

Whether that authority went down or did not is not settled yet, until reference has been made to the records. In the ordinary course a Ministerial authority for the employment of an extra officer ought to go to the Under-Secretary for Defence.

118. As the Under-Secretary for Defence did not report that the vouchers were not sent in monthly, it would seem that the authority was not sent?—If everything was done according to regulation the authority was not sent to the Under-Secretary.

119. *Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] If Major Smith or any other member of your staff did not report that Captain Clark was engaged on this work, you have had a man employed in your office for five months without the Paymaster knowing anything about it?—Yes, no doubt, that is the state of the case.

120. The King's Medals, I understand, have only been given since the death of the Queen?—The condition is that men must have completed eighteen months' service in all before peace was signed—and a portion of that service must have been between the 1st January, 1902, and the date of peace being signed—in order to get the medal.

121. Then, all the former returned contingenters could not obtain this medal?—No. The only exceptions were men invalidated on account of wounds.

122. What was the last contingent that returned before the death of the Queen?

*Captain Clark:* The Fifth.

123. *Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] All you refer to, then, would be those who served in the Sixth and Seventh Contingents?—Excepting those who were transferred.

124. *The Chairman.* You stated that it was generally an officer of the contingent who made up the discharge rolls on returning?—Yes.

125. Why, then, was Captain Clark, who was only in the Ninth, employed to make up the discharge rolls of the Seventh?—He was in the Seventh, and we could not get another man of the Seventh to do it, though we tried to.

126. Then, of course, he would be entitled to exactly the same pay for that work as a man of the Seventh would be?—Yes. I understand that Captain Clark was attached to the Seventh at one time.

*Captain Clark:* That is so.

*General Babington:* That is why he was employed.

127. *Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones.*] With reference to the position of an officer in the service who was an acting-lieutenant: would he enjoy the privileges of the office when he was acting—would he draw the pay in the Imperial service as an acting-lieutenant?—There is no such thing.

128. It is not recognised?—No. The only appointments on at all similar lines are local rank or temporary rank. Local rank draws exactly the same pay as the subordinate rank.

129. If an officer was known as an acting-captain, we will say?—There is no such thing recognised. He would draw the pay of his subordinate rank.

130. *The Chairman.*] How about a man who was a captain and acting-adjutant?—He would draw the pay of a captain and allowance as adjutant.

131. *Mr. Taylor.*] What principle governs the gratuities? I can understand the pay, that can be checked; but what governs the gratuities?—There was an army order under which we were each given a gratuity of so many days' pay at a certain rate.

132. This gratuity of £191 13s. 4d. would be paid by the Imperial authorities?—Entirely.

133. *Mr. R. McKenzie.*] It has cropped up that Colonel Porter recommended several lieutenants to be promoted to the rank of captain. Would that entitle them to the pay of a captain?—Not until the appointments were confirmed by the Imperial authorities.

134. Can you tell us whether the appointment of Lieutenant Clark had ever been confirmed by the Imperial authorities?—I understand it has never been confirmed.

135. *Mr. Taylor.*] Is there any guarantee that if the Government were to pay this amount the Imperial authorities would refund it? Are they compelled to, or might they dispute the service?

*Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] If we make a mistake and make an overpayment they detect it. If we overpay they stop it, and the colony has to pay. I, as Minister of Defence, am only the trustee or agent for the Imperial Government within the limits prescribed by them.

136. *Mr. Taylor.*] The rate of pay for which Captain Clark is claiming is some Imperial rate; the rate of pay that he was offered, £4 a week, was the rate that the local authorities thought commensurate with the services rendered?

*Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon:* Yes.

137. *Captain Clark.*] In the preparation of the King's Medal rolls, General, is it customary to have an officer to certify to the service?—Yes, because there is practically a certificate which demands that an officer who prepares medal rolls must have personal knowledge of the services of the men.

138. It has been stated before the Committee that a clerk—one of your regular staff—paid at the rate of 10s. a day, could have done the work. Could he have done it?—If the War Office knew that it had been done by a clerk they would not accept it.

139. *Mr. Taylor.*] Why?—Because the man doing it must practically certify that the work has been done by an officer having personal knowledge of the men.

140. *Mr. Wood.*] Could a clerk in the office have done the clerical work?—He could have copied out what the officer went through with him.

141. Was there anything to stop a clerk doing the work?—Oh, yes.

142. Barring what you have just mentioned—that the Imperial authorities would not have accepted it?—He could not have done it otherwise than that he had personal knowledge of the men.

143. *Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] You have said that an officer must do it. Would that mean that an officer must prepare the rolls?—Any person could prepare them. Take a regiment, for instance. The adjutant practically does it, but the commanding officer certifies that it is correct.