

Nov 29, 1976

Jersey Couple and 2 Sons Slain; Third Son, 18, Held in Murders

New York Times (1857-Current file); Nov 29, 1976; ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 20 pg. 1



United Press International

Three of the four victims, from left: Mr. and Mrs. De La Roche, their son Ronald. Photo of Eric was not available.

Jersey Couple and 2 Sons Slain; Third Son, 18, Held in Murders

Special to The New York Times

MONTVALE, N. J., Nov. 25—A father, mother and two young sons were found shot to death in their home here today, and a surviving 18-year-old son was charged tonight with their murders.

The survivor, Harry De La Roche Jr., had earlier told the police that he discovered the bodies on returning home from visiting a friend about 4 A.M. He was reported to be a student at The Citadel, a military college in Charleston, S. C., home for the Thanksgiving weekend.

The four victims were in bedclothes. The mother, Mary Jane De Le Roche, 53 years old, was in her bed; the father, Harry William Frederick De La Roche, 44, was in the adjoining boys' bedroom.

Each had two wounds from a small-caliber gun, according to Dr. Lawrence Denson, Chief Medical Examiner of Bergen County.

In his bedroom, the youngest son, Eric John, 12, had been shot twice in the face and once in the chest, but Dr. Denson said the cause of death appeared to have been a blow to the head from some blunt instrument, after "much struggle."

The other son, Ronald Ernest, 15, died of a gunshot wound in the head. His body was found stuffed in a metallic con-

tainer, apparently a wardrobe, in the attic of the two-story home, Dr. Denson said.

George Michael Hecker, Montvale Chief of Police, said that Harry Jr. had been formally charged with murder and taken to the Bergen County Jail in Hackensack at 6:30 tonight.

The suspect had been questioned by Joseph C. Woodcock, Bergen County Prosecutor, and the Montvale police. He was given a lie-detector test before charges were filed against him. The state police, under Detective Sgt. Lou Parisi of the major-crime unit, also took part in the investigation.

Hearing Is Set for Today

Young Mr. De La Roche was held tonight in the Bergen County Jail pending a hearing tomorrow to determine whether he needs a court-appointed lawyer and to set bail.

"The young man apparently came home at 3 A.M. and shot his parents and two brothers while they were sleeping," Mr. Woodcock said tonight.

The boy was halted by a police officer early this morning for running a stop sign, according to Mr. Woodcock, "and at that time, he said his father and moth-



Harry De La Roche Jr., charged with murdering his family.

er had been murdered and his younger brother was missing."

Later in the day, when Mr. Woodcock saw him at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, the prosecutor said the boy "did not appear to be visibly upset. He was very civil, he seemed extraordinarily calm."

Mr. De La Roche was a sales representative for Ford Motor Company and worked with several other men in the company's international sales division at the Ford offices in Newark, processing foreign orders.

The family had lived in the home at

Continued on Page 31, Column 2

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.