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Jury Frees White Man in Negro Death

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., Jan. 23 (AP) — A white man who admitted firing a rifle at a Negro youth while cruising through a trouble zone after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was found innocent of murder today.

Two Negroes were on the six-member jury that acquitted Lee Charles Bradley, 24. The verdict on the second-degree murder charge came after 75 minutes of deliberation.

Bradley was charged with killing Rudolph Homer Hargett, 18, with a single bullet between the eyes. Hargett was seated on his bicycle sipping a soda with friends when he was shot. He was home on leave from the Air Force.

Bradley testified during the three-day trial that he was cruising with friends through the area where stone throwing had been reported. He said one person in a group of Negroes raised a bottle over his head as if to throw.

The defendant said he poked his rifle barrel out the window but aimed it downward, intending to fire into the ground and scare the person out of throwing the bottle. He said he fired once.