

August 28, 1952

New Mental Tests Ordered For Tuccillo

Attorney Protests, Calls Man Accused of School Beatings 'Loving Father'

Ralph Tuccillo, Tompkinsville ex-convict and former mental hospital patient accused of beating two boys at the Willowbrook State School where he was employed, is beginning a new cycle of psychiatric examination today in Bellevue Hospital.

The new mental tests were ordered yesterday by Magistrate Augustine B. Casey over strenuous objections by Tuccillo's lawyer, Louis Baron.

Baron described Tuccillo as "a loving father, a hard worker," and added, "if there is anything to these alleged crimes, they have been brought about by his drinking."

Tuccillo was arrested Aug. 20 after Dr. Frank Glasser, assistant superintendent at the Willowbrook institution accused him of beating two boys with a broom handle. He had worked at the hospital the last seven months, using the name of John J. Martini.

Fingerprint File Due

Tuccillo's arrest and record prompted an investigation by District Attorney Sidney O. Simonson to determine how he obtained a state job. Simonson has asked for a copy of Tuccillo's fingerprint record filed with the state Civil Service Commission, but has not yet received it.

Simonson yesterday asked that Tuccillo be sent to Bellevue, because "justice would be furthered if another examination takes place before any court action."

Tuccillo's lawyer countered with his objection and said, "I believe that the district attorney has been misled by what he has heard, not by facts."

Doors Open, He Walks Out

Referring to Tuccillo's "escape" from Matteawan State Hospital for the Criminal Insane, Baron said, "He did not escape. He just walked out; the doors were open." Tuccillo "walked out" in October, 1946, and was not picked up until four years later.

Judge Casey asked Baron what disadvantages there would be to further mental examination. Baron repeated his stand that both Tuccillo and members of his family were against it.

Tuccillo himself remained calm during the drawn-out arguments. He glanced several times over his shoulder at his wife and two children seated among the spectators. As he was being led to the court-house detention pen, Tuccillo paused to shake hands and exchange a few words with Dr. Glasser.

Court action will be resumed when the Bellevue report is received, probably late next month.