

PROSTITUTE 'FREE TO GO'

A BRADFORD man alleged to have locked a prostitute in his second floor flat for four days, raping her twice and violently assaulting her, said he lashed out after she failed to meet him in a pub and lost the key he lent her, Leeds Crown Court heard yesterday.

He denied raping the 26-year-old woman and told the court he never locked her in his flat or prevented her from leaving.

The jobless 26-year-old said the woman was fond of him and wanted to have a permanent relationship.

One evening, however, she brought a client back to his flat when he was there with a friend and another woman.

The day he attacked her she had failed to meet him in a pub and arrived at his flat in the early morning, having lost his key.

"I just lost my rag then and thumped her. I hit her with my fist about the face two or three times," he told the court.

Upset

Later, they had a meal together but she annoyed him again. "She was on at me then, going on to me. She was drunk and calling me a bastard and that, and that's when I hit her again," he told the court.

He said he punched her in the body.

That night she was upset and they slept in the same bed but did not have sex. The next morning, when a social worker called, the woman stayed in the bedroom.

But he denied that he had told her to stay hidden.

In the afternoon she went out for groceries and a bottle of cider, later cooking a meal.

Bruising

In the next two days they had sex three times, but always with her consent.

He said that the woman did not want to go out, although he asked her to go with him when he went to see a friend and went for a drink.

"She didn't want to leave the flat because she had bruising to her eyes," he told the court.

He stressed that at no time did he prevent her leaving the flat.

The night before she left she had sent him a note, talking of her affection for him and saying she wanted a permanent relationship.

Unlocked

He told the court, however, that he had wanted his old girlfriend back and felt no affection for the woman he was alleged to have raped.

The next morning they were in bed together when a friend

**I did not
lock her
up, rape
trial hears**

who had been staying left, leaving the door unlocked.

He said he nudged her several times, asking her to get up and lock the door, then she just stormed out.

"She just jumped out of bed and said: 'I am sick of this place' and she just stormed out," he told the court.

Key

He said he had met the woman in a cafe in Bradford and after meeting for a drink they spent the night together and became good friends. She stayed at his flat several times and they slept together, he said.

Later, he lent her a key to the flat.

The Bradford man has denied two charges of rape and one of false imprisonment, but has admitted assault on the woman, causing actual bodily harm.

The trial continues.

Man is cleared of rape charges

A 26-year-old Bradford man was cleared of locking a prostitute in his flat for four days and raping her twice, a jury at Leeds Crown Court decided today.

He was found not guilty on two charges of rape, one of them at the direction of the judge. The jury also found him not guilty of false imprisonment. He had denied the charges.

Earlier, the man had admitted assaulting the 26-year-old Bradford woman causing her actual bodily harm. He was jailed for 12 months for that offence.

The court heard that she had severe bruising on her face, neck, chest and arm.

Attacked

Passing sentence, Judge Lauriston QC told the man: "It was a savage and cowardly attack on a woman who was no match for someone of your size and strength.

"I have got little doubt that the truth was that as the police said you were blazing and mad and you could have killed her and that was the state you were in when you attacked her."

The man's lawyer, Mr. Kenneth Hinde, said the man lashed out after the woman brought a client to his flat, lost a key he had loaned her and failed to turn up when they arranged to meet for a drink.