

24 Nov 43

Sir, Members of the Court:-

For over a year now, Pte MacBeth has been a member of my platoon and so I feel that I fully appreciate his problems.

While a farmer in Canada with his wife and child he was not a drinking man but when he came overseas in Feb 40 he did commence to drink and was soon in difficulties with the army.

While with this Company he has made a sincere effort to leave alcohol alone. He thought he had it beaten when on his ~~first~~ leave he did not touch it for five days, until he met an old acquaintance and the ensuing re-union resulted in his being before this Court to-day.

He does not try to give the impression that he is incorrigible so that he will be returned to Canada as such. He sincerely expresses the desire to do a good job in an active operation for he feels acutely the humiliation of being, close to permanently, billeted in the guard house. MacBeth is physically strong, mentally alert and possessed of above average courage, these are essential requirements of a soldier. He has the desire to soldier, but lacks, when under the influence of alcohol, the required self discipline.

On examination of his MFM 6 you will undoubtedly be struck by the number of entries, their seriousness and the severity of the punishments meted out. These punishments have to no degree cured him, nor will a further long term of detention for this offence.

This plea is not, primarily, in mitigation of punishment for this crime, but a plea for understanding and action by the Court of such a nature that one of the Army's problems might be turned into a valuable soldier. It is felt that if he could go, as he desires, to the reinforcement unit with a recommendation to be sent to a theatre of operations that he would, due to being active and away from a source of alcohol, do a real job and be an asset to any unit.