

THE WEEKLY ONTARIO

AND BAY OF QUINTE CHRONICLE

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BELLEVILLE, ONTARIO, THURSDAY, MARCH 14 1918.

MORTON & HERITY Proprietors

Verdict For Defence in Stirling Slander Case

Jury was out over Three Hours Last Night in Sprentall vs. Matthews — Mrs. and Mrs. Matthews took the Stand Judge's Charge.

The jury at the assizes of the Stirling slander case, which was brought against Mrs. Thomas H. Matthews for damages for telling her husband certain things alleged to be slanderous, was out over three hours last night when the verdict was returned in favour of the defendant. This leaves the plaintiffs, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Sprentall, to pay the costs as they are in the case. The suit of Mrs. Matthews against Thomas Sprentall was not proceeded with but was reversed to the next court.

The trial opened on Saturday at 10 o'clock and proceeded until 5.30 on Tuesday morning until a quarter to two in the afternoon. At 2.45 court resumed after lunch and the arguments of the counsel were presented to the judge. The judge's charge closed about five o'clock.

Deep interest has been shown in the action, for the village has been greatly excited for the past twelve months over rumors and reports and alleged scandals. The nature of the trial at this assize however was such as did not admit the village gossip into evidence.

Mr. R. Quiss Porter, K.C., appeared for the plaintiffs, and Mr. J. A. Patterson, K.C. and John T. Loftus conducted the defence. Principal George Kennedy of Stirling High School, was the first witness to go on the stand at the resumption of the trial at the assizes before Justice Rose and jury yesterday.

He said he first heard the alleged slander toward the end of February, 1917. "Did you meet or have a conversation with Mrs. Matthews?" "I did." "Where was that?" "In my own house."

This was just a few days after he had first heard of it. Mrs. Matthews said that Effie Kennedy did not tell the story, but that it would be easy to draw conclusions; of course, she had a date with Mr. Coulter. She said: "We're after Coulter for the way he treated the Baker's."

Patterson questioned her as to what she had said to Mr. Matthews. She replied: "I did not say Mrs. Sprentall told those words. I said I heard that Effie Kennedy told the girls that when Mrs. Sprentall called her back into the kitchen that she had had to the girls and asked if she thought it was Mr. Coulter, that it passed the window. She never expressed an opinion, not Roswell and that was a date on with Mr. Coulter."

Mrs. Matthews said this to Matthews and to no one else. When she inquired from her own girls if that was what they had heard, Mrs. Matthews learned that they had heard it like this: that Mrs. Sprentall went to the door in the choir house fitting down and later she said for a long time. She was there once in a while. They said they did not hear Effie say that Mrs. Sprentall had a date on.

When she first told Mr. Matthews, witness mentioned about "the date." But afterwards learned there was nothing said about a date. "How did it interest you?" "Because she had told a falsehood to the girls," (her daughter and Miss Stabback).

"When did you get that ('the date on')?" "I don't know just when. It was months afterwards." The story was told Mr. Matthews months after the incident. The correct version was learned after Mr. Matthews had spoken to Mr. Hall on March 7th, 1917. Mrs. Matthews went to Mr. Kennedy's regarding some prize money of the horticultural society. As he was writing a receipt for Mrs. Matthews, Mr. Kennedy flew in a rage, said it was a funny mixup Mr. Matthews and Mr. Hall had got into over the story. He said Mr. Hall had told him about it and Mr. Kennedy said there was no foundation. Mrs. Matthews asked him if he knew there was a foundation. He said no. So Mrs. Matthews told him the story as she heard it. Mrs. Kennedy said, "Did she say that?" Mrs. Matthews said "Yes." Mrs. Matthews stated to Mr. Kennedy that as far as she was concerned, she had not a word to say against Mrs. Sprentall's reputation.

"I said I had my own perfect right to draw my own conclusions as to why she had told a falsehood." Mrs. Sprentall had set a bad example to Miss Matthews. This affected her daughter's going to the Sprentalls. She denied saying to Mr. Kennedy that she had mentioned anything to him about getting after Mr. Coulter for the way he had treated the Baker's.

Mrs. Matthews then turned to the interview with the Sprentalls. She told them she did not use the words complained of in a letter from Mr. Sprentall's solicitors. Mr. Matthews offered to publish the story. To Mr. Porter—Witness admitted saying to Mr. Matthews that Mrs. Sprentall was wearing a loose kimono, that she said she had a date on with Mr. Coulter, but Mrs. Matthews said the girls said they must go, not that Mrs. Sprentall said they must go. No one of the girls said Mrs. Sprentall said that she had a date with Mr. Coulter. Both Miss Stabback and Miss Matthews (now Mrs. Baker) that evening said Mrs. Sprentall was wearing a loose fitting dress. Mrs. Matthews was only interested in the falsehood which had been told the girls. She was not interested in the rest of the story. She did not remember warning Mr. Matthews not to repeat the story.

At Mr. Kennedy's, Mrs. Matthews said, "I could draw my own conclusions as to why Mrs. Sprentall had told the lie to the girls." "Did you draw the conclusion?" "I thought it strange conduct that she should set that example before my daughter."

Mrs. Matthews denied Mr. Kennedy's statement that she added, "She did have a date." Mrs. Matthews left Mr. Kennedy's in good terms for anything she knew. Mrs. Getta Baker, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Matthews, recalled the incident in the spring of 1916 at the home of Mrs. Sprentall. Mrs. Sprentall answered a call to the door, returning said it was Roswell and later called Miss Kennedy to another room and that they returned to the room a few minutes later, the girls left. Mrs. Kennedy said to the other girls what Mrs. Sprentall had told her. Mrs. Sprentall asked, "Do you think the girls knew it was Mr. Coulter?" Mrs. Matthews said yes. Mrs. Sprentall told Effie she had told the girls a falsehood.

Keep War Aims Before People

Government War Lecture Bureau To Be Active Here—Churches And Movies, These to be Used by Speakers to Gain the Public Ear

An important war publicity propaganda has been set in motion by the Dominion Government, through a war lecture bureau, under a director of public information.

The purpose is to afford the people of Canada further facilities for acquiring information concerning the war, and a clear understanding of its problems and obligations at home and abroad, in other words, to stimulate the country to the maximum of effort.

The bureau is assisted by a national advisory council under the chairmanship of Sir Robert Falconer, K.C.M.G., president of the University of Toronto.

Hundreds of local representatives and committees have been elected in so many cities and towns for this patriotic service.

A corps of five minute speakers will give talks two or three nights a week in the moving picture theatre, through the courtesy of their manager, on topics issued by the bureau, and similar talks will be given at frequent intervals in churches, colleges, schools, before clubs and organizations, and wherever ready made audiences can be found.

Campaign is "Nation Wide." This type of war publicity is being carried out all over Canada by hundreds of volunteer speakers and audiences aggregating every week hundreds of thousands. A similar bureau is being operated in Washington on a large national scale. The recent appointment of a minister of propaganda in the British Cabinet is another indication of the value placed upon keeping the people informed and stimulated regarding the war.

Bellefleur will be in his front row in this important work, and the citizens will frequently hear interesting messages of national importance through a band of local voluntary speakers.

Only One Zeppelin Approached Defences

Four Bombs Dropped at Hull — British Take Prisoners at Lens — Violent Bombing in Champagne District — U. S. Troops Found the Hun's First Line Empty — Gotha Hangars Bombed by French Aviators.

ONLY ONE ZEPPELIN REACHED DEFENCE AREA (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) LONDON, March 13.—An official announcement issued today says three Zeppelins participated in the raid over the English coast last night but that only one of them ventured to approach a defended district. Four bombs were dropped at Hull, where a house was demolished and a woman died of shock.

BRITISH CAPTURE PRISONERS AT LENS (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) LONDON, March 13.—Today's war office statement reports that a strong German force raided a British post south of Armentieres last night following a heavy bombardment, and that a few British are missing. The British made a successful raid north of Lens capturing prisoners. Southwest of Cambrai and opposite Loos the enemy artillery was active yesterday and in the Messines sector and at Passchendaele last night.

VIOLENT BOMB FIGHTING IN THE CHAMPAGNE (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) PARIS, March 13.—The French war office reports that bomb fighting was violent in the Champagne, especially in the region of the Monts.

CABINET SHAKE-UP PREDICTED (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) LONDON, March 13.—The Liverpool Post asserts that a cabinet change is approaching and says that among the persons concerned is Hon. A. J. Balfour, foreign secretary, who according to the paper has shown a tendency lately to take "too diplomatic a view" of international problems. Reports printed in other papers say H. E. Duke, chief secretary of Ireland, has retired and will be appointed to a judicial position, James Ian Macpherson, parliamentary secretary to the war office, goes to Ireland in his place.

FRENCH AVIATORS BOMB GOTHA (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) PARIS, March 13.—The French war office announced that during last night's enemy raid on Paris French aviators made a counter attack on Gotha hangars in the rear of the German lines dropping six tons of bombs with good results.

AMERICANS FOUND FIRST HUN LINES EVACUATED (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) LONDON, March 13.—A despatch from American headquarters says American troops again raided the German trenches in the sector north of Toul, they found the first lines evacuated, and took no prisoners.

MEMBERS OF MAXIMALIST ARRESTED AT KIEV (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) ZURICH, March 13.—A despatch received here says that Ukrainian and Saxon troops have arrested the members of the Maximalist Rada at Kiev.

ARTILLERY ACTIVITY ON ITALIAN FRONT (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) ROME, March 13.—A war office statement issued today reports lively artillery actions at various points along the Italian front. Five enemy airplanes were shot down by Italian British and French aviators.

PHILIP KIRKLAND GLASE EBROOK KILLED IN ACTION. (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) LONDON, March 13.—Philip Kirkland Glase Ebrook, Unionist member of Parliament for South Manchester and a Major in the Cheshire Yeomanry, has been killed in action in Palestine.

BERLIN PAPER DEMANDS REPRISALS (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) AMSTERDAM, March 13.—The Berlin Tages Zeitung publishes an article demanding that at least one English town be destroyed by German airplanes for each of the four hundred German ships which it says have been confiscated by British.

SON OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT HAS BEEN HONORED (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) LONDON, March 13.—A despatch from American army headquarters says Capt. Theodore Roosevelt, son of Col. Theodore Roosevelt, has been decorated by a French General with the Croix De Guerre for gallantry in action.

BARON BLYTHSWORTH IS DEAD (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) LONDON, March 13.—Baron Blythsworth, former Governor of the Channel Islands and previously commander of the Scotts Guards, serving in Egypt and South Africa, aged 73 years.

PORTUGUESE TROOPS VEYB ACT (Ontario 4 p.m. Special G. N. W. Press Service.) LONDON, March 12.—A large German force was attacking positions of the Portuguese troops caught by machine gun fire from the front and suffered severe casualties this morning. British official communication tonight reported wounded Germans were left in No. 7 body took to flight.

Will Organize Five Counties Ald. Hanna Lost Fine Setter

Mr. Brockel's Duties in Connection With S. O. S. and Production Movement.

Mr. P. F. Brockel, secretary of the Belleville Y. M. C. A. has been appointed to organize Leeds, Grenville, Glengary, Stormont and Dundas counties for the "Soldiers of the Soil" movement, which will endeavor to get 15,000 boys from 15 to 19 years of age upon the land this year in the province of Ontario. Mr. Brockel will also assist in organizing Madoc, Tweed and Stirling, besides being secretary of the Belleville Production League.

Well-Known Prize Winning Animal Died at City Hall Last Night. Ald. Charles Hanna's fine thoroughbred Irish setter, well-known to every member of the city council, died in the committee room at the city hall last night very suddenly.

The dog always accompanied his master to committee and council meetings and was a favorite with dog lovers. Last night "Pooka," as the setter was named, came to the city hall and about a quarter to eight, acted as if he had cramps. Ald. Hanna put him in the committee room and fifteen minutes later when he went in, he was surprised to find the dog dead. It is thought the dog must have got hold of some cut glass. Ald. Hanna has had Pooka for about a year. The dog was a prizewinner, having a table of silverware to his credit.

DIED TAYLOR—On Tuesday morning, March 12th, 1918 at her home, 14 Delaware Ave., Hamilton, Elsie Taylor, widow of the late W. R. Taylor, formerly of Corbyville in her 75th year. Funeral from the residence of her son W. R. Taylor, 30 Reid St. Belleville on Thursday March 14th at 2.30 p. m. Service at the house at 2 o'clock. Interment family plot in Belleville Cemetery.

Mr. Northrup Appointed

Official Announcement of His Selection as Clerk of Commons.

Ottawa, March 13.—Official announcement was made Monday of the appointment of W. B. Northrup, ex-M.P. for East Hastings, as Clerk of the House of Commons. Mr. Northrup succeeds Dr. Flint.

BIRTH GUNN—At the Belleville General Hospital, March 13th, to Mr. and Mrs. Donald Gunn, a 2 o'clock. Interment family plot in Belleville Cemetery.

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