

OFTEN-ACCUSED MAN CONVICTED OF ASSAULT

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Reputed contract killer **Lodrick Parker** -- characterized as a man who would slaughter his target's family and dog just to take care of business -- saw his luck run out Thursday when he was convicted of assault for a botched hit that literally blew up in his face.

Parker briefly glanced at his lawyer, Jeffrey Collins, as the Recorder's Court jury pronounced him and two codefendants guilty of two counts of assault with intent to murder, two counts of armed robbery and one count of arson.

"I'm very happy that justice was done," said assistant Wayne County prosecutor Richard Cunningham. " **Parker** is a very, very dangerous man. . . . We got a pro off the streets."

Judge Leonard Townsend, who presided over the two-day trial, congratulated the jurors on the verdicts, which came after 85 minutes of deliberation.

"You're never going to find one with more convincing evidence," Townsend said. "Your verdict is absolutely correct."

Parker , 31, and codefendants Kamania Barclay and Kimball Gaskin are to be sentenced Nov. 29.

The verdicts ended **Parker** 's remarkable string of courtroom victories, including acquittals in the 1988 hospital bed assassination of reputed drug lord Richard (Maserati Rick) Carter and two other slayings.

After his most recent acquittal, Cunningham said **Parker** was "the luckiest man alive." But Thursday, Cunningham said, "It looks like his luck ran out today."

Parker , Barclay and Gaskin were convicted for the Jan. 11 fire attack on the Blessed Candles religious goods shop, 19727 W. Seven Mile, owned by Thomas and Alice Tye.

According to testimony, the three went into the shop, pulled guns and ordered a guard -- Thomas Tye's uncle, Charles Byrd -- and a clerk onto the floor. After taking identification from the victims, the men splashed gasoline around the store.

The store exploded when fumes were ignited by candles. The gunmen were blown out the front window and the victims were severely burned.

Investigators believe the attack was part of a vendetta against Thomas Tye. Cunningham argued that **Parker** was a hired killer dispatched to wipe out everyone in the shop as a message to Tye.

Parker was acquitted in August of killing Tye's sister, Charmaine, and a companion. He is awaiting trial for wounding Thomas and Alice Tye in an earlier attack at the candle shop.

Byrd, who survived the candle shop blast, was shot to death just before **Parker** 's trial in the slaying of Charmaine Tye. **Parker** was in jail at the time of that killing, which remains unsolved.

Cunningham said **Parker** would kill his target's entire family down to the dogs to get a message across.

"They weren't going to be killed for anything they did, but because they were related to Tommy Tye -- because they were there," Cunningham said. "It was nothing personal. It was only business."

But Collins argued that the case was a personal matter for police "because it's **Lodrick Parker** . The police will do anything necessary, even lying, to get a conviction of **Lodrick Parker** ."

Caption: Photo

LodrickParker

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