

Trial Board Hearing Ends; Decision Expected Monday

Mitchell To File Lawsuit

Key Witness At Hearing

Witnesses Give Conflicting Versions Of Mitchell Beating

The Police Trial Board hearing charges of undue force in making an arrest against two officers officially concluded its session Tuesday afternoon.

A decision is expected Monday from the Board composed of Police Commissioner Edward Piggins and other top headquarters brass.

Facing a police trial board charged with unprovoked assault, two patrolmen testified they hit bar owner Robert F. Mitchell, 32, only after they had first been attacked.

The 25th witness to be called during the week-long hearing, Patrolman Robert J. Lessnau admitted he and his partner, James Davis, struck Mitchell following the latter's arrest Jan. 18 at W. Warren and Williams.

"As I tried to search Mitchell," Lessnau said, "he said he was not going to be patted down and punched me on the shoulder."

"Then I hit him in the face with my fist. My partner also hit him and all three of us went down to the pavement," Lessnau testified.

Mitchell, of 2081 Virginia Park, was arrested after he dropped off a passenger at the Westside intersection. He had been driving with only one headlamp.

The two patrolmen said they halted Mitchell because the passenger and Mitchell seemed "in such a hurry."

Testifying last Wednesday, Dr. Felix Engel, physician on duty at Receiving Hos-

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Many Questions Unanswered As Trial Board Ends

Why did Dr. Felix Engel, in his testimony before the trial board in the Robert F. Mitchell case, attempt to make it appear Mitchell was not severely beaten? Why did he



THREE KEY WITNESSES during the Trial Board hearing of the Mitchell case were D.S.R. driver George K. Bobo, Barbara Jernigan and Nancy Alexander. All said they saw Mitchell being beaten.



PATR. ROBERT LESSNAU



PATR. JAMES DAVIS

HAROLD LYONS CALLED "ILL"

Prison or Hospital? Ex-Boxer's Future Now Up To Judge

By PAT STEPHENSON
(Chronicle Special Writer)

On the afternoon of Dec. 17, 1956 Harold Lyons, 23, former Detroit welterweight boxer, entered a radio-television shop on Tireman and committed a heinous crime.

The next day he was arrested and subsequently pleaded guilty to the charge "assault with intent to rape."

Since his arrest, Harold has been in the Wayne County Jail. To the many people who have known Harold before or after the crime, his future life hangs between destruction and salvation.

To Harry Duplessis, probation investigator for Recorder's Court, Harold is a young man who never before committed a crime. He is a sick boy, deeply disturbed mentally. His future as a useful citizen or a hardened criminal largely depends on his sentence.

Harold's victim was co-owner of the show with her

"Harold used to have a sunny disposition, Duplessis said, "but now he is a sick-confused boy."

In Jan. 1954, Harold entered the Army and served over 10 months in Korea and Japan. He was given an Honorable Discharge in Dec. of 1955.

Duplessis stated that the mental and physical strain on

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Mrs. Hattie Dodds Succumbs; Rites Planned Friday

Funeral services for Mrs. Hattie Dodds, of 449 E. Palmer, will be held Friday

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Trial Board to Conclude Sessions

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pital when Mitchell was brought in, said the patient had a "small laceration about one and one-half by two inches in his head. There was a contusion under the right eye without any opening."

Dr. Engel, in reply to a question, said he used eight or ten stitches to close the wound.

Other testimony from Dr. Engel:

Q. Did you observe the injured arm which Mitchell said had been struck with a police man's night stick?

A. No, the patient didn't mention anything about his arm.

Q. Doctor, look at this picture. (A photograph of Mitchell taken shortly after he was arrested was displayed.)

Do you see the swollen right arm?

A. As I said, the patient did not say anything about his arm to me.

Q. Did Mr. Mitchell complain that he lost one tooth?

A. No. I looked in his mouth and asked him if anything was wrong. He said it wasn't.

Thirteen-year-old Nancy Alexander, of 4845 Tillman, was another witness.

The young girl said she and a companion were in a restaurant when another youth ran inside and said two policemen are "beating up a man outside."

Nancy said "two officers were on top of this man. The man was on the ground and there was a lot of blood on the sidewalk."

Q. Was each of the of-

ficers hitting the man with nightsticks?

A. The officer who was at the man's feet was hitting him with a nightstick . . . I saw them hit him one or two times and heard the man say 'Please don't hit me anymore. I haven't done anything.'

A Negro patrolman, Jerome Jenkins, testified Thursday.

Patrolman Jenkins said he and his partner, Patrolman James Banks were on scout car duty and found Patrolman Davis and Lessnau with Mitchell handcuffed in a doorway.

Patrolman Banks said he didn't recognize Mitchell because of his "physical condition and the darkness."

Edward Hayes, 19, of 4556 Twenty-fifth, told the trial board he saw Mitchell "strike one of the officers and the officer struck him in the face."

Important witnesses were Dr. Edward G. Anderson, a dentist, and Dr. Leon Dixon, a physician.

Dr. Anderson testified he examined Mitchell's teeth two days later and "found one upper false tooth missing" and two loose lower natural teeth . . . Mitchell's mouth was bleeding and his gums were swollen."

Dr. Dixon said an examination of Mitchell Jan. 21 disclosed the following:

"Two abrasions below the left knee; a small laceration of the knee cap; two or three bruises of the lower left chest; discolored right thumb; right hand swollen; laceration of the left scalp; bruises of the left forehead and a bruised right forehead.

"Also, bruised left lower eyelid; eye partly closed; bruised left cheek and swollen left forearm."

Dr. Dixon also said an x-ray of Mitchell's hand revealed a chipped bone of the fourth finger.

Atty. Julian P. Rodgers, counsel for Mitchell, objected to x-rays taken of Mitchell three years ago becoming a part of the court record.

He explained he intended to file a \$25,000 damage suit and wanted the x-rays in his possession.

Commissioner Piggins, however, ruled the x-rays would remain in the custody of the trial board until a decision in the matter has been reached.

Sgt. Thomas Moldoom testified he served Mitchell with a subpoena to appear in court and said the latter "did not have a bandage on his hand."

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