



## MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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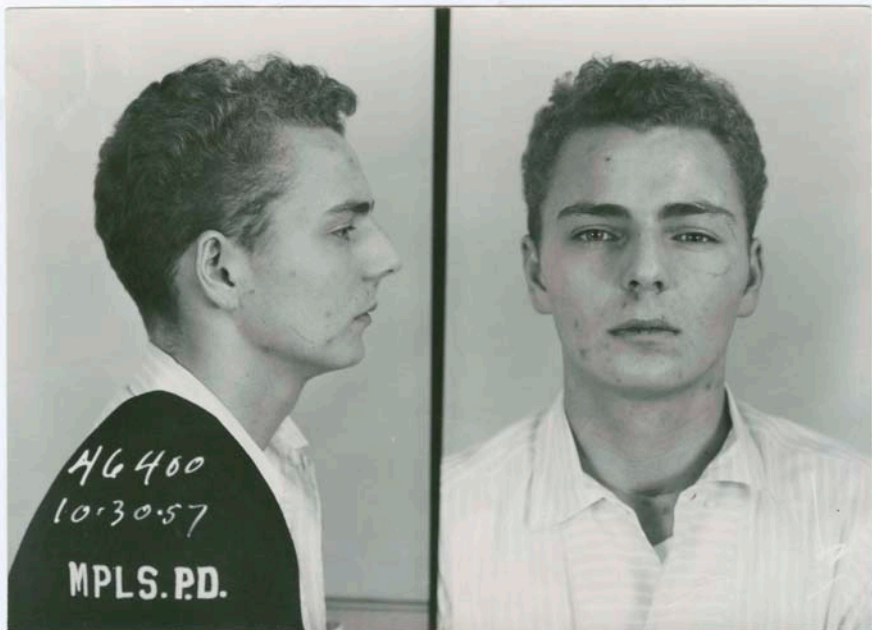
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[James O'Kasick]



[James O'Rasick]

8151062



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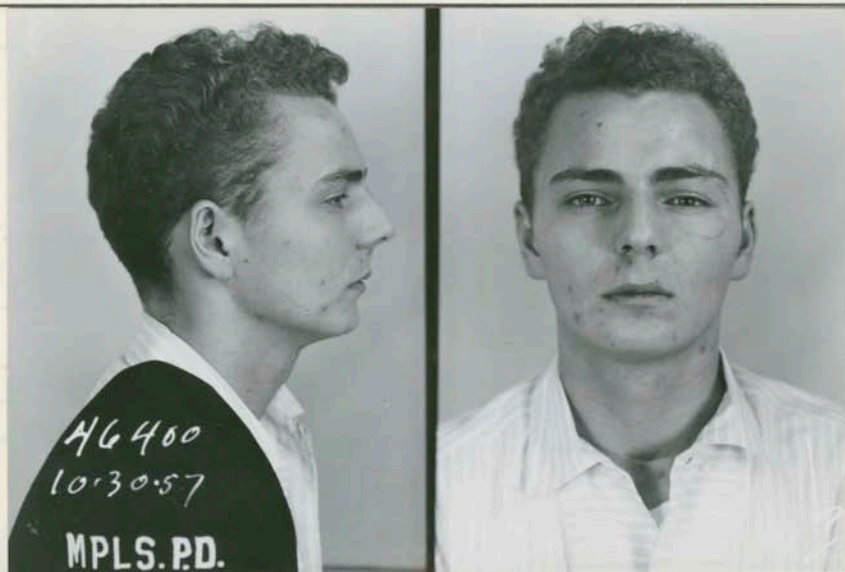
[James O'Kasick]



STATE OF MINNESOTA, BUREAU OF CRIMINAL APPREHENSION  
488 WABASHA, ST. PAUL, MINN.

SUPERINTENDENT  
POLICE DEPARTMENT  
29 CITY HALL  
MINNEAPOLIS 15, MINN.

Record from \_\_\_\_\_ (Address) \_\_\_\_\_  
On the above line please state whether Police Department, Sheriff's Office or Institution.



Date of Arrest 10-30-57  
Place of Arrest Mpls, Henn.  
City County

Charge \_\_\_\_\_  
Disposition \_\_\_\_\_

Date received at Institution \_\_\_\_\_  
Residence 3909 38th Ave., So.  
Place of Birth Mpls.

Nationality \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Age 20 Date of Birth 4-7-37

Height 5-5 5/8 Weight 122

Hair lt ch-curl Eyes blue

Comp. med Build slender

Scars & Marks \_\_\_\_\_

PREVIOUS RECORD








R 151062

Duplicate






Name O'KASICK, JAMES MICHAEL  
Alias \_\_\_\_\_Class. 17 L 1 R 000 12  
S 1 U 000 9No. 46400 Color White Sex Male

Reference \_\_\_\_\_

## RIGHT HAND

1. Thumb <u>17</u>	2. Index <u>16</u>	3. Middle <u>13</u>	4. Ring <u>15</u>	5. Little <u>12</u>
				
<u>1</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

## LEFT HAND

6. Thumb <u>11</u>	7. Index <u>14</u>	8. Middle <u>12</u>	9. Ring <u>15</u>	10. Little <u>9</u>
				
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

Impressions taken by:

Note Amputations

Signature of Person Fingerprinted:

Date:

Four Fingers Taken Simultaneously

Four Fingers Taken Simultaneously

Left Hand

L. Thumb

R. Thumb

Right Hand





## MINNESOTA STATE PRISON, STILLWATER, MINNESOTA



Occupation Laborer  
 Received from Hennepin County  
 Date received 11-19-57  
 Charge Murder - 2nd Degree  
 Sentence Life  
 Place of birth Minneapolis, Minn.  
 Nationality American  
 Age 20 Height 5'-5"  
 Weight 125 Hair Lt. Brown  
 Build Small Eyes Blue  
 Complexion Fair  
 Marks and Scars Cut scars L side of face

## CRIMINAL HISTORY



7151062

Leave This Space Blank

Name James Michael O'Kasick

Alias \_\_\_\_\_

Classification 17 L 1 P 000 12  
S 1 11 000 3

Ref. \_\_\_\_\_

No. 19676 Color White Sex Male

1.—Right Thumb

2.—R. Index Finger

3.—R. Middle Finger

4.—R. Ring Finger

5.—R. Little Finger



6.—Left Thumb

7.—L. Index Finger

8.—L. Middle Finger

9.—L. Ring Finger

10.—L. Little Finger



Four fingers taken simultaneously

Left hand



Amputations \_\_\_\_\_

Left Thumb Right Thumb



Four fingers taken simultaneously

Right hand



Classified by \_\_\_\_\_

Verified by \_\_\_\_\_

Searched by \_\_\_\_\_

Prisoners signature

*James Michael O'Kasick*

PLEASE DO NOT FOLD THIS CARD



R151062

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

1-4

1 2 58 KB

J. Edgar Hoover  
Director.

STATE BUREAU

The following FBI record, NUMBER 758 355 C

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CONTRIBUTOR OF FINGERPRINTS	NAME AND NUMBER	ARRESTED OR RECEIVED	CHARGE	DISPOSITION
PD Minneapolis Minn	James Michael O'Kasick #46400	10-30-57	invest (Murder-robbery-kidnapping)	Life MSP Stillwater Indt 0-40 yrs UCC St Cloud Refty 11-19-57 on chg of Murder 2nd deg, kidnapping.
SP Stillwater Minn	James Michael O'Kasick #19676	11-19-57	Murder-2nd deg	life

Notations indicated by \* ARE NOT BASED ON FINGERPRINTS IN FBI files. The notations are based on data furnished this Bureau concerning individuals of the same or similar names or aliases and ARE LISTED ONLY AS INVESTIGATIVE LEADS.

STATE OF MINNESOTA, BUREAU OF CRIMINAL APPREHENSION  
488 WABASHA, ST. PAUL, MINN.

Minn. State Reformatory  
Saint Cloud, Minnesota

Record from \_\_\_\_\_ (Address) \_\_\_\_\_  
On the above line please state whether Police Department, Sheriff's Office or Institution.



Date of Arrest \_\_\_\_\_  
Place of Arrest Hennepin  
City County

Charge Murder 2nd. Deg.  
Disposition Life

Date received at Institution 12-20-57

Residence Mpls., Minn.

Place of Birth Mpls., Minn.

Nationality Ir-Fin--Am.

Occupation Laborer

Age 20 Date of Birth 4-7-37

Height 5'5" Weight 128

Hair Lt. Brn. Curly Eyes Blue

Comp. Sallow Build Small

Scars & Marks \_\_\_\_\_

PREVIOUS RECORD





RL51062

DECEASED

17 L 1 R 000 13  
S 1 1 000 9

Name James Michael O'Kasick

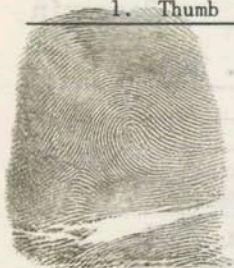




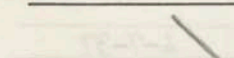

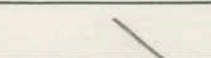
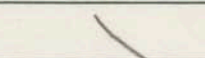
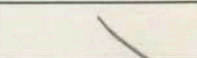
Class. ---

Alias ---






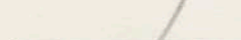




Reference ---

No. 22121 Color White Sex Male

RIGHT HAND

1. Thumb <u>17</u>	2. Index <u>16</u>	3. Middle <u>13</u>	4. Ring <u>15</u>	5. Little <u>12</u>
				
				

LEFT HAND

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Impressions taken by: AMK

Note Amputations

Signature of Person Fingerprinted:

Date: DEC 23 1957

James M O'Kasick 22121

Four Fingers Taken Simultaneously





Four Fingers Taken Simultaneously

Left Hand

L. Thumb

R. Thumb

Right Hand

			
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8. 15 '58 A

1-4

Director.

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## James O'Kasick Stabs Self to Death

### Found Dying in Cell at St. Cloud Reformatory

The O'Kasick story of violence and bloodshed ended today when James O'Kasick, 21, youngest of the trio of Minneapolis gunmen, killed himself in St. Cloud reformatory.

Warden Carl Jackson said O'Kasick stabbed himself three times in the abdomen with a table knife that apparently had been smuggled out of the dining room. The knife had been sharpened, he said.

O'Kasick, whose two older brothers were killed by a highway patrolman just a year ago Sunday, was serving two life sentences for murder and 40 years for kidnapping.

The murder sentences were for the shooting deaths of Robert Fossum, Minneapolis policeman, and Eugene Lindgren, an Anoka painting contractor, both killed in separate O'Kasick episodes of violence in August and September of 1957.

"He gave us no indication he planned to kill himself," Jackson said. "He had his ups and downs but generally he seemed resigned to his fate of spending the rest of his life in prison."

O'Kasick had tried to kill himself (by shooting) once before, the night his brothers were cornered and killed in the brush of Carlos Avery game farm near Wyoming, Minn.

He recovered to tell the full story of the O'Kasick exploits, but doctors said his heart had been weakened by the wound. For that reason he was given a ground floor job in the reformatory tailor shop.

"In that assignment he didn't have to climb stairs," Jackson said.

This morning O'Kasick reported he was ill and "slept in" instead of reporting to the tailor shop. A guard making a routine check noticed he was doubled up in a blanket in his bunk.

The knife was protruding

O'KASICK  
Turn to Page 4A

★ ★ ★ ★



JAMES O'KASICK  
Writes finis to crime story

### O'Kasick Remorseful, Says Pastor

By JOHN NYBERG  
Minneapolis Star Staff Writer

The suicide of James O'Kasick at St. Cloud reformatory this morning came after a "desperate inner struggle," according to a clergyman who had counseled with the prisoner many times.

"Jim had found faith in God," said the Rev. Neal Kuyper, "but he was unsure that it would sustain him through the overwhelming trials of a life imprisonment."

Mr. Kuyper, Protestant chaplain at the reformatory, first came into contact with O'Kasick after his transfer to St. Cloud from Stillwater prison. Subsequently, they met many times.

"If there was one theme in particular that ran through our conversations," he said, "it was this:

"Jim was really sorrowful for what had happened . . . to the officers and the hostage. Several times he expressed feelings of regret for the things that had happened."

In regards to his faith, O'Kasick was not much different from other prisoners who face long-term sentences, according to Mr. Kuyper.

"Generally, he wasn't depressed nor was he excited about anything. Occasionally, however, there was evidence of spiritual excitement in his effort to try to find forgiveness. Then it was a matter of

PASTOR  
Turn to Page 4A

Lindgren gave police the hunch the brothers were the hunted ones.

James, near death in General hospital, confessed the crime spree of the trio.

### PASTOR

Continued from Page One

settling down and trying to making the most of life."

The chaplain had his last meeting with O'Kasick last Thursday and they talked for about an hour regarding his adjustment to reformatory life and about finding a purpose for living.

"He worked in a cleaning part of the tailor shop and seemed to like his work.

"He had accepted forgiveness from God but still seemed to be in a midst of struggle. He thought he could grow in faith by himself but at the same time wondered how he could live out his faith during life imprisonment.

"He was a man grasping onto faith in a new way . . . asking himself the question if he could find purpose in living."

Mr. Kuyper said O'Kasick in earlier meetings had inquired about obtaining correspondence material that would equip him for missionary work. He said also that O'Kasick was regular in attendance at Bible class and at Sunday morning worship services in the reformatory chapel.

When O'Kasick was returned to St. Cloud following the trial at Anoka, Mr. Kuyper had a long talk with him about his feelings in being back.

"He went to the trial feeling there was some hope," the chaplain said. "Now that the trial was over he seemed glad."

"But at the same time, he didn't seem to fully accept the verdict. He thought there was still a possibility of another trial and eventual release."

Although he had never had personal contact with O'Kasick Alfred Barron, reformatory psychologist, had studied case records on the prisoner.

"From these records," said Barron, "I gather that he was a rather moody fellow. He seemed very unrealistic about his being here. Shortly after his admission, he indicated that he thought he would be out in five years. He insisted on the trial at Anoka and thought he'd be cleared."

Barron said there was no indication that O'Kasick was mentally ill.

### O'KASICK

Continued from Page One

from O'Kasick's stomach. An ambulance was called but he died within a few minutes.

Jackson said O'Kasick had been "quiet" but still talked about a new trial in the Lindgren case. He had claimed that a highway patrolman had killed Lindgren in firing at his brothers.

A transcript of trial testimony in Anoka county district court was being prepared for an appeal for a new trial.

After the killing of the two brothers, only James was left to identify the trio as the gunmen who shot Fossum and Officer Ward Canfield in a gun battle at 39th St. and Blaisdell Av. on Aug. 17, 1957.

He revealed that he and his brothers Roger, 26, and Ronald, 24, were on their way to hold up the Red Owl store at 24th St. and Hennepin Av. in a stolen car when Fossum and Canfield pursued them.

Fossum was killed by gunfire and Canfield, wounded in the abdomen, was run over by the bandit car as he lay in the street.

Canfield, suffering numerous injuries, was in critical condition for some time. He underwent 14 operations, including the amputation of one leg, and still is convalescent.

The O'Kasicks fled from Minneapolis and hid out for a time in the woods of northern Minnesota. Then they returned to the Minneapolis area and hid in the brush of

Anoka county for several days.

Police had not learned the identity of the killers when the O'Kasicks erupted the second time 28 days after the first episode.

They got into a freakish scrape with Anoka county sheriff's deputies, wounded Deputy James A. Sampson, 30, and hurried to the nearby home of Lindgren to commandeering his car.

They took Lindgren hostage in his car from his home, four miles north of Anoka, and forced him to drive at a wild pace with highway patrolmen in pursuit.

In a field of brush and willows at the game farm, Lindgren was shot and killed.

Highway Patrolmen James Crawford killed Roger and Ronald O'Kasick with a shotgun blast.

James, alone in the brush, turned his gun on himself.

The O'Kasicks were not known at that time as the Fossum killers, but the violence of the episode with

#### THE MINNEAPOLIS STAR

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pull at Bunbury's ...  
trap. 1-17-61

# O'Kasick Case

## Award OK'd

3  
9  
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F The state claims commission today recommended that the legislature award \$9,000 to Mrs. Marion Lindgren, Anoka, for the death of her husband, in the flight of the infamous O'Kasick brothers.

Eugene Lindgren, 32, was shot to death in September, 1957, while a hostage of the Minneapolis lawbreakers during their flight from authorities.

The O'Kasicks seized Lindgren and his car in their get-away attempt, after they had killed one Minneapolis patrolman and seriously wounded another.

In the gunplay near Wyoming, Minn., Lindgren was killed. Two of the O'Kasicks, Roger, 26, and Ronald, 24, were fatally wounded. James O'Kasick, 20, was wounded but recovered. A year later he stabbed himself to death in St. Cloud reformatory.

The O'Kasicks had been linked with a long series of Twin Cities robberies.

As suggested by the chapter titles and as you read the book you cannot help but feel that the doctor is also somewhat of a philosopher in addition to being Doctor, Detective and Criminologist.

The history of the American Academy of Forensic Science is contained in one of the chapters. Dr. Helpern is a past President of the Academy.

The 8 pages of photographs pertain to only one of the 16 chapters and only to a discussion of President Kennedy's assassination. Considering the large number of the doctor's cases discussed in the book, it is indeed unfortunate that some of the pages of photographs were not reserved to illustrate those cases. In this reviewer's opinion, Dr. Helpern went far afield in his discussion of the firearm wounds in the Kennedy case. The doctor is quoted as saying: "In my opinion, this beautifully preserved bullet that was found in the hospital was the first bullet that was fired. It passed through the President's neck, exited from the throat wound, and was stopped by his clothing, or just plopped out of his neck into his clothing. I've seen this exact thing happen hundreds of times." If the quote is accurate it would indicate both that the doctor's vast experience in firearms wounds has been mostly confined to low velocity projectiles (pistol bullets, etc.) and that he has failed to apply the basics of ballistics. Considering the velocity, weight and fully jacketed nature of the projectile involved in this case, the doctor's theory as quoted is beyond the realm of probability. Tests made with the gun and ammunition involved, in the assassination, indicates the bullet would consistently penetrate over 72 centimeters of simulated flesh (the President's neck contained approximately 13 to 14 centimeters of flesh) and still have some remaining velocity. It is highly unlikely that the bullet after penetrating only 13 - 14 centimeters of flesh would be stopped by the President's clothing or just plop out of his neck and into his clothing. The remaining velocity and energy of the bullet on exiting the President's neck actually is greater than the muzzle velocity and energy of the famous .357 magnum revolver bullet.

Aside from the above criticism, I found the book to be excellent and instructive reading. For the most part, the book is narrative in nature with technical discussion at a minimum. I am sure that all who read it will find it to be both interesting and enjoyable. The book has already become a valued addition to my own library.

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A MINNEAPOLIS CASE HISTORY  
(Minnesota's O'Kasicks)

151062

GOPHER IDENTIFICATION  
September 1968

Prepared for Gopher Identification by:  
Bob Schranck, Minneapolis Star Staff Writer

The final chapter of the O'Kasick story of violence and bloodshed - a three month trail of crimes in 1957 which included murder, kidnaping, car theft and armed robbery - came to an end ten years ago on September 15, 1958.

James O'Kasick, 21 at the time, serving two life sentences for murder and a 40 year sentence for kidnaping, stabbed himself three times in the stomach with a



table knife he apparently smuggled into his cell in the St. Cloud Reformatory.

He died shortly after prison guards found him with the knife protruding from his body. It was his second attempt at suicide, coming one year and one day after he shot himself in the chest after a shoot-out with police in the Carlos Avery game farm near Wyoming, Minnesota.

Near death from his self-inflicted chest wound, James O'Kasick related the crime spree which led to the game farm and the death of his brothers Roger, 26, and Ronald, 24, from a shotgun blast fired by a Minnesota Highway Patrolman.

In what was thought to be his dying declaration, he told the late Minneapolis Detective Inspector Charles Wetherille, how his brothers had committed a number of drugstore and supermarket robberies during the time he was serving in the marine corps.

His first "job" was June 27, 1957, ten weeks after his discharge. The trio obtained almost \$1,200 in a robbery of Knight's Pharmacy, 2201 W. Broadway. In the next holdup, the Pennhurst Pharmacy at 5358 Penn Avenue South, July 6, the brothers used James' '41 Cadillac.

James told Wetherille, Robbery Capt. Cliff Egeland and Mrs. Fay Salt, police stenographer, of the five drug store holdups and one supermarket robbery his brothers pulled before he teamed up with them.

Apparently as the two young men succeeded, they got bolder. During one getaway, they fired at a pursuing squad car.

In August 1957, the three brothers purchased a steel plate for \$5 to help bullet-proof a stolen vehicle.

On Saturday, August 17, the car was equipped with rifles, pistols and ammunition.

Thus armed, the trio was on the way to hold up a Red Owl store at 2440 Hennepin Avenue, when Minneapolis Patrolman Robert Fossum and Ward Canfield spotted their stolen vehicle.

James told how during the case, after the back window was shot out, he pushed a rifle out and emptied the six-shot weapon at the pursuing police car. Roger was driving and Ronald, in the front seat, was firing a pistol.

At 39th Street and Van Nest Avenue, the O'Kasick car crashed into a parked car. While they were trying to get into the parked car, James turned back and shot and wounded Canfield.

Roger, he said, went over to Fossum and fired his pistol into the officer's head, "so he wouldn't recognize us."

James O'Kasick claimed that they were not aware that Canfield, wounded in the abdomen, was caught in the wheels and dragged as the gunmen sped away.

Canfield hovered, between life and death for some time after the incident. During the next year, he underwent 14 operations including the amputation of one leg. Several years later, Ward Canfield tried to return to work, but after a short time in the Bureau of Identification, it was obvious his permanent injuries would force his early retirement.



While Canfield lay on the street in critical condition with his partner dead nearby, the O'Kasicks drove to a filling station in the area, commandeered a car from two women and drove off.

Their next stop was First Avenue South, where they took the car of Alvin Anderson, 9448 Clinton Avenue South, Bloomington, and kidnaped his wife. They drove to 36th and 2nd Avenue where they transferred to their own car taking their hostage with them. Mrs. Anderson was pushed from their vehicle at the rear of 3325 Columbus Avenue.

The trio then split up, Ronald and James dropping Roger off at his room in South Minneapolis before returning to their home at 3909 38th Avenue South.

On Monday, August 19, the brothers fled from Minneapolis and hid out in the woods of northern Minnesota. After about three weeks they returned to a wooded area near Forest Lake where they lived in the brush while James contacted the family.

Their identity had not been discovered by police when the O'Kasicks erupted the second time - 28 days after their first episode.

They got into a freakish scrape with Anoka County Deputies when Ronald, going for gas for their stalled vehicle, was captured. When the brothers started shooting, Deputy James Sampson was hit in the foot.

As Sampson's partner summoned help by radio and took Sampson for medical care, Roger rescued his brother, still handcuffed, from the backseat of the police car.

As the area was being surrounded by some 300 law enforcement people, Roger blew apart the links of the handcuffs with a shot from his .45 caliber automatic.

The brothers fled to a nearby farm where they were denied entrance. They ran on to a neighboring farmhouse, the home of the Eugene Lindgren family. Lindgren, 30 a housepainter was taken hostage by the trio when he tried to get at a rifle in his garage.

The O'Kasicks forced Lindgren to drive at a wild pace along back roads almost as far east as Forest Lake before doubling back.

Among police covering were Minnesota Highway Patrolmen James Crawford and Kenneth Cziok. Above them in the patrol airplane was officer Robert Buckman.

Crawford turned around to pursue and radioed his location as the fleeing car sped by in the opposite direction. With the airplane observing and directing the two officers almost cornered the O'Kasicks. But the brothers pulled Lindgren in front of them as a shield and drove past the patrolman.

When the Cadillac went into a ditch on a game farm road, the officers approached cautiously until they were in the ditch across the road.

Reconstructing the scene, Crawford apparently shouted for Lindgren to drop. As he did, he was shot in the head by Roger O'Kasick who was holding his hostage by the shirt.



Crawford blasted across the road with his shotgun fatally wounding Roger and Ronald O'Kasick - later described by Minneapolis police veterans as the "most cold-blooded killers in Minneapolis History".

(Crawford is now a Highway Patrol Captain, in charge of one of the Metropolitan Districts with headquarters in Golden Valley.)

James O'Kasick said his brother, Ronald, died in his arms. He then ran off into some high weeds and tried to shoot himself in the heart. Although he recovered, his heart was apparently weakened by the wound, doctors said later.

When he recovered, James O'Kasick was tried for the murder of Fossum and the kidnaping of Mrs. Anderson. He was found guilty and received sentences of life and 40 years respectively. In a separate trial at Anoka later, he was found guilty of participating in the Lindgren murder and sentenced to a second life term.

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Frayne Johnsen transfers from the Minneapolis Police Department to the Identification Division of the Minnesota State Crime Lab.

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#### ITEMS FOR PUBLICATION

We are in constant need of material for the continuation of our newsletter. Technical articles on the various field of identification are particularly desirable. Short articles on new methods, systems or procedures instituted or started by your department would also be desirable items. Also welcome are personal notes on new members, promotions, transfers, changes of addresses, etc. The quality of our newsletter will depend in a large part on your cooperation in providing material.

Send all items direct to: Stanton O. Berg, Editor Minn. Div. IAI  
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