

Clay County Man Held In Slaying

Shotgun Blast Kills Storekeeper Christmas Eve

A 35-year-old Clay County man has been charged with murder in the 8 p. m. Christmas Eve shotgun slaying of a Macon County country storekeeper, C. L. (Cecl) Ledford.

Sheriff J. Harry Thomas read the murder warrant to James Maney, of Shooting Creek, in a local hospital several hours after Maney and Ledford engaged in a gun fight at Ledford's store in the Cartoogechaye community.

While officers searched for him and a companion in Clay County, Maney turned up at Angel Clinic in Franklin, for

treatment of a gunshot wound in the abdomen, allegedly inflicted by Ledford.

Is Under Guard

Maney, who is kept under special guard at night at the hospital, admitted to Highway Patrolman E. H. Hooper that he blasted Ledford with a 12-gauge shotgun after the storekeeper shot him with a pistol.

R. C. Ledford, also of Shooting Creek, Maney's companion, backed up the wounded man's story and also filled in some of the links in the chain of events leading to the gunfight between the two men, according to the sheriff. Ledford, who is no kin to the slain man, has been charged by Sheriff Thomas with aiding and abetting the murder of the storekeeper. He was arrested about 45 minutes after he and Maney's brother drove the wounded man to the hospital.

Trouble Brewing

Sheriff Thomas said trouble began brewing between the three men at the store a couple of hours before the shooting. The officer said it was his understanding the storekeeper said the two Clay County men had taken some goods from his store and this touched off the trouble,

Begs With Him

An eye-witness to the slaying, Mrs. Nell Shope, Ledford's sister, related that she saw Maney pounding at the door of the store and pointing a shotgun. She said she begged him not to shoot and that Maney replied: "He shot me and I'm going to shoot him."

Fired from the outside, the blast from Maney's shotgun went through the screen door and glass of the main door.

Ledford's body was found crumpled just inside the doorway of living quarters at the rear of the store, some 30 feet away from where Maney reportedly stood.

Pistol Under Body

A .32 calibre pistol from which
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