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November 18, 2009

GAFFNEY TEEN RECEIVES LIFE PRISON TERM FOR HOME INVASION & BUSINESS BURGLARY

A Gaffney teen received a life prison sentence today after a Cherokee County jury decided he was responsible for a violent home invasion and a related convenience store burglary that involved the theft a large amount of money.

John Bonner, 18, was found guilty of first-degree burglary, second-degree burglary, assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature, kidnapping, grand larceny and armed robbery at the conclusion of a two-day trial. He will serve every day of Circuit Judge Derham Cole's prison sentence. He is not eligible for parole.

Bonner is one of eight people involved in the April 2, 2008 invasion of Providence Road home and the break-in of a near-by convenience store, Corner Store #2. Principal Deputy Solicitor Barry Barnette told jurors that Bonner developed the plan to commit the burglaries after watching a female employee of the business carry large amounts of money to the home at the close of business.

Bonner and others forced their way into the home and held the female store employee at gunpoint while they searched for money. The bandits stole the woman's keys and they triggered a burglar alarm when they entered the business. The bandits stole several thousand dollars and fled. The store's surveillance cameras recorded the activity.

The bandits split stolen money among the group in the aftermath of the crime. Bonner was later arrested in Concord, NC.

"The victim in this case is a hero," Barnette said. "She did a wonderful job testifying about her scary experience."

Bonner is the last member of the group to be found guilty. Co-defendant, Joshua Manning, 23, formerly of Gaffney, received a 60-year prison sentence in April. Co-defendant, Labronte Agnew, 19, formerly of Gaffney, received a 30-year prison sentence in April. Co-defendants Robert L. Wilson Jr., Billy A. Rodgers, Terry D. Littlejohn and Kendrick Tate, Kwame "Fred" Douglas have all plead guilty and are awaiting sentencing.

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