

Klionsky pleads guilty in brass theft case

By MARTIN TOOMBS
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WATERLOO — Hymen Klionsky, a prominent Seneca County political and business figure, pleaded guilty this morning to a felony charge connected to the theft of brass from Goulds Pumps in 1986.

The 73-year-old former owner of Klionsky Scrap Iron and Metal faces the possibility of a state prison term. As part of a plea bargain, Seneca County Court Judge W. Patrick Falvey indicated he would sentence Klionsky to no more than 1 to 3 years in state prison. The minimum sentence would be probation.

Klionsky, of 20 Leland Drive, Seneca Falls, pleaded guilty to first-degree criminal possession of stolen property. The plea was in satisfaction of an indictment which also

charged him with fourth-degree conspiracy, two counts of second-degree grand larceny, second-degree criminal possession of stolen property, third-degree grand larceny and third-degree criminal possession of stolen property.

"He has no comment," said Klionsky's attorney, Harold Boreanaz of Buffalo, following the brief court proceeding.

Klionsky, mayor of Seneca Falls in the 1950s and the coun-

ty's Republican chairman for 10 years before he stepped down last September, had maintained his innocence following his indictment in January of 1990. He sold the scrap metal business in 1987, but works for Rep. Frank Horton, R-29 of Penfield, as a part-time field representative.

The guilty plea came shortly before the planned start of jury selection for a trial.

The plea bargain does not include a provision for restitution to Goulds, said Steven Meyer of the state Organized Crime Task Force, who prosecuted the case. However, he noted that a lawsuit, which named Klionsky as a defendant and sought \$616,000 in restitution, has been settled out of court. He said he could not reveal the settlement terms.

Meyer said he accepted the plea because first-degree criminal possession of stolen property is Class D felony, only one step below the top charge in the indictment, and because Klionsky was the last defendant in the case.

Klionsky's co-defendants — the two Auburn men to whom he sold his business in 1987 and the corporation, entered guilty pleas Friday in Seneca County Court.

Frederick J. Kerr, 53, of 1 Perry St., and Geoffrey Platt, 43, of 40 Alden Ave., pleaded guilty to fourth-degree conspiracy in satisfaction of five criminal charges. The corporation pleaded guilty to second-degree grand larceny in satisfaction of several charges.

All the defendants are due to

be sentenced April 29.

The charges stem from an investigation into the theft of nickel and brass from Goulds Pumps.

Klionsky was accused of paying employees at Goulds to put brass scraps which should have been reprocessed into bins for his employees to remove. He also allegedly skimmed brass from shipments his company made between Goulds' plants in Seneca Falls.

Klionsky also allegedly introduced Kerr and Platt to the Goulds employees involved in the thefts at the time he sold them his business. The thefts of nickel allegedly did not begin until after Klionsky had sold the business.

In an indictment handed up Jan. 8, 1991, Kerr and Platt were charged with fourth-degree conspiracy, second-degree grand larceny, second-degree criminal possession of stolen property, third-degree criminal possession of stolen property and fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property.

The corporation was charged with fourth-degree conspiracy, three counts of second-degree grand larceny, three counts of second-degree criminal possession of stolen property, third-degree grand larceny and two counts of third-degree criminal possession of stolen property.

Four others charged in the case — all former Goulds Pumps employees — have pleaded guilty. They were put on probation and ordered to make restitution to Goulds.



Klionsky