

COUNTY WOMAN KILLS HERSELF

MUSKEGON, Mich.—(UP) — Authorities reported today a 29-year-old woman apparently doused herself with gasoline and died in flames because she feared her masquerade as a man would be betrayed.

Coroner John A. Dehorn ruled that the woman, Myrtle Mapes of Bear Lake, died of self-inflicted burns and suffocation. Her body was found in her blazing, overturned auto in a desolate rural area near here last night.

The auto was registered in the name of "Thomas Oliver Mapes" and officers indicated Miss Mapes was despondent over fear that a friend might disclose she was a woman.

The remains indicated she was attired in a man's clothing, Sheriff Axel Pedersen said.

Melbourn Beebe of nearby Twin Lakes said Myrtle, whom he knew as "Tom," brought him a sealed note late yesterday. "I've had an awful fight with my girl friends," she told Beebe. "Don't open this unless I don't come back."

The note indicated she was "tired of living" and "wasn't doing any good," Pedersen reported.

Later she purchased a gallon of gasoline in a can, police said, and drove to a lonely road where she splashed the fuel over the car's interior and set it on fire.

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