

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA

THE TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE – TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 1909

FIVE ARRESTS IN FICARROTTA MURDER

JURY OF INQUEST HELD SECRET
SESSION YESTERDAY

Senlito Renezro Held, Charged With Being a Principal in the Assassination of Wealthy Wholesaler

Behind closed doors the jury of inquest, in the Ficarrotta murder case yesterday morning held its deliberations in West Tampa, everyone except witnesses, officers and members of the jury being excluded. The jury remained in session from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m., hearing in that time a large number of witnesses. The evidence introduced was of such a nature that four arrests were made during the course of the proceedings. They were Sam Y'Italiana and Vito Spoto, brothers and Earl Simmons, a negro. After questioning the men thoroughly, all were released. Simmons is the negro who states that he saw the three assassins lurking about in the vicinity of the waterworks and among the palmettos near Ficarrotta's house a short time before the murder.

Among the witnesses heard at the inquest were the three little children of Ficarrotta, who were standing near him when the fatal shots were fired. What these children testified to could not be learned, but it is understood that they were able to give no intelligible statements, having run away as fast as they could without having a chance to see the three men. Just what testimony was submitted by other witnesses it is impossible to say, but before the end of the session Constable F. Gonzalez was sent out to arrest Senlito Renezro. Renezro was found, arrested and taken before the jury. Members of the jury and Justice Boyette questioned him closely and his replies were so unsatisfactory that it was decided to hold him, pending further investigation. It is understood that Renezro claimed to have been in Ellinger City at the time of the shooting, and later contradicted himself by stating that he was in a coffee shop on Main street. Just how much evidence there is against Renezro is not known, but he is in strict confinement in the county jail. The jury adjourned until Thursday morning, when it is hoped that additional evidence may be secured and other arrests made.

Newspapers Ruled Out

A newspaper man endeavored to secured permission to be present at the inquest, giving his personal word of honor not to divulge more than the court and jury thought proper. This was refused, notwithstanding the fact that he agreed to place a \$25 bond to be forfeited in case he failed to keep his word, also agreeing to take oath to that effect in the presence of the jury. One of the jurymen made a motion that all newspaper men be excluded, and the matter was brought to a vote, resulting in four voting in favor of a secret session. The jury consists of Lee McLaughlin, J.W. Brooks, Walter Anderson, G.H. Riggsbee, Arthur Schlemann and Juan Romera.

It is understood that sensational developments are shortly expected. The authorities have been trying to puzzle out the motive of the crime and have come to the conclusion that the killing was done on account of some personal enmity or desire for revenge and not because of a black hand plot. So far as know, Ficarrotta had no enemies. The mystery remains one of the most puzzling of many which this city has known. West Tampa authorities declare that it is the worst which has ever occurred there, and will make every effort to arrest the guilty parties and bring them to justice

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