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Mercy killing ends with side-by-side graves

By BARRY CRAIG

A man and the wife he killed to end her suffering will be buried side by side this week by the Toronto taxpayers.

Their funeral will end what one city detective called "the most tragic case I've ever seen."

Marcel Cluzel, 49, of 85 Spadina Rd., killed his wife 31 days ago because he couldn't bear to see her suffer from cancer.

He died himself Saturday as the sun was coming up.

"He didn't want to live," said Dr. John Porter.

Cluzel, who lived with his 43-year-old wife, Bertha, in two rooms at the back of a house, killed her Oct. 5 with a cartridge-fired hammer used to slaughter cattle.

"He did what he thought was the humane thing," said a detective.

He placed the gun at his own temple and fired, but was discovered still alive.

A homicide detective said: "He killed her because he couldn't stand to see her suffer, then he had nothing to live for himself."

Cluzel died of his injuries at 6:55 a.m. Saturday on the 12th floor of the Toronto General Hospital.

Only once in the month he was alive did he say anything, according to a nurse.

"Oh, my God," he said, and that was all.

His wife had been ill for five or six years. She was confined to bed.

"He was really good to her," a detective said. "He even made up charts of what she could eat.

Cluzel and his wife were discovered by their landlady who heard their radio playing loudly all night.

"That's why she became suspicious," said a detective. "The Cluzels were quiet, nice people. It wasn't something they'd do."

Cluzel was taken to hospital and underwent an operation. He had a hole three inches deep and a half-inch wide in his skull from the hammer.

"For four or five days he did pretty well," Dr. Porter said. "He even sat up in a chair."

But he soon deteriorated and sat in bed staring at the walls.

For the first two weeks, a police constable guarded him. But after that it wasn't necessary.

During that time, police were send-

ing telegrams to Europe trying to locate relatives.

Cluzel was from France. But police in France couldn't find any relatives.

His wife was from Germany, near Nurnberg.

Police there located her mother, but wrote back that she said she was too poor to come to Canada or pay for a burial.

So the couple will be buried by the city.

There will be no autopsy, no inquest.

"It wouldn't serve any purpose," Dr. Porter said.

And, in the homicide bureau of Metro Toronto Police, sits a warrant that will never be served.

It was to arrest Marcel Cluzel for the capital murder of his wife.