

# Routine Investigations By Oregon State Police Solve Bizarre Slay Case

By TOM STIMMEL

Two routine investigations of the sort state police conduct every day, plus two remarkable clues, tied together the story of Klamath County's bizarre hitchhike murder.

Neither investigation began with any thought of murder.

About 6:30 p.m. February 1 Washington State Patrolman Richard Thurston spotted a 1953 Chevrolet in Kirkland with a tail pipe dragging almost to the ground. Thurston stopped the car to issue a traffic warning or citation. In the car Thurston found two boys and a young married couple.

**THE DRIVER** could not produce his driver's license, car registration, or any identification. He gave his name as Ted Gerard and said he was driving his grandfather's car.

Officer Thurston took the young driver to the patrol car, searched him for identification, and smelled alcohol on the boy's breath. He took the boy back to his car and found several cans of beer, which the boy said belonged to his friends.

The occupants were taken to the Kirkland police station. The car was searched. The search produced identification belonging to Bernard J. Fitzpatrick, 17, a soldier stationed at Fort Ord, California, and a wallet belonging to Ralph Ray Lawson, 53, a truck driver from Pasco, Washington.

The youth who said his name was Ted Gerard told police Lawson was his grandfather. He denied his name was Fitzpatrick, although officers insisted that the soldier's identification photograph looked like him. Gerard said he had not been in service.

Gerard finally admitted his name was Fitzpatrick, and said he had stolen the car in Sacramento.

Fitzpatrick was charged with violation of the federal Dyer Act, interstate transportation of a stolen car, and the FBI was called into the case. Fitzpatrick was taken to the Seattle city jail.

**THERE, FITZPATRICK** repeated his stolen car story to other officers. He was asked if he had killed Lawson, and he said he had not. He said he knew nothing about a GI pistol belt, scabbard, and short bayonet found in the car's glove compartment.

In the course of an hour-and-a-half investigation, Fitzpatrick admitted his stolen car account was not true. He said Lawson had picked him up while hitchhiking north of Sacramento, and that he had killed Lawson after an argument about driving. He placed the location near Algoma in Klamath County.

Fitzpatrick was held under the Dyer Act, and his bond was set at \$25,000.

Three hours before Officer Thurston spotted the car with a dragging tail pipe in Kirkland, Washington, a permanent resident in a summer home area near Rhododendron, Oregon, on the slopes of Mt. Hood reported that a deer apparently had been shot near her cabin.

A state police officer and several neighbors investigated the report, followed a short trail of blood in the snow, and found the body of a man behind a small mound. It was without shoes, and bore no identification. It still bore a wrist watch and a wedding band, and there were noticeable scars on four fingers. Near the body

dier stationed at Fort Ord, California, and a wallet belonging to Ralph Ray Lawson, 53, a truck driver from Pasco, Washington.

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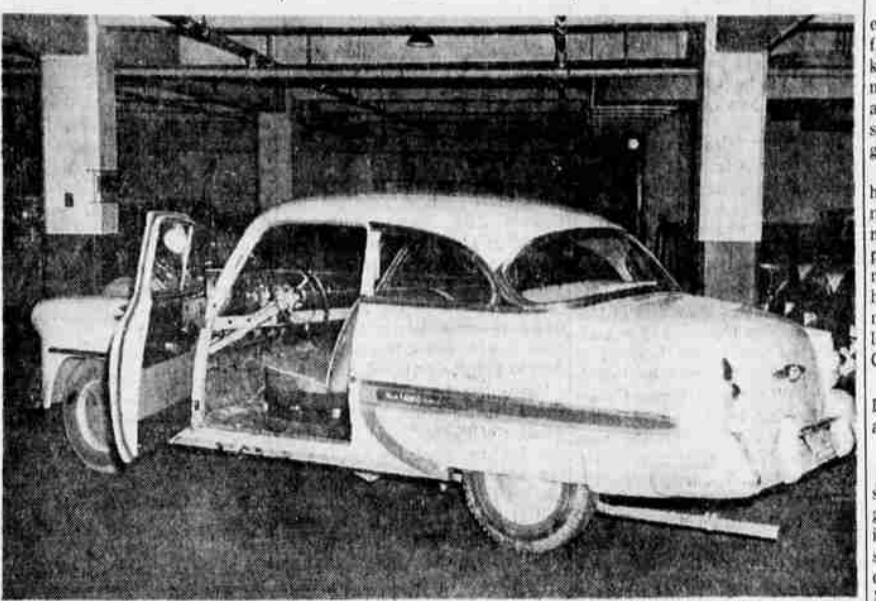
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There were two clear footprints. The man had been stabbed with something, and had been bleeding from wounds in the right side and shoulder. Most of the blood had clotted.



**DRAGGING TAIL PIPE** that led to the arrest of Bernard J. Fitzpatrick on traffic violation shows in this photograph of the car in which Fitzpatrick was a rider. The car owner's body was carried on the rear floorboards for about 180 miles before being dumped in snow on Mt. Hood.

**Busy Physician**

DO THAN, Ala. (AP) — You can't tell Dr. Bruce McCannell there's no influenza epidemic—at least at his house. Five of his 10 children are in bed with the flu.

The physician, who says his other five youngsters will probably come down with the ailment, too, divides his time, treating his family and other flu patients.

Christine Miller of San Antonio, Tex., recently bowled 202 on her 64th birthday.

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## Court Records

**KLAMATH COUNTY DISTRICT COURT**

William Bryan Doig, fail dim headlights, dismissed motion district attorney.

Vernon Doyle Dorry, no muffler, \$7.50 forfeited.

Vernon Lee Turry, fail stop at stop sign, \$5 forfeited.

Bill E. Gust, tandem axle overload, \$27 forfeited.

Charles Erwin Shulmire, fail stop at stop sign, \$7.50.

Richard Calvin Smith, driving while right to apply for operator's license suspended, dismissed motion district attorney.

Thelma Knight, carrying concealed weapon, \$100 forfeited.

Charles Erwin Shulmire, fail stop at stop sign, \$7.50.

Everett Leroy Vance, no operator's license, dismissed motion district attorney.

Janita Lucille Vance, no operator's license, dismissed motion district attorney.

Benjamin Lee David, inadequate brakes, \$7.50 forfeited.

Melvin Wayne Mays, following too closely, \$10 forfeited.

Frederick Kendall, combination overload, \$86 forfeited.

Delbert Blaine Troxel, combination overload, \$37 forfeited.

Randolph Wallace Crowder, combination overload, \$86 forfeited.

Bernard J. Fitzpatrick Jr., murder in the first degree, held to answer grand jury; bail set at \$2,000; remanded to sheriff.

Robert Lee Houck, fail transfer title, \$5.

Ronnie G. Reeves, obtaining money false pretenses, request to waive preliminary hearing, held to answer grand jury; bail set at \$2,000; remanded to sheriff.

Fred Roy Puckett, vagrancy, time to enter plea set February 11 at 9:30; released on \$250 bail posted.

Kenneth Augustus Page, no PUC permit, \$20 forfeited.

David Allen Moebeke, fail stop at stop sign, \$5.

Isaac David Hopper Sr., fail stop at stop sign, \$5.

Alfred Carter, vagrancy, 30 days county jail, suspended.

Gene Walter Gambie, fail stop at stop sign, \$5.

Burvie Ray Long, fail stop at stop sign, \$7.50 forfeited.

David Arthur Garren, no operator's license, \$10 forfeited.

Wilbur Benedict Johnson, no muffler, \$10 forfeited.

William George Neuhert, combination overload, \$59 forfeited.

Jack Samuel Giffin Jr., violation basic rule, \$7.50.

Joseph James Bettles Jr., truck speeding, \$5 forfeited.

Janet Lee Ring, violation basic rule, \$12.50.

Guido Anthony Robustelli, fail stop at stop sign, \$5.

Marianna B. Kerr, violation basic rule, dismissed.

Everett Elwin Arasmith, violation basic rule, \$17.50.

Roder Allan Bliss, improper mufflers, \$5.

Vernon Douglas Houston, improper mufflers, \$5.

Gary Arthur Thill, passing insufficient clearance, \$7.50.

Jerome Romain Crispen Jr., fail stop at stop sign, \$5.

Richard Lay Fuller, violation basic rule, \$10.

Charles Silas Sullivan, following too closely, \$5.

James Milton Smith, fail stop at stop sign, \$5.

Thomas Leroy Keitzenberg, fail stop at stop sign, \$5.

## Southerner Faces Charge

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (AP) — Postal inspectors have charged a 32-year-old Chattanooga man with a revengeful mail order scheme in which such things as 1,300 pounds of cheese and a reducing machine were ordered in the names of other people.

Erol A. Curtcher was arraigned Tuesday on a charge of using the mails to defraud.

A U.S. attorney said the harassment campaign of more than a year centered on officials of an insurance agency which had refused Curtcher a job.

Jack D. Hixson Jr., an agent for the insurance firm, said his name was used in the order for fancy cheese. But what really shook his household was his unsought enrollment in a rock 'n' roll record club.

He said rock 'n' roll is forbidden in his house, since his wife once was a violinist for a symphony orchestra.

## LEGAL NOTICE

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The City of Klamath Falls, Oregon, proposes to change from the zone in which it is presently located under ordinance No. 3095, on file in the office of the City Recorder, to zone R-5A, under said ordinance the following described territory: Lots 1, 2, 3, 25, 29, 30, 31 and 32 of Block 310, Darrow Addition to City of Klamath Falls, Klamath County, Oregon.

The general public and all persons particularly interested are hereby notified that the Common Council of said City will hold a public hearing on said proposal at the hour of 7:30 o'clock P.M. of the 15th day of February, 1960, at the Council Room in the City Hall of said City at which time any person or party may appear and be heard on the proposal.

Done Feb. 10, 1960.

ROSIE KELLER  
City Recorder  
No. 48, Feb. 10, 11, 12.

## Tribe Council Issues Plea

FORT HALL, Idaho (AP) — Banning the old Indian "stick" game is like banning bingo, or bridge, say the Indians, and the Tribal Council adopted a resolution appealing to the "sense of justice and honesty of the American people."

Last month the government said no more gambling on the Shoshone-Bannock Indian Reservation here. It had been allowed since 1938, at least over the weekends for small amounts of money.

Most stuck with the ancient Indian guessing contest called the stick game, but some enjoyed card games instead.

Tuesday the Tribal Council said the order by the Interior Department was aimed at the "subjection of Indian tribes, to create turmoil and confusion." The Indians said the stick game is only recreational and that they will "resist all prosecution and persecution."

## Crime Probe Rejuvenated

CHARLESTON, W. Va. (AP) — A crime investigation resolution is going the rounds in West Virginia's House and Senate.

Amended by the Senate Monday, it was shelved, and brought back to life within minutes in the House Tuesday, generating some pointed conversation.

"What's wrong with investigating crime? If there are racketeers in this state, doesn't this Legislature have enough guts to stand up and fight them?"

"I never saw anything manipulated like this in my life in this House."

"There has been no question in my mind that racketeers have taken over . . . and, according to the last vote, I think they have done it."

## REALLY INDEPENDENT

JACKSON, Miss. (UPI) — Mississippi Democrats, having already threatened a possible bolt from this year's Democratic National Convention, apparently intend to be as independent as possible.

Gov. Ross Barnett has made his own arrangements for hotel accommodations for the 66-man delegation independent of National Chairman Paul Butler.

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