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Review of Cases at Cochrane Assizes

Murder Case Traversed to Spring Assizes. Fifteen Months for Assault on Officer. Other Cases Last Week.

Brief reference was made last week in 'The Advance' to the Timmins cases at the fall assizes then in progress at Cochrane. By error 'The Advance' made it appear that Mike Skakoon, accused

of the murder of Mrs. Leake at Timmins last May had been adjudged insane and committed to an asylum. In this suggestion this paper was mistaken. There had been question of Skakoon's mental condition, but instead of being committed to an institution for those mentally afflicted, his case was traversed to the spring assizes. J. M. Greer took over the defence of Skakoon at the request of the judge, the accused being unrepresented by counsel when his case was called. Mr. Greer pointed out that time was necessary for the

preparation of a proper defence. Also, it was arranged that a medical examination be made of the condition of the accused Skakoon. Drs. Paul and Brown, of Cochrane, examined Skakoon, and as a result of their report to Mr. Justice Garrow who presided at the assizes, an application was made to have the case laid over pending a more thorough enquiry. Accordingly the charge against Skakoon was dropped from the list for last week and will come up again at the spring assizes. In the meantime Skakoon is to be held in the Halleybury district jail until the assizes in the spring. In the meantime the condition of the man will be studied. A brother of Mike Skakoon's had been held for a time this year as a material witness in the case. This brother, Nick Skakoon, is out on a \$500 recognizance, his father, Sylvester Skakoon, of Blezard Valley, near Sudbury, being present at the trial at Cochrane last week and entering into a recognizance to guarantee the appearance of Nick Skakoon when the trial is taken up again next spring.

Another case of particular interest to this immediate district was that of John Kovacic, charged with assaulting Constable Hugh Douglas, of the 'Tisdale' police force, at Schumacher on August 31st. His Lordship described the action of the accused as a very serious one. "That sort of thing cannot be tolerated in this country," he said. Kovacic was sentenced to fifteen months in jail. "If foreigners come to this country they must not interfere with the administration of justice here," the judge remarked. In this case the jury was out only half an hour before they returned with a verdict of guilty. The judge told the jury he could not see how they could have reached any other conclusion from the evidence as submitted. Kovacic is a Jugo-Slav, and was accused of having struck the officer on the face with a stone while Constable Douglas was arresting a drunken man. The officer had his cheekbone broken in two places and was off duty as a consequence for several days. Constable Douglas positively identified Kovacic as the man who had assaulted him, while the stone with which the injury had been done was also produced in court. Constable Douglas had struck Kovacic on the head with his billy, and Chief McNinis had seen the mark on the man's head the following day. The defence

was that it was a case of "mistaken identity," as G. Vincent, lawyer for Kovacic, phrased it. Kovacic said the mark on his head had been caused by a fall on the ice some nine years ago in his native land. It was also stated that the accused had been drinking beer. Accused had been intoxicated to some extent the judge said, but he added:—"I am going to impose a sentence that will deter you and others from this sort of conduct and yet not prevent you from the chance of becoming yet a good Canadian citizen."

The third of special interest to this district was that of Arnold J. Chalut, of Timmins, who was charged with rape. In this case the jury were out some five hours, and eventually returned a finding that the accused was guilty of common assault on the girl, Evelyn May Cook. The jury retired at 4.15 p.m. Wednesday and at 7.45 returned for further instructions. "Can we bring in a verdict of common assault?" one juror enquired. Mr. Justice Garrow told the jury that if they felt the evidence did not warrant a verdict of guilty on the charge of rape they could consider other findings, such as attempted rape, indecent assault, and common assault. The judge also pointed out that the evidence of the accused himself was an admission of common assault. The foreman of the jury asked in regard to the penalty for common assault in such a case, but the judge said that was something with which the jury should not concern itself. That was for the judge to determine. The jury's duty was to consider the evidence and give their finding. One juror also wanted to know if the time already spent in jail by Chalut would be considered in the sentence imposed, but the judge said that he did not think it right for the jury to burden themselves with such questions as that. When the jury returned at 9.20 with the verdict of guilty on the charge of common assault, the judge described the finding as just and fair. He sentenced Chalut to three months in the district jail. In doing so the judge gave the prisoner a stern lecture. "Young men like you are a menace to society and a disgrace to your friends," he said. "I hope this experience will be a warning to you. Men of your type are more of a menace to the public than bank robbers and men who commit crimes by violence." Dean Kester, counsel for the accused,

had cross-examined the girl in the case at some length and had shown that her story at the trial last week differed in some material points from her evidence at the preliminary hearing. Mr. Kester also touched on the previous good reputation of the prisoner, who had suffered already in several ways. He had lost a good position at the Hollinger and had been in jail for three months. The jury had apparently considered this latter point and it seemed that while they felt that he had been guilty of a technical offence and so did not wish to give the accused a complete acquittal, at least some of the jurors apparently thought that the time already spent in jail might be sufficient punishment for the accused. Mr. Kester made an able plea for leniency under the circumstances. For the crown, A. B. Curry, the special prosecutor did not ask for severe sentence, but taking into consideration the past relationship of the prisoner with a young girl he thought a further sentence should be given. The Cook girl had claimed that Chalut had attacked and criminally assaulted her on July 10th on a street corner in Timmins. The prisoner denied this but admitted grabbing her by the wrist and arm and shaking her. Then she fell to the ground and he walked away. He said the girl wanted him to marry her and he declined, though he admitted immoral relations with her last spring. After the charge of rape had been laid the prisoner discussed with the girl the idea of having the case withdrawn. He said the girl agreed to this, but when he accompanied her to the police station for what he thought was the withdrawing of the case, he said the girl pointed him out to the police as the man wanted and he had accordingly been locked up. The girl had given the name of "Joe" Chalut to the police and this was the name his brother was known by. The brother was not in town and the prisoner had talked to the police when they had the warrant in the wrong name.

Henry Robinson, of Hearst, charged under Section 202 of the criminal code was acquitted on a charge that the judge referred to as "most repulsive." It was the only one of its kind that Judge Garrow had ever encountered, and he told the accused he was fortunate that the jury took the view they did of the evidence. Robinson, a 33-year-old farm hand, unmarried, was accused of an unnatural crime, the testimony for the crown resting entirely on the evidence of Cyrille Maheux, a farmer in the Hearst district, who told of his experience while searching for his cows on August 21st. Maheux told the crown prosecutor that there had been no trouble between him and the accused and that Robinson had been a good neighbour. Robinson himself in the box, however, swore that he and Maheux had had trouble over hay and pasture and that Maheux still owed him five dollars. Another witness for the defence suggested that Maheux had said that he was going to have Robinson "placed" because he was alleged to have burned his bush and was afraid of his barns going the same way. The jury was out 55 minutes, returning with the verdict that they found Robinson not guilty. Robinson was at once given his liberty, the judge saying the verdict was a proper one on the evidence.

The jury which heard the evidence in the case of a young Dane named Jensen who was charged with indecent assault on a young girl brought in a verdict of not guilty but at the same time added a rider saying that they accepted the evidence of the crown's chief witness regarding what he said he had seen but that the action of the accused was an entirely innocent one when his side of the story was known. Jensen was working on some houses being erected at Kapuskasing on the evening of July 4th, and his story was that the girl had asked him for a nickel and that he had taken her by the hands because he was afraid she might fall from the slide on which she was playing. The crown witness, who had been working in his garden some fifty to a hundred yards away, told the court he had been attracted by the action of Jensen and had gone over to the slide. He asked the accused if he had nothing better to do and struck him twice with the handle of the rake he was carrying. Later he told the police and on July 7th picked out Jensen as he punched the time clock to go on the job. The police chief was called and arrested the accused. Mr. Vincent, who was counsel for Jensen, told the jury the girl had been in another case of the same nature and had testified then what her mother had told her. The jury was out 25 minutes in this case against Jensen, and when the verdict of not guilty was announced by the foreman, Mr. Justice Garrow termed it fair and just in the circumstances, and Jensen was at once freed.

KAPUSKASING GETTING READY FOR THE HIGHWAY

The Northern Tribune, of Kapuskasing, last week says:—"The thirteen new houses being built this summer by the Spruce Falls Co. are now practically completed. In fact tenants are moving into some of them. The work of putting cellars under six houses on Bowman Ave. is also finished. Private garages have been added to other houses owned by the company in town, where these were wanted; and further plowing of lots ready for spring planting was done as well. The boulevards will have a much improved appearance next year. In a word, Kapuskasing is gradually getting all dressed up for trans-Canada highway tourist traffic in the near future, in the certainty that many of the auto jaunters will break their journey here and enjoy the town's extensive facilities for hospitality plus friendliness without blah."

Gold Bullion by Air Siscoe to the Mint

Cargo Valued at \$94,000 Sent from Siscoe Mines to the Royal Mint at Ottawa by Airship Last Week.

Despatches from Ottawa last week says:—

Using an airplane for the first time for such a shipment, and racing against time to take advantage of the high premium prevailing on gold, officials of Siscoe Gold Mines, in the Rouyn district, 45 miles from Amos, Que., on Friday last rushed to the Royal Mint at Ottawa 344 pounds of bullion valued at approximately \$94,000.

The gold reached Ottawa at 2.30 o'clock, after a successful flight of 350 miles from the mine by the first aerial treasure argosy in the history of this section of the continent.

Pilot S. L. Hill, of General Airways, Ltd., stationed at Amos, Que., was at the controls of the Fairchild F.C. 2 seaplane which brought in the gold, and the conveyance was accompanied by Owen Matthews, superintendent of Siscoe Gold Mines from which the precious metal was shipped.

It was learned after the arrival of the plane, and when the bullion had been turned over safely to officials at the Royal Mint under police guard, that the gold mining syndicate used the fast aerial method of transportation for their shipment to place the gold on deposit in Ottawa as rapidly as possible, owing to the state of the gold market.

Usually the product of the Siscoe Mines is shipped by rail, to points of deposit. In the winter General Airways machines fly it direct from the lake-side at the mines at Amos, and there it is sent forward to its assignee under special guard. In the summer boats plying the lakes and rivers to Amos carry the gold over that section of the route.

When it was decided to send Friday's shipment all the way to Ottawa by airplane, the Carleton County police were notified by wire to meet the plane at Rockcliffe aerodrome of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Chief McCarthy, of the county police, with one uniformed and one plain-clothes officer, went to the Air Station in an automobile to protect the precious cargo, and met the flying party. The gold was taken to the Mint in the police car, and few persons, even around the air station knew that such a valuable freight was being openly transported through the streets of the city.

Even officers of the Royal Canadian Air Force had not been advised that the plane was bringing gold. Appreciation of the prompt action of the county police in providing an armed escort for the bullion, although the matter was outside their jurisdiction was expressed by the pilot of the plane and the mine manager.

Pilot Hill told the Ottawa pressmen that the direct air route from the mine to Rockcliffe is scarcely 200 miles, but owing to certain obvious risks on such an important mission, he had followed the paths of civilization as far as possible, winging his way to Ottawa via Lake Expansé in the Lake Temiskaming region, and the line of the Ottawa river.

The incoming men from the Rouyn area said that Siscoe was practically the only gold producer in the field at the present time shipping direct from that district. The O'Brien interests, however, were about to install a mill to handle ore close to the Siscoe holdings, and would probably also ship through the railway route at Amos.

Mr. Hill and his passenger, Mr. Matthews, were guests at the Chateau Laurier, Ottawa, Friday evening, flying back to Siscoe the following day.

FIRST EXCURSION TO JAMES BAY BOOKED FOR NEXT JULY

The first conducted tour to Moose Factory, Ontario's new seaport and summer resort on James Bay, has just been arranged by the Canadian National Railways. Next summer, it is expected, 100 young people, under the sponsorship of the Toronto United People's Conference of the United Church of Canada, will take the tour from Toronto, leaving July 6th.

The itinerary, which takes up a week, includes a boat trip on Lake Temagami and side trips to the mining fields of Rouyn and Timmins. A day and night will be spent at Moose Factory itself, sleeping accommodation to be provided on the train. It is expected that the tour will be the beginning of a stream of regular tourist traffic to the new seaport.

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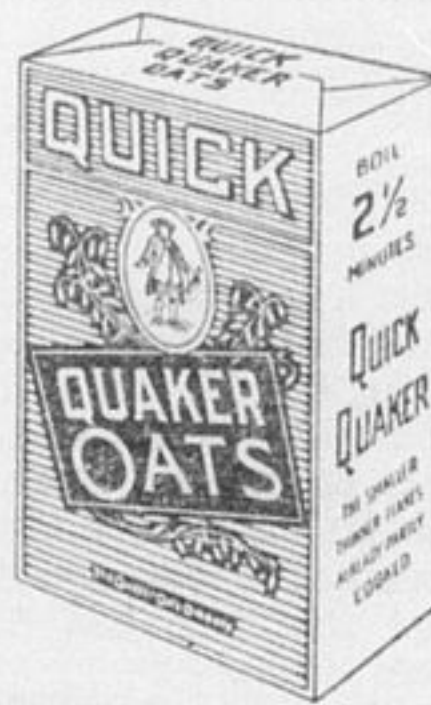
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