

Denies Slaying



Mrs. Karen Olsen Nelson, 26, formerly of Utica, Mich., is on trial in Santiago, Cuba, charged with murder in the pistol-death of her cane planter husband on Dec. 11, 1949. She contends he was killed when his gun was accidentally discharged.

Wife Asserts Husband Slain By Own Pistol

**American Woman On
Trial In Cuba Says
Death Was Accident**

SANTIAGO, Cuba—(AP)—Twenty-six-year-old Karen Olsen Nelson denied before a Cuban court here yesterday that she had anything to do with the pistol-death of her sugar cane planter husband.

The American woman charged with murder said that Alvar Nelson, 31, was killed accidentally when his gun was discharged after it fell from his belt while he was cranking a motor in the pumphouse of their home in December, 1949.

Mrs. Nelson, formerly of Utica, Mich., and two plantation employes are charged by police with causing her husband's death to collect \$30,000 insurance.

One of the accused, Hector Marrero, plantation storekeeper, supported Mrs. Nelson's version of the accident.

"Alvar told me he was shot when his pistol fell," Marrero told the three-judge court. (Cuba does not have jury trials). "He told me this as I was helping Mrs. Nelson carry him into the house."

Plantation Foreman Luis Montardo, the third defendant, said all he knew of the accident was that Mrs. Nelson told him her husband had been shot and begged him to hurry for a doctor, "which I did."

Israel Castellanos, director of the Cuban Bureau of Investigation, testifying for the prosecution, said the trajectory of the bullet and the position of the pump motor showed the shooting was not accidental. He added that the type of gun that Nelson carried could not be fired in falling, or even if it were struck with a hammer.

He was puzzled when one of the judges, whose hobby is firearms, took Nelson's gun and struck it several times on the bench, the hammer firing each time.