

NATIONAL

Jordan Case Moving Slowly in Robeson

LUMBERTON, N.C. (AP) — Eight arraignment hearings have been scheduled and dropped for the two men charged with killing Michael Jordan's father last August. But the delay isn't worrying attorneys in the case.

"We may be looking at March or April of next year" before the case is tried, defense lawyer Hugh Rogers said Monday. Rogers, who represents Larry Martin Demery, 18, of Rowland, estimated a trial would take two months, including jury selection.

"We're at a lull in the proceedings," Rogers said. "I've got other murder cases that are two or three years old. It's the function of the prosecutor to schedule them for trial."

An arraignment hearing, where a defendant enters a plea, could be scheduled in July, said District Attorney Richard Townsend. Previous hearings were delayed because pending motions hadn't been resolved.

Townsend said he didn't know if the case would come to trial before he leaves office at the end of the year. Townsend lost a reelection bid this month to former assistant Johnson Britt, 57 percent to 42.9 percent.

Townsend said the election campaign and his loss didn't play a part in the speed of the proceedings.

"It takes time in a case like this, any first-degree murder case," Townsend said.

Demery and Daniel Andre Green, 18 of Lumberton, were charged Aug. 16 with first-degree murder, armed robbery and conspiracy to commit armed robbery. They are being held without bond.

The last item entered in Demery's file was an order Dec. 1

denying him permission to attend his grandfather's funeral. Motions filed by Rogers include requests for information from the prosecutor and requests for another attorney, clerical help and a private investigator.

Rogers had said he might seek a change of location for the trial, but said he has changed his mind because there's nowhere in the state that hasn't heard of the case.

He also said prosecutors usually try co-defendants at the same time, but in this case it's possible the trials would be separate.

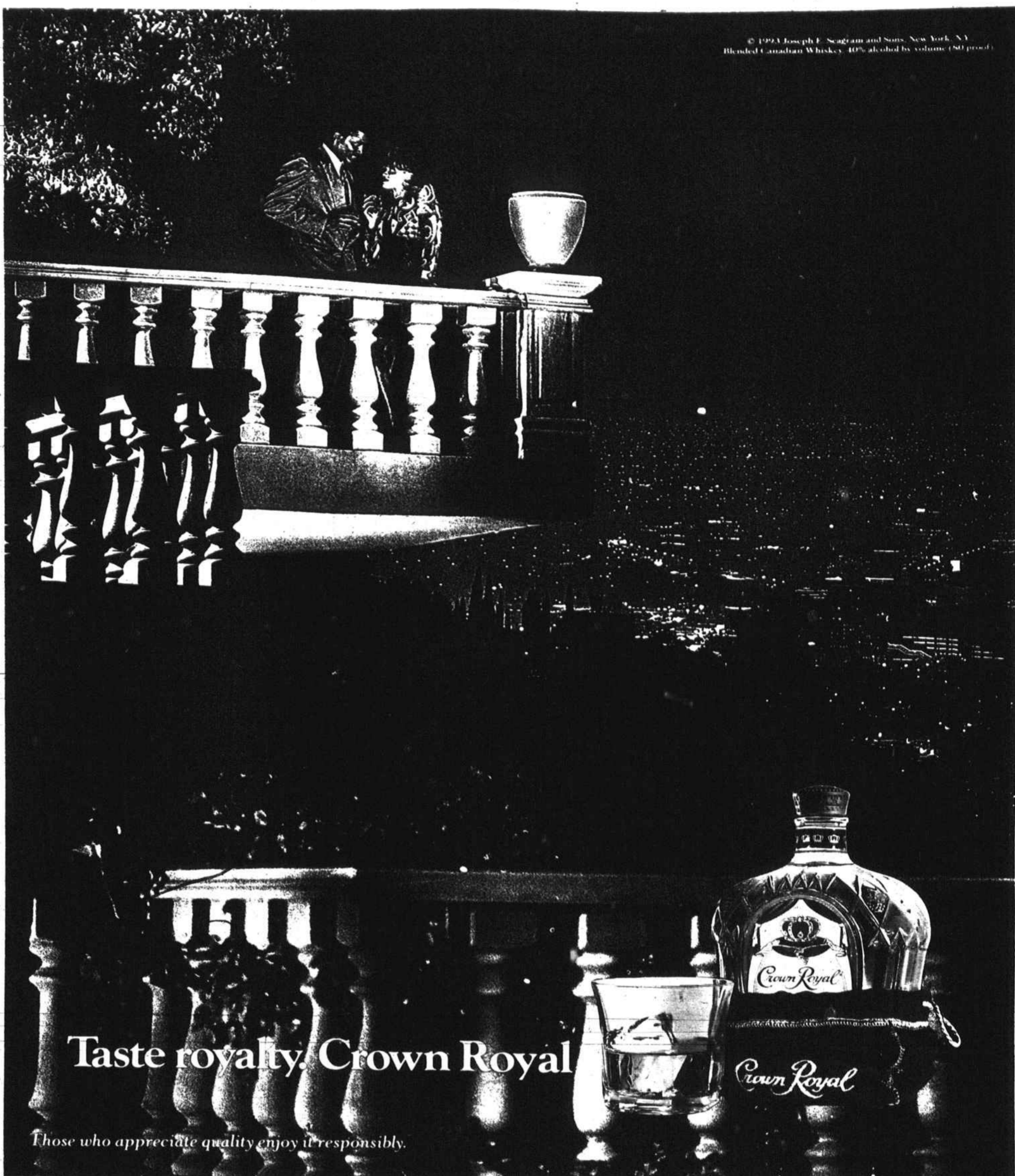
Green's attorney, public defender Angus Thompson, filed 42 motions on Dec. 31 including requests for a bill of particulars, a list of state witnesses, test result, physical evidence, exclusion of pictures of Jordan's body and a request to make a record of the jurors' races.

A motion by both sides of the defense to keep law enforcement authorities from talking about the case was acted on quickly last year and a judge ordered everyone involved in the case to refrain from discussing it in public. A motion still is pending to hold some hearings in closed session.

James R. Jordan's body was found Aug. 3 in a South Carolina creek, but wasn't identified until Aug. 13. Authorities said Jordan was killed July 23 as he napped on the side of U.S. 74.

According to an affidavit filed in the case, police were told that Green was seen wearing a Chicago Bulls NBA championship watch and two or three rings that belonged to Jordan.

Michael Jordan, who retired from the Bulls last year and has begun playing baseball, had given



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