

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

Section 24, Pages 691 - 720

The Kansas State Penitentiary case file on Richard Hickock, inmate number 14746. Hickock and his accomplice, Perry Smith, were convicted of first degree murder for the brutal 1959 killings of Herb and Bonnie Clutter, their daughter, Nancy, and son, Kenyon, in Holcomb, Kansas. The murders inspired the non-fiction novel "In Cold Blood" by Truman Capote. Hickock was executed by hanging on April 14, 1965. Please note that some images have been removed in accordance with K.S.A. 45-221(a)(29) and have been labeled with pages indicating their removal. Additional redactions of personally identifiable information made in accordance with K. S. A. 2005 Supp. 45-221(a)(30).

Creator: Kansas State Penitentiary

Date: 1959 - 1965

Callnumber: State Penitentiary, Inmate Files, Executed Prisoners, Box 2

KSHS Identifier: DaRT ID: 208963

Item Identifier: 208963

www.kansasmemory.org/item/208963

KANSAS
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

KSP No. 264

mh
5-16-60

Page

KANSAS STATE PENITENTIARY
Lansing, Kansas

CLASSIFICATION STUDY

Committed Name

HICKOCK, Richard E.

Register No.

14746

PERSONAL: (cont'd)

Subject has married twice and is the father of three children by his first wife and has one child by the second and he is divorced at present..V. Subject had a prior term in this institution, being paroled Aug. 13, 1959, and was later involved in the current offense for which he was sentenced to hang..V.

RESOURCES:

States he has no funds, owns no property and has no veterans compensation.NV

EMPLOYMENT & OCCUPATIONAL RECORD:

Is experienced in painting autos..V.

| | | | |
|-----------|---|-----------------|---------------|
| 1949-1950 | Santa Fe R.R. | Gardner, Kans. | Operator..V. |
| 1950-1951 | Roark Motors | Olathe, Kans. | Painter...V. |
| 1951-1956 | Ashmore Pontiac | Kans. City, Ks. | Painter...V. |
| 1956-1957 | Markl Buick | Kans. City, Ks. | Painter...V. |
| 1957-1958 | Self Employed | Kans. City, Ks. | Painter...NV. |
| 1954-1956 | Night job as ambulance attendant (extra)... | | |

MARITAL HISTORY:

Married [REDACTED] in 1951, divorced in 1957, three children born of the union..V. Married Margaret Sanders in 1957, one child born of this union, marriage ending in divorce..V.

MILITARY HISTORY:

Marine Corps Reserve, 1951...V.

MEDICAL HISTORY:

Subject is a 28 year old, white male 68" in height, weighing 167 lbs., of medium build and fair complexion. Left eye deformed from skull fracture in 1950. Medical history essentially negative. Serology - negative.

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY:

Graduated from high school. Attitude toward education and authority - normal. Manipulative dexterity - 79%. I.Q. - 111. General educational level as shown by Stanford Achievement Test - 11.7

RELIGIOUS HISTORY:

States he is protestant.

IMPRESSION:

A wanton antisocial who planned a crime while confined in the institution that resulted in wholesale murder. Subject is dangerous and capable of any commission that will accomplish his desires.

PROGNOSIS:

The sentence imposed makes prognostication uncertain.

CWM/mh



Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

KSP No. 177

Page.....

cn
10-11-60

KANSAS STATE PENITENTIARY
Lansing, Kansas

SPECIAL PROGRESS REPORT

Committed Name

HICKOCK, Eugene

Register No.

14746

REVISED INMATE'S VERSION: (Verbatim)
December 1960 Clemency Board

I feel that I should be given consideration for clemency because, there are circumstances that at the time the crime was committed that I never had any part in doing. I never participated in the killing of any of the people. That is I never did the actual killing. Also I never agreed to it. The first killing happened when I wasn't in the room. The killing was not premeditated or planned in any way. A witness for the state lied about me, but that I can not prove. But my main reason is that I never killed anyone.

/s/

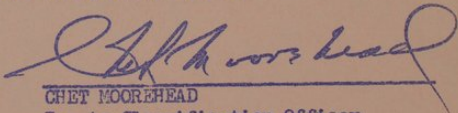
/s/ Richard E. Hickock

PRE CLEMENCY SUMMATION: December 1960 Clemency Board

Subject was received at this institution in April, 1960, after being sentenced to Hang, for the charge of Murder 1st. Degree, 4 counts, concurrent. Subject is a TWO time loser, having served 1 previous term in this institution. No work record is available due to his confinement in Death Row, but he has maintained a clear conduct record.

Subject is active in the Religious program.

CWM:cn
October 12, 1960


CHET MOOREHEAD
Inmate Classification Officer



Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

KSP No. 177

Page _____

KANSAS STATE PENITENTIARY
Lansing, Kansas

SPECIAL PROGRESS REPORT

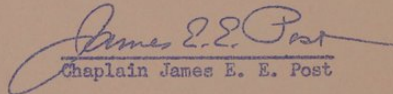
Committed Name HICKOCK, Richard

Register No. 14746

RELIGIOUS SUMMARY:

Even though the subject can not attend Church due to his confinement on death row - he is active in Bible Correspondence course work.

October 7, 1960

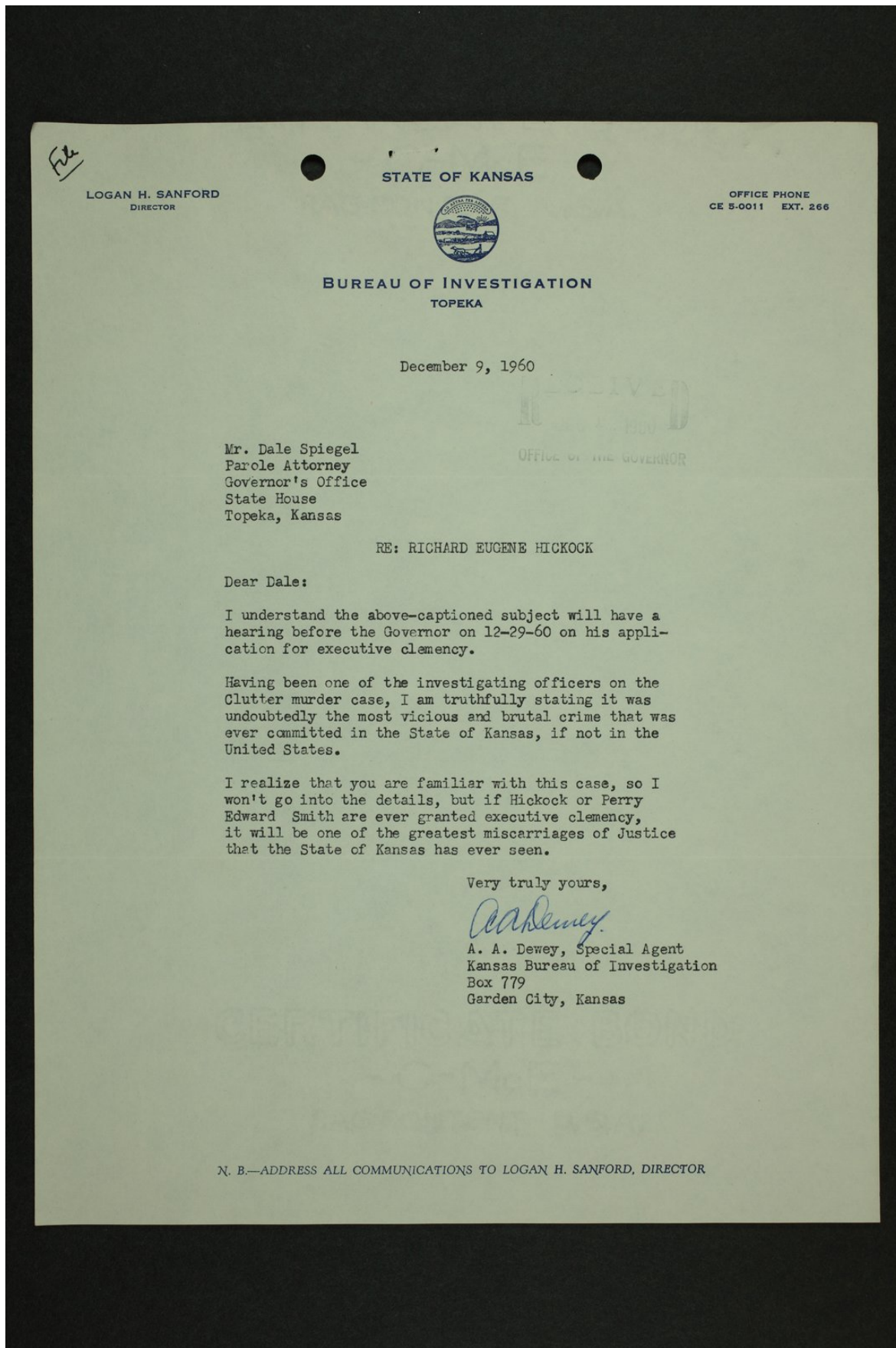

Chaplain James E. E. Post

WORK REPORT: 10-5-60

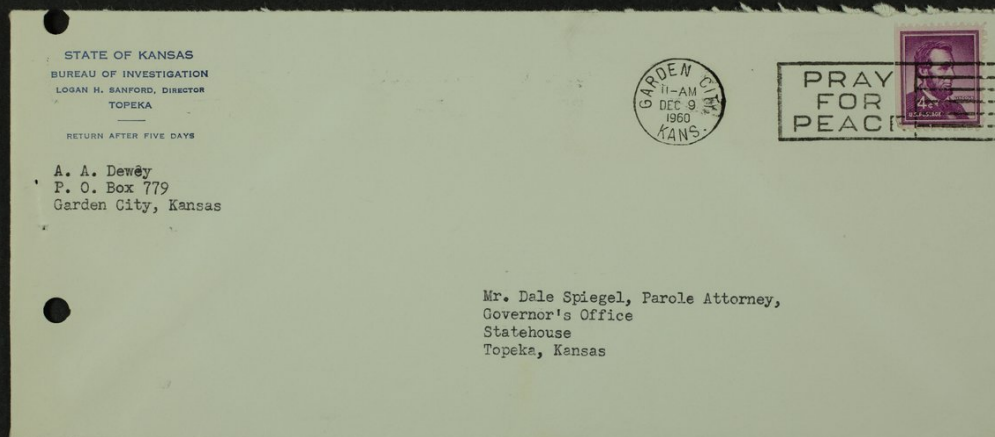
"This inmate is confined in Segregation with no work duties." ~~ability of work/dependability~~, adaptability, and attitude are very good.

/s/ Lt. T.V.E. Hofflinger

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

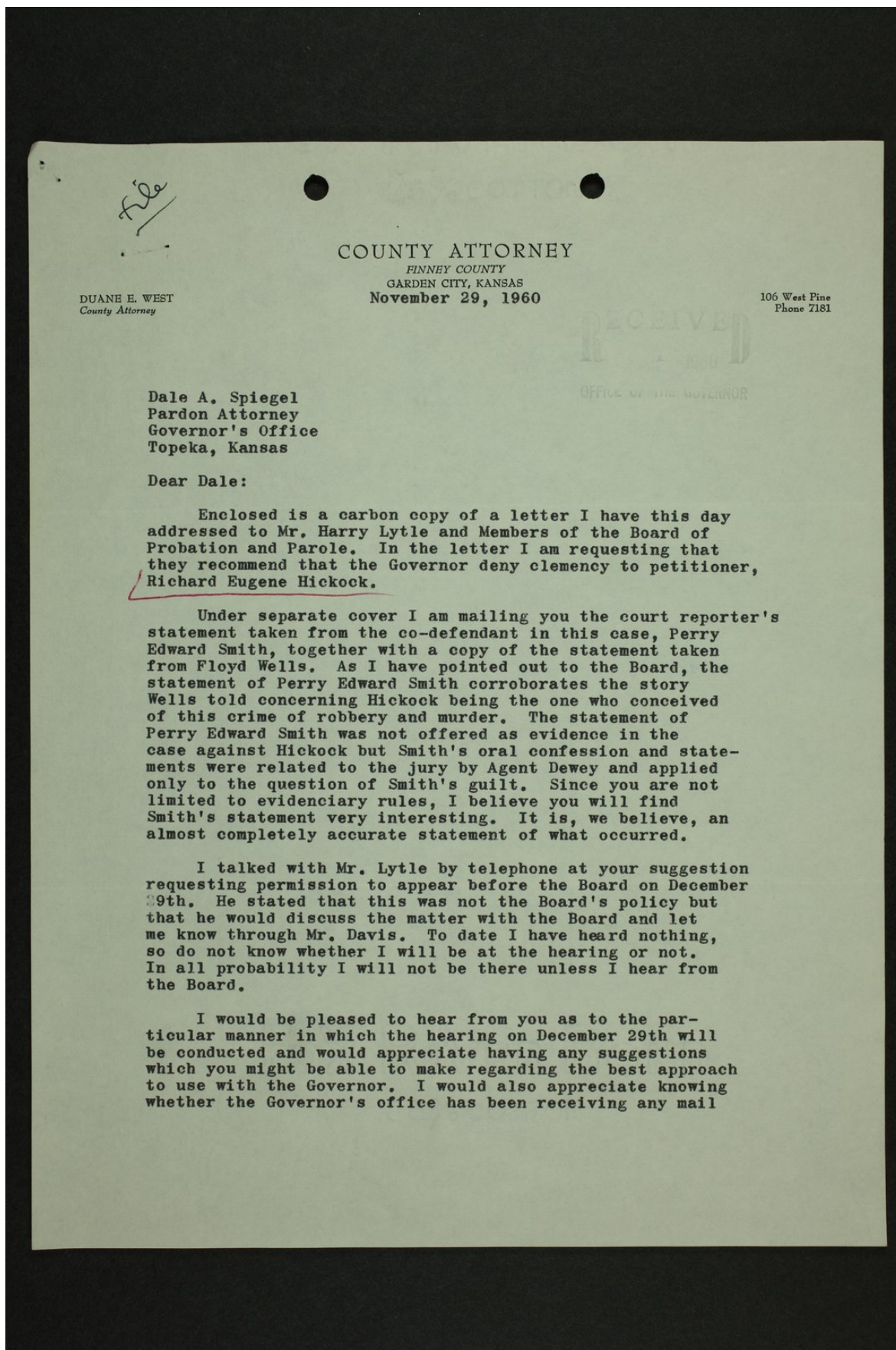


Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file





Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file



COUNTY ATTORNEY

FINNEY COUNTY
GARDEN CITY, KANSAS

November 29, 1960

DUANE E. WEST
County Attorney

106 West Pine
Phone 7181

Dale A. Spiegel
Pardon Attorney
Governor's Office
Topeka, Kansas

Dear Dale:

Enclosed is a carbon copy of a letter I have this day addressed to Mr. Harry Lytle and Members of the Board of Probation and Parole. In the letter I am requesting that they recommend that the Governor deny clemency to petitioner, Richard Eugene Hickock.

Under separate cover I am mailing you the court reporter's statement taken from the co-defendant in this case, Perry Edward Smith, together with a copy of the statement taken from Floyd Wells. As I have pointed out to the Board, the statement of Perry Edward Smith corroborates the story Wells told concerning Hickock being the one who conceived of this crime of robbery and murder. The statement of Perry Edward Smith was not offered as evidence in the case against Hickock but Smith's oral confession and statements were related to the jury by Agent Dewey and applied only to the question of Smith's guilt. Since you are not limited to evidentiary rules, I believe you will find Smith's statement very interesting. It is, we believe, an almost completely accurate statement of what occurred.

I talked with Mr. Lytle by telephone at your suggestion requesting permission to appear before the Board on December 29th. He stated that this was not the Board's policy but that he would discuss the matter with the Board and let me know through Mr. Davis. To date I have heard nothing, so do not know whether I will be at the hearing or not. In all probability I will not be there unless I hear from the Board.

I would be pleased to hear from you as to the particular manner in which the hearing on December 29th will be conducted and would appreciate having any suggestions which you might be able to make regarding the best approach to use with the Governor. I would also appreciate knowing whether the Governor's office has been receiving any mail



Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

Page 2-

about this matter. It would seem to me that it would be most expeditious of the Governor to continue all of these matters over into the lap of the incoming executive, especially in view of the fact that the court has not yet heard the appeals pending in this case.

Thanking you for your assistance and with best regards,
I am

Sincerely yours,

Duane
Duane E. West

DEW/dah

enc.

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

November 29, 1960

Mr. Harry Lytle
Chairman, Board of Probation and Parole
and Members of the Board

Gentlemen:

Mr. Dale A Spiegel, Governor Docking's pardon attorney tells me that on December 19th you will consider the application of Richard Eugene Hickock for executive clemency in the case of State of Kansas vs. Richard Eugene Hickock No. 2322, wherein Hickock was convicted in the District Court of Finney County, Kansas, on March 29, 1960, on four accounts of first degree murder, and the penalty was set by the jury as death by hanging. Since it is my understanding that Governor Docking accepts the Board's recommendations approximately 90 per cent of the time, I would like to take this means of urging the board to refuse a recommendation of clemency in this case and to acquaint you with some facts and information to back up my request.

I am enclosing herewith a copy of a statement taken from one Floyd Wells, formerly an inmate of the Kansas State Prison, now serving the balance of his sentence at the State Reformatory in Hutchinson. This statement was given to the Kansas Bureau of Investigation on December 10th after Wells had indicated prior to that time that he knew something about the Clutter murder. The statement sets out and establishes the fact that the robbery and murder of the Clutter family was planned and masterminded by the petitioner, Richard Eugene Hickock, while he was still incarcerated in the Penitentiary. Wells testified to the information contained in this statement at the trial here in Finney County and none of his testimony was at any time controverted by either of the defendants. Well's statement corroborated the statement given to us by Perry Edward Smith, co-defendant in this case, in that Smith stated that he had been asked to come to Kansas City by Hickock who stated that he had a "score" all lined up. Smith's statement further indicated that this was to be a case of robbery where there would be no witnesses left to identify the perpetrators of the crime.



Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

Page 2-

I am making the statement of Perry Edward Smith available to Mr. Spiegel only as a means of corroborating the statement given by Wells. Both of these indicate quite clearly that this crime was indeed premeditated murder from the very outset by the petitioner, Richard Eugene Hickock.

I am not going to dwell upon the terrible brutality of the crime. As you know, it took the life of Mr. and Mrs. Clutter and two of their children, age 15 and 16. This is something that all of us would like very much to forget.

At the trial of this case, the jury, after taking into consideration all of the facts and circumstances, deemed that this was a clear case of premeditated first degree murder and was of such magnitude that the extreme penalty of death should be and was imposed. I believe the jury reached the correct verdict and I know it was something that they did not do without a great deal of soul searching and prayerful consideration. I believe that the jury felt that society must protect itself from an individual such as the petitioner and the ultimate penalty in this instance is the only way in which to be absolutely certain that this petitioner does not once again take human life.

As a law enforcement official, as a private citizen, and on behalf of what I believe to be a vast majority of the citizens in the County, I am respectfully requesting that you deny this request for commutation of sentence and that you recommend to Governor Docking that he allow the sentence to be carried out as imposed.

With best regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Duane E. West

DEW/dah

cc: Dale A. Spiegel

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

June 1, 1960

Hickock

Mrs. E. A. Frack
Ingalls,
Kansas

Dear Mrs. Frack:

Thank you for your letter of May 27, and for reminding me of your daughter, Imogene, and her husband, for both of whom I have a very high regard.

Your real concern for the problem inherent in the Clutter case is appreciated.

Of course, no clemency action is contemplated in this case at this time. The appeals of those convicted of the crime are pending in the state supreme court.

With best personal regards to you and your family,
I am

Very truly yours,

Dale A. Spiegel
Pardon Attorney

cf

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

Thank you for reminding me of my daughter and her high school. I have a very real concern for her future. I am interested in the future of the state and the people of the state. I am interested in the future of the state and the people of the state. I am interested in the future of the state and the people of the state.

RECEIVED
MAY 31 1960
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Ingalls (Kansas)
5-27-60

I'd like to introduce myself - mother of Imogene Frank you - in fact I believe she told me her date on a number of occasions - of Jack Campbell - By the way they live in Pasadena Calif - He is with J.B.M. and they have 4 children -

you are Pardon atty - now I don't have any idea what influence you have on Gov Docking - but we do hear both names used on our T.V. channels - + in the newspaper - we live in the S.W. part of Kans - I believe they now call it the big 5th District - now this is what I'm getting at - we haven't heard one word about what the Governor intends to do about Smith + Hickock - that were sentenced to hang May 13th 1960. They had a fair trial - in fact - perhaps better than they deserved - but the people in Finney County were very good to them. a jury of 12 and a judge decided they should pay with their lives - even Hickock's mother was at the trial. and a sister of Herbert Clutter went + talked to her - as any good Christian would. + even mother said - yes they are doing all they can - under the circumstances.

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

Herbert Clutter his wife + a teen age child
shouldn't be dead to day - they were really
tops in anyone's books - Mr Clutter was a
leader for all good - always ready to lend a
helping hand - everyone liked the family -
I can't remember of been beautiful at the Jr + Sr,
Prom this year - + this year there are
just markers on the grove - all four -
and by two men that never even saw
them until that awful night - Is that
the American way of life? They begged for
their lives - Mr Clutter even offered to
give them a check for any amount if they
would just go away - + leave them unharmed -
Don't say it wasn't premeditated - you don't
carry that in your car just for fun do you?
They knew the way out there - so plain - why
we even live in the next county - but to this
day - we would sort of have to ask how to get there.
People of S.W. Kansas - just plain don't like what
Gov. Docking is doing about these cold blooded
murders - How do we know another Gov.
won't come along + pardon those in a few years?
I can't say I'm for Capital punishment -
but the law isn't good as it now stands -
The Herbert Clutter family didn't deserve to
die - they were sleeping peacefully away -
Read the script - you will find all that + more.
I've been a Democrat all of my life - but some
how - I just can't go along with this -
I don't hear from you - I'll know you
didn't even bother to read this - let alone think it over.
Thanks -
Sincerely yours,
Mrs E.A. Frack Ingalls Kansas.

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

May 17, 1960

Mr. & Mrs. Verlin Kuhns
Protection,
Kansas

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Kuhns:

Thank you for your letter to Governor Docking re-
garding Richard Eugene Hickock and Perry Smith.

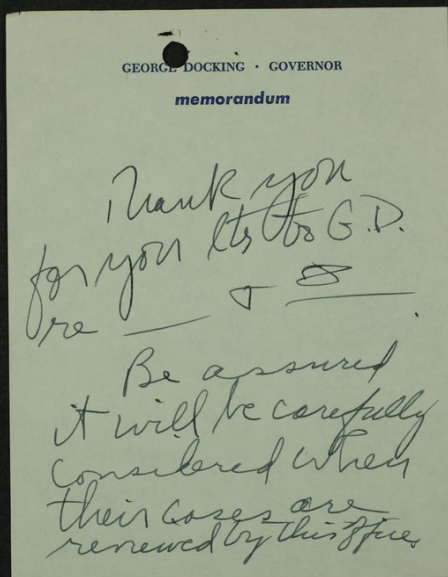
Be assured it will be carefully considered when
their cases are reviewed by this office.

Very truly yours,

Dale A. Spiegel
Pardon Attorney

cf

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file



Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

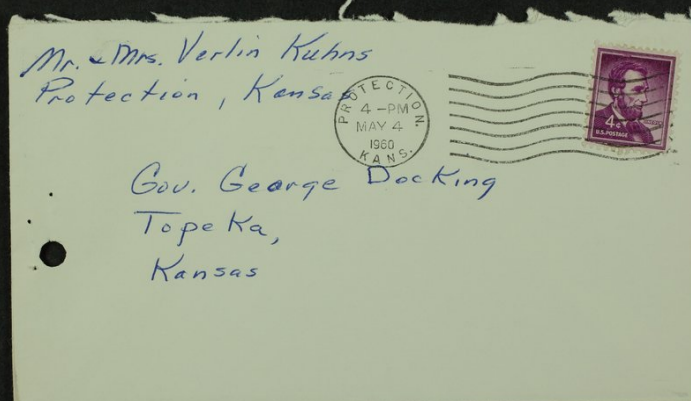
Protection, Kansas
 May 3, 1960
 Gov. George Docking
 Topeka, Ks.
 Dear Gov. Docking:
 we are writing to beg
 you to commute the death
 sentence for Richard Eugene Hickock
 & Perry Smith.
 First of all we are
 Christians. we believe that
 that Capital punishment is
 murder in the eyes of God.
 One murder cannot be made
 right by another.
 The death penalty is not
 a protection to society. It has
 been proven that the homicide
 rate of states which use the
 death penalty is greater than
 in the states which do not
 use it.
 I pray that God will
 speak to your heart and before

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

it is too late, you will
change the fate of these
two men.

Sincerely
Mr. & Mrs. Verlin Kuhns
Protection,
Kansas

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file



Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file



Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

File

Dale

May 13, 1960

Dear Mr. West:

Dale Spiegel has given me your letter of May 9 because it concerns a request for an appointment with Governor Docking.

First of all, be assured that you were not getting a run-around when it was suggested that you talk to Mr. Spiegel. It has been the policy of this administration to refer all penal matters to Mr. Spiegel.

This is an operational procedure established by Governor Docking, and one which we all observe.

So far as the Clutter case is concerned, it has not reached this office and any discussion of it would be premature at this time.

Sincerely,

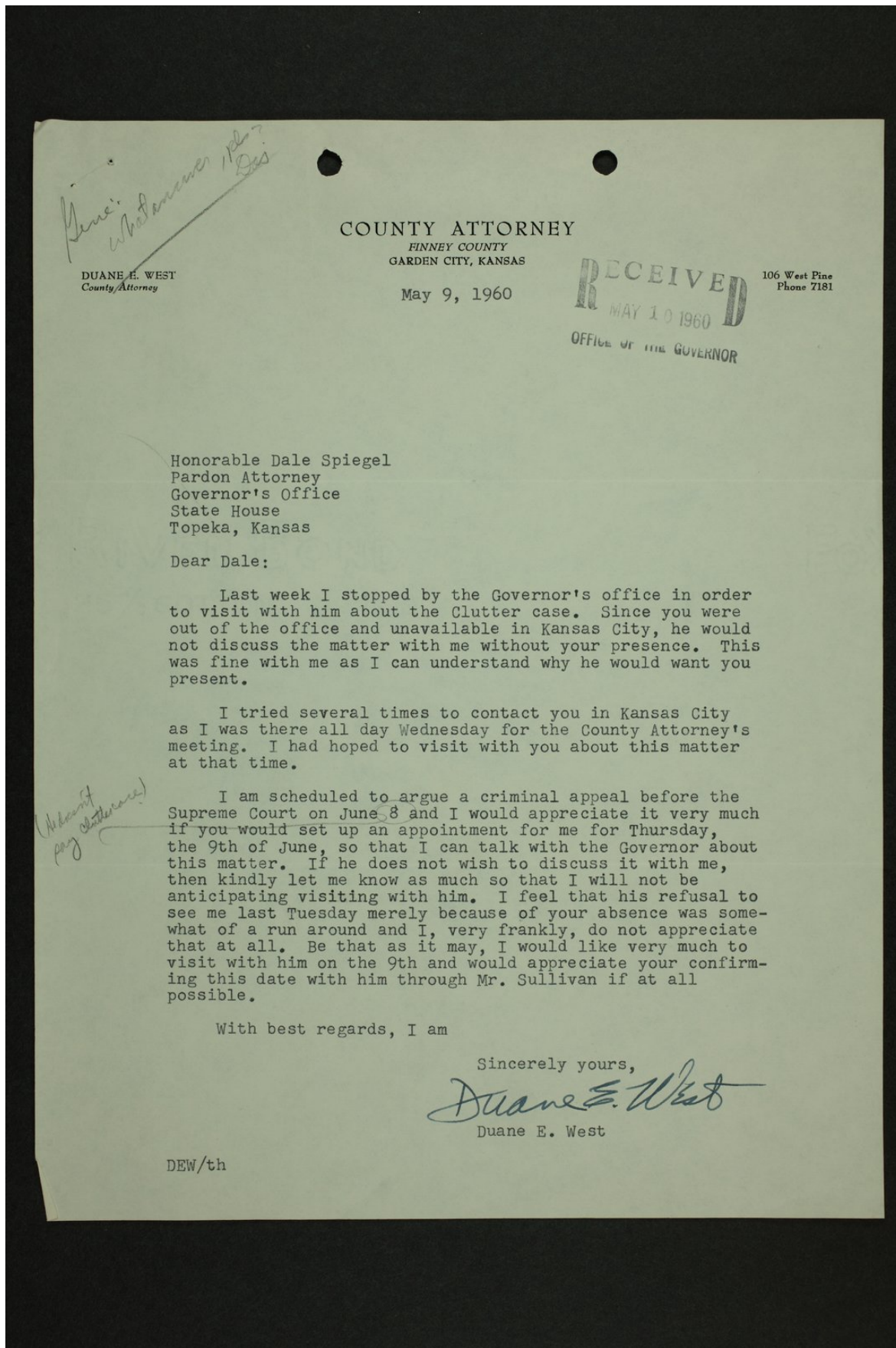
GENE SULLIVAN
Executive Secretary

GS:ps

Hon. Duane E. West
County Attorney
106 West Pine
Garden City, Kansas



Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file



COUNTY ATTORNEY

FINNEY COUNTY
GARDEN CITY, KANSAS

May 9, 1960

RECEIVED
MAY 10 1960
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

106 West Pine
Phone 7181

DUANE E. WEST
County Attorney

Honorable Dale Spiegel
Pardon Attorney
Governor's Office
State House
Topeka, Kansas

Dear Dale:

Last week I stopped by the Governor's office in order to visit with him about the Clutter case. Since you were out of the office and unavailable in Kansas City, he would not discuss the matter with me without your presence. This was fine with me as I can understand why he would want you present.

I tried several times to contact you in Kansas City as I was there all day Wednesday for the County Attorney's meeting. I had hoped to visit with you about this matter at that time.

I am scheduled to argue a criminal appeal before the Supreme Court on June 8 and I would appreciate it very much if you would set up an appointment for me for Thursday, the 9th of June, so that I can talk with the Governor about this matter. If he does not wish to discuss it with me, then kindly let me know as much so that I will not be anticipating visiting with him. I feel that his refusal to see me last Tuesday merely because of your absence was somewhat of a run around and I, very frankly, do not appreciate that at all. Be that as it may, I would like very much to visit with him on the 9th and would appreciate your confirming this date with him through Mr. Sullivan if at all possible.

With best regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Duane E. West
Duane E. West

DEW/th

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

KSP No. 1

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION
Kansas State Penitentiary

From Office of: KSP - Record Clerk Date: May 11, 1960

To: HICKOCK, Richard Eugene KSP # 14746 Subject: Stay of Execution

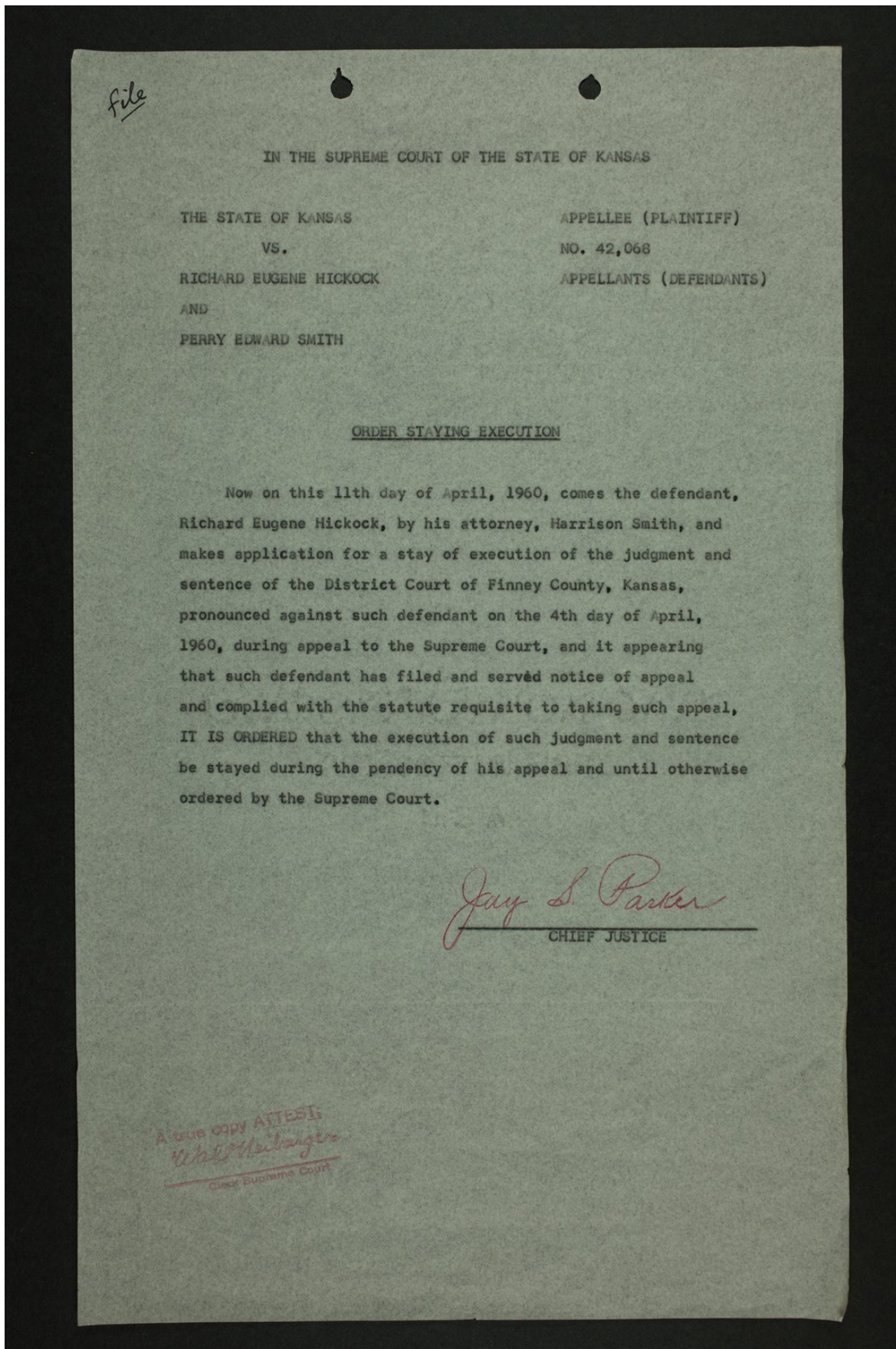
Be advised that an Order Staying Execution, dated April 11, 1960, and issued by Chief Justice Jay S. Parker, Kansas State Supreme Court, has been received in this office.

This is your official notice of this order.

cc: Director, Penal Institutions
Director, Probation and Parole
Warden
Pardon Attorney ✓
Director, KBI
Deputy Warden
File

William R. Barker
WILLIAM R. BARKER, Record Clerk

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file



Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

KSP NO. 50

KANSAS STATE PENITENTIARY PRISONER'S INTERVIEW

Reg. No. 14746 Name HICKOCK, Richard Eugene Date Received 4-5-60
 Alias _____ County Finney Sentence Hang years
 Crime: Murder 1st Degree
 Industrial school as No. _____
 Reformatory as No. _____ as _____ Date _____ received at _____
 State Industrial Reformatory _____ From _____ to a term of _____
 years for the crime of _____ Paroled _____ Discharged _____
 Penitentiary as No. 13651 as Same Received Mar '58 at Lansing
 State Penitentiary Kansas from Johnson to a term of 1 to 5
 years for the crime of Grand Larceny
 Paroled Aug 13 '59 Discharged _____

 Penitentiary as No. _____ as _____ Received _____ at _____
 State Penitentiary _____ from _____ to a term of _____
 years for the crime of _____
 Paroled _____ Discharged _____
 Penitentiary as No. _____ as _____ Received _____ at _____
 State Penitentiary _____ from _____ to a term of _____
 years for the crime of _____
 Paroled _____ Discharged _____
 Nativity Kansas City, Kans. How long have you lived in this state? Life Weight 165
 Age 28 years. Color White Religion Prot Occupation Painter(Auto)
 Grade of education High School Drink No Smoke Yes Chew No Use dope No
 Are you married? Div If so, number of children (4) 8, 7, 3, 2 years of age.
 Wife _____ Address _____
 Mother Eunice Hickock Address RR#1, Edgerton, Kansas.
 Father Walter Hickock Address Same
 Children's names [REDACTED] Addresses Kansas City, Kansas.

 Have you any brothers or sisters? 1 B Give names and addresses Walter David Hickock, Rt#4, Paola, Kansas.

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

In case of death notify Parents (Address on the other side)

Have you now or have you ever had any relatives in prison? If so, give particulars No

Is there any insanity in your family? If so, give particulars No

Your age when you left home 19 Why did you leave home Married

Were your home surroundings pleasant or unpleasant Pleasant

At what age were you first arrested? 17

Give particulars of the crime for which you are now committed "Plead not guilty and found guilty by Jury Trial."

Are you a naturalized citizen? native Born

Port of entry to U.S. If foreign born _____ By what steamship and line _____

Marines

Were you in the ~~army~~ 1110337 If so, place and date of enlistment Olathe, Kans. 1951
Undesirable, June 19, 1958.

Place where crime was committed Garden City, Ks How long were you in jail before trial 3 months.

And where Finney County Jail Did you plead guilty? No

Resident No (Edgerton, Kansas.) Transient _____

Give place you have lived during past six years, if outside of state No

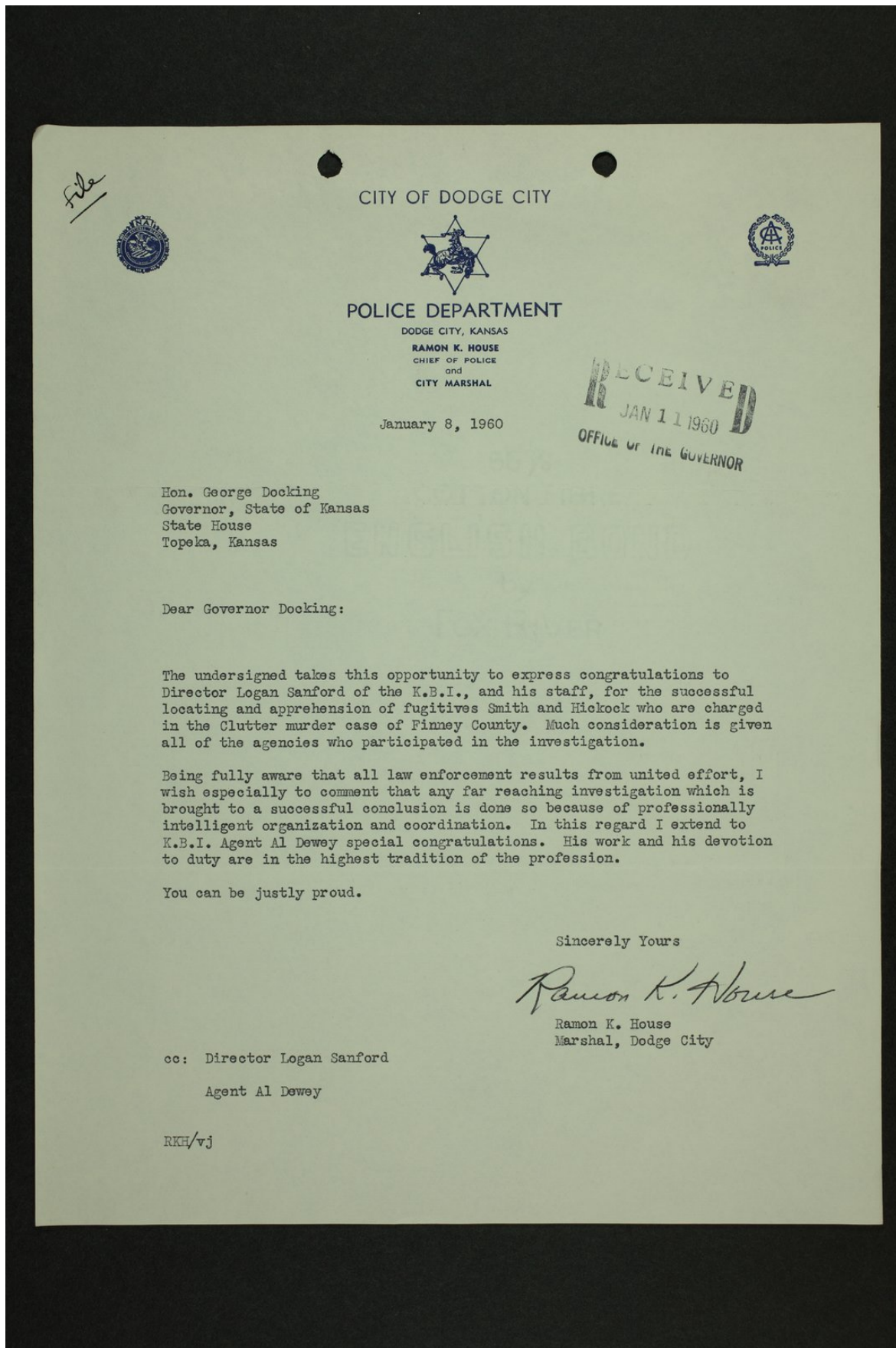
What do you consider the main cause of your downfall "Victim of Circumstance."

Were you employed when crime was committed Bob Sands Garage, Olathe, Kansas.

I have truthfully answered the questions asked of me, and hereby direct the Warden of this prison to open and examine all letters and other mail that may come addressed to me, while I am an inmate of this institution.

Richard Eugene Hickock

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file



Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

May 8, 1959

Mr. Richard E. Hickock
Box 2
Lansing, Kansas

Dear Mr. Hickock:

In response to your letter of April 23, 1959, let me suggest, if you believe your case sufficiently meritorious, that you apply for executive clemency as provided by statute.

I feel sure that Mr. William R. Barker, Record Clerk, will give you such assistance as you may require in making this application. You are cautioned, however, that this suggestion means only that by using this statutory procedure, your case can receive official consideration, and that such consideration can be either favorable or unfavorable in its results.

Very truly yours,

Dale A. Spiegel
Pardon Attorney

bg

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

Apply for Clem

RECEIVED
APR 29 1959

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Lansing, Kansas
April 23, 1959

Dear Sir:

I am writing you this letter with sincere hopes, that you will give it some consideration. Tonight just before I began writing this letter, I received word from my mother that my dad is ill, and unknown to him, he is believed to have cancer. If this is true, and I am sure it is, he may not have long to live. I have a younger brother but he is married and has children, so he is unable to help the folks financially. I saw the parole board in February and received an additional 6 months. Why, I don't know, but I did. I have had no trouble since I have been here. Up until this trouble in 1957, I was never in trouble with the law. I was arrested once in 1949 but released with no charge. At this time I have a detainer lodged against me in Wyandotte Co. I also have a few chicks out, but the people are being nice enough to hold them till my release and I can take care of them. When this trouble I am in first arose I was married and had three children, my own business, small I know, but still my own. I lost all this and more to. I'll pay for what I done the rest of my life. But believe me when I say I have learned. I know you have heard this story before, from men who never meant it, but I do. Five years ago, my (over)

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

father was sick for over 6 months, and I helped them then, and I want to now. Before I was arrested, my folks never owed much money, since then they have mortgaged the farm trying to help me. My spree was a short one, thank God. But in a period of about 4 months, I committed grand larceny, wrote bad checks, and stole a car. I got a big break when the Federal run this time with this. But now, and maybe I shouldn't, I am asking for another break. Not so much for myself but for my folks. Because I don't have much more time left to flatter. What I am asking for is this. I would like to be placed on the good parole board. I know it isn't much longer till August, but I could do so much on the farm during the summer for my dad. My lawyer tells me that I will not be convicted on the charge in Wyandotte Co. If you could do this, with God as my witness I will not betray your trust. If you will, please write me your decision. Thank you.

Richard E. Hickock 13651
P.O. Box 2, Lansing, Kansas.

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

KSP No. 310

KANSAS STATE PENITENTIARY
Lansing, Kansas

RECORD OFFICE

From Office of: William R. Barker Record Clerk. Date: # 6-19-58

Subject: Richard E. Hickock Number: #13651

To: Director Penal Institutions
Board of Probation & Parole
Pardon Attorney
Warden
Deputy Warden
Classification
Captain's Office
Inmate
File

A Detainer charging the above named subject
with "Dyer Act" was canceled this date by
U. S. Marshal, Topeka, Kansas.

Please have your records conform.

**DETAINDER
CANCELED**

Ly. C. Pike
Record Clerk

Richard Eugene Hickock inmate case file

KSP No. 309

KANSAS STATE PENITENTIARY
Lansing, Kansas

RECORD OFFICE

From Office of: William R. Barker Record Clerk. Date: 3-19-58

Subject: Richard E. Hickock Number: 13651

To: Director of Penal Institutions
Board of Probation & Parole
/ Pardon Attorney
Warden
Deputy Warden
Classification
Captain's Office
Inmate
File

A Detainer charging the above named subject with "Violation of Dyer Act" was filed this date by U.S. Marshal, Topeka, Kansas.

Please have your records conform.

DETAINDER

Marvin E. Blum
Record Clerk