

Murder: 6/23/61

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UPDATE: Chyrel Jolls

On June 23, 1961, a three-year-old boy, Andrew T. Ashley, was abducted from the area of his Jewett Pky. home. Two days later his partially-disrobed body, bound with nylon stockings, was found in Delaware Park Lake.

After one of the most intensive investigations in Buffalo history, police on July 13 identified Chyrel Jolls, a 15-year-old girl with a history of mental illness, as the alleged kidnap-murderer and linked her to the earlier abductions of two other North Buffalo children who escaped unharmed.

Miss Jolls was committed to Matteawan State Hospital for the criminally insane in 1962 under a psychiatric report which declared her insane. She was returned here briefly in 1964 to face murder and kidnaping charges in the Ashley case and a kidnaping indictment in the case of a five-year-old boy abducted on the day prior to the Ashley boy's disappearance.

The case ended in a mistrial when the girl was deemed unfit to stand trial and was returned to Matteawan. On Dec. 17, 1969, the charges of kidnaping and murder were dismissed on the recommendations of psychiatrists who termed Miss Jolls "intellectually" capable of standing trial but emotionally unfit.

By NANCY SCHWERZLER

CHYREL JOLLS is now 25 years old. Andrew T. Ashley would have been 13 this year.

At a 1969 psychiatric hearing, medical testimony revealed that Miss Jolls was no longer psychotic and had sufficiently recovered to understand the nature of the charges against her and to assist in the preparation of her own defense. However, doctors feared that the strain of another trial might induce a psychotic episode and cause a severe mental and emotional relapse.

The dismissal of the kidnap-murder charges cleared the way for Miss Joll's certification to a civil mental institution. In January, 1970 she was transferred to St. Lawrence State Hospital at Odensburg, from which she was "released as cured," according to medical records, one year later, on January 29, 1971.

TEN YEARS AFTER her arrest in connection with the Ashley homicide, Chyrel Jolls has disappeared. Records at St. Lawrence hospital list Miss Jolls as having no address at the time of her release six months ago.

Miss Jolls' parents, Howard and Georgia Jolls, lived at a Leroy Ave. address at the time of their daughter's 1961 arrest and subsequently moved to a N. Pearl St. address.

However, present records reveal that Chyrel's father, Howard, is currently confined to the Gowanda State Hospital, Helmuth, and has been a patient there for some time, according to relatives. The whereabouts of Chyrel's mother, Georgia, is unknown.

SINCE THE kidnap-murder charges against Chyrel Jolls were dismissed in 1969, she is free from further prosecution. However, a 1962 ruling had ordered that she be confined at Matteawan "until she shall become sane," at which time she would have been returned to the jurisdiction of Erie County Court to stand trial.

Evidence introduced at the abortive 1964 trial proceedings included strands of hair found in the play helmet of the five-

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Chyrel Jolls
... a decade ago

was captioned: "The way I went last Friday," leading police to believe the Friday mentioned was June 23, the day the Ashley boy was abducted and murdered.

Chyrel Jolls was also identified by two children as the woman who had abducted them and left them bound and gagged near railroad tracks in separate incidents.

AT THE TIME of her arrest on charges in the Ashley case, Chyrel was in a phone booth speaking with the dead boy's mother. FBI agents had traced the call, during which she told Mrs. Ashley that the boy would be returned unharmed if police were taken off the investigation.

Chyrel, who had completed elementary school three years behind her age group, had received treatment for mental illness at Strong Memorial Hospital, Rochester; Newark State Hospital and the Good Shepherd Home. She was believed to have set a fire causing \$200 damage at the Good Shepherd Home while she was there as a 12-year-old.

Psychiatrists who evaluated her mental condition at the time of her arrest noted that if she were guilty of the murder and abductions, she might not "consciously remember them."

THROUGHOUT HER inter-

FBI lab tests identified as having the same characteristics as Chyrel Jolls' hair.

Police also found a crudely sketched map in the Jolls' home on which Chyrel had traced a path from her home to Delaware Park Lake and back, a route which took her past the Ashley boy's home. The map

tained that she was innocent and asserted that she "loved children" and would "never do anything to hurt a child."

Today Chyrel Jolls is at liberty after 10 years of confinement in mental institutions. Today Andrew T. Ashley lies in a small hillside plot at St. Francis Cemetery.

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