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**HEADLINE: Murder trial hears of fingerprint theory**

AN alleged murder victim's fingerprint may have been put on a vital piece of evidence after her death, it was claimed yesterday.

An expert photographed spinster Marion Ross's fingerprint on a tin box nearly three weeks after she was found dead, a court heard.

The tin, containing cash in £100 bundles allegedly folded in the same "peculiar" way used by former bank clerk Miss Ross, 51, was found in the bedroom of David Asbury.

The 21-year-old, of Castle Drive, Kilbirnie, denies stabbing Miss Ross in the eye and throat with a pair of scissors and a knife at her home. He claims he was elsewhere at the time.

Mr William Totten, defending, questioned how Miss Ross's print could have got on to the ornamental tin box, said to have been in Asbury's home for three years.

He asked police scenes of crime photographer Leslie Gibbens, 59, if it was possible that, for some reason, someone had brought the tin to Miss Ross's hand after she was dead.

Mr Gibbens, who confirmed from a report that two fingerprints were Asbury's and a third Miss Ross's, replied: "The possibility is there."

Mr Gibbens agreed with Mr Totten he couldn't say when the prints got on to the box. He alleged that Asbury's fingerprint had also been found on a gift tag in Miss Ross's home at Irvine Road, Kilmarnock.

Asbury's stepfather, William Crisp, told the trial at the High Court in Glasgow on Wednesday that he brought the tin back from work three years ago.

He gave it to his son Stephen who swapped it with Asbury for another. He said Asbury was a saver and he wasn't surprised to find the money.

Stephen, six, said he could neither remember getting the tin nor swapping it but he knew it had happened because his father had told him.

The trial continues.