

PENCIL BETRAYS MURDERER OF GIRL

Slayer Confesses Only After
His Mother Involves Him
by Identifying Trinket.

HE HAD USED IT AS LURE

Taken to Station for Questioning
by Detective Who Knew His
Past Record.

Lloyd Price, 22 years old, of 556 Myrtle Avenue, Brooklyn, a Negro with a psychopathic history and a police record, was held without bail in the Flatbush Homicide Court yesterday after he had confessed, according to detectives, that he killed Helen Sterler, 6 years old, whose body was found late Wednesday night in the cellar of 1,013 De Kalb Avenue, Brooklyn.

A brightly enameled red and blue mechanical pencil, found beside the child's body, led to the arrest of Price. It had belonged to his father and, according to statements attributed to the prisoner, it was the bauble that lured the child on after shiny coins had failed to catch her fancy. Detective Arthur De Marrais, who brought about the arrest, was highly commended for his work.

De Marrais, of French extraction, has long been recognized as one of the keener plainclothes men in Brooklyn. He has been on the force twelve years and has young children of his own. When he was assigned to the Sterler case, he said yesterday, he began at once to weed out, in his mind, the names of possible suspects. He lives and has worked in the neighborhood for years.

At last he narrowed down the

list of suspects to a few. Price was one of them. He recalled that twice before—in the Spring of 1928 and late in 1929—he had arrested and obtained the conviction of the Negro. He went to the Price home at 8:30 o'clock on Thursday night. Mrs. Marie Price, Price's mother, met him at the door. De Marrais took both to the station house.

Balks Detectives for Hours.

For several hours Price flatly denied that he knew anything about the Sterler case. He gave fairly convincing accounts of his movements on Wednesday and could not be swerved from his story. When all other means had failed at 3:30 A. M. yesterday, De Marrais whipped out the colored pencil and flashed it before his eyes.

"This is your pencil," said the detective.

Price shook his head.

He persisted in his denial and the police were finally forced to abandon that angle of the questioning. They were disappointed. They had only that one tangible clue, and had staked everything on it. De Marrais took it into the squad room where Price's mother sat.

"Mrs. Price," he asked, "did you ever see this before?"

"Yes," she said, according to the detective, "that belonged to my dead husband."

"You're sure?"

The woman took the pencil in her hands and kept turning it in her fingers for almost five minutes.

"Yes," Mrs. Price repeated, "that was my dead husband's pencil. I always kept it in the bureau drawer, though I ain't seen it for two days. I had to write down something and I couldn't find it. It was gone."

Confronted With Pencil.

De Marrais walked back into the room where the son sat.

"Listen, Lloyd," he said, "your mother just identified this pencil. It belonged to your dead father. Do you still say you never saw it before?"

The prisoner hesitated. De Mar-

rais held him with his eyes. The narrow shoulders shrugged.

"It's my pencil," said Price. "I'll tell you everything."

The confession followed. District Attorney Geoghan took the prisoner to the house in De Kalb Avenue, and while he and detectives looked on Price took them over the route he had described and went through his movements in the hall, on the cellar stairs, and re-enacted what had happened in the basement.

Price told the authorities that he went home after the crime and while detectives were searching the borough for suspects the next day he attended a motion picture show and helped his mother around the house.

In the police line-up Price again admitted the crime, according to the police. He denied any connection with other crimes concerning which he was questioned.