

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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Pair Sentenced in Leicester Home Invasion

WORCESTER —Two men were sentenced to state prison today after being convicted last month of a 2014 Leicester home invasion in which three residents were bound and gagged and a Marine's Purple Heart medal was stolen along with cash and jewelry, according to Worcester County District Attorney Joseph D. Early Jr.

Timothy Lavin, 39, of Leicester, and Nicholas Desiderio, 36, of Worcester, were each found guilty on Feb. 16 of three counts of armed robbery while masked along with home invasion. Mr. Lavin was also found guilty of possession of a firearm without an FID card, possession of ammunition without an FID card and operating a motor vehicle after suspension.

Judge Richard Tucker sentenced Mr. Lavin to 20 to 22 years in prison on the home invasion charge, and 15 to 20 years on the armed robbery while masked and firearms convictions. Those sentences will run concurrently with each other and begin after the 20-year sentence he is currently serving for a separate home invasion.

Assistant District Attorney Joseph A. Simmons recommended a sentence of 25 years to life with that sentence to begin after the one he is currently serving.

Judge Tucker sentenced Mr. Desiderio to 10 to 12 years in prison for armed robbery while masked and five years of probation for home invasion.

Mr. Simmons recommended a sentence of 25-years to life on all of Mr. Desiderio's convictions.

Mr. Lavin and another man broke into a house in the Cherry Valley section of Leicester on Jan. 5, 2014, while Mr. Desiderio, a former employee of the home owner, waited outside. Mr. Desiderio's role was in planning the home invasion and serving as getaway driver. The third suspect has not been caught.

The two men tied the hands of the victims – the owner, his daughter and her boyfriend -- and put duct tape over their mouths before raiding a safe in the living room.

The Purple Heart, which was given to the owner of the house by his father, a World War II veteran who was injured in the battle of Iwo Jima, was never recovered.

“This was a great team effort,” Mr. Early said. “Chief Jim Hurley, Detective Tim Fontaine and Sgt. Paul Doray did a very thorough investigation tracking down leads and searching through trash for evidence. ADAs Joe Simmons, Dannon Stacer and Nathaniel Beaudoin did a great job at the grand jury level and prosecuting.

“The theft of this war hero's Purple Heart and the possible permanent loss to the family was never lost on the police and our prosecutors.”

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