Capital punishment in Canada:

Capital punishment is the ultimate decision in court, where the accused is sentenced to death. The death sentence in Canada dates back to our country’s early history as colonies, and was used legally until it was abolished in 1976. Canada’s only method of execution was hanging, having deemed it the most “efficient”. Capital punishment began to stir controversy with the public in the 1900’s, as many people began to question the morality behind killing as a form of punishment for killing. The last hangings in Canada were of Arthur Lucas and Ronald Turpin in 1962. In the early 1800’s, reasons for being awarded the death sentence included unlawful abuse, murder, robbery with wounding, among many others. In the late 1800’s and early 1900’s, only three crimes were punishable by death; murder, rape, and treason. Such a terminal and serious punishment is still questioned around the world with so many countries still accepting capital punishment. But for Canada, it’s all in the past.

If “2 fisherman” took place in Canada, when would it take place?

Based on evidence in the story, the tale of the two fisherman would take place around the 1930’s. The author describes a small town with old fashioned buildings and customs. The importance of the death penalty in the story also makes a strong argument that the hanging of Thomas Delaney would have happened a long time ago. The gallows in the jail show that hanging probably isn’t too rare where they live, and Smitty being that hangman shows that the job of the hangman happens so often that it becomes a permanent job. After the hanging in the story, there was a large crowd outside, waiting to oppose the decision of death to Delaney. This could show that people are starting to oppose the death sentence in Canada, as movements for abolishing capital punishment followed after these years.

Should Delaney have been killed for his actions?

In my opinion, the death sentence for the actions of Delaney was too harsh of a punishment. He acted out of defense of behalf of his wife, but perhaps went too far by killing Rheinhart. In the story we see that Delaney hadn’t flat out killed another man, Rhienhart had fought against him and Delaney was hurt fairly badly in the fight. We can only assume that he was enraged at the sight of another man trying to abuse his wife, which back then was punishable by death as well. If Delaney hadn’t killed Rheinhart, it’s possible that Rheinhart would have received the death penalty and that execution would be questioned. But because of everything that did happen, Delaney was unfairly punished. He didn’t intend to kill another man, just to defend a loved one. His actions were not malicious and only based on the fact that Rheinhart was trying to molest his wife. Thomas Delaney was a young man that didn’t deserve to be hung.

Image: the last hanging in Canada was of Lucas and Turpin



Sources:

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