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'Exorcists' accused of killing

Two men went beserk and punched and kicked a young woman to death trying to rid her of the devil, an Old Bailey jury was told today.

They hit 31-year-old Beatrix Rutherford until she was unconscious, jumped on her stomach and repeatedly wicked her during the "exorcism" at her Edmonton home last March, it was claimed.

John Sherwood — described in court as looking like "a Mormon from a wagon train" — was said to have later told police: "I wasn't hitting her. I was hitting the devil. I didn't mean to kill her. I love her. I must have been possessed by the devil myself."

CIVIL SERVANT

Sherwood (30), described as an itinerant preacher, of no fixed home, and Anthony Strover (25), unemployed, of Wood Lane, Shepherd's Bush, London, deny the manslaughter of Miss Rutherford, a civil servant.

She was last seen alive at a prayer meeting in the Pentecostal Church at Edmonton. She was with the two men.

(Proceeding)