

Starnes Tells How Affidavit From Negro Cook Was Secured

John Starnes, prosecutor of Leo Frank, was put up to tell about the Minola McKnight affidavit.

"Did you investigate the scuttle hole around the elevator?" was Dorsey's first question.

An objection by the defense was overruled.

"See any blood spots there?"

"No."

"Now, tell the jury about the Minola McKnight affidavit."

"Pat Campbell and I arrested her at the solicitor's office. We had gone to get a statement from her husband. We also had information from this husband that she had made the identical statement which she made in the affidavit. The next day, Mr. Craven and Mr. Pickett came to police headquarters. They were sent into the room with Minola. She said, upon request, that she preferred to talk to them. We left them alone with her. When she finished with her statement, I said, 'Minola, we only want the truth, and if this isn't the truth, we don't want it.' She said that it was the whole truth. Her attorney, Mr. Gordon, was waiting on the outside. I conferred with him frequently. I don't recall any demand that he made except for admission. When he went into the room, the statement was half finished. It was read over to him, and he left shortly afterwards, presumably for the solicitor's office. The statement had been typewritten when he returned. It was read over to him,

and he asked Minola a number of questions about it."

"Was she held upon my authority?" asked the solicitor.

"No."

"Did I direct you to free her?"

"No."

Cross-examination, by Rosser:

"What authority did you have to arrest her?"

"The feeling of an honest and conscientious officer who thought she ought to have been arrested."

"Did you have any warrant?"

"No."

"Did Dorsey know you were going to lock her up?"

"I suppose he did."

"He didn't protest against it because it was against the law?"

"No."

"She was carried from Dorsey's office screaming and hysterical, wasn't she?"

"Yes."

"And declaring that she had told all she knew?"

"I don't think she said that."

"Your purpose was to get her to make another statement beside the one she had already made—the one that didn't suit you, eh?"

"My purpose was to get the truth."

"Did you telephone Dorsey at any time?"

"My recollection is that I called him to tell that Minola had made the statement."

"Why did you call him?"

"He was representing the state in the state's case on which we were working."