

Title:Dr Clarence Johnson Sworn In For The State, 193rd To Testify
Category:LEO FRANK TRIAL BRIEF OF EVIDENCE

DR. CLARENCE JOHNSON, sworn for the State in rebuttal.

I am a specialist on diseases of the stomach and intestines. I am a physiologist. A physiologist makes his searches on the living body; the pathologist makes his on a dead body. If you give any one who has drunk a chocolate milk at about eight o'clock in the morning, cabbage at 12 o'clock and 30 or 40 minutes thereafter you take the cabbage out and it is shown to be dark like chocolate and milk, that much contents of any kind vomited up three and a half hours afterwards would show an abnormal stomach. It doesn't show a normal digestion. If a little girl who eats a dinner of cabbage and bread at 11:30 is found the next morning dead at 3 a. m., with a rope around her neck, indented and the flesh sticking up, bruised on the eye, blood on the back of her head, the tongue sticking out, blue skin, every indication that she came to her death from strangulation, her head down, rigor mortis had been on her twenty hours, the blood had settled in her where the gravity would naturally take it in the face, she is embalmed, formaldehyde is used and injected in the various cavities of the body, including the stomach, a pathologist takes her

stomach a week or ten days after, finds cabbage of that size (State's Exhibit G) in the stomach, finds starch granules undigested, and finds in the stomach that the pylorus is still closed, that there is nothing in the first

six feet of the small intestines; that there is every indication that digestion

had been progressing favorably, and finds thirty-two degrees hydrochloric acid, and if the pathologist is capable and finds that there was only combined hydrochloric acid and that there was no abnormal condition of the stomach the six feet of the intestines was empty, I would say that the digestion of bread and cabbage was stopped within an hour after

they were eaten. That would not be a wild guess in my opinion.

CROSS EXAMINATION.

The bruises on the head, the evidence of strangulation and other injuries about the head are other possible factors which must be taken into consideration. Anything which disturbs the circulation of the blood, or hinders the action of the nerves controlling the stomach, especially the secretion, prevents the development of the characteristics found in normal digestion one hour after a meal. I mean by mechanical condition of the stomach, no change in the size or thickness, or opening into the intestines, or size or thickness of intestines. The test should be made with

absolute accuracy with these acids. The color test is generally accepted.

A man's eye has to be absolutely correct to make the color test. The degree of acidity in a normal stomach varies from 30 to 45 degrees, according to the stomach and what is in it. The formaldehyde would make no change on the physical property on the pancreatic juice found in the small intestine after death. There would be hardly any change on its chemical property. When it comes in contact with the formaldehyde it is supposed to be preserved. It has some neutralizing effect on the alkali present. That decomposes in time after death, unless hindered by some preservative. The hydrochloric acids in the stomach also disappear if the stomach has disintegrated and the preservative (preservative) has disappeared. It disappears like the other fluids and tissues of the body unless hindered by some preservative agent. Sometimes digestion is delayed a good deal even in a normal stomach by insufficient mastication, too much diluting of the juices, or anything that hinders the operation of the mechanical effect. Insufficient mastication is one of the commonest causes, also the taking of too much liquid. Fatigue occasioned by extensive walking would hinder it. If the walking was not too extensive to produce fatigue, it would help digestion in a normal stomach. Insufficient mastication is the worst cause of delayed digestion. My estimate

was that the cabbage was found an hour after the process of digestion had begun. I did not undertake to say when the digestion began. You can't tell by looking at food in a bottle how much the failure to masticate it delayed digestion in hours and minutes. It would be just an estimate. The physical appearance of that cabbage (Defendant's Exhibit 88) shows indigestion by the layer, character and size, and area of separation between, and the character and arrangement of the layers below. The mere fact that it was vomited up would be proof positive that no scientific opinion could be made about it. To make a scientific test I would have to test the mechanism of the stomach, the time it was in there and the degree and presence of the different acids. The chocolate milk would not naturally stay in a normal stomach five or six hours. The cabbage would stay in a normal empty stomach where there was a tomato also three or four hours. I never made any test of Mary Phagan's stomach and examined the contents of i

RE-DIRECT EXAMINATION.

160 cubic cc. of liquid in the stomach taken out nine days afterwards would be a little in excess of what I would consider normal under the conditions already named.