

Police Office, Greymouth, 24th February, 1902.

*Re* Constable Burrell being off his beat on the nights of the 13th and 14th instant, and Constable McGrath remaining too long in the station when visiting it on both nights, and failing to report Constable Burrell for being off his beat.

I beg to report that, it having been represented to me that the single men regularly leave their beats, that this has been brought under the sergeant's notice, and that it still went on as before. Several citizens mentioned to me that the single men are seldom seen on their beats while on night duty. Mr. Bannehr, editor and part owner of the *Colonist* newspaper, told me the same thing, and said that he one morning found one of them asleep in a doorway; he does not know which of them, as he did not waken him. He looked for the other constable to draw his attention to him, but did not find one. He says he always sees Williams, McGrath, and Bird on their beats, but seldom Burrell, Durbridge, or Kemp.

In consequence of these reports I decided to watch and see what was going on. Having reason to believe I was being watched, I on the 13th took my bag and left in a cab, saying I was going away for the night. I went to a quiet place in the suburbs, and remained there till 12.30 a.m. I then made my way carefully to the Government Buildings grounds and hid under trees in front of the station. I arrived there at 1 a.m. and remained there until 4.30 a.m. Constables McGrath and Burrell were on night duty. McGrath visits the station every two hours during the night. Both of them came in about half-past 2, and I did not see them leave until 4.20 a.m. I cleared out without showing myself that night. I could not get too near owing to a dog barking.

The following night was wet and I slipped out early and watched. The same constables came in about 12.30 a.m. and remained in until 1.20 a.m., when McGrath left the station to go on his beat. Constable Burrell remained inside. I spoke to McGrath outside, and walked into the mess-room and found Burrell sitting down with his hat off and a fire burning. He jumped up on seeing me and went out on his beat. I ordered both to report in the morning, and they did so. [Reports attached.] I mentioned the matter to Sergeant Mackay when he returned from Collingwood. He said he did not watch them as he had full confidence in them.

I questioned Constables Williams and Bird as to how the duty was done, &c., and I attach their reports.

In my opinion, those three constables should be removed from Nelson as soon as possible, or if an inquiry is to be held it should not be held before Mr. Robinson. Such an inquiry will last a long time. There are several other charges of assault, &c., yet to be reported. I will endeavour to forward them by next mail.

E. MACDONELL, Inspector.

Police-station, Nelson, 15th February, 1902.

REPORT of Constable A. BURRELL, No. 912, *re* leaving No. 2 beat and coming to the Police-station for supper:—

I respectfully report that at 12.30 a.m. on date I came to the police-station for a cup of tea, and the night was cold and wet. While there Inspector Macdonell came in, and after a conversation with him he asked me to furnish him with a report *re* leaving No. 2 beat. I admit that it was an error of judgment on my part, and may add that it will not occur again.

A. BURRELL, Constable No. 912.

The Officer in Charge, Police-station, Nelson.

Police-station, Nelson, 19th November, 1901.

SIR,—

I hope you will forgive me for the steps I have taken in this matter, but I cannot see any other way to stop the breaches of the Police Regulations that frequently occur while on night duty. I went on night duty at 9 p.m. on the 18th November, 1901, in company with Constable Durbridge. He left his beat a few minutes after 11 p.m. and entered the police-station, where I saw him at 11.45 p.m. asleep with his head resting on the kitchen table. I went out on my beat and returned at 1.15 a.m. on the 19th. He was in a similar position as when I first saw him. When I woke him he asked me the time. I told him 1.20 a.m. I went out, and returned at 3.20 a.m. He came out of his bedroom at 3.35 a.m. and remained in the station after I left it at 4.15 a.m. I returned to put out the lamps. Sergeant Mackay came out on the verandah from the station; he was fastening a mackintosh; it was raining; he took the coat from the mess-room. Durbridge was asleep on the floor when the sergeant entered and left. Constable Kemp joined the sergeant and they left the station together to look after an eel-basket, so the sergeant said. I remained in the station until 5.15 a.m., and was not relieved by Constable Kemp, which is a common occurrence with the single men. On the 20th Constable Durbridge left his beat at 10.45 p.m., in company with two men, and went on my beat in the direction of the station. He was there at 11.45 p.m.—asleep, as usual. On the 21st Durbridge came out of the Commercial Hotel at 12 p.m. I reported this constable to the sergeant on several occasions. The sergeant took no notice; he only informed the men what I had done. They had plenty of sleep during the night and would rise early in the morning and walk up and down the cell passage, which is under the same roof—the noise would wake the soundest sleeper. Durbridge and Burrell used to go bawling about the mess-room and cell passage. I on several occasions went into the station at 8 a.m. and complained to the sergeant, but after I returned to bed the noise increased. I shifted my bed to an outhouse. Constable Kemp had a dog, which he tied to the fence. This dog used to howl all day, and it was impossible for me to sleep. On the 15th October, 1901, I complained to the sergeant, who was in the men's barrack-room at the time. Constable Kemp called me a liar, and said the dog was very quiet. The sergeant made no answer to my complaint. A few days before the Commissioner came to Nelson Constable Kemp met me on the street and asked for the lend of my baton. I said, "You can have it if you call at the house." When I visited the station at