

AIR MURDER CHARGED!

DUAL DEATHS BLAMED UPON PLANE TRAP

Weakened Pin in DeLay Machine Declared Due to Tampering; Victim Had Enemies

Were B. H. DeLay, aerial daredevil, and R.I. Short, President of the Essandee Corporation, who were killed in an airplane crash Wednesday, the victims of Los Angeles' first aerial murder plot?

Such a possibility was suggested to police yesterday by Charles H. Raymond, close friend of the dead Venice flyer.

Raymond's statement may cause a thorough investigation of the accident with a view to determine whether DeLay and Short were the victims of a murder conspiracy.

That the death plane was tampered with before it left the ground on that fateful journey is Raymond's opinion. To support it, he claims that a certain pin, which in the average plane is one-half to three-quarters of an inch thick, was only three-eighths of an inch in circumference in DeLay's plane.

Added strength was given to Raymond's theory in claims that an attempt was made against DeLay's life recently. Raymond declared DeLay was fired upon one night as he was walking near Clover Field. The identity of the assailant was not discovered. DeLay is said to have had a number of enemies in the beach district.

Collapsing of the wings while the plane was looping the loop 2000 feet in the air caused the accident. Raymond declares that this mishap could be accounted for by the smallness of the pin, which slipped out of place and resulted in a loosening of the struts holding the wings.

It was pointed out that DeLay was a flyer with ten years experience and would not be likely to endanger his life in a plane equipped with such a faulty pin. Short too was known as a very careful aviator.

Destruction of the plane by fire after the accident will make difficult any thorough investigation of the actual cause of the crash aviation experts declared yesterday.

DeLay was one of the most noted flyers in Southern California and was known as a "stunt" performer. He left a widow and [2] small daughter[s]. Funeral services for him will be held tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock at the Los Angeles Crematory.

Short, who is survived by a widow and two young sons, was a well-known automobile man of Los Angeles. Funeral arrangements for him have not been completed. - July, 1923

Clarifications: DeLay had more than one daughter left behind. His two young daughters were Beverley and Patricia. Daredevil DeLay was also known by his initials of B. H., which stood for Beverly Homer. Beverly and his surname of DeLay are French names and he could also speak French, since he also had French Heritage. His daughter was similarly named Beverley. Note that her Beverley name is spelled with "ley" (including an added "e") to distinguish her name from her father's Beverly name spelled with an "ly".

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