



(Staff Photo)

CAMERAS SOMETIMES DO MORE THAN PISTOLS—Lacy Savage, identification officer of the Winston-Salem Police Department, is demonstrating the effectiveness of criminal identification through use of the department's picture files.

## City Police Go in Heavily for Photography, Find Pictures Aid in Capture of Criminals

By ROY THOMPSON

Working under the theory that the camera is sometimes mightier than the nightstick, Winston-Salem police have gone into the picture business in a big way.

Their records division has a file of more than 50,000 pictures (worth, according to the old Chinese standard, approximately a half-billion words).

At the present expansion rate,

the file is growing by nearly 5,000 pictures each year.

### Repeaters Are "Mugged"

The department's interest in photography started back in the early days of the depression when hard times were making hardened criminals. Some of the tougher characters registered for a room in the police department's hotel with iron bars were photographed—just in case officers should want to look them up again sometime.

Today just about every drunk who staggers into the jail is lined up to "watch the birdie" before being made comfortable in a cell. Officers who have seen the photo files develop know that today's drunk may be tomorrow's killer. It pays to have a picture on hand.

If, for example, Quincy X. Rasmussenheink should fly into a rage and kill his wife with a poker tonight, officers could check their files for a picture of Quincy. If Henry has been arrested recently, they can take the negative and send copies of their man's picture all over the United States.

### How to Spot Crooks

Perhaps the most often used file is called the Modus Operandi File. It works this way:

A man visiting the city from the hills of Surry County is met on the street by a stranger who offers to show him the wonders of city life. The stranger finds a pocketbook full of money and offers to share with his country cousin.

By the time the "sharing" is over, the stranger leaves "for a minute," and takes the pocketbook and the Surry man's money with him.

Hours later, the victim becomes suspicious and goes to police. Detectives will listen to a story they've heard many times before. Then they'll lead the complaint to the Modus Operandi File.

### Filmflammers On File

There, filed under a general classification of filmflammers, will be pictures of shell game operators, pocketbook finders and other sharpies who can talk faster than most folks can listen.

Often, as officers thumb slowly through the pictures, the "sucker" will spot his hospitable friend. After that, officers usually have little more to do than check the suspect's usual hangouts.

And if they can find the picture, they can usually find the man.

Another important phase of criminal photography now being recognized here is that of pictures

of scenes of murders and serious wrecks.

The oldtime blackboard diagram used by officers to show a jury just what happened when Rasmussenheink clonked his wife with the poker is on the way out.

Today officers come to court armed with a set of pictures. And periodic police schools in photography are training more and more rookies to take their own pictures.

And so today, given a murder scene, officers take pictures. If they get a fingerprint of the murderer, they can usually get his picture. If they get a picture, they usually can get their man.

And if they have pictures of the corpse and its immediate surroundings, chances of convicting their man are greatly strengthened.

# Police Here Put Crime Into Color

## Department Does Own Photography

By MAMIE H. BRADY  
Sentinel Reporter

The Winston-Salem Police Department is now one of two in the South using its own color pictures as evidence in court.

Municipal Court Judge Leroy W. Sams viewed screen projections of color pictures yesterday that were made in December by Bill Keiger of a hit-and-run personal injury traffic accident. He has been making them for some time, but this was the first time any had been used in court.



KEIGER

The pictures graphically showed dents in the hood and bloodstains on a light colored car. John E. Smitherman, 37, of East Bend, Route 1, admitted he was driving at the time a pedestrian was hit on Sixth Street. The accident was at 6:21 p.m. Dec. 8.

Mr. Smitherman was arrested shortly after the accident when his car was spotted at a restaurant west of town. He was charged with hit-and-run driving and drunk driving. He posted \$5,000 bond pending trial.

YESTERDAY Mr. Smitherman entered a plea of nolo contendere (no contention) to each of the charges.

Smitherman's counsel said he did not have insurance but had arranged personally to take care of all expenses of Robert O. Long, 45, of 722 North Cherry Street, who was injured.

Judge Sams told Smitherman he was taking into consideration the "considerable amount of money it has cost you" and that "otherwise I would be much more severe in the judgments."

Smitherman was fined \$100 and costs, given a suspended sentence and his license revoked for 12 months in each of the two cases.

Officer Keiger answered numerous questions about his pictures, how they were made, processes involved in their development and the number of times the enlargement increased the actual size of what he had photographed in the transparencies.

"I've been processing them here in our own dark room in the Police Department since October," Mr. Keiger said.

"Working with color is far different in many ways than black and white—it's more involved and it must be more precise," he continued.

"It takes approximately 90 minutes to complete the 14 processes of developments, fixing, washing, etc.," he explained.

"TEMPERATURE control is my biggest problem, for in some of the processes a variance of one or two degrees makes a lot of difference," he continued. "Room temperatures cannot vary much from that of the solution or reticulation will result."

Miami is the only other city in the south, besides Winston-Salem, where a staff officer of the Police Department has had his color pictures accepted in court, according to a survey of departments.

Out in Texas the state officers use color pictures extensively, according to reports made at national conventions of identification officers. Northwest and Pacific Coast cities are using them too, and have been for some time.

CHIEF JIM WALLER said color photography is just another progressive step taken by the department as it attempts to do everything possible in making law enforcement a complete job.

Winston-Salem, he recalled, pioneered in use of alcohol blood tests, and in use of radar in checking speed of automobiles.

Color photography must be handled with meticulous care to assure its efficiency, said Chief Waller. The officer who takes the pictures must have them under his supervision at all times and be able to show this when they are offered in evidence.