



SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA
TERRITORY
69 BOURKE STREET
MELBOURNE

INTERVIEW

*Submitted
to T.C., 30/3/50
A.H.*

by The Chief Secretary

Re CAPTAIN ARTHUR CLEE (Bayswater).

WITH VARIOUS PEOPLE ON Wednesday, March 29th 1950

Brigadier Leggett asked to see me this morning, to report the break-down of Captain Arthur Clee. The Captain had not been in good health for some weeks, and last week-end was obviously ill. As he showed no improvement on Monday, Brigadier gave him some personal attention, and the Captain then broke down and confessed to the Brigadier that he had suffered a moral lapse at the Box Hill Boys' Home, and this had preyed on his mind until he could not sleep, and he felt he could not carry on. He mentioned that his familiarity with certain boys had been reported to Senior-Captain Berry by another lad, and that Major Jessop had dealt with the matter. No action had been taken beyond a recommendation of a change of appointment. He had anticipated that this would be to other work, but when it had been to similar work at Bayswater, it preyed on his mind.

The Captain's condition showed no improvement after this confession -- he was broken with shame-- so the Brigadier contacted the Captain's Brother (Captain Garnet Clee, of T.H.Q.) and on Tuesday evening brought the Captain down there.

I then saw Brigadier Leggett and Captain Garnet Clee together, but both could only say that as far as they knew the lapse had involved handling the sex organs of some boys at night, and probably self-abuse. I said I would see Major Jessop later in the day, and arranged to interview Captain Arthur Clee at night -- his brother assured me his condition was too distraught for him to come to T.H.Q.

In the afternoon I saw Major Jessop. He reported that the first allegation of misconduct had been made nearly three years ago, one boy reporting to his parents about the Captain and another boy. An investigation was made but the Captain and the boy both denied the charge and no evidence could be secured: it was felt that the charge was without foundation. Then last October a lad reported similar offences to Snr. Captain Berry who passed it on to the Manager (Major Jessop).

On investigation the Major found that the Captain had on several occasions gone to boys after lights out (when other lads were presumably asleep) and had handled their private parts. Four lads were involved, and suggestions had been made

Signed.....



SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA
TERRITORY
69 BOURKE STREET
MELBOURNE

INTERVIEW

by *The Chief Secretary*

Re CAPTAIN ARTHUR CLEE (Continued). 2.

WITH ON

The Captain now admitted to fact - charge had been covered.

to two other lads. Another lad, finding this out, had been "black-mailing" the Captain, who had nevertheless been able to maintain discipline, and had prevented any earlier disclosure. The Captain had been so sincerely penitent, and so shamed, that the Major agreed to give him a chance to live the experience down and re-establish himself in the eyes of both Officers and boys. The matter was reported, but only verbally, to ~~Major~~ Lt.-Colonel Marion. Major Jessop believed there had been no recurrence of the evil at Box Hill, not any suggestion at Bayswater. After the Captain had left Box Hill, the boys took no further notice (he felt their memories would be short once the Captain was removed from the Home), but when a party of them recently visited Bayswater it was apparent to him (and to Captain Clee) that they refused to notice or speak to the Captain. This had greatly distressed the Captain who apparently felt it was a sign his weakness had been discussed among the boys and was more widely known. Major Jessop had expected that the change for the Captain would have involved a change to other work.

In the evening I had a long talk with Captain Clee. He was in a distressed condition, but better than he had been, so that we were able to talk reasonably. After some preparatory ground work, I was able to lead him to answering definite questions. On one occasion only had there been exposure of his own organs, and there had never been any suggestion of sodomy. There had been one incident after the exposure at Box Hill last October, but nothing at all at Bayswater. He had become a victim to self-abuse as a lad of ten or eleven years, and this had persisted (with some periods of victory) ever since. It was not sufficient to undermine his health ~~at all~~, but was of course the occasion of spiritual weakness and loss of self respect.

His break-down had been brought about by distress at the Bayswater appointment (he thought we had known his weakness), self-condemnation in view of his engagement with Lieut. Simpson (T.G.Staff), and dread that boys from Box Hill would talk and create scandal. This eventually caused such anxiety that he could not sleep and in the end could not eat.

In a long talk I explained something about sex

Signed



SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA
TERRITORY
69 BOURKE STREET
MELBOURNE

INTERVIEW

by The Chief Secretary

Re CAPTAIN ARTHUR CLEE (Bayswater) Continued 3.

WITH..... ON.....

matters, the immaturity evidenced in self-abuse, but assured the Captain there was no reason why he should not yet master the evil. This led to advice about body, mind, and soul. I told the Captain that I could not say what the Commissioner's decision would be regarding the possible continuance of Officership, but it was obvious he was not in a condition to continue at present. Some months of suitable employment, with careful attention to diet, spare-time hobby, spiritual exercises, etc. seemed to be advisable.

He must let Lieut. Simpson know he was suffering from nervous trouble and was temporarily off duty, and then as soon as he was well enough, he should see or write her, and then confess to her something of his weakness and that he had lowered himself at Box Hill. She must be free to act as she felt best, but if she desired she could ask to see me. There was no reason why he should not yet make good, and attain to a full and noble manhood and spiritual vitality.

I would communicate with him again later when we had had time to sort the position out and give full consideration to all it involved.

All interviews closed with prayer.

[Handwritten signature]
30/3/50

Signed.....