
ANTON MARTINSEN FLADEBY



May 11, 1919
Manitoba Penitentiary, Stony Mountain
Aged 30 years

Mr. Fladeby was born in 1889 on a small farm at Enebak, 30km southeast of Kristiania (now Oslo), Norway. On April 3rd, 1909 shortly before his twentieth birthday, he set sail for the promising shores of Canada aboard the steamer "Oslo" Nothing is known about his wanderings in Canada from the time of his arrival until the winter of 1914. Most likely he found work on farms among the Scandinavian communities of Manitoba. A married brother named Reidar was also living in the province at the time. It was on December 1st, 1914 that Anton was first accepted to the staff of Manitoba Penitentiary at Stony Mountain. At the age of 25, he was now at the beginning of a career with one of Canada's most revered federal penitentiaries.

For three years he carried out his duties faithfully, all the time hearing the stories of the Great War overseas. Something must have stirred in him. In September 1917, he underwent an initial medical examination and the following January he enlisted at Winnipeg with the 1st Depot Battalion, Manitoba Regiment. He arrived in England in June of 1918 and joined the 52nd Canadian Expeditionary Force in France. His experience in France was brief, a matter of a

month before the Armistice was signed that November 11th. He remained in Europe until March 1919.

By late April he had returned to his job at Stony Mountain. A short ten days after his return to the Institution, on May 2nd, he was attacked in the hallway outside the barbershop by inmate Albert Johnson, an American who was serving a three-year sentence for forgery.

That morning, inmate Johnson had asked a Hospital Overseer for some medication for an upset stomach and also for a small knife to cut his fingernails. While he was cutting them, other inmates came into the doctor's room and inmate Johnson stepped into the hallway where he spotted Officer Fladeby. After watching for a few moments, he suddenly lunged at the officer, stabbing him in the neck and severing an artery. Another inmate is said to have pulled inmate Johnson away from the officer, prompting Johnson to run down the corridor to his cell. At some time in the ten short days that Mr.

Fladeby was back at the penitentiary, he had searched Albert Johnson's cell and discovered a letter that the inmate was writing, complaining of ill-treatment of inmates at the penitentiary. Since this was considered contraband at the time, the officer confiscated and reported it, as was his duty. It would seem that inmate Johnson harboured considerable resentment over this.

Two inmates applied first aid to the wounded officer until the arrival of the Penitentiary Surgeon. All three attended to him for over an hour; he appeared to be resuscitating and he was taken to Winnipeg General Hospital. Although newspapers initially reported his condition was improving, Mr. Fladeby died on May 11th, nine days after the attack due to internal bleeding.



During inmate Johnson's trial in July, the inmate stated that he, "could not say whether he struck at him or ran at him, but something came to me as I ran through the corridor to my cell ... I had no intention of hitting Fladeby when I met him." After only an hour and twenty minutes of deliberation, the jury found him guilty of the manslaughter of Anton Fladeby and he was given a life sentence. The trial created quite a sensation at the time, as inmate Johnson accused Stony Mountain staff of cruel and inhumane treatment of prisoners.

In November 1919, inmate Johnson was transferred to Kingston Penitentiary, and in 1935 he was deported to the United States. Johnson had a lengthy career in the U.S., having previously served time in military prison throughout the U.S.

Officer Fladeby was buried in Winnipeg at the Brookside Cemetery at the age of thirty with full military honours. He rests in plot Mlty-01760.

He was survived by his widowed mother in Norway, whom he had been supporting, and his married brother Reidar who had also come to Canada.

Officer Fladeby's name was added to the Canadian Police and Peace Officer's National Memorial on Parliament Hill in 1998 on tablet #7, script 9.

