

43. You do not suspect that the cooks may leave vegetables undressed and uncooked to save trouble?—They might do so, but as far as I know the vegetables all get used up.

44. You have never seen any accumulation of fruit and vegetables lying about—that is to say, wasted?—No, but sometimes a fatigue party is told off to peel potatoes; they have a lot to do—perhaps four sacks. They might say, “The faster we peel them the quicker we will get away,” and they might peel them very thick. That is possible.

45. But I am now referring to a deliberate neglect to prepare the vegetables for cooking?—No.

46. You have no reason to suspect that sort of thing?—No.

47. Supposing a person sent a present of fruit or vegetables, would it go to you?—Yes.

48. Do you get such gifts?—Yes.

49. And they all have ultimately reached the troops?—Yes. If there is enough to go right round the camp they are evenly distributed. We keep a gift-book, and if there is not enough to go right round we keep a record of where it goes. The book shows the date it is received, where it comes from, if sent for any exclusive unit, where it goes to, and the date. There have been occasions when, say, a person has sent in a sack of potatoes for the Taranaki men: well, there are Taranaki men in every unit, and there would be great difficulty in picking these men out, and trouble also.

50. *The Chairman.*] That would account for a great deal of the misunderstanding?—Yes, sir.

51. The best way is to send it for the men generally?—Yes.

52. When it is sent to the men generally, by means of your gift-book you can distribute it fairly, giving each a share in turn?—Yes.

53. *Mr. Salmond.*] Have you anything to do with the daily inspection of the camp?—Nothing at all.

54. What officer from the Quartermaster’s office comes round?—The quartermaster-sergeant.

55. Do you know anything about the daily inspection of the camp?—I simply know that there is a daily inspection.

56. You are inspected too: who forms that inspecting party?—The Medical Officer, the captain of the day, the subaltern of the day, the camp orderly-sergeant, the camp orderly-corporal, and the quartermaster-sergeant.

57. That is about a dozen men?—About six.

58. Do they all go round together?—Yes.

59. Do they, as far as you know, inspect every portion of the camp?—They inspect every portion of my camp.

60. Do they go into the tents?—I have no tents in my portion of the camp.

61. You do not know whether the backs of the tents are inspected?—I do not know whether they go round every tent. We have seen them going through the lines. I do not know that they could go through every tent.

62. So that there might be sick men lying in tents and the inspecting party would not find them?—If the inspecting party did find them they would be reported. But it would not be their place to deal with that. There is an orderly-corporal to every unit, and if a man is sick he has to report it.

63. *The Chairman.*] You say there is an orderly-corporal whose business it is to report any sick man in a tent?—That is so.

64. On fine days are the sides of the tents turned back so that you could get a view right into them?—There is a standing order to that effect.

65. The whole floor of the tent can be seen from outside?—That is so.

MONDAY, 19TH JULY, 1915.

ROBERT WEST HOLMES sworn and examined. (No. 6.)

1. *The Chairman.*] You are Chief Engineer in the Public Works Department?—Yes.

2. Will you tell us what you have had to do with the erection of huts at the camp?—I have had nothing to do with it yet.

3. Is it not in your Department?—It is in the Department, but from the way the Department is worked the instructions have apparently passed from the Under-Secretary to my subordinate and not to myself.

4. Would that be an intimation to you that you were not to be concerned in the matter?—Certainly.

5. And you then in consequence took no concern in the matter?—That is so.

6. You are now, are you not, engaged in some work in connection with it?—Yes. I was called in by the Hon. Mr. Allen on Thursday last and asked to take charge of the work to be done out there.

7. Have you seen the hutments that have been erected?—Yes.

8. And what is your opinion of them as to their suitability for the purpose intended?—I think they are very suitable for the purpose. They would be somewhat cold on a frosty night, being built of galvanized iron, and I think some requirements will be needed in regard to ventilation in order to prevent draughts during heavy weather.

9. Those openings just underneath the eaves may require some alteration?—Yes; we will have to provide some means of closing them on the weather side of the building.

10. It was suggested on Saturday that some opening in the ridge would be desirable?—Well, it may be, but I hardly think so. I think that is more a question for trial. That is a matter that can be easily rectified if an alteration is found to be necessary when the buildings are inhabited.