

FATHER KILLS INFANT AND SELF IN REVENGE WIFE SOUGHT DIVORCE.

W. H. Mahaffey Jr. Fires Fatal Bullet Through Temple of Nine-Months Old Girl

THREE NOTES WERE LEFT

"Baby Will Be Better Off in God's Hands" One Says.

'CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOU'

Double Shooting Takes Place In Home While Child's Mother Was At Work -

Reconciliation Attempt Failed.

By EMORY GRINNELL

A fatal bullet through the temple of his nine month old daughter and another one into his own head beside the infant's crib about 3:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon carried out the vengeful threat of an unemployed father against the estranged wife, who was preparing to divorce him.

The father, William Howard Mahaffey, Jr., 26, of 616 South Cox, knowing his wife, Mrs. Verna Bullard Mahaffey, 23, was at work, slipped through the unlocked front door of the house where she lived at 1971 Harbert, and fired the two shots before a relative of the wife could interfere.

Reconciliation Attempt Failed

Failure Saturday night to effect a reconciliation with the wife from whom he had been separated caused the tragedy, according to Capt. Frank Glisson of the Police Homicide Bureau. Mr. Mahaffey threatened to "get even" for her refusal, she said. One bullet from the .38 caliber revolver went through the right temple of his daughter, Georiga Elaine, as she lay in her crib, and the second through his head, lodging in the ceiling of the rear bedroom of the house, Captain Glisson said.

In three notes, one to his mother, another to his father and a third to his wife, Mr. Mahaffey begged "forgiveness for what I have done," but said "it is the only thing I see to do."

'Love You Too Much'

"I love you too much to stay in a same world and not have you for a wife," the note to his wife said. "The only thing I see to do is leave it."

"I thought for awhile I would take you too, but you want to live," the note said. "I do too, but not without you. I am taking the baby with me as I feel she will be better off in God's hands than she would be here. So goodbye, sweet. I love you more than anything in this world."

Maurice Warren, uncle of Mrs. Mahaffey with whom she lived, said he heard the front door open and came down the stairs to see what had happened.

"I was coming downstairs when I heard some shots," he said. "I ran into the bedroom but it was too late. My wife was upstairs ill and a negro maid was in the rear of this house."

Came Saturday Night

Mrs. Mahaffey said her husband came to the house Saturday night and tried to change her mind about the divorce.

"I told him last night I had made up my mind and was going to sue for a divorce and he threatened to get even," she said. "I didn't know he would do anything like this."

Mrs. Mahaffey, who was employed at Walgreen's at Main and Union, said he returned to her home yesterday morning, but that she had to leave for work at 1 o'clock and he left her .

She said they had separated since last Summer and that he had been in New York, returning about a month ago. The couple had been married three years. They had only the one child.

'Milk Beside Crib'

The baby, nicknamed "Toots" had just finished eating and a half-filled bottle of milk was lying beside her in the crib. A rattle and a small colored ball lay near.

The notes, written in long hand, were clear and legible. They apparently were written yesterday morning after he had returned from talking with Mrs. Mahaffey.

Mr. Mahaffey had been living with his father, W. H. Mahaffey Sr., since he returned from Brooklyn, NY. In his pocket was found a Christmas card which Captain Glisson said, had been sent to him at Brooklyn by his wife.

'Love To Baby's Father'

Written in ink on the bottom of the card was a note, "Love to the father of my baby, and wishing we all could be together on Christmas," it said.

In the note to his mother, Mrs. L. H. Doty of Brooklyn, Mr. Mahaffey said, "Verna is going to get a divorce and I am not kind of person who can love one minute and forget the next.

"I could not live and not have her as my wife. The world is not big enough for that. If I stayed on, I would take the down road. That would in the long run cause you more pain than this will.

'Do Not Hate Verna'

"Try to forget me and just say 'I never heard of him.' Do not hate Verna as she will need your love now. I hope God will forgive me and we will be together in the next world."

The note to his father, the briefest of the three , expressed similar feeling and said, "It was the only thing I could see to do."

"I waited this morning and thought you had changed your mind," the note to his wife read, "but you had not."

"I don't want to take this course, but know nothing else to do. There is no happiness without you. When you left, I said good-by, but you didn't pay any attention . . . . .

"Where ever I go I love you, No, I can't wish you happiness, because I won't be there

to share it. I'm selfish I guess . . . .Yours until we meet in the great beyond."  
The pistol used by Mahaffey was owned by Mr. Warren, who said he believed  
Maaffey took it from his bureau drawer when he visited his wife yesterday morning.  
Captain Glisson said he had listed the deaths as a suicide and a murder.  
Funeral services for the Mahaffey baby will be conducted by the Rev. Rush  
McDonald at 2o'clock tomorrow afternoon. Burial in Memorial Park.  
Funeral arrangements for Mr. Mahaffey are incomplete.  
Information from The Commercial Appeal, February 5, 1940

# FATHER KILLS INFANT AND SELF IN REVENGE; WIFE SOUGHT DIVORCE

## W. H. Mahaffey Jr. Fires Fatal Bullet Through Temple Of Eight-Months-Old Girl

### THREE NOTES ARE LEFT

#### Baby Will Be Better Off in God's Hands, One Says

### 'CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOU'

## Double Shooting Takes Place In Home While Child's Moth- er Was At Work—Reconcil- iation Attempt Failed

By EMORY GRINNELL

A fatal bullet through the temple of his eight-months-old daughter and another into his own head, dropping him dead beside the infant's crib about 3:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon, carried out the vengeful threat of an unemployed father against the estranged wife who was preparing to divorce him.

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Reconciliation Attempt Failed

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**'Love You Too Much'**

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Amarillo, part. cloudy	70	64	60
Asheville, rain	39	45	24
Atlanta, rain	38	39	28
Boston, part. cloudy	30	34	17
Brownsville, cloudy	70	74	90
Cairo, cloudy	39	39	34
Chattanooga, rain	34	36	29
Chicago, snow	33	35	28
Cincinnati			28
Corpus Christi, cloudy	67	71	61
Dallas, part. cloudy	55	61	41
Del Rio, cloudless	64	67	52
Denver			30
Dodge City, part. c'dy	35	43	23
El Paso, part. cloudy	57	59	37
Fort Smith, rain	33	37	31
Galveston, cloudy	55	53	48
Huron, cloudy	22	27	
Jacksonville, cloudless	52	66	31
Kansas City, cloudless	33	39	31
Knoxville, rain	33	27	27
Little Rock, cloudy	40	41	31
Los Angeles			2
Louisville, rain	35	41	3
xMemphis	41	41	3
Miami, cloudless	58	70	4
Minneapolis, St. Paul, cloudy	27	30	3
Montgomery, cloudy	42	42	3
Nashville, rain	37	38	7
New Orleans, cloudy	66	73	4
New York, part. c'dy	34	39	1
North Platte, cloudy	30	31	
Oklahoma City, cloudy	43	47	
Palestine			
Phoenix, cloudy	65	68	
Pittsburgh, cloudy	32	35	
Raleigh, rain	42	51	
Salt Lake City, c'dy	45	48	
San Antonio, cloudy	63	66	
Seattle			
Shreveport, cloudy	52	54	
Springfield, rain	34	36	
St. Louis, cloudy	35	38	
Vicksburg, cloudy	53	54	
Washington, cloudy	39	46	
Williston, cloudy	23	23	
xAirport			

**YESTERDAY'S TEMPERAT**

Highest, 41 degrees at 8 p. m.  
Lowest, 37 degrees at 8 a. m.  
Mean, 39; normal, 42.

**HOURLY READINGS**

8 a.m.	37	6 p.m.	
8 a.m.	37	10 p.m.	
10 a.m.	38	11 p.m.	
Noon	39	12 midnight	
2 p.m.	39	12 a.m.	
4 p.m.	40	1 a.m.	

**METROLOGICAL REP**

Barometer—sea level  
Temperature

# FATHER SLAYS INFANT, SHOOTS SELF FATALLY

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didn't pay any attent

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can't wish you happy  
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## Baby Will Be Better Off In God's Hands, Note Says

### DIVORCE ACTION PLANNED

#### 'I Can't Live Without You,' W. H. Mahaffey Jr. Wrote In Letter To Estranged Wife— Child Was 8 Months Old

*(Continued From Page One)*

since last Summer and that he had been in New York, returning about a month ago. The couple had been married three years. They had only the one child.

#### Milk Beside Crib

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# GET We



# Who Here

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### Love To Baby's Father

Written in ink on the bottom of the card was a note. "Love to the father of my baby, and wishing we all could be together on Christmas," it said.

Detective Sergt. Tom Smith, whose wife is an aunt of Mrs. Mahaffey, had been called to the home only a short time before the shooting yesterday, because the family was afraid Mr. Mahaffey would return, relatives said.

In the note to his mother, Mrs. L. H. Doty of Brooklyn, Mr. Mahaffey said, "Verna is going to get a divorce and I am not the kind of person who can love one minute and forget the next.

"I could not live and not have her  
The world is not his

FEBRUARY 5, 1940

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you left I said goodbye, but you didn't pay any attention. . . .

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Captain Glasson said he had listed the deaths as a suicide and a murder.

Funeral services for the Mahaf-

fey baby will be conducted by the Rev. Rush McDonald at 2 o'clock tomorrow afternoon at the Spencer-Sturla Funeral Home. Burial will be in Memorial Park.

Funeral arrangements for Mr. Mahaffey Jr., in charge of Collins Funeral Home, are incomplete.

In **GET THEM FROM US FOR LESS**

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL, MEMPHIS.

### Deaths Trail Plea For Reconciliation



W. H. Mahaffey Jr.



Mr. and Mrs. Mahaffey



Baby Mahaffey

has been icebound for 16 days with its cargo and equipment valued at \$2,500,000, said they expected the Driver Gorge near Butler's Landing to go out before this morning.

BARGE POSITIONS

### STUDENTS MADE ILL BY MONOXIDE FUMES

### Nine Perkinston Basketball Players Given Treatment

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