

POLICE HUNT RAPIST OF GIRL, 9, KIDNAPPED ENROUTE TO SCHOOL

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Tidwell Pleads Guilty to Three Charges Brought by Union Head

Haskell Tidwell, former secretary of the San Pedro Retail Clerks Union, Local 905, pled guilty in the South Bay Municipal Court Friday morning to three misdemeanor charges involving an attack on Union President Wally Elliott.

Judge Otto B. Willett postponed sentence and ordered a probation report on the ex-labor leader. A probation officer will make an investigation and tender a recommendation to Judge Willett prior to Oct. 16 when Tidwell is due to appear in court for sentencing.

He was charged with simple assault, brandishing a gun in a threatening manner, and carrying a concealed weapon without a permit. He had asked for a jury trial when he entered his first plea of not guilty on July 5.

Tidwell, ousted by members of the union following charges brought by Elliott, was accused of visiting Elliott at his home, 2811 Olive St., and threatening him with a gun. The ex-union secretary denied owning a gun, although he was holding one when arrested on a complaint signed by Elliott.

City Prosecutor Boris Woolley was preparing for the jury trial when he and Tidwell's attorney, Alexander Schulman, held a conference after which Tidwell switched his plea and "copped out" to the three charges.

He faces a maximum of 180 days in jail or a fine of \$500, according to Judge Willett, who may or may not follow the probation report as he deems fit.

'You Do It!' Says Council to Board And Vice Versa

It appears that if Torrance taxpayers and parents want sidewalks around local schools they'll have to decide out of which pocket they want to pay for it.

The Board of Education wants the city to put them in and the City Council wants the Board of Education to put them in.

The situation developed when a group of parents asked the city to install sidewalks at the Perry Elementary School. The City Council referred the matter to the Torrance Board of Education. The Board in turn pointed out that the sidewalk area, which is a portion of a dedicated street, belongs to the city and that the Board cannot legally put sidewalks on a city's property but their own.

Councilman Willows G. Blount said: "Fine. We'll do the property to the Board."

But the Board is not certain they want to accept. They do not have to accept the property unless they wish. The local board maintains that since the school is an old established school acquired when the Torrance Unified School District was created, the city should install the sidewalks.

Councilman Nick Drane said: "It's the school's responsibility. They throw up schools here and there and expect the city to install the sidewalks."

Dr. Hull said the Board "threw up" schools where the city let the builders throw up homes.

He also said that the school district pays the city to install sidewalks around new schools.

Meanwhile Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Taxpayer wondered whether to take the money out of his left pocket or out of his right pocket to pay for the sidewalks.

Student in Cal Poly

Among the over 1000 fresh men and transfer students starting fall quarter classes at California State Polytechnic College in San Luis Obispo Tuesday was Curtis E. Eddin Goodridge, 2201 Elmwood St.

Weather Today Like Yesterday

The Weather Bureau stuck with the status quo today and dealt out a prediction stating that it will be foggy this morning with hazy sunshines in Torrance and visibility just like it was yesterday.

Rapist Terrorizes Fourth Grade Girl

Police dragnet widened today in search of a pimply-faced man in a "single seater" coupe who forced a nine-year-old girl into his car early Friday morning, drove her to a lonely spot in the oil fields, and raped her.

The kidnap and rape took place as the entire Torrance Police force and volunteers searched for a 5-year-old boy who was believed to have been kidnapped after school Thursday. He spent the night at the home of a school friend.

Local police got the alert to be on the look-out for the rape suspect at 9:30 a.m. yesterday shortly after they abandoned a plan to drain a pond near Torrance Elementary School, in search of Michael Crane, son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Crane, 1915 Gramercy Ave.

The girl, in near hysteria, sobbed out her story to Sgt. D. C. Cook, juvenile officer of the Torrance Police Dept.

"I was walking to school at Torrance Elementary when this man pulled up in front of me and asked me to get into the car," she told Sgt. Cook, who later fixed the location of the kidnapping at 230th St. and Narbone Ave. "I told him I wouldn't go but he grabbed me and pulled me into the car."

She told of being driven to a lonely spot on Maple Ave. north of Sepulveda where the attack took place. The sex fiend, described as about 22 to 23 years of age with a pimply complexion then drove her to 251st and Crenshaw Blvd., where he let her out of the car. The girl, almost incoherent and in sobs, walked to the home of Mrs. Joe Stahl and told what had happened. Mrs. Stahl summoned police, who took the girl to her mother and then to the Harbor General Hospital. Doctors there confirmed that she had been criminally attacked.

The fourth grade student described the man as a white male, American, 22-23 years of age, brown hair and wearing a jacket with a lastex waistband and zipper. She described the car as being "a little car" with one seat, which led police to believe the suspect was driving a cut down coupe, possibly of 1936 to 1938 vintage. However, Sgt. Cook did not discount the possibility that the light green car, a hard top, might have been a foreign-made sports car.

The youthful victim was picked up at approximately 9:00 a.m. and walked up to the home of Mrs. Stahl 20 minutes later.

Enroute, Michael passed a short distance from his home and pointed out to Mrs. Gilstrap his house.

"I guess daddy's home. There's his car," she reported Michael as saying.

Returning from school Mrs. Gilstrap saw a police car in front of Michael's home and thinking something might be wrong, went to investigate. There she met by a woman reporter.

"Is this Michael Crane's home?" Mrs. Gilstrap asked. "You aren't looking for him, are you? I just took him to school."

A few minutes later the investigative search ended quickly as Sgt. Tom Morris issued a radio broadcast: "All Torrance police and fire units, Search for missing boy. He has returned to school."

At the time of the boy's return Police and Fire Department officials were preparing to drain "Pea Creek" a muddy swamp-like pond west of Plaza del Amo, a short distance from where the boy was last seen.

The search through fog-shrouded alleys and streets began at 7:10 Thursday night when the missing boy's father, a longshoreman, reported he was unable to locate the boy after searching the neighborhood for more than an hour. Police began to suspect the boy had been kidnapped when the stories of two first-grade companions indicated Michael had been picked up by a man in a car.

Both the Torrance and Harbor area goal areas of the Red Feather appeal in the Los Angeles area were set for the Red Feather appeal in the Los Angeles area.

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City Water Improvement Project Nearing End

As water poured through sluice gates this week filling the new 10,000,000-gallon reservoir, thus marking the completion of the modernization program of the city's water system, city officials pondered the problem of what to do with approximately \$250,000 surplus funds.

Earlier this year Councilman Victor E. Besthead recommended the surplus funds to be used to construct a municipal swimming pool and other civic projects.

This suggestion hit a legal snag, however, when City Attorney James M. Hall ruled

that the money could not be used for any purpose other than water improvements.

"We are going to need additional water facilities in the not too distant future if Torrance continues to grow at its present rate," claims McVicar.

"If we are to be prepared to meet the demand for the additional ser-

vice we would be wise to plan

voted the original \$2,000,000 bond for it now."



FILLER UP . . . While Angus McVicar, superintendent of the water department, and Mayor Mervin M. Schwab watch a sluice gate is opened in the city's new 10,000,000-gallon reservoir in Palos Verdes hills. McVicar estimates it will require two weeks to fill the huge concrete tank. Filling of the huge concrete reservoir marks the completion of the modernization of the city's water system which was financed by a \$2,000,000 bond issue.

(Herald photo)

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BACK WITH PARENTS . . . Five-year-old Michael got a lecture Friday morning, but not in a school classroom. Little Mike stayed with a pal all night without telling his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Crane. A night-long search by police ended when he walked into his first grade class at Torrance Elementary School next morning. (Herald photo).

Missing Boy Spent Night With Neighbor

An all-night search Thursday for a 5-year-old boy believed to have been kidnapped ended suddenly Friday morning when a neighbor reported the youth had spent the night at her home.

The missing youth, Michael Crane, a first-grader at Torrance Elementary School, did not return home after school

what actually happened were chalked up to the fact that the two young "witnesses" were, after all, just first graders.

During the night's search police obtained a complete list of names of other students in Michael's class and questioned them in an effort to get a clue to the boy's disappearance.

Meanwhile, while the distraught parents waited out the long night, their two other children, Steven, 2, and Teresa, 3½, slept peacefully, unaware of the extensive effort being made to find their missing brother.

The all-night search was directed by Sgts. D. C. Cook and Mervyn Porter, who ordered a foot by foot search of the area.

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Torrance Third In \$100 Million County Building

When will we reach the crest of the wave?"

That is the question being asked by Milton J. Brock, chairman of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce construction industries committee, today as he ponders the fact that nearly

\$100,000,000 went into residential, commercial, and industrial construction in the county last month.

Torrance ranks third in dollar value of the building boom, excluding the City of Los Angeles and unincorporated county territory.

Total valuation of the new construction here was \$3,167,682, more than one third of first-ranking Beverly Hills' \$7,758,123, and nearly equal to second-ranking Long Beach's \$3,55,555.

City of Los Angeles building activity valued \$38,501,497, while unincorporated county territory reported a valuation of \$26,438,815.

These figures are part of the new construction which went into construction in the county's unincorporated areas and 45 cities last month, according to a study conducted by the Chamber's research department. Only eight times, including twice this year, has that total been surpassed, Brock said.

In the first eight months of the year, Brock reported, \$7,770,604,744 went into new houses, offices, and factories, a figure \$6,645,678 ahead of the same period in 1950, all-time record construction year, and exceeding 1952, the second greatest year by more than \$165,000.

"Should construction be maintained at its present brisk pace, Brock said, "1953 will be the greatest year in Southland history, eclipsing 1950 by about \$100,000,000."

More than half the building activity—\$48,851,380 of it—was for residential construction during the first eight months of the year. These dollars are providing 63,967 dwelling units, enough to shelter all the residents of both Pasadena and Santa Monica.

During the last month period, permits were issued to provide 7352 dwelling units, including 30 in Torrance. Grand total of building permits issued was 17,011, Brock said.

Scout Gets Real Life Saving Test In Hermosa Pool

A 14-year-old Boy Scout attempting to qualify for his Life Saving Merit badge Thursday night passed his test with honor when he actually saved the life of a 16-year-old youth.

Don Kelly, a Life Scout, was practicing life saving in the pool of the Hermosa Beach

Baltimore Hotel when he noticed another youth turn panicky and struggle to get air. The young Scout surface dived, spun the struggling youth by grabbing his knees, and then used a hand pull to tow the boy to the edge of the pool.

A life guard and merit badge examiner, Theodore Eddy, saw the episode but believed Kelly to be practicing and was not aware of the incident until the exhausted youth was brought to the pool's edge. The victim, Charles Walker, was pulled from the water and given artificial respiration.

Young Kelly, son of Don Kelly, 2394 Walnut Ave. in Kettler, disengaged in their stories and Knolls.