. I turned around to see if Mr. Frank was looking. I don't know that he didn't get a glance at the corpse, but no one but Mr. Gheesling and I at this moment stepped up and looked at the little girl's face. What Mr. Frank and Mr. Black saw behind my back, I can't say. I don't say that Mr. Frank stepped into that dressing room, but he passed out of my view. So did Mr. Black. Mr. Gheesling had a better view of Mr. Black and Mr. Frank than I did, because

my back was to them and Mr. Gheesling was looking straight across the body at them. Mr. Frank had no difficulty in unlocking the safe when we went back to the factory. The elevator we went down on is a freight elevator, makes considerable noise. It stops itself when it gets to the bottom. I don't think it hits the ground. She was lying on her face with her hands folded up. Her face was turned somewhat toward the left wall. A bruise on the left side of her head, some dry blood in her hair. One of her eyes were blackened. There were several little scratches on her face. Somebody worked her arms to see if they were stiff. The arms worked a little bit. The joints in her arms worked just a little bit. When we first went down the basement we stayed down there about 20 or 25 minutes. During that time neither the shoe, the hat, nor the umbrella had been found. In the elevator shaft there was some excrement. When we went down on the elevator, the elevator mashed it. You could smell it all around. It looked like the ordinary healthy man's excrement. It looked like somebody had dumped naturally; that was before the elevator came down. When the elevator came down afterwards it smashed it and then we smelled it. As to the hair of the girl anyone could tell at first glance that it was that of a white girl.

RE-DIRECT EXAMINATION.

The body wasn't lying at the undertakers where it could have been seen from the door.

RE-CROSS EXAMINATION.

At the moment the face was turned towards me, I didn't see Mr. Frank but I know a person couldn't have looked into the face unless he was somewhere close to me. I was inside and Mr. Frank never came into that little room.

RE-DIRECT EXAMINATION.

When the face was turned towards me, Mr. Frank stepped out of my vision in the direction of Mr. Gheesling's sleeping room.