

SIMPSONVILLE MAN RECEIVES 20-YEAR PRISON SENTENCE FOR BOTCHED BURGLARY

A Simpsonville man received a 20-year prison sentence today for attacking a west-side homeowner during a break-in.

Troy Eugene Barton, 41, pleaded guilty to first-degree burglary, attempted armed robbery, malicious injury to personal property and two counts of breaking into a motor vehicle. He will serve 85 percent of Circuit Judge Mark Hayes' sentence before he is eligible for release.

The crime occurred May 10, 2005 at Larry Minish's Warden Drive home. Minish arrived home about 6:40 p.m. and noticed that his boat cover had been removed. As he approached to investigate, he saw Barton inside his 1996 Chevrolet Silverado truck. Minish pulled Barton out of the truck. Barton threatened to shoot him with a gun and a fight ensued when Minish refused to give up the keys. Barton used a hammer to hit Minish several times during the struggle.

During their investigation, sheriff's deputies discovered that the passenger side window of Minish's truck had been broken out. The ignition and the dashboard had also been damaged. Investigators also determined that

Barton had been inside Minish's garage. Barton fled the crime scene after Minish yelled to a neighbor and told them to call 911. After leaving the Minish residence, he was caught trying to break into a car at a Conrad Drive residence. He was arrested at a nearby convenience store short time after the second car break-in.

Barton's 23-year criminal record includes two prior convictions for burglary.

"Mr. Minish stopped a career criminal before he stole from him," Principal Deputy Solicitor Barry Barnette said. "We are fortunate that he wasn't hurt seriously."