

Faces Serious Charge

As a result of the unfortunate accident on Christmas Eve in which Leo Arno was fatally injured, Provincial Constables Ervine and Kelly again visited Marmora on Saturday to complete their investigation of circumstances connected with the accident. George Vilneff, jr., was taken into custody on a charge of manslaughter, which was afterwards reduced to one of criminal negligence. He appeared before Magistrate E. J. Butler, K.C., the police charging that he was driving the automobile at the time of the accident. He was remanded until next Monday, without being asked to plead. Bail was fixed at \$5000.00 and was arranged, the accused returning home with his father.

An inquest will be held in Belleville on Thursday evening, when a number of witnesses will be heard. It is alleged that both Arno and Vilneff had consumed a quantity of wine and that a quantity of wine was found in the car. As they were both only eighteen years of age it opens up another phase of the matter to be investigated.

They started to motor to Madoc and it was while they were returning to Marmora the accident occurred. About six miles east of Marmora the car left the road and the right side of the car crashed against the side of the rock cut. Both front and back fenders were about demolished, the side of the car was damaged and bent, the glass was broken in the front door and the top was twisted and damaged. The auto looked to be a bad wreck, but was able to proceed to the village under its own power and it is estimated the cost of repairs will not be very high. The serious part was the injuries to Arno, who suffered a bad scalp wound and broke his neck.

Charges Against George Vilneff Were Withdrawn.

The inquest to enquire into the death of Leo Renard, known locally as Leo Arno, was held in Belleville on Thursday and Friday of last week. When the inquest opened on Thursday evening Mrs. John Quinn, Marion Doyle, Dr. Stobie of Belleville, Dr. Hamilton Crawford, County Constable Percy Gray and Mr. Jas. Bell were called as witnesses.

When George Vilneff was called Mr. C. A. Payne, K. C., arose and stated that he was appearing on behalf of Vilneff and that as the latter had a charge of criminal negligence against him he could not be compelled to give evidence. Crown Attorney B. C. Donnan, K. C., stated that he had no intention of doing anything that would prejudice the case of Vilneff or injure him in any way. When Mr. Payne still objected Mr. Donnan requested the Coroner, Dr. R. W. Tennent, to adjourn the inquest until the following day.

Arrangements were then made to have George Vilneff appear before the Magistrate at 10 a.m. on Friday, when all charges against him were dismissed and his bondsmen were released. Vilneff was then instructed to appear at the inquest where he was required to give evidence.

The evidence of Mrs. Quinn outlined the trip to Marmora with Arno or Renard driving her husband's car. George Vilneff met them on the way in and came to Marmora with them. She went to Maret's store to shop and told the deceased she would be ready to start for home between 9.30 and 10 o'clock, that was on Christmas eve. When she was ready to go home Arno was not around and she went to look for him but did not see him again until he was taken to Dr. Crawford's office. Mrs. Quinn told of brief statements by the deceased at Dr. Crawford's office when he said he didn't know what had happened after he got in the car. He also said "don't blame anyone, wine got the best of me." Mrs. Quinn also told of raising Renard from a boy of eight and explained why they changed his name to Arno.

Miss Marion Doyle told of seeing Arno and Vilneff in Mr. John Quinn's car and of them starting out when they changed seats and Vilneff started to drive.

Dr. Stobie and Dr. Crawford described the injuries suffered by the deceased and the cause of death, which was due to a fracture of the vertebra and severing the spinal cord.

Constable Percy Gray had eight photographs taken at the rock cut about six miles east of Marmora where the accident occurred. He gave a very clear description of the manner in which the accident had apparently occurred. He also told of questioning Vilneff and the latter claiming Arno was driving and going very fast when the accident occurred. He did not see any evidence of drinking on the part of Vilneff. No wine was found in the car but someone had been sick in it. Vilneff had later admitted that he was driving the car.

Jas. Bell gave evidence of purchasing the wine. He stated he thought it was for John Quinn, and that when Arno told him Mr. Quinn was not in Marmora he refused to give him the wine and told him not to take it out of witness' car. In spite of that he discovered later in the evening that the wine was gone and suspected Arno had taken it. He did not see the latter again until the day of his funeral.

On Thursday George Vilneff gave his evidence. He told the jury that Leo Arno had been drinking and that he was driving him around to sober him up when the accident occurred. He was sure that Arno lurched against him as he was returning from a drive out the Madoc highway and that he lost control of the car sending it against a rock cut, Arno being thrown clear of the car. He told of bringing the injured boy back to Marmora, and testified that Arno on different occasions during the night of December 24th, was nauseated from the wine he had been drinking. The witness stated he was travelling thirty miles per hour at the time of the accident and that he applied his brakes but thought that hitting the rock did more to stopping the car than his brakes. Asked if he had been drinking that night the witness said "Not at any time."

Without leaving their places the jury brought in the following verdict: "We the jury empanelled to inquire into the death of Leo Renaud find that he died in the Belleville General Hospital on Dec. 27th, 1934, from injuries received in an automobile accident on Highway

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