

American Homes Subject To Wave Of Burglaries

Part 1- Burglary Protection

For millions of Americans the term "Safe at Home" has a familiar and reassuring ring. Traditionally, most of us have regarded our home as a castle, a refuge, a place safe from the intrusions of "crime in the

decade many Americans have found that their homes are no longer islands of safety. They have awakened to the fact that the hazards to body and property from burglary, fire or accidents are a real and present danger.

A nationwide wave of burglaries, personal attacks, and vandalism has fairly well dispelled the myth that "a man's home is his castle." Recent opinion surveys confirm that a majority of home owners are seriously concerned for the safety of their persons and property. And these fears are well-founded in fact. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, a burglary occurs somewhere in the United States every fifteen seconds - over 2,345,000 burglaries each year.

Police arrest nearly 250,000 people each year on burglary charges, but officials admit that they are probably able to apprehend and arrest only one tenth of those who commit burglaries. Between 1967 and 1972 burglaries rose 46% in the United States and day-time burglaries, the variety most often directed against residences, rose 74%. And those figures reflect only the officially counted burglaries. Police studies show that at least an equal number of minor burglaries, or attempted burglaries, go unreported.

If one could draw a composite picture of a typical residential burglar we would find a young male adult, less than 30 years of age, from a relatively low social-economic group, probably unemployed or at best partially employed, and with little education and the legal compulsory requirements. The individual in question would probably have a prior arrest record as a juvenile delinquent and the chances are that a good percentage would have a history of dope experimentation or addiction. On a national-basis, persons under age 25 account for 83% of all burglary arrests. In fact, 51% of all the persons processed for burglary are referred to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court.

With some few exceptions, the highly skilled professional burglar, over age 30 and with years of experience in his "trade," is not a factor in residential burglaries. The professional burglar concentrates principally on commercial establishments or the homes of the extremely rich and well-known. The "pot-luck" type burglar - the one who has no real knowledge of whether or not he will find anything of value in a home - is almost inevitably an amateur. But because he is an "amateur", does not mean that he lacks talent in gaining entry to your home. Of course, in some cases no talent at all is required (in nearly a fifth of the burglaries the entry was made without force - the doors were unlocked).

The average residential burglar displays normal intelligence levels. Within a short period of time he can master

the rudimentary skills required to pry open a door or window and rummage through the locations where a homeowner is most likely to maintain his valuables.

Burglars refuse to oblige the police or the public by "looking like burglars." They may be clean-shaven, crew-cut and fitted out in sports clothes, repairmen's uniforms, or similar attire which blends into the background of the neighborhood in which they are working.

In general, the public is woefully misinformed about the violent nature of burglars. Many people persist in believing that burglars are "non-violent-type" criminals. The actual record of personal attacks perpetrated by burglars, including murder and rape, should dispel this myth.

To begin with, while burglars do not expect to be apprehended, they do commit their crimes in a state of high tension. Most would probably prefer not to encounter the homeowner but are able and willing to react violently if such a confrontation does occur. While some burglars may not be armed with a firearm, they do normally possess attack weapons such as knives, screwdrivers, pry bars, etc.

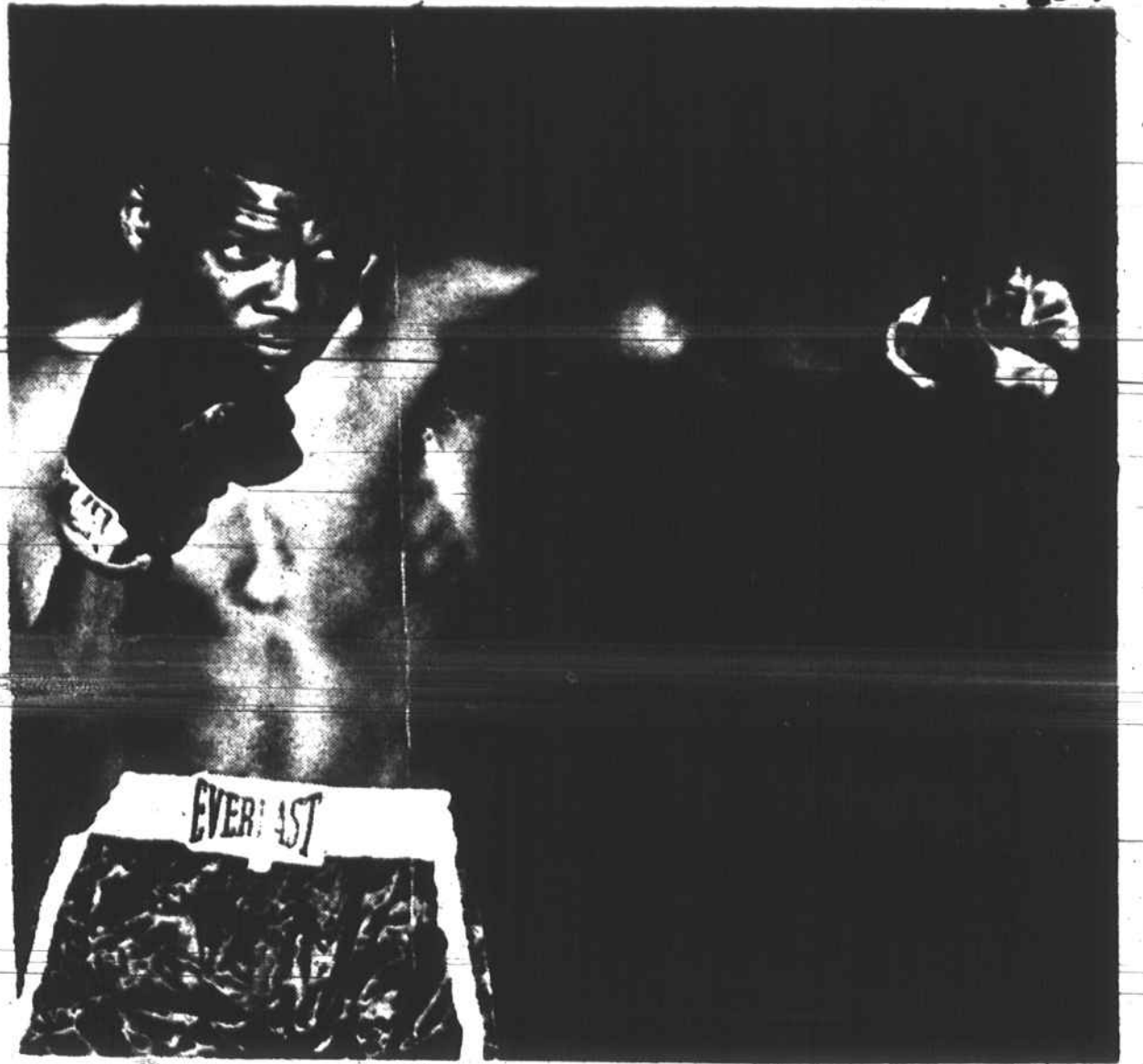
The theory that homeowners need not fear burglars, because the burglar is only interested in their property, just does not make sense. Included among the ranks of burglars arrested each year are an appreciable number of rapists, dope addicts, and mentally unbalanced individuals. No one can afford the luxury of believing that he is safe from personal attack as long as the burglar can obtain the property items he seeks.

But there is one important part of the burglar's psychological profile which should be noted. With few exceptions, the burglar is not a hard worker. Confronted with some serious obstacle to his entry, such as good alarm system and set of door locks, the burglar is likely to pass up your home in favor of an easier target. There are more than enough unprotected homes to go around.

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staff.

Upon successful completion of this planning phase, it is projected by HUD that monies will be granted for program implementation and evaluation at \$130,000 for Program Year I and \$150,000 for Program Year II. The funding of each phase is contingent upon the performance evaluation of the preceding one. The overall program is intended to develop and test delivery systems for housing management.



Robert Ford, probably the most talented fighter to have fought in Winston-Salem, continues his struggle.

Chronicle Profile

Fighter Nearly Made It To The Pro Ranks

It all began with a stolen bicycle. The bike was at the Patterson Avenue YMCA when somebody rode off on it. The owner of the bike, Robert Ford, was so angry about it that he vowed to beat who ever stole it. "If I ever find the boy who stole my bike," Ford reminisced, "I'm gonna beat 'em up."

He never found the boy nor the bike, but he did learn how to fight. Moe Lucas had warned Ford that he'd better learn how to fight before he went off hunting somebody to beat. Lucas talked Ford into boxing for the YMCA and the rest reads like a good novel.

Ford, a native of Winston-Salem, held the state middleweight crown for three years 1967-68 and 69. He was the North-South Carolina Golden Gloves champion at the same time. Probably the most promising young fighter in Winston-Salem at the time, Ford was cocky, confident and complete as a fighter.

"I could have been the world middleweight champion," he said, matter-of-factly, in a recent interview. "I used to work out with guys who fought Muhammed Ali," he added. "Some of the guys said I hit harder than the champ."

There's no doubt that Ford didn't hit hard. His record as an amateur was 65 wins and 2 losses. He spent some time in California where he had worked out and trained in Archie Moore's camp. "I was just polishing up and learning some things to get ready for the pros," he recalled. That was in 1969 when he was the defending amateur middleweight boxing champion of Winston-Salem.

In his last fight of November '72 Ford was hurt in his right eye. He has yet to return to the ring. A law suit is pending, but Ford continues to do some training.

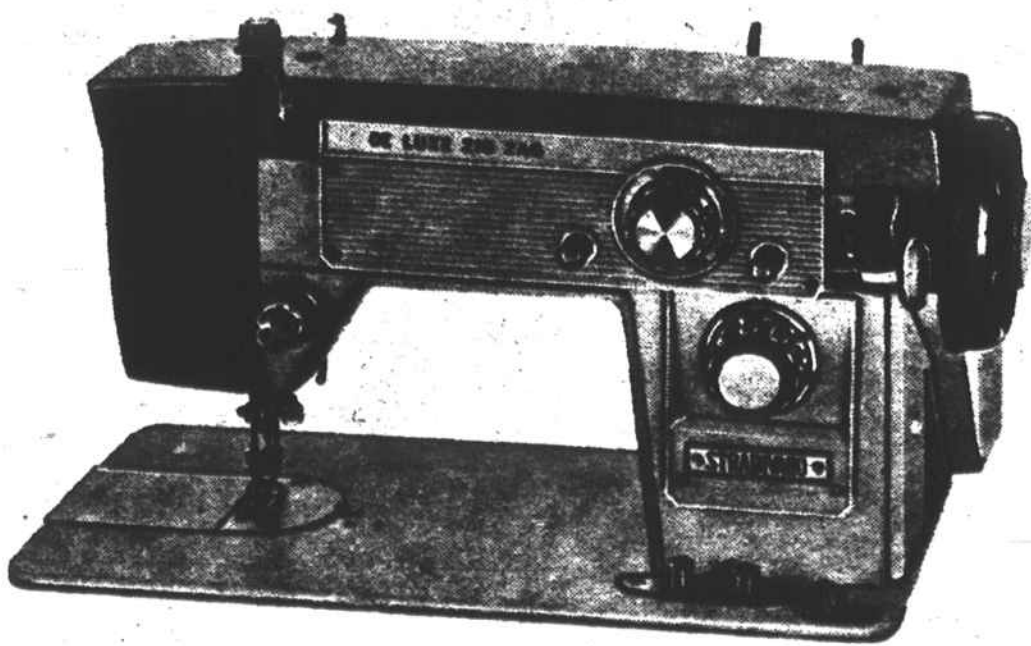
Talking to Ford, it is easy to see the desire and ambition to be a professional fighter. He talks softly but firmly; his hands emphasize what his words don't but his words are strong and his reactions are gut-level. "I run five miles every morning and I shadow box 15 rounds. You gotta' exercise and keep in shape.

"Times have changed. Boxers don't train like they used to. Like when Joe Louis, Sugar Ray and them guys were fightin'. The food don't have the natural vitamins now. Scientists have tampered with food and stretched it and it ain't like it used to be."

Ford is still using his talents, however. He teaches youngsters how to box. "Boxing is a good way of keepin' kids out of the streets," he said compassionately. "It gives them something to look forward to in the future." Ford said he tells the kids that maybe one day they might turn pro but it's up to them. "They have to keep themselves clean; a kid has to keep his body clean."

Although Ford thinks highly of boxing generally, the incident that resulted in the loss of his eye makes him somewhat skeptical about advising kids to rely on boxing as a career. "Boxing is alright, but I wouldn't depend on it for the future," he warned. "You might get hurt and then it's all over."

There is no doubt that Ford was a good fighter and potentially a great one. Whether he still is remains to be seen. He does not, however, speculate on his future. He leaves that to the doctors and the courts.



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