

Chronicle
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Dynamite

At Thoresen

Home Here

Seventy sticks of dynamite and 17 guns were discovered Monday during a search of the Pacific Heights mansion of the late William Erness Thoresen III, Federal agents revealed here yesterday.

Thoresen, 33, was found shot to death in his Fresno home last Wednesday. His wife, Louise, 34, has pleaded not guilty to a charge of murder filed against her in the San Joaquin Valley city.

An official of the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Unit of the Internal Revenue Service said it received information there might be a weapons cache in the Pacific Heights dwelling on Broadway. Permission was obtained from Mrs. Thoresen to make a search.

A large store of weapons was also found in the Fresno home.

In 1937, authorities raided the Broadway home and several East Bay warehouses and confiscated 77 tons of firearms belonging to Thoresen. He was later convicted of Federal charges.

The Day Thoresen Died

July 1, 1970 Chronicle

Wife: 'He Tried to Kill Me'

Fresno

The wife of William Thoresen III, the eccentric gun-collecting millionaire, ran to a neighbor's house the morning of June 10 and screamed, "I just shot William," the neighbor testified yesterday.

And the neighbor, attorney William J. McDermott, recalled that Louise Thoresen said, "He tried to kill me last night. He choked me. He tried to force me to swallow a bottle of Seconal (sleeping pills)."

McDermott, who testified at a Municipal Court preliminary hearing to determine if Mrs. Thoresen should stand trial in Superior Court for murder, said she told him she "couldn't stand it any longer."

VISIT

The attorney said he visited the couple the night before the shooting and that the

wife appeared "subdued" and "her husband tense and on edge."

McDermott said Mrs. Thoresen whispered that she wanted to talk to him the next day. He said she told him, "The last two days have been living hell."

McDermott said he noticed that Mrs. Thoresen's left arm was swollen and her knee bruised and he said he believed that Thoresen had beaten his wife several times before he was shot to death with one of his own guns.

BODY

Another witness, a pathologist who examined Thoresen's body, said the millionaire's knuckles were bruised possibly from hitting someone — and that there were fresh needle marks on an arm and a leg.

Dr. John R. Miller said five bullets were fired into Thoresen's back and that the abrasions on his knuckles and his hand could have come "from a blow being struck."

Following her arrest here, Mrs. Thoresen was found to be suffering from a punctured eardrum and bruises about her chest.

BRUISES

She has pleaded not guilty to murder charges and remains in jail on murder and drug charges stemming out of the discovery after the killing of some 50 pounds of marijuana at the family home.

Dr. Miller said his examination of the millionaire's body showed needle marks on his right arm and one puncture on the ankle. The marks were no more than 24 hours old, the coroner's pathologist testified.

Thoresen, son of a prominent Chicago steel manufacturer, first came into prominence in San Francisco in

1968, when Federal agents raided his Pacific Heights mansion and discovered tons of munitions.

CONVICTION

Convicted in Federal court of unlawful possession of automatic weapons, the couple's conviction was sent back for review by a higher court one day before the shooting.

The couple had been married ten years and had a son, 8-year-old Michael. Mrs. Thoresen had earlier filed for divorce but the couple was said to be reconciled prior to Thoresen's death.

In addition to his gun troubles, Thoresen had also been convicted of theft. He had assaulted two women on separate occasions and had been accused of setting off dynamite near a Tucson, Ariz., radio station. He was arrested several years ago in San Francisco on charges of unlawfully possessing dangerous drugs.

Our Correspondent