

THE STATE

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Identification of Intruder Solves Many Housebreakings

Columbia police are marking at least housebreakings in the Gonzales Gardens and Hendley Homes areas "solved" after numerous residents identified a 26-year-old Negro yesterday as the man who entered their homes.

In the meantime, police continued to hold the man, listed as Leo Barr, for investigation.

Officers said they were in possession of the man's clothing, which contained holes made by

seven-and-a-half shot fired at him by Officer J. A. Richardson as he fled recently from the Gonzales area. He was also fired at by Officer H. A. Baker in December as he sped away from the Hendley Homes area, but he bore no scars from that escape.

Officer Richardson's shots, however, did pepper the elusive intruder's back and shoulders, officers continued.

Officer Richardson said he had the Negro in the back of his police car no later than Sunday night after he placed him under arrest in the 600 block of Taylor Street, but as he was waiting for another car to come to his assistance, the Negro bounded from the car and was gone.

The shadow-like intruder has plagued the two housing areas, Hendley on Rosewood Drive and Gonzales on Forest Drive, for several months and has repeatedly slipped through traps set for him.

Officers said the suspect admitted most of the break-ins, in which he collected an undetermined amount of cash, medium-priced jewelry, watches, and other small items. They quoted him as saying he lived within two blocks of each area when he was entering the homes, that he never made his forays until after midnight, and that he would hide out in weeds and grass near the homes when he saw a police car coming.

The intruder sometimes entered two or three homes in one night and, if the house was in darkness, cutting lights on in the houses was one of his trademarks. He sometimes entered homes where lights were burning, officers said.

Several residents reported being awakened in their apartments and finding a Negro man standing in their rooms. As a result, police armed with shotguns and walkie-talkies have been patrolling the two projects for several months.

Officers said the intruder, recently discharged from service, sometimes wore olive drab clothes, sometimes an Army uniform, or a gray suit and gray coat on other occasions.

None of the loot has been reported as recovered as yet, but officers expected to have more to say there later. Captain G. L. Lackey is head of the Columbia Detective Division.

The suspect was arrested near

Leesville Monday night by Detectives W. H. Rawlinson and J. V. Smith, along with Lexington County Sheriff H. M. ("Bill") Caughman and Lexington Deputy Sheriff W. M. Asbill, who were called in for assistance, as Leesville is in Lexington County.

Police said at least eight Columbia residents have identified the man and that no less than eight, and probably more, housebreakings have been solved by his arrest. Questioning of the suspect is expected to be continued today, officers added.