

Judge Dowsley's Report on Evidence of the Bruels' Charges

In the belief that our readers will be interested in the report sent by Judge Dowseley to the Education Department after the hearing of the charges against Inspector I. D. Bruels, and on the strength of which Mr Bruels has been reinstated by the Department. The Observer publishes it in full this week. It is really only a resumé of the evidence as presented. Judge Dowseley's commission being simply to hear the evidence and report. His report is as follows:

Remarks at Conclusion of Hearing.

As I stated at the opening of the investigation my duties are to investigate and report, but without saying definitely what my report will be I may say that none of the charges have been sustained. They have been based largely on hearsay or idle gossip. The petition sent to the county council in February last which resulted in Mr Bruels' first suspension was signed by the Trustees of a school section, one of whom admitted that he was not a Trustee of the previous year and knew nothing whatever of the charges. This is largely on a par with all the charges in this investigation; they had no foundation whatever, and it is a great pity that this investigation was made necessary. We have the finest educational system in the world and it is the aim of the Education Department to properly educate the young and all its efforts are to that end. Education is an asset to the State and nothing should be allowed to interfere with the work. These charges and the differences between the Council and the Inspector are certainly a detriment to the work of the Department and cannot be allowed to continue. I trust that from now on harmony may prevail and every effort made to assist the Education Department.

I thank the counsel engaged in this case for all the assistance in carrying through the investigation. I recognize the difficulties, particularly of Mr Burritt, in formulating the charges and marshalling the evidence, therefore, I know the labor which such work entails and that his duties have not been light. Both counsel have performed their duty in this investigation to the full.

I desire also to express my appreciation of the candid, straightforward and truthful manner in which the young lady teachers gave their evidence. I was much pleased with their manner and what they said carried weight. They are certainly a credit to the teaching staff of the County of Renfrew.

In the matter of the investigation of certain charges preferred by the Council of the Corporation of the County of Renfrew, against Mr I. D. Bruels, Inspector of Public

rude Hume, the Court reporter at Brockville, to be in attendance.

At the time and place so fixed I was attended by the following counsel.—Mr James H. Burritt, K.C., for the complainants, and Mr William R. White, K.C., for the respondent. Dr. John Waugh, the Chief Inspector, sat with me to watch the case in the interest of the Education Department, and I thereupon proceeded to hear the several charges.

On the opening of the matter charge 1 (a) was withdrawn.



Pte. Leo Kelly

Son of Mr and Mrs Phillip Kelly, of the Point, Allumette Island, overseas with 130th, and transferred to France.

On charge 1 (b), School Section No. 7, Stafford, the evidence was taken of the school teacher, Miss Retty, and three school trustees. The evidence disclosed that Miss Retty had taught in this school from September, 1914, until June, 1915, under a permit. The Trustees advertised in the summer of 1915 for a qualified teacher, but did not succeed in getting one. They then applied to Mr Bruels for permission to re-engage Miss Retty. As Mr Bruels did not know Miss Retty, he suggested Miss Zeroth, who was known to one of the Trustees, who said she was a good teacher. Subsequently Miss Retty was given a school in Ross under a permit, and the Trustees engaged Miss Zeroth. No evidence of any compulsion or insistence by Mr Bruels, or that he was acting otherwise than in the interests of the school. The Trustees, or at least one of them, knew Miss Zeroth and the question of her nationality did not enter into the transaction in any particular.

On charge 1 (c) Micksburg School No. 2, Stafford, the evidence was taken of Miss Strutt, and of Roy Winters, a Trustee. Miss Strutt was engaged from September until Christmas, 1913, and taught during the term of her engagement. No arrangement was made for her continuance and she was not asked to continue. After the New Year the Trustees engaged Mr Myers. Further than recommending Mr Myers, Mr Bruels did not interfere.

On charge 2, the evidence of a Trustee shows that the Board after advertising for a qualified teacher engaged Miss Zeroth, without any interference or suggestion from Mr Bruels.

On charge 3 (a) Strasman's School No. 5, Alice, the evidence was taken of the teacher, Miss Knight, the German Minister, Rev. Pranschke, and of Mr Bruels; and disclosed that Mr Bruels did not encourage German children to attend German schools. He did know that some German pupils were absent from school one day each week, presumably attending a German religious school. The teacher told Mr Bruels on one of his school inspection visits. He (Mr Bruels) deposed that he suggested to the German minister that the religious instruction be given on Sunday, but this was not acted on. The absence of the pupils did not controvert the provisions of the Truancy Act, and Mr Bruels said that he felt that he had no power to interfere, that he reported the facts to the Department, but took no further action. The said pupils showed up well at their examinations.

On charge 3 (b) Locksley School No. 3, Alice, the evidence was taken of the teacher, Miss Andrews, who deposed that Mr Bruels did not instruct her to record the German children as present when they were attending German schools, and she did not so mark them. The school register was produced and showed that they were not so marked present.

On charge 4, that Mr Bruels was incapable of marking examination papers, the only evidence given was that of Mr Flach, one of the examiners, who stated that the Department had asked him to re-read some papers that had been examined by Mr Bruels and other examiners, and that he had declined. No evidence that the Bruels papers were incorrectly marked.

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Pte. A. Childerhose

Son of Mr and Mrs Henry Childerhose, Greenwood, went to England with 130th and drafted to France with another battalion.

Schols for the North Riding of the County of Renfrew.

To the Honourable
The Minister of Education,
Toronto.

Sir,—
In pursuance of the Commission under 6 (1) (r) of Chapter 265 R. S. O. to me directed, to enquire into and report upon the causes of suspension of Mr I. D. Bruels, Public School Inspector for North Renfrew, I beg to report as follows:

That I communicated with the complainants, the Corporation of the County of Renfrew, and obtained from them a bill of their charges and complaints in detail. A copy of the said bill of charges is annexed hereto.

I thereupon arranged a date for the hearing of said charges for Wednesday, 20th December, 1916, at 1.30 p.m. at the Court House in the town of Pembroke, and at the request of the parties I issued orders directing the attendance of witnesses, and having been advised by counsel engaged that there was no court reporter available at Pembroke, I arranged with Miss Gert-

JUDGE DOWSLEY'S REPORT.

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Charge 5 was withdrawn as not relevant.

Charge 6 (a), Stafford No. 7.—Robert Lowe, a Trustee, deposed that last June Miss Zereth held examinations before proper date, and that on account of measles she allowed his child to write at home, he becoming responsible that the examination would be fairly conducted. No complaint was made to the Board and no notice given to Mr Bruels. No evidence that Mr Bruels knew of any irregularity.

Charge 7 was withdrawn.

Charge 8 (a) Rolph No. 3.—The evidence was taken of the Secretary of the school board, that they had a teacher on permit from August, 1915, till December, 1915. Mr Bruels advised them to advertise for a qualified teacher, which they did in December. Not obtaining a teacher, Mr Bruels requested the former teacher to go out and take charge. The school is in an out-of-the-way place, and although Mr Bruels saw her early in February, she did not open school till 5th March. No evidence that Mr Bruels was to blame.

Charge 8 (b), Strasman's School No. 5, Alice.—The evidence was taken of two trustees and the Secretary of the Board. They advertised for a teacher, got one application at \$550. They wrote offering \$475. She did not come. Mr Bruels then sent a Miss McDonald. They did not engage Miss McDonald as they expected a teacher the next day. The expected teacher did not come and they subsequently wrote to a teacher on a list given them by Mr Bruels. They secured a teacher who opened school on 10th October. Mr Bruels not to blame.

Charge 9 (a) withdrawn.

Charge 9 (b) Rankin School No. 4, Wilberforce.—The evidence of the Secretary-Treasurer of the school disclosed that they had engaged a Miss Scott in September, 1914. She was a young girl without any qualifications, and no previous experience. Mr Bruels visited the school and calling the Trustees together advised them that Miss Scott could not be retained. He gave them the names of two other teachers, and they (the Trustees) engaged a Miss McNulty, who taught until December, being the period for which the Trustees had hired her. Miss McNulty had Normal Entrance and Model training. Mr Bruels did not act arbitrarily, and only acted in the performance of his duty.

Charge 9 (c), Lett's School House, No. 2, Wilberforce.—The evidence was taken of a member of the building committee, who said that as they were contemplating the building of a new school house, Mr Bruels advised them to visit two certain schools. They did so and had plans drawn with some changes from the plans of the schools they visited. Mr Bruels approved of the plans, tenders were advertised for, a contract given and the work finished without any interruption or interference by Mr Bruels.

Charge 9 (d), School of No. 3, Malways.—The witnesses called knew nothing whatever about this charge.

Charge 9 (e), No. 12, Westmeath. The evidence of one of the Trustees was that a Miss McLaren taught from September to December, 1915, but was not re-engaged. No evidence of any arbitrary conduct by Mr Bruels. The balance of this charge relating to the delay in payment of the school equipment grant, and to the unbecoming manner of Mr Bruels, was withdrawn.

Charge 9 (f), that Mr Bruels had admitted that he was a German. This was the main charge and the one which the complainants made every effort to prove. The evidence disclosed that Mr Bruels' grandfather was born in Bremen in 1775 when Bremen was a free city; that on its becoming part of the German Empire in 1815 his ancestors moved to London, England. His father was born in London and when his father was about 14 years of age they emigrated to Canada and settled near Toronto, where I. D. Bruels was born. There was no evidence that he had admitted he was of German descent. On the contrary, the evidence showed that he denied being a German, but claimed to be of Belgian, Irish and English descent.

This closed the evidence on the several charges.

From the evidence submitted there is nothing whatever to substantiate any of the charges against Mr Bruels. Apparently these charges are the outcome of the report that he is a German, but are all based on hearsay or rumor only. Some of the charges in some minor details have some elements of truth in them but in such cases they are the result of Mr Bruels carrying out his duties as Inspector.

No evidence has been given to justify the County Council for the County of Renfrew in suspending Mr I. D. Bruels, as Inspector, for neglect of duty, misconduct, inefficiency or physical infirmity.

My thanks are due to Dr. John Waugh, the Chief Inspector, for his assistance during the investigation.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

(Sgd.) J. K. DOWSLEY,

County Court Judge, Leeds and
Grenville, Commissioner,
Brockville, December 30th, 1916.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FROM FRANCE.

Acknowledgement has come of the receipt in France by the members of the heavy siege battery commanded by Major Maxwell, brother of Mrs (Rev.) D. MacOdrum, of the large supply of socks, comforts and Christmas cheer in various forms generously supplied by the W. C. T. U. ladies of Pembroke, Chalk River, Westmeath and Beachburg. Major Maxwell, who as announced some time ago received some bad burns in France and has been in England undergoing hospital treatment, was absent when