

TRAILED 6 MONTHS, HELD IN BOND THEFT

Two Men Accused of Stealing
Securities From Desk While
Talking to Banker.

\$35,000 TAKEN AT 5 BANKS

Same Trick Used With All, but
Serial Numbers Were Traced—
Prisoners Deny Crime.

As a result of six months of police efforts to clear up a series of thefts of bonds from New York banks two men were arraigned in Pennsylvania Avenue Court, Brooklyn, yesterday on charges of grand larceny. Magistrate Sabbatino held them in \$5,000 bail each for hearing Wednesday.

The two were Benjamin Lawrence, 39 years old, of 333 West Eighty-sixth Street and Sidney J. Unger, 41, of 302 Grand Concourse, the Bronx.

There were five thefts, the total stolen being about \$35,000, according to Detectives Arthur De Marrais and Louis Woelfel of the Thirteenth Detective Division, Brooklyn, who made the arrests.

How Thieves Worked.

Lawrence and Unger were charged with the specific theft of \$5,700 in Federal Home Loan bonds, which disappeared last July 3 from the desk of George L. Porter, cashier of the Citizens Bank, 80 Jamaica Avenue, Brooklyn. He reported to police that he had placed the bonds on his desk just before two men, whom he did not know, called on him. One of the men engaged him in conversation for a few moments, then both left, and Mr. Porter noticed some time after their departure that the bonds were missing.

The cashier said yesterday that he had not yet seen the prisoners.

Detectives De Marrais and Woelfel were assigned to the case last Spring, under the direction of Captain James J. Gegan, after the first of the five thefts had been reported. They refused to give the names of the other banks in which thefts were reported, pending the court proceedings on Wednesday, when other witnesses will be asked to join with Mr. Porter in an attempt to identify the two prisoners. All the thefts were executed similarly to that reported by the Citizens Bank.

Traced Through Brokers.

The arrests followed the appearance of a part of the stolen bonds at the Treasury Department in Washington, where they were recognized by their serial numbers. Treasury officials notified the police here that the bonds had been forwarded by several New York brokerage houses, and with this lead the detectives were able to locate Lawrence, who was arrested Saturday at his home and was taken to Brooklyn police headquarters. Unger was arrested later Saturday in Times Square.

The actual sale of the stolen bonds was made by Lawrence, the detectives said, after he had been introduced to several brokers by Unger, who is said to have worked as a customers' man at one time.

Both prisoners denied that they had any knowledge of stolen securities, saying that the only bonds they had disposed of in recent months were some given to Lawrence for sale by an uncle.

Lawrence was listed at police headquarters as having been arrested in 1932 at Valley Stream, L. I., for extortion. The records showed that he was fined \$100 in County Court in Mineola and sentenced to serve six months in jail, but that the jail sentence was suspended. Unger has no police record.