

'Skid Row Slasher' Guilty in 9 Deaths

Los Angeles, Calif. — For two months, the "Skid Row Slasher" spread terror in this city's alleys and flophouses, cutting the throats of nine men so deeply that the winos

called him the head chopper.

A jury concluded Wednesday that Vaughn Orrin Greenwood, 33, was the slasher.

Greenwood was found

guilty on nine counts of murder — eight of the nine slasher slayings and one of two similar killings a decade earlier. The jury deadlocked on two other counts. He will be sentenced Jan. 19.

The slasher apparently killed as part of a strange ritual, which included drinking the blood of his victims.

Entered in evidence at Greenwood's trial were glasses that police technicians said had been filled with blood and drained.

Greenwood did not testify, and no motive for the blood drinking was suggested.

Investigators said the killer also frequently removed the victims' shoes and arranged them in a distinctive alignment. His trademark was the death wound he inflicted, cutting down to and sometimes into the spine, leaving the victims almost decapitated.

The victims, mostly derelicts, were killed beginning Dec. 1, 1974, when the body



Vaughn Greenwood

of Charles Jackson, 47, a tramp, was found on the steps of the main library.

A week later Moses Yak-anak, an Eskimo, was found in an alley. The killings continued, week by week.

The killings stopped after Greenwood was arrested for a rampage through the Hollywood Hills, and only later was he accused of the slasher slayings. He was sentenced to 32 years to life for burglarizing the home of actor Burt Reynolds and breaking into other houses, stabbing a homeowner and attacking a sleeping movie producer with a hatchet.

Jurors told reporters that the evidence was circumstantial and that it bothered them. But they noted that the most telling evidence against Greenwood were a footprint and a set of cufflinks.

The bloody footprint, which police technicians said was made by Greenwood's shoe, was found in the hotel room where Robert Shannahan, a truck driver, was killed. Police said they found in Greenwood's room cufflinks identified as stolen from George Frias, a catering worker killed in his apartment.

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