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# CLOSING STAGES OF TEENAGERS' MURDER TRIAL

## *Counsel Give Addresses And Judge Sums Up*

**A**N appeal to the jury to find Pauline Yvonne Parker, aged 16, and Juliet Marion Hulme, aged 15 years 10 months, not guilty of murder on the grounds of insanity, was made by their counsel in their final addresses on the sixth day of the trial in the Supreme Court to-day.

The Crown Prosecutor (Mr A. W. Brown) asked the jury to return a finding that the girls were guilty of "the dreadful murder." He declared they were both sane.

In the trial, which started on Monday, the girls pleaded not guilty before Mr Justice Adams and a jury of twelve to a charge of murdering Parker's mother, Honora Mary Parker, at Christchurch on June 22.

After counsel's addresses and his Honor's summing up, the jury retired at 12.41 p.m. to consider its verdict.

The evidence in the case was concluded yesterday, and the sitting this morning opened with the addresses by the defence counsel—Dr A. L. Haslam for Parker, and Mr T. A. Gresson for Hulme. Each spoke for twenty-five minutes.

Mr J. A. Wicks has been acting with Dr Haslam throughout the trial, and Mr B. McClelland has been with Mr Gresson.

The upstairs public gallery was not as full on the resumption of the trial at 9.30 a.m., as on the previous five days, but there were still nearly one hundred onlookers. The number grew as the day progressed and the time for the jury to consider its verdict drew nearer.

Dr Haslam addressed first for the defence.

He said that defence counsel would address as briefly as possible, and if any matter was omitted, it was not necessarily unimportant.

A lot of repulsive evidence had been put before the Court. It was not done to shock the jury, but was necessary to enable the

jury to decide on the question of the girls' sanity.

**The jury would dislike many of the things the girls had done, but should not be prejudiced against them.**

"There is no dispute about the facts of the crime. Its horror is very vivid in the minds of us all. The salient points are not disputed.

"The submission of the defence is that the girls were insane. Sometimes it is said we must satisfy you by the preponderance of proof. If we have reasonably satisfied you, then that is adequate.

"We have evidence that each girl suffered from ill-health in early childhood, then in 1952 these two lonely and withdrawn types met at school."

Little was known about their early association, although reference had been made to a bicycle ride where the girls had taken off their raincoats and shoes and had become ecstatic, said Dr Haslam.

It was quite obvious from the diaries that quite early the friendship assumed an alarming intensity. The diary showed also a steady deterioration of their mental and moral condition.

The "vision" of the fourth world recorded in the diary of Parker, and their claim to have found the key to the fourth world was also a key to their mental condition.

Juliet Hulme then went into the sanatorium and their friendship intensified, though during that period, Parker had also other interests.

She associated with boy friends, but at the end of 1953 they had been dropped and her friendship with Juliet Hulme was all that mattered.

After a period of relative calm, there was the strange episode of the girls' "coronation." Then in the New Year the disastrous association got into full stride. It was not surprising that by this time the parents of both girls were alarmed and did their best to break down the friendship.

Dr and Mrs Hulme were kind to Parker, and invited her to Ilam. Unfortunately, she convinced them she was unhappy at home, and coupled with that she seemed to have cut out her own family.

What exactly was the association between the girls was not quite established, although they were very close. He would suggest they were morbidly close, said Dr Haslam.

They conceived the idea that they were literary geniuses and the next step was to go to Hollywood and get their novels filmed. Their plans were fantastic.

# Deterioration 'Accelerated'

There was then an episode that shocked them deeply, when Juliet found her mother in Perry's bedroom.

No doubt the girls made more of it than it really was but the sense of security in "Ilam" was breaking up as they learned that Dr and Mrs Hulme were talking of separating. Their mental deterioration was accelerated.

Dr and Mrs Hulme had made it plain Parker could not go abroad with Juliet Hulme, but they still went on with their crazy plans.

In their distorted thinking, it was Mrs Rieper who was a threat to their staying together.

"And so we have these girls planning this attack, carrying it out clumsily, and not showing a shadow of remorse," said Dr Haslam.

Dr Bennett had an advantage because he knew something of the background of the girls beforehand.

He saw Parker some months before when she was taken to him by Mrs Rieper, her mother, and he knew Dr and Mrs Hulme.

Dr Bennett had described his interviews and while emphasizing different aspects, agreed with Dr Medicott that the girls were suffering from paranoia with delusions of grandeur, and the nature of their disease, that each would infect the other, and that they would mutually accelerate the progress of their disease.

Dr Bennett did not merely

concur with Dr Medicott. He had approached the question from a slightly different angle, but had reached the same conclusion. Both had submitted detailed analyses on which their conclusions were based.

Both had said that in the type of mental disease from which the girls were suffering there were often no external signs. There was a superficial appearance of sanity.

## Varieties

He need hardly repeat that there were so many varied forms of insanity, and that this was something very different from ordinary imbecility and was beneath the surface.

While in custody the girls pretended for a time they were insane, and then they wanted to be sane.

One of the significant things was the tenor of the remarks made by the girls to the doctors. There was the claim by one that she was going to rewrite the Bible, on vellum parchment. This was just one of the many symptoms of the girls' distorted minds.

Dr Bennett and Dr Medicott had told the jury that the girls were insane. Dr Bennett had described in detail just how the delusions would work and affect their reasoning.

He had pointed out how their association was believed by them to be threatened.

"You remember how in their imagination they had toyed with violence for so long, and now they broke out and committed it," said Dr Haslam.

"It is submitted that there was ample evidence that the girls were insane in the broad general medical sense of the term," said Dr Haslam.

Dr Bennett had said that their delusion would affect their whole judgment. They knew that they were killing Mrs Parker, but the question was whether they knew that what they were doing was wrong.

Dr Bennett had told the Court that the girls were homosexuals and paranoiacs of the exalted type.

He had said that obeying the law was an intellectual function. The girls had been driven by emotion, which was always more compelling than intellect.

Their emotion was based on a delusion. They thought that they were simply transferring an unhappy woman to heaven and preserving at the same time the association that was essential to their paranoiac delusions of grandeur. They did not regard their act as morally wrong.

The defence submitted the girls were both insane.

"I now commit this young girl to your charge, and invite you to bring back a verdict of not guilty on the grounds of insanity," concluded Dr Haslam.

# Duty of Jury Outlined

Mr Gresson said Dr Haslam had said everything that could be said on behalf of the defence that the two girls were insane, and he endorsed every word Dr Haslam had said.

If the evidence convinced the jury that the girls were insane to the extent that they did not know what they were doing and did not know it was wrong, then

the duty of the jury was to find them not guilty on the grounds of insanity.

A single hair did not constitute a beard, said Mr Gresson, and all the evidence had to be considered as a whole.

Homosexuality and paranoia were frequently associated, in the opinion of Dr Medicott. He thought the girls were suffering from paranoia of an exalted type in a setting of folie a deux.

## 'Delusional'

Dr Medicott gave evidence that Parker and Hulme were living in weird delusional way, with their own god and religion, a fourth world, and believing that they were outstanding geniuses with a special type paradise which only 10 could enter.

Paranoia of the exalted type was accompanied by delusions of grandeur and an immense conceit that had to be continually fed.

Each acted as a resonator to the other, each raising the pitch of the other's mental state.

Dr Medicott said that they

were aware of the fact that they were killing Mrs Parker, and they were aware at times of the wrongness and rightness, but this was so temporary that they could switch from what they knew of the law to their own fantastic world at a moment's notice.

He considered that they were certainly insane, and that he would have certified them even if they had never killed Mrs Parker.

He did not base his diagnosis on the fact that they had committed the murder.

Dr Medicott arrived at a clear-cut diagnosis of paranoia, mental illness, with an association of folie a deux.

Dr Bennett arrived independently at a similar conclusion to that of Dr Medicott.

"You have two competent, reputable doctors telling you Parker and Hulme were insane, and I ask you to accept that evidence.

"There were three other doctors called to say otherwise, and all agreed that there could be a difference of views."

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