

MURDER CHARGE AT NELSON DEATH OF MENTAL PATIENT

HEARING ADJOURNED

(New Zealand Press Association)

NELSON, November 13.

A 68-year-old mental hospital patient appeared in the Nelson Magistrate's Court before Mr J. B. Thomson, S.M., today, on a charge of murdering another patient at Ngawhatu Mental Hospital on October 28.

Mr H. G. Brodie, Crown Prosecutor, appeared for the Crown, and Mr C. A. L. Treadwell for the accused.

Two employees who work in the laundry at the mental hospital said in evidence that the accused went into the laundry about 1.30 p.m. on October 28. The man who was killed ran out of the door, and was followed by the accused. The man in front stumbled on the front step, and they saw the accused hitting him with what appeared to be a roll of newspaper.

James McGilvary, chief engineer at the hospital, said he saw the accused carrying a newspaper covered with blood. He took it from the accused, and found that a piece of one-inch water piping was inside the paper. The accused said: "I've killed him." The accused complained that the man he had attacked had some kind of control over him.

Dr. F. Cameron, acting-medical superintendent at the mental hospital, described the accused's mental illness. He had suffered from delusions of persecution for some years, witness said.

Dr. Cameron said he had interviewed the accused, who said the man killed had been persecuting him for eight years, day and night. The other man worked on him (the accused), and he could get no rest. He had decided to kill the man a week before, and had been to the laundry twice previously to attack him. He had now decided he had made a mistake, and it could not have been the dead man who had been persecuting him.

Cross-examined, Dr. Cameron said the accused was not fit to plead.

The Crown Prosecutor applied for an adjournment to enable him to refer the case to the Attorney-General to determine whether there should be a stay of proceedings.

This application was granted.

Mr Treadwell asked for the suppression of the names mentioned, and when all the evidence had been heard, the Magistrate ordered the non-publication of the names of the accused and the victim.

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