

BANGOR DAILY NEWS

Man acquitted of aggravated assault, guilty of lesser charge against former Maine state trooper convicted of sex crimes

By [Beth Brogan](#), BDN Staff
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BATH, Maine — A man who assaulted a former Maine state trooper on trial for sex crimes in April 2012 was found not guilty Wednesday of aggravated assault, but guilty of misdemeanor assault.

William Harrison of Charlestown, Mass., is scheduled to be sentenced on Oct. 30 in West Bath, Sagadahoc County Assistant District Attorney Jonathan Liberman said Thursday.

Harrison assaulted former state Trooper Gregory Vrooman of Nobleboro on Aug. 12, 2012, in a Lincoln County Superior Court courtroom just as the jury was preparing to release its verdict. Harrison is related to Vrooman’s victim.

Vrooman was on trial at the time after being indicted by a Lincoln County grand jury in February 2011 on four counts of unlawful sexual touching, four counts of unlawful sexual contact, four counts of assault and a charge of tampering with a witness.

Harrison [threw a few punches at Vrooman before being quickly subdued by others in the courtroom and arrested](#), Lincoln County Sheriff’s Office Lt. Michael Murphy told the Bangor Daily News at the time.

Vrooman was removed from the courthouse by ambulance and taken to a hospital to be treated for injuries.

[He was convicted](#) the following day of 12 sex crimes against a girl younger than 14 years old.

The reading of the verdicts was moved from Lincoln County Superior Court in Wiscasset to Sagadahoc Superior Court in Bath after the assault.

Vrooman is currently serving 21 months in jail.

Liberman declined to say where he is imprisoned due to concerns for Vrooman’s security.

The jury delivered the verdict in the Harrison trial on Wednesday, after attorneys offered closing arguments. Vrooman testified on the stand this week, Liberman said. He suffered a fractured skull, with “displacement” of the temporal bone in his skull, and multiple facial fractures, according to Liberman. Vrooman did not suffer any brain damage, but does suffer from some nerve damage.

Liberman said he argued that Harrison was guilty of aggravated assault because Vrooman suffered serious bodily injury, substantial risk of death from the injury and required an extended period of convalescence to recover his health — each of which is criteria under Maine law for the aggravated assault charge, he said.

But Harrison’s attorney, Clifford Strike, said Thursday that it appears the prosecution did not convince the jury that Vrooman suffered “serious bodily injury.”

“Based on the medical records, which were provided to us, when it came to a head injury, the medical records stated it was a minor head injury,” Strike said. “Certainly a skull fracture can be serious — I’m not saying in all cases it’s not serious — but it has to be serious in this case and apparently the jury found that it was not.”

Strike said the state did not prove intent with regard to aggravated assault.

“I felt that we had evidence of all three,” Liberman said.

However, he said the jury took enough time to consider the case and to make an informed decision.

Had Harrison been convicted of the Class B felony, he would have faced a maximum of 10 years in jail. The Class D misdemeanor assault conviction carries a sentence of less than one year.

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