

Suspect in Flynt ^{FPack} shooting released _{3/9/78}

NORFOLK, Va. (AP) — A Norfolk man who was arrested in connection with the shooting of Hustler magazine owner Larry Flynt was released Wednesday after police said he admitted hoaxing authorities in an attempt to obtain a reward for solving the Flynt shooting case.

Police Capt. B.H. Blannott of Gwinnett County, Ga., said Teddy Morris, 20, admitted that he telephoned Gwinnett County police and offered to provide information about the person who had shot Flynt.

It was later determined that Morris had no such information, Blannott said. He said Morris "admitted it was all a hoax" during questioning in his jail cell here Wednesday by Blannott and other Gwinnett County authorities.

Blannott and Norfolk Police Capt. Don McManus said Morris apparently hoped to receive a reward for the information he intended to provide.

Blannott said it had been "definitely established" that Morris was not in Lawrenceville, Ga., Monday when Flynt, 34, and his lawyer, Gene Reeves Jr., 47, were shot outside the courthouse where Flynt was being tried on a charge of distributing obscene material.

Flynt was removed from the critical list Wednesday, and his condition was described as serious. Reeves was listed in satisfactory condition.

Blannott said two warrants were issued for Morris' arrest on charges of aggravated assault with intent to kill after he called Gwinnett County police Tuesday, and Georgia officers sent a

message to Norfolk police asking them to pick up Morris as a fugitive.

Morris gave Gwinnett County police his name and telephone number and told them where he could be picked up — at a Norfolk tavern.

Morris was taken into the custody at the tavern late Tuesday night.

At an extradition hearing Wednesday morning, Morris refused to waive extradition, and General District Court Judge William L. Shapero ordered him held on \$250,000 bond.

Blannott and three other Gwinnett County officials — District Attorney Bryant Huff, Police Chief John Crunkleton and Sgt. T.R. Garmon — arrived just after the hearing and questioned Morris.

Later, at a news conference, Blannott announced: "Teddy Morris is no longer a suspect in the assault on Larry Flynt and Gene Reeves."

The Georgia officials appeared before Shapero to request that the charges against him be dropped and to apologize to the court. Shapero ordered Morris immediately released.

McManus said Morris, a short, shaggy-haired junior high school dropout, had a police record of minor offenses in Norfolk, including some convictions for drunkenness. He said Morris "didn't seem to awfully drunk to me" when he was taken into custody.

But Robert H. Anderson Jr., an attorney for Morris, said Wednesday he had "no reason to disbelieve" that Morris was drunk when he telephoned Gwinnett County police.