

FORD CLAIMS DRINK PROMPTED MURDER

Case of Mrs. May Wagner's Slayer Will Go to the Jury Today

Alleging that because of excessive and continuous drinking, he was irrational and thus irresponsible for his act, Charles Ford yesterday combatted the efforts of Prosecutor Boyle to send him to the electric chair for the murder of May Effie Wagner. The case was partly tried before Supreme Court Justice Garrison, all the evidence being submitted. It will go to the jury this morning.

It is charged by the State that Ford, on the afternoon of March 14 last went to Laurel Springs and visited the home of Mrs. Wagner, with whom he had lived for eighteen years and who had left him because of his abuse. Failing in his efforts to persuade her to return home with him on a previous occasion, he had repeated the call and hunted for Robert Wilson, whom he accused of being responsible for Mrs. Wagner's obduracy. After shooting Wilson he broke into the home of Mrs. Wagner and shot her to death, sending two bullets into his own head but recovering in the Cooper Hospital. Prosecutor Boyle had a number of witnesses who traced Ford's movement and who testified as to his declarations to "do" Wilson and the woman.

In the defense presented through Lawyers Frank B. Jess and Adam R. Sloan, it was shown by witnesses that Ford had been a heavy drinker all his life and that because of the woman's going away from him he drank more than ever. As a result it was asserted his mind was so affected that he did not know what he was doing.
