

car. He said the car had been turned over to him by his brother, Harry Heipel, who had driven it from the west on the evening of November 9. The murdered man's luggage was recovered from the CNR baggage room in Winnipeg, where it had been checked by a man answering Harry Heipel's description.

A charge of murder was now laid against Harry Heipel and a warrant for his arrest issued. His movements were traced to the international boundary and, since he was believed to have entered the States, his description was widely circularized throughout the Midwest. This eventually led to his arrest by the sheriff of Ogle County, Illinois. Heipel waived extradition and was returned to Canada for trial forthwith.

At a preliminary hearing held in Sinaluta, Heipel was committed for trial and appeared before Judge P. M. Anderson and jury in King's Bench Court in Regina on January 17, 1939.

The trial lasted for five days. A feature of the prosecution evidence was a comparison of .38 calibre revolver cartridge cases found near the body with similar cartridge cases discovered on a farm in the Arcola District, Saskatchewan, where Heipel had spent some time as caretaker immediately prior to the murder. Microscopic examination led to the positive conclusion that both groups of cartridges had been fired from the same weapon.

The motive for the crime was apparently robbery, since a wallet was missing from the effects of the victim. The twenty-four-year-old defendant had a previous criminal record. Among other prison terms he had served was one term of from one to fourteen years in Illinois State Penitentiary on a conviction of forgery in 1937. He had been deported to Canada before serving any substantial part of his sentence.

In all, forty-four witnesses were called for the prosecution. In the end the jury returned a verdict of guilty and the sentence of death was immediately imposed. Harry Heipel was hanged at Regina Jail on April 26, 1939.

The National Film Board made a film based on what became known as the Heipel Case. The well-known actor, the late John Drainie, played the part of the murderer, while Inspector Harvison took the part he had played in real life — that of the RCMP officer in charge of the investigation.

The film, believed to have been a fairly accurate reconstruction of what had actually occurred, opens with the farmer visiting friends and doing business in Regina. On his way home he stops in a small town for a cup of coffee and gets into conversation with a stranger. When it develops that they are both going the same direction the farmer offers his new-found acquaintance a ride after buying him a meal.

The film then goes on to show the two men getting into the car, the gregarious and friendly farmer talking and his young passenger tensing up as they drive along. Suddenly he pulls a revolver out of his pocket and, holding it to the driver's head, he orders him to pull over to the side of the road where he shoots him through the head in cold blood. He is next shown dragging his benefactor into a field where he fires several more shots at him before covering the body with a blanket.

The Film Board documentary was shown commercially at the time, but I remember seeing it while attending a training course at Regina Barracks. It had a strong impact, depicting as it did a kindly old man who came to a gruesome and cruel end in payment for playing the part of the Good Samaritan.

Saskatchewan RCMP Division Commander Dennie LaNauze, in reporting on the case to the Commissioner of the