

WOMAN PLEADS NOT GUILTY OF MURDERING HER 'WIFE'

Defense Claims Insanity

-- Trial Set --

Miss Ruth Mae Foster, charged with murdering her "wife," Mrs. Virginia Louise Ford, on May 19, at the culmination of a five-year unconventional love relationship, plead not guilty and not guilty by reason of insanity at her arraignment before Superior Judge Thomas L. Ambrose on Monday.

Judge Ambrose set July 43 for her trial on the charge of murder. He also appointed three psychiatrists, Dr. Grosvenor Bailey, Dr. Clarence W. Olson and Dr. Hyman Tucker of the State hospital at Norwalk, to examine the accused woman. Each is to give her a separate examination before the case comes up for trial.

DRIVEN TO FRENZY

Walter L. Gordon Jr., Miss Foster's attorney, told the Sentinel he will attempt to prove on behalf of his 28-year-old client that she was rendered temporarily insane by jealousy coupled with the emotional upset occasioned by this unusual type of love.

He stated that the slain woman
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MURDER TRIAL SLATED — Miss Ruth Mae Foster, accused in the sensational murder trial scheduled to start July 13, is shown with her attorney, Walter L. Gordon Jr. At her arraignment on Monday Miss Foster plead not guilty to the charge of murdering Mrs. Virginia Louise Ford, the woman with whom she had allegedly lived in a "man-wife" relationship for five years.

★ more about Defense

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had tormented the accused, driving her into a frenzy and telling her she wanted her to move out of their home to make way for a new girl friend named "Bernice."

Miss Foster and Mrs. Ford had reportedly lived together since 1943 at 4445½ South Avalon boulevard. Four of the dead woman's six children lived with them.

TO RELY ON STATE DOCTORS

Attorney Gordon said that he will not have Miss Foster examined independently by psychiatrists, but will rely in his defense upon the findings of the state appointed doctors.

Miss Foster meanwhile is being held in jail until her case comes up before Superior Judge Walter S. Gates the middle of next month.

The young woman was taken into custody after she herself notified police that she had stabbed to death 48-year-old Mrs. Ford. She kept her appointment with the police and surrendered peacefully.

She had assertedly stabbed the older woman to death with a keen-edged sandwich knife, slashing the victim many times. One of the jabs pierced the older woman's chest in the region of the heart.

According to Attorney Gordon, Miss Foster claims that she was 23 when she first met Mrs. Ford in 1943, and was working in a barbecue stand at 42nd and Central avenue. Up to that time, she said, she had never been associated with any other woman on the basis of her later friendship with the deceased.

COURTED BY BOTH

One day five years ago, she said, Mrs. Ford sent another woman to her to tell her she "liked her very much."

Shortly afterwards, Miss Foster asserted, she moved into the Ford home. In the beginning, she claimed, both Mrs. Ford and her husband, Lawrence "Flying Ford" Ford, a member of the "Rhythm Maniacs" dance group, both paid court to her. After about six months, Ford reportedly demanded that his wife choose between him and Miss Foster.

Mrs. Ford is said to have preferred the younger woman, and Ford moved out.