

Legion of Canada and the United States Save Man from Execution

Wrongly identified as a murderer, then saved, and now awarded \$5,000 for the mistake, is a story of true comradeship in the Canadian and American Legion that has just had "finis" written across its file in the office of the National Rehabilitation Committee of the American Legion in Washington, D.C.

The veteran who came near to being railroaded after being seized in California and taken to Utah for trial, his life's savings used in frantic attempts to prove his innocence, is H. O. Phillion, a former member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the World War. He was arrested in Los Angeles and taken to Price, Utah, in 1928, when a man in a restaurant which he happened to visit in Los Angeles, mistook him for the real slayer in a crime committed in 1922.

The final chapter in the case is a notice written by Watson B. Miller, national chairman of the Legion's Rehabilitation Committee, to J. C. G. Herwig, of the Service Bureau of the Canadian Legion in Ottawa, as follows:

"We are indeed pleased to advise you of the receipt of the following letter from the department adjutant, the American Legion, Department of Utah, with reference to the above captioned man:

"Please be advised that the Utah legislature appropriated \$5,000 to reimburse the above-named veteran in part for loss suffered by his wrongfully arrested and confined in the Carbon county jail on the charge of first degree murder."

Phillion was seized and taken to Utah despite his claim that he had never been in the state, and that he had been in Canada at the time of the crime. Later, through the efforts of the Canadian Legion, and the Canadian Royal Mounted Police, brought

into the case through Legion efforts, he produced many affidavits to prove his innocence — despite the fact that the British law holds a man innocent until he is proven guilty.

When the case seemed darkest, and those able to swear that he was not the man, were afraid to do so because of the friends of the man slain, Phillion appealed for help from the Canadian Legion. He wrote:

"I am appealing to you in God's name, as an innocent man, to do all in your power to help me out, and to appeal to the government on my behalf to protect an innocent man and a British subject from the great injustice that is being done me."

The Canadian Legion's efforts made the case an international incident and brought into effective play the weight of British influence and prestige. The Dominion Command of the Canadian Legion coordinated all the efforts that went towards thwarting what would have been a terrible miscarriage of justice.

Phillion virtually was saved from the firing squad, the method of punishment in Utah, through the evidence induced by Canadian Legion efforts, and *The Legionary*, official publication of the Canadian Legion, says: "The American Legion proved itself a comrade organization in every respect, and very materially assisted in clearing the path of justice," and "the thanks of the Canadian Legion are due to their comrades of the American Legion for their helping hand in this amazing episode."

Cheaper in the Long Run

Somebody has estimated that the legislatures of the 48 states of the country are costing us in the neighborhood of \$15,000,000 this year. If that were the only cost we might be willing to give them a bonus to stay at home.—Los Angeles Times.

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