

Man pleads guilty to armed robbery

Two men accused of shooting a Livonia patrolman on the Jeffries Freeway May 6 have pleaded guilty to robbing three people at gunpoint in Farmington Hills shortly before the shoot-out.

Appearing before Oakland County Circuit Judge Frederick Ziem, James Douglas Barton, 23, of Inkster pleaded guilty to three counts of armed robbery, one count of felony firearms possession/second offense and one count of habitual offender/third offense.

Casimir Edward Bagaciuinis, 20, of Westland pleaded guilty to two counts of armed robbery and one count of felony firearms possession/first offense.

Sentencing is scheduled for Dec. 17. Conviction of armed robbery carries a maximum sentence of life in prison. Felony firearms possession/second offense carries a mandatory five-year prison term. Felony firearms possession/first offense carries a mandatory two-year prison term.

BARTON ALSO faces parole violation hearings. He was on parole from Southern Michigan Prison at Jackson at the time of the robbery and subsequent shoot-out.

Barton has not yet gone to trial in Wayne County on charges of assault with intent to commit murder and felony firearms possession/second offense in connection with the shooting of Livonia Patrolman Gregory Henderson May 6.

A third man who Farmington Hills Police allege was involved in the robbery, Arnold E. Sherman, 25, of Garden City, was killed in the shoot-out. Bagaciuinis was wounded and required hospitalization.

The robbery occurred after 11:15 p.m. May 5 at a house on Nine Mile Road. Police allege that Barton, Bagaciuinis and Sherman bound and terror-

ized two men and a woman for 3 1/2 hours during a robbery in which the suspects were looking for drugs.

After brandishing a sawed-off shotgun, the three men tied up two brothers and assaulted the girlfriend of one of the men. The men demanded drugs, money and other possessions before ransacking the house. They drove away shortly before 3 a.m. One of the brothers then drove the woman to Redford Community Hospital and notified Farmington Hills Police, Sgt. Charles Nebus said.

THE WOUNDED officer is a 13-year decorated police veteran. He's still recuperating.

According to police reports, the shoot-out occurred on the Jeffries Freeway near Middlebelt, following a routine traffic stop by Henderson and fellow officer Charles Baron-Klask. The officers were unaware of the Farmington Hills robbery when they stopped the car for a traffic violation shortly before 3 a.m. The three men in

the front seat of the car were ordered out after the driver, later identified as Barton, could not produce identification.

At a preliminary examination in Livonia, Henderson testified that he was crouched in the doorway on the passenger side of the car, trying to remove a gun he saw lying on the floor when he looked in to see why the driver wasn't getting out. That's when the driver fired several shots.

Both officers returned fire. Sherman and Bagaciuinis were struck by bullets. Neither was armed although both were advancing toward Henderson when they were shot, according to Henderson's testimony and police reports.


BARTON WAS arrested at 6:15 a.m. on Arden Street, about 1 1/4 miles from the shoot-out. A resident called police to report a man with a gun wandering around the neighborhood, police said. Among the property confiscated from Barton's car was suspected marijuana, two handguns and two handguns. Also seized were stereo equipment,

amplifiers, a tape deck, a cassette player and a guitar believed stolen in the robbery, police said.

Police recovered the handgun believed used in the freeway shooting on Arden Street, where Barton was arrested. About \$1,000 in cash, believed taken

in the robbery, was found on one of the suspects, police said.

Barton was paroled in January from Southern Michigan Prison at Jackson after serving a 18-month sentence on armed robbery and weapons convictions in Wayne County Circuit Court.



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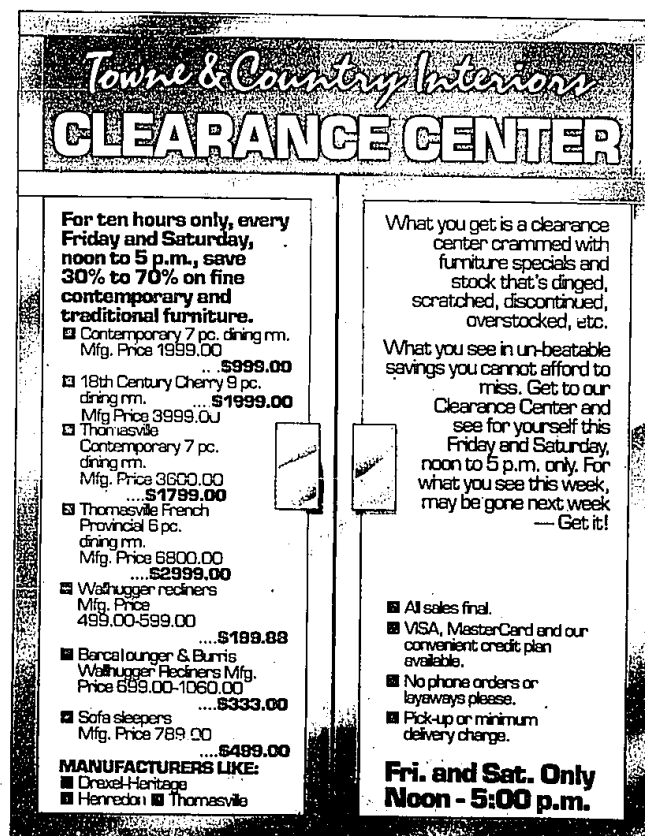


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