

Court told of wigs in a flat

A POLICE officer said that while keeping watch from a hospital window he saw six women in a flat opposite, a court heard. One was making-up in a bedroom and another took three poodles out for a walk.

But all six were men, dressed in women's clothes and wearing wigs, alleged Mr. John Leonard, prosecuting at Marylebone, London.

During the six-day police watch, he said, 59 men went to the flat. Others were turned away for some reason or other.

POLICE RAID

One caller who stayed only three minutes complained bitterly as he left.

When the police raided the premises, they found one woman there.

"But she said she was not there to gratify the clients," Mr. Leonard added.

Charged with conspiring with others to corrupt the morals of such persons as should be induced to visit a flat in Lancaster - mews, Paddington, were six men:

Charles Keenan, 24, and Eric Edward Beck, 34, both of

Lancaster - mews; John O'Reilly, 33, of Gloucester-terrace, Paddington; Ronald Edward Tone, 25, of Warwick-road, Stratford; Lionel Johnson, 40, of Trent-road, Brixton, and John Victor Hooton, 31, of no fixed address.

Mr. Leonard said the flat was over a garage and consisted of two bedrooms, a kitchen and a waiting room.

Police found on the premises various articles and a great deal of women's clothing.

During the police observation Beck and Keenan were living at the flat; O'Reilly and Johnson went there on four days, and Hooton and Tone were there every day.

P.S. Derek Walker, who gave evidence of watching the premises, said he saw all six men dressed as women.

One afternoon he left his observation point in the window of the hospital and went to a telephone kiosk.

"I telephoned AMB —, the number of the telephone in the flat," the officer went on. "An effeminate voice

answered and I said 'I have seen your advert and would like to come and see you.'

"The voice said 'What do you want? Usual or unusual.' I asked what unusual was and the voice replied: 'Any service you fancy.'"

He was told that the fees were "£2 for the usual and £3 for the unusual."

Later that day he saw a number of men admitted to the flat by Tone, Johnson, Keenan and Hooton, who were wearing women's clothes.

RANG THE BELL

When one man asked "Is this the right address?" Tone replied, "Come in darling."

Another man who had been admitted to the flat was shown out again four minutes later by Tone, who told him: "Bring some money and we'll fix you up. You want something for nothing."

Next day, the officer went on, he saw a man go to the flat door, ring the bell and ask Keenan: "Are you the woman I made an appointment with?"

Keenan replied, "No, I'm the maid. Will you come in?" The caller then entered.

Sgt. Walker said that evening he went to the roof of the flat to watch from there. He opened a skylight and heard the bell ring. Then a voice said: "You go this time. I have been running up and down those stairs all day."

About an hour later he saw Beck, who was dressed in a blouse and a pair of black pants, behave improperly with another man.

P.C. Edward Brunt, who kept watch with Sgt. Walker said he went to a cafe at Coldharbour-lane, Stockwell, and read out a warrant to Johnson, who replied, "I was only there for a couple of days and I only dressed up for a giggle."

Supt. John Gerrard told the court that after seeing a man go into the flat he followed three minutes later.

WAITING ROOM

He was shown into a waiting room. He then announced himself and disclosed that he had warrants for the arrest of a number of people.

In a lounge room he saw O'Reilly and a woman, Josephine Cotter.

Asked if she was there to entertain men Cotter replied, "Certainly not. I am only coming round to see my friends."

All six men were committed for trial at the Old Bailey. They pleaded not guilty and reserved their defence.

Keenan and Hooton were committed in custody. The others were allowed bail.