

Teen indicted in rape of Silver Lake girl, 7

A 19-year-old resident of Willowbrook Developmental Center who was allowed to come and go as he pleased was named yesterday in a six-count indictment in connection with the rape of a 7-year-old girl.

The defendant, James Rich, a resident of the center for the retarded since 1969, was charged with sexual abuse, felonious assault and endangering the welfare of a minor, in addition to first degree rape.

The girl had been playing with a girl friend near her home last April 3 when she rode off on a bicycle. Meanwhile, her friend returned home for supper when she did not return. She was later found about 7:30 p.m. near the Silver Lake reservoir where police said she had been attacked.

The girl was treated at Staten Island Hospital for internal and facial injuries. She also underwent surgery. While waiting to testify before the grand jury yesterday she gave no indication of the ordeal to which she had been subjected.

The girl's parents reportedly are planning a civil lawsuit as result of the incident.

According to police, Rich quickly became a suspect in the case, but was not arrested until April 12 and at his arraignment in Criminal Court, he was or-

dered to undergo a psychiatric examination at Kings County Hospital.

Willowbrook authorities described Rich as a borderline, moderately retarded resident who had a "low boiling point." While he was said to have been involved in two "assaultive-type" incidents at Willowbrook in the two weeks prior to his arrest, the center said he had never been involved in an assaultive incident off the grounds of the institution.

Rich enjoyed what the center called "community status" whereby he was permitted to come and go as he wished, in the belief that he had the "intellectual ability" to live in the community.