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HEADLINE: Murder accused had tin 'for years'

AN ornamental tin money box bearing a murder victim's fingerprint was discovered by detectives in the accused's home, but his stepfather yesterday told the High Court in Glasgow, it had been in the family home for three years.

Asked by Mr Alan Dewar, prosecuting, if he knew how the fingerprint should come to be on the box, Mr William Crisp replied: "I have no idea."

The Marks and Spencers box, shaped like a house with a roof and old fashioned street scenes painted on it, was found at Mr David Asbury's house in Castle Drive, Kilbirnie.

Mr Asbury, 21, denies murdering spinster Marion Ross, 51, in her home at Irvine Road, Kilmarnock, between January 6 and 8 this year. It is alleged he stabbed her in the throat and eye with a pair of scissors and a knife, and robbed her of a tin containing a sum of money.

The accused, who worked on an extension at Miss Ross's home two years earlier, has lodged a special defence claiming he was in Kilbirnie at the material time.

The box contained more than £2000 in £100 bundles, which were made up in a "peculiar" way.

The court was told earlier, that Miss Ross, a former bank teller, used to make up £100 bundles in the same fashion when she worked for the Royal Bank of Scotland.

In his evidence, Mr Crisp, 35, said that he brought the tin box home three years ago, when he worked for a skip hire company in Barrhead, Renfrewshire.

He said the box was one of a number dumped in the yard, and he took several home and gave the ornamental box in the shape of a house to his younger son, Stephen, and another box to Mr David Asbury.

Asked by Mr William Totten, defending, if he was surprised to see the tin in David's room, he said he was not and recognised it right away.

Mr Totten: "Do you have any doubt the tin in David's bedroom was the one you brought back to the house in 1994?"

Mr Crisp: "No." He added that his younger son told him just a few weeks ago he had swapped the tin with his brother a couple of years before.

The trial before Lord Dawson continues.

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