

Tells of Fighting Before Panok Died

George (Gregor) Hladiy may know early this afternoon if he has been found guilty of the murder of Josef Panok, whose body was found last August, floating in the McIntyre River. The case against Hladiy is expected to go to the jury in the early afternoon following addresses to the 12 jurors by Mr. Justice Ferguson, and the crown and defense attorneys.

Hladiy has been standing trial since Wednesday for Panok's murder when his case came up for a re-trial at the current spring assizes here of the Supreme Court of Ontario.

ROPE AROUND NECK

The accused took the witness stand himself on Friday afternoon, and testified that Panok had tried to kill him by slipping a rope around his neck.

Hladiy declared that he had swung around and hit Panok, then tied the same rope around Panok's neck and threw the body, weighted down with riser plates, into the water.

Hladiy testified in the Ukrainian language, through an interpreter, and spoke in low tones, coughing occasionally and swallowing noticeably.

He said that he and Panok had gone down to the railway tracks on the night of July 26 to get wheat from the box cars and that the fourth row of cars that they came to had grain in them.

When they found the fourth row of cars, said the accused, an engine went by, "a Canadian National from Port Arthur," and the two men waited for it to pass. "We had a smoke, and after the engine was gone, Panok took the seal off the car. I was just standing by. He tried to open it, and he said he couldn't. Then I tried to open it."

FELT THE ROPE

Hladiy said he opened it some 10 inches, and then declared: "At the time I was struggling with the door, I had my cap on. I felt him throw a rope on my hat. He caught it by the brim, and it fell down."

The rope, said the accused, fell "right under my nose."

Hladiy declared that he turned around, "and we started to struggle, and I hit him. He hit me, then

I hit him a second time, and his head hit against the car. When he fell down, I looked at him and he didn't move.

"When I saw he wasn't moving, I turned him over, and I went around him, and he didn't move. I got so nervous and excited. Then I picked up the rope that was there on the ground."

Defence Attorney Hugh Cunningham, at this point, asked the accused what he did with the rope.

Replied Hladiy: "I didn't know exactly what I was doing. I just wrapped the rope around his neck."

He added that he then went to a pile of riser plates "and picked up two." He declared that he didn't know the pile was there before hand, and that when he returned to where Panok was, "I tied them up to his feet and his neck, and threw him into the water."

The defence attorney then asked him: "Why did you put the rope around Panok's neck when he was on the ground?" and Hladiy replied: "I was so scared and nervous, and then it came to me that he was going to do that to me."

NO REASON

Crown Attorney E. D. Wilkens cross-examined the accused and asked him if he had had reason to think that Panok would attack him in any way, and Hladiy replied that he hadn't.

Mr. Wilkens then asked what the accused and Panok had talked about as they walked along the tracks, and Hladiy said they had only talked about getting the wheat and how much they could sell it for.

The attorney declared: "Now you say that all of a sudden he tried to lasso you and pull you down. He had the rope in his two hands, and he tried to get it down

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