

Woman, 48 Asphyxiated in Smoke-Filled Home

Decatur, June 16 - Mrs. Geraldine J Miller, 48, operator with her husband, Richard W. Miller and brother-in-law, True Miller of the Miller Motel on U. S. 27. (The motel was the first motel in Decatur) at the northwest edge of Decatur was asphyxiated in her smoke-filled home about midnight last night after an over stuffed chair began smoldering, apparently from a lighted cigarette.

She was found dead in the living room of her home by her husband when he returned home at 12:45 a. m. today from the motel.

Elmer Winteregg of this city, Adams County corner, who has indicated he will file a verdict of accidental death by asphyxiation, said Mrs Miller apparently had been dead only a few minutes when her husband reached home.

Apparently Fell Asleep

Authorities said Mrs. Miller who had talked on the telephone with her brother-in-law about 8:45 yesterday, apparently had dropped off to sleep while watching a television program and that her lighted cigarette had set fire to the chair.

She apparently had attempted to get to a door after awakening, but had been overcome and had dropped to the floor, where her husband found the body.

The television set still was in operation when Mr. Miller reached the house, but there were no other lights on in the residence. a fuse having been blown out after wiring on a floor lamp burned away.

The dense smoke left the furnishings and clothing in the house a total loss.

A pet dog which Mr. and Mrs Miller owned was missing today, possibly dead somewhere in the house.

Mrs. Miller was born Aug. 19. 1906 in Pleasant Mills and graduated from Pleasant Mills High School and the Methodist Hospital in Fort Wayne. She was a registered nurse in the Adams County Hospital for a number of years.

Rites Tuesday

Surviving in addition to the husband to whom she was married Oct 9, 1939 are her mother, Mrs. Jesse Steele this city; sisters, Mrs. Delbert Tumbleson of Ft. Wayne, Mrs. Bert Holser of Walkerton, Mrs. Harvey Koos of Decatur, Mrs. Murray Holloway of Pleasant Mills, Mrs. Lawrence Robock of Marblehead, Oh, Mrs. Fred B. Hilty, Omaha, Neb., and Mrs. Lawrence Johnson of Middletown, OH; three brothers, Roy Steele of Pleasant Mills, Guy Steele, Fort Wayne and Joe Steele, Decatur.

The body is at the Zwick Funeral Home, where friends may call after 2 p. m. Monday.

Services will be conducted at 2 p. m. in the funeral home, the Rev. Billy Springfield officiating. Burial will be in the Decatur Cemetery.