

# Robbin' Banks & Killin' Cops: The Life and Crimes of Lawrence DeVol and His Association with Alvin Karpis and the Barker-Karpis Gang

Robert R. Ernst

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Raised in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Lawrence DeVol was in trouble with the police from the age of ten when he was confined in a juvenile facility. During his years of crime he committed burglaries, armed robberies and murders in eleven states throughout the Midwest. Eleven people met his guns and died violently at his hands, six of them being police officers protecting their communities and others when he was hired to murder them. During his career he escaped from three county jails, one state prison and one state hospital for the criminally insane. For the last few years of his life he was a member of one of the most notorious gangs of the '20s and '30s known as the Barker-Karpis gang. This gang committed bank robberies in several states, taking in over \$600,000 in cash and bonds, a huge amount for the times. After killing two police officers during a Minneapolis bank robbery, he was captured in St. Paul. Given a life sentence, he escaped from a state hospital for the criminally insane and continued his reign of terror with a series of bank robberies until cornered in Enid, Oklahoma. One police officer was killed and two others wounded before Lawrence DeVol met his death at the hands of police guns at the age of only thirty-two.



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