

Title:John R Black Sworn In For The State, 8th To Testify
Category:LEO FRANK TRIAL BRIEF OF EVIDENCE

JOHN R. BLACK, sworn for the State.

I am a city policeman. I don't know the details of the conversation between Mr. Starnes and Mr. Frank over the 'phone. I didn't pay very much attention to it. I went over to Mr. Frank's house with Boots Rogers. Mrs. Frank came to the door. Mrs. Frank had on a bath robe. I stated that I would like to see Mr. Frank and about that time Mr. Frank stepped out from behind a curtain. His voice was hoarse and trembling and nervous and excited. He looked to me like he was pale. I had met Mr. Frank on two different occasions before. On this occasion he seemed to be nervous in handling his collar. He could not get his tie tied, and talked very rapid in asking questions in regard to what had happened. He wanted to know if he would have time to get something to eat, to get some breakfast. He wanted to know if something had happened at the pencil factory and if the night watchman had reported it, and he asked this last question before I had time to answer the first. He kept insisting for a cup of coffee. When we got into the automobile as Mr. Rogers was turning around Mr. Frank wanted to know what had happened at the factory, and I asked him if he knew Mary Phagan and told him that she had been found dead in the basement of the pencil factory. Mr. Frank said he didn't know any girl by the name of Mary Phagan, that he knew very few of the employees. I suggested to Mr. Rogers that we drive by the undertakers. In the undertaking establishment Mr. Frank looked at her. He gave a casual glance at her and stepped aside. I couldn't say whether he saw the face of the girl or not. There was a curtain hanging near the room and Mr. Frank stepped behind the curtain. He could get no view from behind the curtain. He walked behind the curtain and came right out. Mr. Frank stated as we left the undertaking establishment that he didn't know the girl but he believed he had paid her off on Saturday. He thought he recognized her being at the factory on Saturday by the dress that she wore but he could tell by going over to the factory and looking at his cash book. At the pencil factory Mr. Frank took the slip out, looked over it and said it had been punched correctly. On Monday and Tuesday following Mr. Frank stated that the clock had been mispunched three times. This slip was turned over to Chief Lanford on Monday. I saw Mr. Frank take it out of the clock and went back with it toward his office. I don't know of my own personal knowledge that it was turned over to Chief Lanford Monday. When Mr. Frank was down at police station on Monday morning Mr. Rosser and Mr. Haas were there. About 8 or 8:30 o'clock Monday morning Mr. Rosser came in police headquarters. That's the first time he had counsel with him. That morning Mr. Haslett and myself went to Mr. Frank's house and asked him to come down to police headquarters. About 11:30 Monday Mr. Haas demanded of Chief Lanford that officers accompany Mr. Frank out to his residence and search his residence. Mr. Haas stated in Frank's presence that he was Mr. Frank's attorney and demanded to show that there was nothing left undone, that we go out to Mr. Frank's house and search for anything that we might find in connection with the case. On Tuesday night Mr. Scott and myself suggested to Mr. Frank to talk to Newt Lee. Mr. Frank spoke well of the negro, said he had always found him trusty and honest. They went in a room and stayed from about 5 to 10 minutes alone. I couldn't hear enough to swear that I understood what was said. Mr. Frank stated that Newt still stuck to the

story that he knew nothing about it. Mr. Frank stated that Mr. Gantt was there on Saturday evening and that he told Newt Lee to let him go and get the shoes but to watch him, as he knew the surroundings of the office. After this conversation Gantt was arrested. Frank made no objections to talking to Newt Lee. Mr. Frank was nervous on Monday. After his release Monday he seemed very jovial. On Tuesday night Frank said at station house that there was nobody at factory at 6 o'clock, but Newt Lee and that Newt ought to know more about it, as it was his duty to look over factory every thirty minutes. Also that Gantt was there Saturday evening and he left him there at 6 o'clock and that he and Gantt had some trouble previous to discharge of Gantt and that he at first refused to allow Gantt to go in factory, but Gantt told him he left a pair of shoes there.

CROSS EXAMINATION.

When I said that Mr. Frank was released I spoke before I thought. I retracted it on cross-examination. I don't know that Mr. Rosser was at the police station between 8 and 8:30 Monday morning, I said that to the best of my recollection. I wouldn't swear Mr. Rosser was there. I heard Mr. Rosser say to Mr. Frank to give them a statement without a conference at all between Mr. Frank and Mr. Rosser. I said that we wanted to have a private talk with Mr. Frank without Mr. Rosser being present. I wanted to talk to Mr. Frank without Mr. Rosser being present. While I was at the coroner's inquest Mr. Frank answered every question readily. I wouldn't swear positively, but to the best of my recollection I had a conversation with Mr. Frank on two previous occasions. When I met Mr. Frank on previous occasions I don't remember anything that caused me to believe he was nervous, nothing unusual about him. I heard the conversation Mr. Starnes had over the telephone with Mr. Frank early that morning. It was about a quarter to six, or a quarter past six. I think we got to the undertaker's about 6:20. As to the reason why I didn't tell Mr. Frank about the murder when I was inside the house, but did tell him as soon as he got in the automobile, I had a conversation with Newt Lee and I wanted to watch Mr. Frank and see how he felt about the murder. Mr. Frank didn't go upstairs and put his collar and cravat on. Mrs. Frank brought him his collar and tie, I don't know where she got them. He told her to bring his collar and tie and he got his coat and hat. I don't know whether he went back to his home or not. He put his collar and tie on right there. I don't know where he got his coat and vest. I don't know what sort of tie or collar he had. He put his collar and tie on like anybody else would; tied it himself. I don't know whether Mr. Frank finished dressing upstairs or not. I couldn't see him when he went behind those curtains. We stayed at the Frank home about ten minutes. At the undertaking establishment I was right behind Mr. Frank. He was between me and the body. I saw the face when the undertaker turned her over. Yes, Mr. Frank being in front of me had an opportunity to see it also. No, Mr. Frank didn't go into that sleeping room, Mr. Frank went out just ahead of me. When we went back to the pencil factory Mr. Frank went to the safe and unlocked it readily at the first effort. He got the book, put it on the table, opened it at the right place, ran his finger down until he came to the name of Mary Phagan and says, "Yes, this little girl worked here and I paid her \$1. 20 yesterday. " We went all over the factory that day. Nobody saw that blood spot that morning. I guess there must have been thirty people there during that day. Nobody saw it. I was there twice that day. Mr. Starnes was there with me. He didn't

call attention to any blood spots. Chief Lanford was there, and he didn't discover any blood spots. Mr. Frank was at the police station on Monday from 8:30 until about 11:30. Mr. Frank told me he had discharged Mr. Gantt on account of shortage and had given orders not to let him in the factory. As regards, Mr. Frank's linen, Mr. Haas said he was Mr. Frank's attorney and requested that we go to Mr. Frank's house and I look over the clothes he had worn the week before and the laundry too. Yes, we went out there and examined it. Mr. Frank had had no opportunity to telephone his house from the time we mentioned it until we got out there. I examined Newt Lee's house. I found a bloody shirt in the bottom of a clothes barrel there on Tuesday morning about 9 o'clock.

RE-DIRECT EXAMINATION.

Mr. Frank had told me that he didn't think Newt Lee had told all he knew about the murder. He also said after looking over the time sheet and seeing that it hadn't been punched correctly that that would have given Lee an hour to have gone out to his house and back. I don't know when he made this last statement. I don't remember whether that was before or after I went out to Lee's house and found the shirt. We went into his house with a skeleton key. It was after Frank told me about the skips in the punches. The shirt is just like it was the day I found it. The blood looks like it is on both sides of the shirt.

RE-CROSS EXAMINATION.

I don't know whether I went out to Lee's house before or after Mr. Frank suggested the skips in the time slips. I don't like to admit it, but I am so crossed up and worried that I don't know where I am at, but I think to the best of my knowledge it was Monday that Frank said that the slips had been changed.