

El Paso Financier Dies in Curtained Car Near Home in Austin Terrace

**Tourists on Sightseeing Trip
Find Body; Revolver Has
Two Exploded Cartridges.**

W. L. TOOLEY, 50, El Paso financier and for 11 years an officer of the First National bank, died yesterday about noon from a bullet wound in his right temple. The body was found in his Cadillac touring car at Reynolds boulevard and Grayham street in Austin terrace, a block from his home. A .38 caliber, single action Colt's pistol with two exploded shells was found beneath his body.

After an examination Justice of the Peace H. B. Rawlins returned a coroner's verdict of suicide. The body was removed to the Hartford mortuary.

Mr. Tooley attended the funeral of A. R. Burges, an old friend, yesterday morning at St. Clement's Episcopal church, and then drove to Reynolds boulevard, where the fatal shot was fired.

Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Coats, 1325 Montana street, who were driving through Austin Terrace, noticed the big car standing in the center of the street. They noticed blood beneath it, investigated and found the body.

Wife Hears of Death.

Mr. Coats went to the Tooley home nearby and told F. C. Williams, 3503 Noble street, of the body. Mr. Williams went into the Tooley home. When Mrs. Tooley heard him telephoning the police that a dead man had been found in an automobile, Mrs. Tooley cried:

"Oh, my God, it's he!"

Mr. Williams was installing a sprinkling system in the curb parking at the Tooley home. He said that he had no idea that Mr. Tooley was the man reported dead in the car when he called the police.

"The unfortunate affair probably took place about 12 o'clock, or a little thereafter," he said. "We were working on the sprinkling system when he passed us about 11:30 o'clock and at that time he appeared to be in a pleasant humor. He got into his car and started off."

W. L. Tooley



Keep News From Widow.

"After we returned from lunch a tourist, who said he was from Indiana, accompanied by two soldiers in civilian clothes, informed us that there was a man dead in an automobile nearby. I went into the house to telephone the police and Thomas Thompson, my partner, went down to the car. He recognized Mr. Tooley the instant he glanced into the machine, but on returning to the house told Mrs. Tooley that he did not know the man, so the sad news might be delivered to her with the least shock possible.

"The blasting in the quarries at noon probably accounted for the fact that no shot was heard."

In Failing Health.

Mrs. Tooley, through Robert Holliday, Mr. Tooley's attorney and neighbor, told newspaper men that her husband had been in failing health for the past two years and that she had repeatedly tried to get him to go to Hot Springs for a rest.

Mr. Tooley left home yesterday morning for his office in the First National bank building. From there he went to attend the funeral of Mr. Burges.

He was to have met his wife at the doctor's office about noon, Mrs. Tooley said.

"When he didn't arrive I hurried home as fast as I could," she stated.

"When I last talked to him he promised me he would meet me at the doctor's office and that he then would come home with me and sleep for an hour or so. He didn't appear at the doctor's, so I went to his office. He wasn't there and I hurried home."

Tourists on Sightseeing Drive.

Mr. and Mrs. Coats recently arrived here from Indiana and were driving through Austin Terrace sightseeing. They passed the death car as they were going south.

"I thought it strange that an expensive machine like that should be left standing in the middle of the road and remarked on it," Mr. Coats said. "The side curtains of the car were up and we couldn't see anyone in it."

"I drove to the end of Reynolds boulevard and then turned around and came back. The machine was still there and then I saw a dark pool beneath the car."

"I stopped my car and got out. When

I got near the Cadillac I saw a stream of blood from the closed front door and the large pool on the running board."

Mr. Coats then called to Williams, who was working on the Tooley lawn nearby. Williams opened the Cadillac door and found Mr. Tooley lying on the front seat.

Running to the Tooley home he telephoned police.

"There's a dead man in an automobile out here at Reynolds and Graham," he told Sgt. Mike Snyder at police headquarters.

Hand Still on Steering Wheel.

Several neighbors and servants were standing around the machine when police arrived. The car was headed south and was just north of Graham street on Reynolds boulevard.

Mr. Tooley was lying along the front seat, his head against the side of the seat on the right hand side and his feet near the clutch and brake pedals. His hat was on the floor on the right hand side of the car and his left hand still rested on the steering wheel. His right arm was doubled beneath him.

The bullet entered his right temple and came out in front of the ear on the left side of the head. It imbedded itself in the framework holding the side curtains about six inches above where his head would have been had he been sitting upright.

Pistol Found Under Body.

The body was not touched until the arrival of Justice Rawlins about 15 minutes later. It was at first thought that Mr. Tooley had been killed by a stray bullet from the Fort Bliss rifle range nearby, as no gun was found until after the coroner's arrival.

When the body was lifted the heavy Colt's pistol was discovered near his right arm under the body. The gun contained four cartridge shells, two of them exploded.

Judging from the smell of the two cartridges, Justice Rawlins said that one of the shells had been fired some time ago and that the other had been discharged recently, as the smell of burnt powder was still fresh.

Fires Shot While Driving.

The fatal shot was fired while the car was running south on Reynolds boulevard. When the bullet crashed through his brain, Mr. Tooley must have stiffened spasmodically, his feet jamming down on the brake and clutch pedals, according to the officers' reconstructed version of the tragedy.

Marks on the pavement showed where the tires had skidded for about 10 feet when the brakes were suddenly applied. The machine was found about 30 feet south of the skid marks. The application of the brakes while the engine was in gear evidently caused the motor to stop, as the gear was still in high when police examined the car.

The body was found shortly before 2 p. m., and Justice Rawlins said that he believed death had occurred about two hours previously.

J. H. Tooley, son of the dead man and partner in their newly formed real estate loan company, ran bareheaded from his home when told by Mr. Holliday that his father's body had been found. He appeared dazed and could answer no questions regarding when his father left home in the morning or anything pertaining to the tragedy.

Mr. Holliday last night wired to W. L. Tooley, Jr., 19, a student at the Harvard School for Boys in Los Angeles, asking him to come home at once.

For practically two years Mr. Tooley had been in failing health. There were times, however, when he appeared to be feeling fine, and on these occasions he was in the best possible spirits. Then there would be days when he would be feeling poorly again and this would be followed by spells of despondency.

In spite of what might be his physical and mental feelings at any time, Mr. Tooley never failed to respond to him and do his part in any movement which tended toward the further growth and prosperity of El Paso. His most recent undertaking was the drive for the \$150,000 fund to launch El Paso's national advertising campaign. He was chairman of the committee and attended every meeting. Throughout the drive Mr. Tooley was always "right around."

(Continued on Page 2; Column 3.)

W. L. TOOLEY DEAD IN CAR, PISTOL UNDERNEATH BODY

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

aging and urging the other workers on. He believed in El Paso and he still further believed that all that was necessary was to get the city and valley's unexcelled advantages before those of other states in the union in order to make El Paso a great metropolis.

President of Gateway Club

At the conclusion of the successful campaign for the funds and the organization of the Gateway club, Mr. Tooley was elected president of the latter. Although in ill health, he continued to serve in this capacity until he felt that it was utterly impossible for him to do so any longer. He keenly regretted resigning the presidency of the club. C. N. Bassett was elected as his successor.

Mr. Tooley was also general chairman of the Y. M. C. A. drive which was staged about three years ago. The goal was \$100,000, but under his leadership approximately \$120,000 was raised.

Last year Mr. Tooley could have been president of the Chamber of Commerce. He was selected for this place on account of the active interest he had always manifested in civic affairs. He was bronched on the matter and seriously considered for some days accepting the position. However, after he thought it over he came to the conclusion that his health would not permit him to give the time to the work that he felt was required. He had worked hard, he stated, and he felt that he should get some rest.

Newsboy in Kansas City

Mr. Tooley's steps in life covered those of a newsboy in Kansas City, Mo., to a bank president. He came to El Paso 18 years ago from Moulton, Texas, where he had organized and conducted a bank under the firm name of W. L. Tooley & Co., bankers.

Mr. Tooley started in the banking business as bookkeeper of the Farmers and Traders bank of California, Mo., and from there went to the Peoples' bank at Tipton, Mo., as cashier. After this he went to the Lander bank at Yorkum, Texas, as its manager. He later organized the bank at Moulton.

Mr. Tooley organized the National Bank of Commerce here, which was consolidated with the First National bank about 12 years ago. On the consolidation, Mr. Tooley went with the First National and served as vice president for 11 years.

For approximately 10 years Mr. Tooley managed the First Mortgage company, of which he was also vice president.

Resigns Because of Health

"Mr. Tooley resigned as vice president of the bank and his positions with the mortgage company July 1, last year," said F. M. Murchison, vice president of the First National. "This was on account of his health. Our relations were perfectly agreeable and happy during all the time he was associated with us and the same close friendship continued until his death."

Bankers and intimate friends stated yesterday that Mr. Tooley was in excellent financial circumstances, that he did not owe a dollar. Among the city property he owned is the Hotel Knox building on San Francisco street and his handsome residence on Hardaway street in Austin Terrace. Mr. Tooley was also interested with Wins Johnson in a large ranch near Deming, N. M. In addition to this it was reported that he carried insurance to the extent of \$175,000.

The present residence was just recently completed. Mr. Tooley sold his first home, which was one of the first to be built in Austin Terrace, to C. N. Bassett. He sold another home, 4209 Pershing Drive, to H. L. Husar. Mr. Tooley and his family lived at the Hotel Paso del Norte until his last home was finished.

Banker for 50 Years

In all, Mr. Tooley had been in the banking business for 50 years. He had also enjoyed 25 years of successful experience in handling real estate loans, 17 of them being spent in El Paso. It was perhaps the latter experience which was indirectly responsible for his decision to again engage in first mortgage real estate loans on improved city and valley property. However, he stated that the prime reason was that he wanted to build up a business in which his sons could succeed him. It was just within the past few days that Mr. Tooley rented a suite of offices on the sixth floor of the First National bank building, and he was having the rooms remodeled preparatory to opening for business. He expected the quarters to be in readiness for opening this week. The walls of the offices had been re-plastered and the woodwork repainted. It was an attractive suite. All that remained to be done was the installation of a counter, which Mr. Tooley decided he would have run across the main office. There were two private offices.

Happy Over New Business

As Mr. Tooley talked of the plans of his new business, he smiled happily.

He appeared to be absolutely contented that he was again entering the business world. His shoulders were thrown back and he walked with a jaunty step. He had been active all his life and he seemed to be glad to get back into the harness after being out about seven months. J. H. Tooley, his elder son, who resigned as assistant secretary of the First Mortgage company to become actively engaged in the business with his father, had consulted with Mr. Tooley about the details connected with the arrangement and management of the office, and they both felt proud and pleased they were starting out in the business together. Later on the younger son was to come in.

A number of opportunities were offered Mr. Tooley after his resignation from the First National and the mortgage company to go into business, but these would have taken him away from El Paso.

"My interests are here," said Mr. Tooley a few days ago. "Besides, I have every faith in El Paso and its future. I did not want to leave here. The reason I have gone back in business here is because I believe in this city and I want to build up a business that my sons can succeed me in."