

Man accused of killing Colten Boushie only intended to scare him, son testifies



The SUV involved in the Colten Boushie shooting is shown in a Saskatchewan Justice handout photo released at the Gerald Stanley murder trial.

HANDOUT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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The man accused of killing Colten Boushie said he only intended to scare him when the gun "just went off," his son testified Wednesday.

Sheldon Stanley said he was standing a few metres away when he saw his father, Gerald Stanley, with a gun in his hand at the side of the vehicle. His father looked sick and said, "I don't know what happened. I bumped him and it just went off," Sheldon Stanley testified.

Gerald Stanley, 56, a cattle farmer, is charged with second-degree murder in the death of Mr. Boushie, 22, a Cree man from the Red Pheasant First Nation. Mr. Boushie was killed by a bullet to the back of the head on Aug. 9, 2016.

Mr. Stanley said he and his father were working on a fence late that afternoon when they heard a vehicle pull into their farm yard. Then they heard someone trying to start their

ATV and ran to see what was going on. Mr. Stanley said he saw someone jump off the ATV and get into a Ford Escape that tried to drive away.

Mr. Stanley, who was carrying a hammer, said he smashed the windshield of the vehicle as it drove past. The vehicle continued forward a few metres and crashed into another car before coming to a stop.

The cousin of an Indigenous man shot dead in 2016 is urging people to come out and 'bear witness' at Gerald Stanley's trial, which began Tuesday. Stanley is charged with second-degree murder in the death of Colten Boushie. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mr. Stanley said he ran to the house, planning to grab his keys so he could follow the vehicle and, as he reached the house, heard two gunshots. The sound came from behind him, so he believed it was his father who fired.

After getting his keys, he came back out and it was seconds later that he heard a third shot. Then he saw his father standing right next to the driver's side window of the stopped vehicle holding a handgun, a Russian-made semi-automatic.

"He looked at me like he was going to be sick. He said 'I don't know what happened. It just went off. I just wanted to scare them,'" his son testified.

The son further testified that two men from the car had run away. Two young women who had also been in the vehicle got out and tried to attend to the victim, Mr. Boushie, but it was soon clear that he was dead. As they pulled his body from the driver's seat, a weapon was dragged out and fell to the ground. It was the barrel of a .22 calibre rifle that was missing a stock and trigger guard. The weapon was loaded, but bent out of shape.

Mr. Stanley said his mother, who had been mowing the grass nearby, told him to call 911 and told his father to go inside. As Mr. Stanley was on the phone with emergency operators, the young women attacked his mother but stopped when he shouted at them.

Then he, his father and mother went inside to wait for police.

Court also heard testimony from Eric Meechance, Mr. Boushie's friend, who was a passenger in the vehicle that day.

Mr. Meechance said he and his girlfriend met up with Mr. Boushie and his girlfriend and another young man, Cassidy Cross, from the Red Pheasant reserve, planning to go swimming. They were drinking whisky and vodka that day and shooting at targets with the .22 rifle, Mr. Meechance said, before going to Maymont to swim in the river.

On their way home, they hit a culvert and punctured a tire. They were trying to go as far and as fast as they could before the tire completely gave out. They stopped at one farm and Mr. Cross tried to break into a vehicle using the butt of the rifle, but it broke. Under

cross-examination, Mr. Meechance said he thought the rifle in the vehicle was not loaded. Having taken nothing, they left.

It was he and Mr. Cross who got out of the vehicle and were near the ATV, which he was adamant did not move while they were present. He heard someone yelling angrily and they jumped back in the vehicle. As they tried to drive away, a blow smashed the windshield into a spider web of fractured glass and Mr. Cross, who was at the wheel, struggled to see where he was going, he said. A few seconds later, they crashed into another vehicle and could go no farther. When he got out, Mr. Meechance said he heard gunfire and ran.

The defence pointed out that Mr. Meechance did not tell police that there was a gun in the vehicle or that they had attempted to break into other vehicles earlier that day. He also told the media shortly after that they were looking for help with a flat tire, when they were actually "motivated by theft," Scott Spencer, Mr. Stanley's lawyer, said.

The trial continues on Thursday.