

Book Claims Jackson Said He Killed

New York

A friend and literary editor of George Jackson, the prison inmate who became a cause celebre after writing "Soledad Brother," says that Jackson admitted to him that he killed a prison guard.

The statement was made by Gregory Armstrong in a book of reminiscence about his relationship with Jackson that was published this week. Titled "The Dragon Has Come," the book says that the confession dropped inadvertently from Jackson during a taped interview with Armstrong in Soledad prison June 19, 1970.

Jackson was shot to death in August, 1971, in what authorities described as a breakout attempt at San Quentin prison in which three guards and two other convicts also were slain.

Jackson and two other inmates were accused of murdering a guard at Soledad on

January, 1970, in retaliation for the death three days earlier of three black inmates shot by a guard during a racial brawl in an exercise yard.

The admission came, Armstrong wrote, as Jackson derided contradictions in grand jury testimony naming him as the guard's killer.

Jackson was pointing out that a witness identified him as holding the guard as he was being beaten to death, Armstrong said.

Then Jackson said: "Now listen, man, he didn't see my face until later on when I dropped the guy and I'm supposed to be beating on him."

Armstrong said the words — "he didn't see my face until later on when I dropped the guy" — just slipped out and Jackson realized it almost immediately.

"He hears himself — his face pulls back for just an instant and he sees in my face that I have heard him, heard the same words he had heard and understood what they meant," Armstrong wrote.

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