

Kemper's bid for parole is rejected

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

A state parole board yesterday refused to free Edmund Kemper III, the mass-murderer who killed and dismembered eight women in Santa Cruz County in 1972-73.

A three-member Board of Prison Terms panel cited the "extraordinary degree of violence" of his crimes in deciding that the 6-foot-9-inch killer should remain in custody for at least another three years. It was Kemper's sixth parole hearing.

Kemper, 39, was convicted in 1973 of murdering his mother, her best friend and six female hitchhikers.

But Kemper's criminal history went back even farther than that. At the age of 15, he killed his grandparents with a shotgun, for which he spent years confined under the aegis of the California Youth Authority.

He was released in the early 1970s, and granted full parole after several psychiatrists agreed that his mental health was normal. One of the psychiatrists who found Kemper normal conducted the interview with him shortly after Kemper had killed one of the hitchhikers, and while her body was still in the trunk of Kemper's car outside the psychiatrist's office.

After killing the six hitchhikers over a period of months, Kemper killed his mother, with whom he had long had a tumultuous relationship, and one of her friends in their Seaciff apartment. He then began driving across the United States, but when he reached Colorado decided to call police and report the murder of his mother. Officers in Pueblo, Colo., arrested him at a pay phone while that conversation was going on.

At Kemper's criminal trial, his attorney never tried to argue that he was innocent, but instead unsuccessfully attempted an insanity defense.

Yesterday's hearing in Vacaville lasted almost three hours.