

## REPUTED HIT MAN NOT GUILTY - AGAIN WITNESS TESTIFIED THAT HE SHOT HER

Detroit Free Press (MI) - Friday, August 17, 1990  
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A Detroit Recorder's Court jury took only 90 minutes Thursday to reject a surviving victim's eyewitness testimony and find reputed hit man **Lodrick Parker** not guilty of murder and assault.

It was the second time in less than two years that **Parker** has been acquitted of murder charges despite a witness placing him either at the scene or pulling the trigger.

"He's the luckiest man alive," said assistant prosecutor Richard Cunningham after the verdict. "But someday, his luck is going to run out."

Defense lawyer Rene Cooper said **Parker**, 31, is not lucky.

"Mr. **Parker** is simply an innocent man who is somehow followed by trouble and innuendo," Cooper said. "It seems that whenever there's a drug-related killing -- especially since Maserati Rick -- Mr. **Parker**'s name gets dredged up."

**Parker** was acquitted in 1988 of the slaying of reputed cocaine lord Richard (Maserati Rick) Carter at Mt. Carmel Mercy Hospital. This time, he was charged with two counts of first-degree murder in the September 1989 killing of Charmaine Tye and Dennis Conley and the wounding of Edith Wilburn outside an apartment on the 1100 block of Superior.

Wilburn, who was left paralyzed by the shooting, testified that **Parker** was the man who walked up and opened fire on the car where she was sitting with Tye and Conley.

But Cooper and cocounsel Raymond Burkett lashed out at Wilburn, saying she was involved in narcotics and unable to clearly remember.

After the verdict, **Parker** was returned to the Wayne County Jail. He faces two more trials involving alleged attacks on the Tye family.

In September, he is to stand trial on charges of assault with intent to murder in the wounding of Thomas and Alice Tye at Blessed Candles, a religious goods shop they owned on West 7 Mile. The Tyes testified earlier that **Parker** came into the store in September and shot them.

He also is charged with assault with intent to murder in the firebombing of Blessed Candles in January, when two people were injured.

One of the injured -- Tye's uncle, Charles Byrd -- was shot to death a week ago in his apartment in the same complex where Tye and Conley were killed.

Byrd, a security guard at the shop, had testified that **Parker** and two other men held him and another employee at gunpoint while gasoline was splashed around the shop. The store exploded when fumes were ignited by candles.

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Edition: METRO FINAL

Section: NWS

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Index Terms: CRIME ; SHOOTING ; TRIAL ; LODRICK PARKER; RESULT ; COURT  
DATE

Record Number: 9001310901

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