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Carter, Artis Trial Opens Today for Triple Murder

PATERSON — Two boxers, former middleweight contender Robin "Hurricane" Carter and one of his sparring partners, John Artis, will go on trial for their lives in Passaic County Superior Court today, charged with murdering three persons during a holdup attempt at a tavern last June.

The state claims Carter, 29, and Artis, 21, entered the Lafayette Bar and Grill June 17 and started shooting in an apparent attempt to stage a robbery and leave no witnesses.

Bar tender George Oliver, 52, and George Nauyoks, 60, of Cedar Grove, a patron, were killed instantly. Another patron, Mrs. Hazel Tanis, 51, of Hawthorne, died a month later of gunshot wounds.

A fourth person, William Marling, 42, suffered head and shoulder wounds and was the only survivor. He is expected to be a key witness for the prosecution during the trial.

Heard Shots

Neighbors who heard the shots told police they looked out their windows and saw two men fleeing in a white car.

Carter and Artis were arrest-

ed near the scene in a white car a short time after the shooting. They were questioned and released.

However, they were taken into custody a second time last Oct. 24 a day after police threw a heavy guard around a mystery witness to the slayings.

Carter and Artis have pleaded innocent to all three charges of murder. They have been in jail since their arrest last October.

Carter, a Passaic resident, once was a strong contender for the middleweight boxing crown. He fought a championship bout against title holder Joey Giardello on Dec. 14, 1964 and lost a unanimous but controversial 15-round decision to the champ.

The highlight of Carter's ring career was a first-round knockout in 1963 of Emile Griffith, then a welterweight who went on to become middleweight champion.

As late as 1965 Carter was ranked fourth in the middleweight division, even though he had been beaten several times after his bout with Giardello.

In his last fight last Aug. 6 Carter lost a split decision to Rocky Rivero in Rosario, Argentina.