

J. C. Shirley Ready to Account For Movements on Murder Day

"I am now ready to give the proper authorities a complete outline of my whereabouts on the day Mary Phagan was murdered, as well as the day before and the day after," said J. C. Shirley, the Marietta street furniture man, accused by Ira W. Fisher, the "murder witness" brought here from Birmingham by Captain Burko, detective for the attorneys who have the defense of Leo M. Frank in charge.

Shirley, seen late Monday in his store, at 809 Marietta street, smilingly denied that he was in any way implicated in the Phagan murder, and attributed Fisher's story to "an unbalanced mind."

Fisher Is Unbalanced.

"This man Fisher, according to his wife, is unbalanced. Some years ago he was suspected of being implicated in a murder and since that time he has never been right. I am told.

"As to any connection, he might try to make between me and the crime that is ridiculous. Why, I've thought so little of it that I haven't even told my wife. The neighbors have been here all afternoon having a laugh with me about this thing.

"Seriously, though, this man Fisher about six months ago bought some furniture of me on the installment

plan. He got behind in his payments and his wife came over here—they lived right near—and had the account put in her name. She was keeping boarders, as Fisher wasn't helping her much. She paid out the account.

"Last August one day Fisher borrowed a dollar of me. I met him about a week later and he was looking much better than when he made the touch. He paid me the dollar he borrowed and said that he was straightening up and intended to reform. I don't know what he meant by 'reform,' but that is what he said.

"Well, about a week later I saw him in church—I go to St. James M. E. church—and he again spoke to me and said something about joining the church.

Never Saw Him Again.

"Shortly after that I was told that he had left his wife and had gone away. I never saw him again.

"No, he never worked for me around here. He didn't even loaf around here, as has been said. How he connected my name in this affair is queer, but I believe the man is simply crazy."

Shirley is well known in business circles of Atlanta. His associates speak highly of him and laugh at the statement of Fisher connecting him with any crime.

Shirley is married and has two children. He lives at 80 Ponders avenue, just around the corner from his furniture store.