

Title:George Gordon Sworn In For The State, 164th To Testify
Category:LEO FRANK TRIAL BRIEF OF EVIDENCE

GEORGE GORDON, sworn for the State in rebuttal.

I am a practicing lawyer. I was at police station part of the time when Minola McKnight was making her statement. I was outside of the door most of the time. I went down there with habeas corpus proceedings to have her sign the affidavit and when I got there the detectives informed me that she was in the room, and I sat down and waited outside for her two hours, and people went in and out of the door, and after I had waited there I saw the stenographer of the Recorder's court going into the room and I decided I had better make a demand to go into the room, which I did, and I was then allowed to go into the room and I found Mr. February reading over to her some stenographic statement he had taken. There were two other men from Beck & Gregg Hardware store and Pat Campbell and Mr. Starnes and Albert McKnight. After that was read Mr. February went out to write it off on the typewriter and while he was out Mr. Starnes said, "Now this must be kept very quiet and nobody be told anything about this." I thought it was agreed that we would say nothing about it. I was surprised when I saw it in the newspapers two or three days afterwards. I said to Starnes: "There is no reason why you should hold this woman, you should let her go." He said he would do nothing without consulting Mr. Dorsey and he suggested that I had better go to Mr. Dorsey's office. I went to his office and he called up Mr.

Starnes and then I went back to the police station and told Starnes to call Mr. Dorsey and I presume that Mr. Dorsey told him to let her go. Anyway he said she could go. You (Mr. Dorsey) said you would let her go also. That morning you had said you would not unless I took out a

habeas corpus. In the morning after Chief Beavers told me he would not let her go on bond and unless you (Mr. Dorsey) would let her go, I went to your office and told you that she was being held illegally and you admitted it to me and I said we would give bond in any sum that you might ask. You said you would not let her go because you would get in bad with the detectives, and you advised me to take out a habeas corpus, which I did. The detectives said they couldn't let her go without your consent. You said you didn't have anything to do with locking her up.

As to whether Minola McKnight did not sign this paper freely and voluntarily

(State's Exhibit J), it was signed in my absence while I was at police station. When I came back this paper was lying on the table signed. That paper is substantially the notes that Mr. February read over to her. As they read it over to her, she said it was about that way. Yes, you agreed with me that you had no right to lock her up. I don't know that you said you didn't do it. I don't remember that we discussed that. You told me that you would not direct her to be let loose, because you would get in bad with the detectives. I had told you that the detectives told me they would not release her unless you said so. I took out a habeas corpus immediately afterwards and went down there to get her released, and she was released.

CROSS EXAMINATION.

I heard that they had had her in Mr. Dorsey 's office and she went away screaming and was locked up. I knew that Mr. Dorsey was letting this be done. She was locked in a cell at the police station when I saw her. They admitted that they did not have any warrant for her arrest. Beavers said he would not let her out on bond unless Mr. Dorsey said so. He said the charge against her was suspicion. They put her in a cell and

kept her until four o'clock the next day before they let her go. When I went down to see her in the cell, she was crying and going on and almost hysterical. When I asked Mr. Dorsey to let her go out on bond, he said he wouldn't do it because he would get in bad with the detectives, but that if I would let her stay down there with Starnes and Campbell for a day, he would let her loose without any bond, and I said I wouldn't do it. I said that I considered it a very reprehensible thing to lock up somebody because they knew something, and he said, "Well, it is sometimes necessary to get information," and I said, "Certainly our liberty is more necessary than any information, and I consider it a trampling on our Anglo-Saxon liberties." They did not tell me that they already had a statement that she had made, and which she declared to be the truth.

RE-DIRECT EXAMINATION.

You (Mr. Dorsey) did not tell me that you had no right to lock anybody up. I told you that, and you agreed to it, but you would not let her go. I told you that Chief Beavers said he would do what you said and then I asked you to give me an order. You said you wouldn't give me an order. When I told Starnes that I thought I ought to be in that room while Minola was making the statement, he knocked on the door, and it was unlocked on the inside and they let me in. They let me into the room at once after I had been sitting there two hours. I was present when she made the statement about the payment of the cook. I don't remember what questions I asked her at that time. I was her attorney. I didn't go down there to examine her; I went there to get her out. Starnes and Campbell were in and out of the room during the time. Mr. Starnes stayed on the outside of the door part of the time. I don't know who was in the room and who was not while I was outside.