

State Officer Nabs German

Capture of Hans Koerber, 21, a German war prisoner who escaped from Fort Lewis, Wash., between May 28 and 30, was announced Friday by Clinton W. Stein, special agent in charge of the Portland FBI office.

Koerber was apprehended near Rainier by Sergeant C. E. Throne of the Oregon state police.

The fugitive appeared at the Interstate cafe, Rainier, about noon, and declared in broken English that he was seeking the police, it was learned. Mrs. Cora Newell, proprietor, summoned the state police and Sergeant C. E. Throne responded, taking the man into custody.

Columbia River Crossed

The prisoner would not discuss details of his escape other than to say that he fled Fort Lewis Sunday, nor would he tell the state officer whether or not he had eaten during his trip south into Oregon.

Koerber had injured his right leg in some manner and was limping badly, Throne reported. The man was not in his war prisoner's garb, but was wearing a checkered blazer, khaki trousers, light shirt and knit sweater, and was carrying a small shaving kit. He had crossed the Columbia river via the Longview bridge about 9:30 A. M.

He told police that he would not steal, was cold and suffering from his leg injury, and had decided to give himself up. Koerber added that he was taken prisoner in North Africa while serving with Rommel's Africa corps.

Previous Try Made

Stein said that Koerber had been transferred to the northwest after having escaped from an internment camp at North Camp Hood, Tex., and been recaptured.

In his escape this week from Fort Lewis, he was accompanied by another German prisoner, Rolf Z. Ieschang, 23, a linguist who speaks English, French, Italian and Greek and who has a background of two years legal training. Ieschang has not yet been retaken, Stein said.

Koerber was taken to the Columbia county jail at St. Helens to await the arrival of army authorities.