

1956

Police Science Book Reviews

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Recommended Citation

Police Science Book Reviews, 46 J. Crim. L. Criminology & Police Sci. 748 (1955-1956)

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POLICE SCIENCE BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by

Richard L. Holcomb*

DAILY TRAINING BULLETIN OF THE LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT. By *W. H. Parker*, Chief. Charles C Thomas, Springfield, Illinois. 1954. Pp. 274, 183 illus. \$7.50.

For those convinced that a field officer's procedural manual must necessarily be staid, dry reading, a glance at the *Daily Training Bulletin of the Los Angeles Police Department* will be a worthwhile surprise. The publication is a compilation of practical and vital police information first imparted during roll call training sessions.

Since, as Chief W. H. Parker points out, there was an abundance of police literature dealing with administration, evidence, criminology, scientific investigation, etc., it made the absence of information on problems of everyday field work all the more noticeable. Where to find the answers that the alert patrolman demanded was a challenge in itself. But the Los Angeles Police Department, as its record for progressive police administration would indicate, found the answer and announced it to the world in this fascinating and very readable 274 page book.

As a permanent reference for the officer who wants to know what to do and how to do it, and who earnestly wants to prepare himself for promotion in his police organization, the *Bulletin* is indispensable reading. Although directed specifically to California Law and Los Angeles departmental regulations, its value to other police administrators and field officers is not impaired.

Its 18 chapters of instruction, ranging from basic matters, such as how to use the telephone to control of a major disaster, are written in a lucid, down-to-earth, smooth flowing style easily comprehended by those of even limited education. Nearly every paragraph is

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headed by explanatory subtopics that aid the reader in finding the exact information he desires, while at the same time stifling monotony that often arises from pages of unbroken printed material.

Perhaps the most unique feature of the *Bulletin* is the use of laughter-provoking cartoons to illustrate essential points of the text material. No experienced police officer can view the drawings without a hearty laugh and the recalling of many personal incidents in his career. Further illustrations, such as the mechanism of the revolver, use of the radio, and report forms, enhance the value of the written matter and commendably emphasize the more important points.

At the rear of the book are review questions in true-false, multiple choice, and completion forms. They are provided for each chapter. Following the questions are the answers.

To the police experts, veteran officers, and educators who contributed to this work, should go the thanks and appreciation of all progressive law enforcement administrators who would enrich their own training programs through the acceptance of new ideas and teaching techniques.

BERNARD C. BRANNON

Chief of Police
Kansas City, Missouri

LAW OF DISPUTED AND FORGED DOCUMENTS.

By *J. Newton Baker*. The Michie Company. Charlottesville, Virginia. 1955. Pp. 560. \$15.00.

The title, *Law of Disputed and Forged Documents*, is not an accurate description of what this book contains. In the preface the author gives better insight into what is to be expected by the statement: "The readers . . . may be enabled to obtain accurate information and assistance in determining the authenticity

of a disputed instrument and in establishing judicial proof." By far the greater number of pages are devoted to an attempt at explaining what can be determined from documents and how it is done rather than discussing the law as it pertains to questioned document cases. It should be noted, however, that there are numerous decisions quoted from document cases over the years, although the vast majority of citations fail to contain a date, and some discussion, amounting to the greater portion of several chapters, deals with the law in respect to various phases of questioned document work.

As one reviews the table of contents and the section headings within the various chapters he is impressed by the scope of this work, but if one reads it critically, he realizes that the outline is well conceived but that the material which is built around it is by and large very weak.

This book has many faults. Undoubtedly the most serious is the inaccuracy of some material. A second is the need of critical editorship. It is extremely repetitive, and there are a number of phrases and sentences that recur time and time again until they seriously detract from its readability. Finally, a book on questioned document work needs a quantity of convincing illustrations, and with modern high quality photoengravings there is little excuse for the poor quality of the few illustrations. The line cuts should be replaced by first rate halftones.

In analysing this text one finds that the technical information which it contains can be roughly divided into three classes—good, bad, and indifferent. Unfortunately, mixed among this indifferent or moderately good material is a certain amount of bad and inaccurate technical information and very little outstandingly good material. The statement on page 364 about a special powder for ball point pen inks is a glaring example of such errors. There are a number of overstatements and vague generalities in the treatment of handwriting and signature identification. For the most part, though, some experience in the field is necessary to detect these faults.

A 1955 book on questioned document exam-

ination certainly ought to contain adequate discussion of materials and methods that have been introduced since the late 1920's and early 1930's when the last worthwhile technical publications were published. This text fails to do so. Practically nothing is presented about the ball point pen as a writing instrument and especially on its effect on handwriting identification. Proportional spacing typewriting is mentioned in the last sentence on page 462, but is neither illustrated nor discussed at any length. There is no recognition of the introduction of alkaline dye inks, and far too much space is devoted to the now obsolete logwood inks with no mention of its demise. A series of typewriting specimens is presented (pages 463-73). For the most part they are from machines of the late 1940's although all are undated, and current designs of Royal and Allen (Woodstock) typewriters are not included.

Many decisions are cited apparently only to show that some particular type of document evidence was used in court and are not rulings on its admissibility. However, in chapter 6, "Standards of Comparison," chapter 8, "Expert and Opinion Evidence," and chapter 9, "Testimony of Nonexpert Witnesses" are found some discussion of the law and legal decisions pertaining to questioned document work. Here, too, there could be improvement, and certainly inaccuracies should be removed.

At times one wonders whether the author is analysing the law as it appears in decisions or merely stating what he wishes was the law. For example, on page 169 he states, "The rule seems to be that an expert witness cannot be compelled to testify." He then immediately cites a portion of the decision of *Boytton v. R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co.* (36 F. Supp. 593) which ends with the statement: "The law does have the power to compel him [an expert] to state an opinion already formed." In his discussion of writing standards and the law pertaining to requiring a person to prepare standards he refers on page 80 to *Kennison v. State* (97 Tex. Crim. App. 154) to substantiate his statement on page 81 "When the accused is asked to write and an objection is made in respect to self-incrimination, he cannot be

compelled to write." The author's thesis on law pertaining to this question is entirely in keeping with the Kennison case, but according to Inbau (*Self Incrimination*, footnote 1, page 42-43) the Kennison case is out of step with decisions of other appellate courts in this country, and in fact there are Texas decisions which leaves the law on this point in confusion in that state. After these two presentations, readers would be prone to examine Baker's cases very carefully before accepting his interpretation.

It is unfortunate that this book should have been published in its present form. It is far below the standards set by Osborn's *Questioned Documents* (1929), Quirke's *Forged, Anonymous, and Suspect Documents* (1930), and Brewster's *Contested Documents* (1932) the last three English language works of any consequence in this field. For one desiring to learn what a questioned document examiner can do it is necessary to turn to these and earlier publications. He surely will not be able to get an accurate, clear cut picture from *Law of Disputed and Forged Documents*.

ORDWAY HILTON

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THE RAILROAD POLICE. By *H. S. Dewhurst*. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Springfield, Ill. 1955. Pp. 203. \$5.50

In *The Railroad Police* the author enlightens the reader as to the history, organizational structure, duties, activities, particular problems, and the accomplishments of the railroad police from the inception of the service to the present day. The reader, particularly one in the law enforcement field, is given a first hand insight into the importance and necessity for such a service, in addition to similar services performed by the enforcement agencies at the various levels of government; namely, local, state, and federal. It gives one an insight to, and appreciation of, the protection afforded passengers, freight, express, and mail, which would not otherwise be possible.

The description of the requirements for employment and selection of personnel in the

railroad police service are generally similar to that of regularly constituted enforcement agencies, but with certain additional requirements which would be worthy of consideration by the various enforcement agencies.

The duties and activities of the railroad police are many and complicated in nature, much of which the lay person has not been cognizant. This also gives one an appreciation of the necessity for the service rendered by the railroad police.

A substantial part of the volume covers the various problems confronting the railroad police, a good portion of which is devoted to trespassing and juvenile problems. This to the layman may seem over emphasized, but is a problem which has plagued railroads from their beginning. The reader, however, becomes cognizant of the extent and magnitude of this problem and in addition, what can be and often is the consequences of trespassing and related incidents; namely, personal injury to the trespasser himself and by his own acts. The point is stressed, and honestly so, that the greatest concern the railroad police have is the protection and safety of the public. The volume gives the reader an appreciation of the lengths to which the railroads go to protect the public, their property, and themselves.

A part of the book is devoted to a summary of the several and various means by which the railroad police acquire police powers within the many and varied jurisdictional areas of the several states. This is of particular importance to the railroad police themselves, in that they from time to time travel from one jurisdiction to another in the carrying out of their duties.

The author has had a first hand, "on the scene" opportunity to know and appreciate the entire scope of the problems confronting the railroad police and also to know their accomplishments and the means by which they were achieved. This knowledge came to him by virtue of his serving as secretary of the Protective Section, Association of American Railroads. He has done an admirable job of describing the field of endeavor in which the railroad police are engaged.

This reviewer is of the opinion that the

volume should be on the "must read" list of all railroad police personnel, worthy of consideration by those in the law enforcement field and of general interest to the public.

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MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS IN THE CHRISTIE CASE. By *Francis E. Camps, M.D.* Medical Publications Limited, London, 1953. Distributed by Macmillan Company, New York. Pp. 244. \$5.00.

The account of the *Christie Case* is another excellent contribution to Forensic Science literature by a group of British authors. It undoubtedly should and will receive the same attention as a previous volume on the Ruxton case which was prepared by Doctors Glaister and Brash in 1937. The student of criminalistics will enjoy reading Dr. Camps detailed account of the unraveling of this recent bizarre crime involving the murder of at least six people. Four of the ten chapters were written by experts in their own fields. These include accounts of the laboratory investigations by L. C. Nickolls; examination of bones by Dr. Richard J. Harrison; examination of the skeletons with respect to determination of sex, age, and stature by Dr. Harrison; and examination of the jaws and teeth by Professor A. E. W. Miles and Mr. R. W. Fearnhead.

In addition to a characteristically thorough treatment of the investigation, the text contains new and illuminating information with regard to problems of identification, changes which occur after death, establishment of elapsed time since death and burial, identification of spermatozoa, and determination of alcohol and carbon monoxide in the blood after death.

The *Christie Case* is the most recent discussion of a mass murder investigation and becomes all the more intriguing when one considers that one of the victims was reported missing in 1943 and whose skeletal remains were found ten years later. Another victim was missing for approximately nine years, while the remaining victims had been buried for a period of less than one year.

It would be most impertinent for a reviewer to comment upon or criticize any particular aspect of the book. To do so would detract from the value of the document. It is not the purpose of the authors to present any particular hypothesis or defend any point of view, but rather to make available an accurate and scholarly report of a medico-legal investigation. Personal evaluations of technics can best be done by the reader.

The text contains 46 illustrations, several in color, in addition to an appendix wherein a number of the original scientific reports and statements of Christie are reproduced.

This book is recommended without qualification to any serious student of criminalistics and forensic medicine. Undoubtedly one salutary result may be the preparation of similar documents by our American colleagues.

RALPH F. TURNER

Michigan State University

FIBER MICROSCOPY. By *A. N. J. Heyn.* Interscience Publishers, Inc. New York, 1954. Pp. 407. \$5.50.

Fiber Microscopy is an elementary textbook and laboratory manual. It is designed as a teaching manual for students learning to use the microscope in textile testing. It includes a discussion of laboratory experiments for the preparation and examination of all common vegetable, animal, mineral, and man-made fibers. In view of its recent publication date, many new synthetic fibers are included in the experiments.

It is pointed out that this book is not a reference book for the rapid identification of fibers. In fact, there are a limited number (12) fiber photomicrographs.

Forensic scientists may be interested in using *Fiber Microscopy* as a text to train members of their laboratory staff in the technics of fiber examination. If used in this manner, the book will be most valuable in the Police Science Library.

RALPH F. TURNER

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THE OFFICER IN THE COURTROOM. By *Floyd N. Heffron*. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Springfield, Ill. 1955. Pp. 162. \$4.50.

This book is misnamed, since a great deal of it does *not* directly pertain to the officer in the courtroom. For example, not until page 54 is there a discussion of the officer and the courtroom.

The first three chapters are entitled, The Purpose of Testimony, The Duty of the Officer, and Preparation of Testimony. Much of this background material seems to be in this book merely to expand its size. For example, included in the chapter, The Duty of the Officer, are the following: Legal definitions of *police* and *policeman*, the purposes of subpoenas, grand juries, mentally ill and insane, abatement and seizure of property, out of state witnesses, and duces tecum subpoenas. Such information will only confuse the rookie and put to sleep the veteran.

In the preface the author writes, "This text is intended to assist the new witness in making these first few appearances (in court) less difficult and to overcome his fears and apprehensions." No mention is made that this book might possibly assist the veteran as well.

Since only a small percentage of policemen are rookies, the author is putting too great a limitation on this book. He is aware of the fact that too often an "experienced" officer does not properly testify. This veteran needs information just as much, if not more, than the newcomer.

Pages 53-111 will certainly be of interest to everyone who will testify in the future, regardless of the amount of experience one has already had as a witness. Everyone will learn at least several things that he did not previously know. The material in this part of the book is very well presented and is recommended to all officers.

Early in the book the author writes: "The use of exhibits, as a means of supplementing oral testimony, is of great value. Many departments have not given proper consideration to this phase of evidence. In every case, where conditions permit, pictures, charts, sketches, diagrams, physical evidence, and expert testimony should be used as a means of corroborating oral testimony." It is too bad that the author did not consider the use of photographs, diagrams, and sketches of any value in this book. If they are of value in court, they certainly would be here in showing how the officer should sit, where he should look, how to point out locations on an enlarged crime-scene sketch, etc.

Appendix A consists of a check list. "This list should be gone over carefully by the witness, while he is preparing to give testimony." This check list consists of 133 items. Just about every experienced witness would get "butter flies" from realizing for the first time *all* the things that he is supposed to do prior to and during the trial. Imagine a rookie, who read in the preface, "It is hoped that officers who read this text may be better prepared to go into the courtroom with a feeling of ease and comfort". Now the rookie is told to remember 8 things just about how he is to sit in the witness chair, 23 points for him to religiously follow during the questioning, etc.

This book will probably prove of more help to the veteran officer than to the rookie. The former can appreciate what the writer is discussing and can evaluate what he personally has done wrong in the past. On the other hand, the rookie has no experience on which to base this information. He will probably be overwhelmed.

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