

## Murder hearing told of sex wish

A MAN charged with murder had entered the Birdwood Park lavatory in December, 1980, while a middle-aged man was inside, a witness told Newcastle Court yesterday.

The witness, [1216], said the middle-aged man had come into the lavatory while he was using the urinal on December 19, 1980.

Mr [1216] said that when he left, Jeffrey Miller had asked him outside to wait for him while he went into the lavatory to have sexual relations with the man.

The prosecutor, Sgt B. Bourne, showed Mr [1216] photographs of Mr Richard Slater and asked him whether Mr Slater was the man he had seen inside the lavatory.

Mr [1216] replied that the man he had seen in the lavatory could very easily be the man depicted in the photographs but he could not be sure.

He was giving evidence at the preliminary hearing part heard until December 10 of a charge alleging that Mr Miller murdered 69-year-old Mr Slater at Newcastle on December 19, 1980.

Mr [1216] whose address was suppressed, said he had gone to a flat in [redacted] Newcastle, on the morning of December 19, where he saw [1217] [1218] and Mr Miller.

They left later and walked towards the Birdwood Park area after calling at several places. He entered the lavatory between noon and 12.30pm and, while he was standing at the urinal, a middle-aged man came in and went to the other side.

He left and walked outside to his companions. Mr Miller had said he was going into the lavatory and had used words to the effect that he was going 'to crack it'.

Mr Miller had meant by this that he was going into the lavatory for sexual relations.

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## No noise from lavatory

[1217] and [1218] went off towards the Pink Elephant Markets and Mr Miller had told him to wait, which he did.

Mr Miller emerged from the lavatory after about two minutes. He did not hear any noise in this time.

He did not see the middle-aged man come out. Nor did he see anyone else enter.

He and Mr Miller had then scurried along to the rear entrance of the Pink Elephant Markets and caught up with the other two.

Cross-examined by Mr P. Callaghan, counsel for Mr Miller, he said he had left out of his original statement to police about Mr Miller going into the lavatory 'to crack it', because police had asked him specifically what he had done.

He denied that he had invented things in his second statement to police.

Mr [1216] said [1217] was mistaken if she said that he and Mr Miller had entered the lavatory together.

Det Sgt R. Clarke said Mr Slater had told him in an ambulance after he was found in the lavatory that nothing had happened to him.