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PRESIDENT, DCM

The accused, SB 153672 Private John Noble DOCHAN, The Royal Canadian Regiment, being duly sworn, states:

Sir, I joined the Canadian Army, Active Force, on the 7th day of January 1949. I went to Camp Borden for approximately three months. After my training at Camp Borden I came to The Royal Canadian Regiment. I was very well satisfied with the Regiment and the Canadian Army and I planned on making it a career. While serving with the Royal Canadian Regiment I was granted a pass for the purpose of going to Hamilton, Ontario. While on my week-end pass I was informed of my girl friend's trouble. Over this trouble I was a day late returning from pass. I was paraded in front of my Company Commander and was awarded five days' CB. Immediately afterwards I was granted an interview with the Officer Commanding my Company, Major Freeman, whom I informed of my trouble, which I am going to tell this Court. Major Freeman informed me that the proper thing to do was to get a recommendation from the priest and make an appointment for an interview with the personnel selection officer. Major Freeman also informed me that it would take approximately three months for my discharge to come through. I remained in the Camp for approximately one week training. I could not concentrate on my training with the worries on my mind. On April the 5th I was finally forced to go AWOL. I returned to my home in Hamilton, Ontario, to work and went to work in Hamilton, Ontario, driving a truck and paid my mother for my girl friend's support. Sir, in my girl friend's family there are five children. My girl friend's mother is working and trying to support them, because if she is not capable of supporting them they will be taken away from her by the Children's Aid. Their father left them in approximately 1945. Afterwards the children were all placed under the care of the Children's Aid Society. The Children's Aid Society found out about my girl friend's condition and informed her mother that she would be placed in a reform institution until she was 21 years of age if there was going to be nothing done about it. She is my wife now and is still only 17 years of age. Sir, I love the girl and thought it was my duty to marry her to save her character and also to give the child parents and a home. Sir, she is a good girl and I realized it was my fault she got into trouble so I stayed AWOL until we could get married. Sir, the reason for my not returning sooner, because she had to locate her father to get his consent before we could get married. Her father has been away for approximately four years and as such I found out that according to the law he would have to be absent for either over five or seven years before she could get married without his consent. It wasn't until early in September that we contacted her father through his people. We obtained his permission and were married in St. Patrick's Church in Hamilton, Ontario, on the 12th day of September '49. After we were married and I got her settled down I realized that I had a lot of responsibility and expense so on the 16th of September 1949 I surrendered myself to Detective-Sergeant Withum of Hamilton City Police Force so I could come back and get it all over with and be able to settle down for good. Sir, I like the Army and The Royal Canadian Regiment and would be very happy if I could carry on soldiering, if I could receive the money to support my wife and child. My wife is seven months' pregnant now and she is not in very good health.

DEFENDING OFFICER:

As well as the statement, the accused has...certificate of marriage and a letter from the Children's Aid Society which he would like to produce to the Court as evidence.