

Donation - Percy
A Gummow family file
(07-02)

CHARLES ROBERT GUMMOW (1884-1956)

This newspaper obituary was written by FOSTER MAHARRY RUSSEL (Deceased)
Editor of the Cobourg Sentinel Star. (Climo)

The Cobourg Sentinel-Star, Thursday, March 22, 1956-3

Obituary

CHARLES R. GUMMOW

Friend of school children for 35 years, humorist, humanitarian and teacher, Charles R. Gummow died in Toronto General Hospital, Monday, March 19, after a short illness following a heart attack.

For 35 of his 71 years, Charles Gummow taught the children of Cobourg. He rose from grade teacher to become principal of the George Street School, following in the footsteps of the late John Orr. He joined the staff of the then new public school in 1911. The school was erected in 1906. The late Mr. Gummow was on the staff of the school when fire destroyed it completely in 1917 and was one of the teachers who accepted crowded quarters in other places around town while the new and finer school was being built.

A soft spoken man, Charles Gummow was one of the first teachers to bring understanding and kindness to the dull routine of the school room. His

methods of teaching were among the pioneer ways which today are generally accepted throughout public schools. He sought and received the liking of the pupils and brought to them in return many pleasant hours of teaching and reading, of sympathy and understanding. When he walked to school pupils walked in groups around him and their high, laughing voices were to be heard far ahead or behind their close ranks surrounding the teacher-principal.

At a time when teachers were expected to be strongarmed, strong-willed and ready with fist or strap, Charles Gummow entered the classroom with kindness and patience. Many of Cobourg and district citizens who have succeeded in different walks of life learned basic education because of that kindness and patience. If he mellowed with age, it was a mellowing of greater friendliness for the pupils and it brought respect, liking and admiration in return.

When the appointment of a new principal came up on the retirement of the late John Orr it was natural and inevitable that Mr. Gummow be tendered the office and just as natural and inevitable that he accept. Happiest of all on the appointment was the student body of the school. As he had brought to the classroom a new daylight in teaching methods so did he bring a newer, brighter teaching method to the school as a whole. His life at the school desk ran the gamut of catch-as-catch-can education, where the child left school for a life of labor at an appallingly youthful age, to the present day conditions where education has come to be recognized as one of the most vital forces and one of the most vital necessities of life.

Charles Gummow was not confined to school room activity during his lifetime in Cobourg. He was an ardent reader and student of world politics and problems.

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In addition he was interested in sports and was known throughout the length and breadth of the old Central Ontario and later the Lakeshore Baseball League as one of the most able official scorers in the district. If he ruled with kindness in the school room, Charles Gummow ruled with a firm hand in his baseball scoring and because of this, sports writers, players

and fans came to accept his box scores as authentic and entirely reliable. No hometown decision was ever to be found in a Gummow score book ruling on a hit or an error. When he retired in 1946 and took up residence in Toronto, Cobourg sports and Cobourg educational groups lost a fine friend.

He was a past master of St. John's, Masonic AF & AM and a member of St. Peter's Church. Born in Cobourg, he was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. George Gummow. Until his retirement he lived all his life in Cobourg except for the time spent in receiving his Normal school education in other places. Three years ago the newest public school in Cobourg was named the Charles R. Gummow School.

There are no close relatives. The funeral took place from the Tait Funeral Home, Wednesday afternoon, to St. Peter's Church for service conducted by Rev. H. Bedford-Jones. Pallbearers were from the Masonic Lodge, Mayor J. D. Burnet, Eric Niles, Allan Salisbury;

from the School Board, W. C. Wakelin, Reginald Stuart; from the school staff, Supervising Principal Grant Sine. Interment was in Union Cemetery.