

# Sidelight

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it to believe it when the caravan of police and reporters from Ramsey arrived. It was some sight!

One thing all police were thankful for was that no shots were fired for any reason. Tension was mounting, and in the dark, anyone could have been mistaken for a convict.

Biggest worries as the hours crept on were that the convicts had escaped by stealing a car from the Ramsey commuter parking lot, which wouldn't be missed until the owner returned home, or that they were hidden in a house with the residents as hostages. Both possibilities were never ruled out until the final capture.

Most people in Ramsey and Allendale stayed home behind locked doors. Many civilians had weapons available in their homes. Another worry was that an investigating policeman might be mistaken for a convict and shot without warning. Movie attendance

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## AS WE SEE IT

By Jim Secor



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was down, as was attendance at the Board of Education budget hearing.

The Ramsey CD truck and the ladder truck, both with generators and flood lights, did duty at Crestwood Lake right after Salvi was captured and it was believed Prins was near the resort.

Until 1 AM Thursday, the search was directed by chief of prosecutor's detectives for Passaic County, Adam Reiser, and his assistant, Lt. Vincent DeSimone. Assisting them were Chief Charles Lo Presti of the Bergen County police, Lt. John Fitzsimmons and Sgt. Steve Karback of the State Police, Chief Doremus of Ramsey, Chief Wilson of Allendale and Ted Wickham of Mahwah. Radio control of the whole operation was under the control of the Ramsey police department, and so was the entire search after 1 AM Thursday. Lt. Stegen, handling most of telephone calls and over 275 tips were investigated, in many cases by more than two cars of men. The two room police station in Ramsey, used as the control center got a real workout. On the job all through the night were all men of the local departments and a fresh shift of county police.

Over 100 police officers, civilian defense personnel and volunteer firemen were in on the chase. Listed among the police participants were 26 state troopers, 15 county troopers, 4 men from Upper Saddle River, 10 men from Ramsey, 4 men from Allendale, 4 men from Mahwah, and 3 men from Waldwick.

Shortly before the Prins capture was made, Sgt. Gates and Ptl. John Hancock were prowling the woods in the rear of the Bruce Hasbrouck residence on South Central Ave. when they spotted a figure crouched behind a bush. It turned out to be a local youth tending his trap lines, so scared of the police that he stuttered in fright when asked for identification.

The escaped convicts revealed on Thursday that they were almost captured at 3 PM Wednesday, but escaped by hard running. They hid in the Christopher Lumber Mill in Allendale for about 4 or 5 hours, while the light snow was falling.

Speculation about the handcuff key used by Salvi and Prins to free themselves continues to mount. Veteran police officers say that because the small key must turn a heavy ratchet in the cuff to release the curved arm, it must be made of case-hardened steel. Anything other than that probably would break off in the lock of the cuff. When opened, a handcuff makes an audible clicking sound.

## Citizens Aided Lt. Parenti in Salvi's Arrest

ALLENDALE—The capture of Michael Salvi, convicted murderer and one of the escaped convicts, by Lt. Frank Parenti at the Allendale Spa on Wednesday night of last week, was made possible by the cooperation of townspeople. The arrest was made at about 7 p.m. as Lt. Parenti dashed from his car, gun in hand, to force Salvi up against the wall after he emerged from the newspaper and candy store owned by Sam Kaplan.

Lt. Parenti had been at the Municipal Building on Franklin Tpke., giving blood for the blood bank. Mrs. Betty DiGruttilla, there for the same purpose, had locked her keys in her car, and Lt. Parenti vol-

unteered to take her to get another set. At the Allendale Ave. traffic light, a car driven by Donald Huiser of Waldwick pulled alongside. Huiser asked how the search for the escapees was going, then noted that he might have seen one of them at the Allendale Spa a minute or so before.

### Turns Lights on Spa

Lt. Parenti drove through the center of town, asked Mrs. Di Gruttilla to stay in the car, and made a wide swing at the traffic stanchion so that his headlights illuminated the Spa. He jumped from his car to find Salvi inside the store. Staying outside, Lt. Parenti waited for the suspect to leave.

Still not sure he had one of the convicts, he ordered him to raise his hands and face the building. Very calmly, the man claimed to be "John Henry of Paterson." He offered to get his identification from his back pocket and started to reach. Parenti blocked the arm and put his own hand in the pocket to find a snub-nosed .38 pistol. Then the man admitted he was Michael Salvi and asked Parenti not to shoot.

### Police Called

Mrs. Di Gruttilla tried to call for help on the police radio, but she couldn't work it. Lt. Parenti asked her to use a telephone and she dashed from the car to the nearby Allendale Pharmacy, which her husband, Nicholas, owns. A witness to the capture, he had already made the call.

Running to the police car, Chester Miskowski of Heights Rd. picked up the radio mike for Lt. Parenti. Salvi, already handcuffed, leaned against the car. In minutes, a whole caravan of police, photographers and reporters arrived from Ramsey. The area was searched for Prins to no avail.

In the Spa, Salvi had purchased a couple of packs of cigarettes and had asked for change of \$10 to make a telephone call, said to be to his brother-in-law in Morris Plains. Owner Sam Kaplan had identified him and had asked Mr. Huiser to get the police.

Salvi later thanked Lt. Parenti profusely for not shooting him.

## Prins Capture By Sgt. Gates Ends Manhunt

RAMSEY—The big manhunt ended at 7:02 last Thursday morning with the capture of Abraham Prins by Sgt. John Gates, halfway between the railroad and Maple St. on a direct line from Orchard Pl. Escorted under gunpoint to Maple St., Prins was manacled.

Later picked up by a patrol car, he and his captor were taken to the police station where he was questioned. At 9:30 he was returned to the Passaic County jail in Paterson by State Police and Passaic County prosecutor's detectives. Other than a question addressed to Sgt. Gates, he answered no questions and made no comments.

### Mrs. Shea Calls

Close to 7 a.m. Mrs. Francis V. Shea of 289 Elizabeth Ave. called the police desk to tell Lt. Norman Stegen that a suspicious man had been seen on the edge of the Shea property.

Sgt. Gates and Ptl. John Hancock, in the area, were sent to investigate. Footprints in the snow bore the diamond mark of the shoes Prins was known to be wearing.

Ptl. Hancock was sent in the car to the end of nearby Refy Ave. to wait, all units were alerted, and Sgt. Gates, followed by Mr. Shea, followed the fresh tracks.

They led to the slight ridge in the rear of Harold G. Williams' property, where they became wider spaced as though the quarry was running. Down the ridge to a gully leading to the railroad, Sgt. Gates and Mr. Shea ran after Prins.

### Face to Face

Suddenly Gates and Prins faced each other, about 25 feet apart. Gates ordered him to stop, Prins did and whirled around, a snub nosed .38 pistol aimed waist high. Gates, armed with a semi-automatic carbine also aimed from the waist, told Prins to "drop it." Gates said later it was a long moment before Prins dropped the gun. Having been told the escapee had two pistols loaded with magnum shells, Gates ordered the convict to spread-eagle on his stomach. He handed the carbine to Shea to hold while he handcuffed the prisoner, finding no other weapon. The long chase was over.

Prins said but one thing to Gates, asking whether he had been captured in Ramsey or Allendale, and Gates refused to answer. Taken to the police station at 7:30, Prins was strip-

ped of his stolen topcoat, coveralls and other clothes in a check for other weapons. Permitted to redress, minus shoes and socks, he was manacled to a steampipe in the chief's office to await transportation to Paterson.

### 'Mug Shots' Off

Gates noted that Prins appeared in good shape, far better than he, clean shaven, washed and with combed hair. The sergeant stated that Prins did not look like his "mug" shot supplied to all police for identification. Asked whether he considered shooting him, Gates said he would have if Prins had resisted. However, he noted that the nearby woods were full of police officers and that stray shots might have injured someone.

It was his feeling that Prins in that long moment of face to face encounter figured the police officer was armed with an automatic weapon therefore he wouldn't take the chance of shooting it out that he might have if Gates was armed with only a pistol.

The coveralls had been stolen from a car owned by Harry Breitenbach of 316 South Central Ave.

Don't use soap on rugs. For quick treatment of spills, use a neutral detergent. Soap leaves a film on carpet fibers that attracts dirt, advises Mrs. Martha Thomas, county home agent.

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