

lington, and Skelton, Frostick, and Co., Christchurch, have been making boots, but no one else has offered up to now. We should be glad of any firm coming in.

59. You are willing to take the boots if people will come in and offer to make them?—Yes.

60. You are getting as many boots as possible from the factories in New Zealand?—I have not refused any.

61. Have you tried to get boots?—We called for tenders.

62. The original contract was made in January?—But at that time there were only four firms who tendered.

63. You got the contract in January for 2,250 pairs of boots per month: when did you try to extend that supply?—The Northern Boot Company was the first to come in.

64. Your explanation of there not being enough boots is that it was impossible to get them?—Yes.

65. Were the boots sent satisfactory in quality?—There is an Inspector who examines every pair of boots that comes into the store. He has a sample, and any boot that is not up to the sample he rejects. The same applies to all stores.

66. After being passed equal to sample were they found to be satisfactory?—Yes. [Sample boots explained.]

67. It has been said by some witness that the lining of the boots proved to be unsatisfactory. Were the boots issued complained of as being unsatisfactory?—Never.

68. And none returned in order to get further supplies?—No.

69. Was any alteration made in the lining of the boots afterwards?—No.

70. Do you consider that the clothing supplied to the troops was in every way satisfactory?—I think so. It is quite as good as the English clothing, because I have seen it.

71. *Mr. Ferguson.*] Do you make any practical test as to the amount of water which the boots would absorb?—No, it has never been done.

72. Would it be practicable to stand the boots in 2 in. of water, weigh them before you put them in and weigh them after twenty-four hours, and see the amount of absorption?—We have never made any test like that.

73. Is it done in the British military system?—I could not say. With the boots that come back from Egypt they are not making tests of that kind.

---

JOHN CAMPBELL sworn and examined. (No. 8.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—Government Architect.

2. You have had to do with the erection of hutments at Trentham Camp?—Yes, I had to do with the preparation of plans.

3. Tell us what you had to do when you began to act?—I was appointed one of the Advisory Board to criticize the plans submitted by the Defence Department for hutments at Trentham. We suggested a few alterations.

4. A sample hut had at this time been erected?—No, none had been erected. We criticized the plans and suggested a few amendments. Then working drawings were prepared under my direction for the erection of the hutments.

5. Did your drawings carry out the suggestions that were recommended by the Board?—They did.

6. Did the Board consider the question of the size of the huts?—We did.

7. Did it consider the question of whether a hundred men were not too many to put into a hut?—We did not think so, with adequate ventilation.

8. There are fifty in each division?—I might say the plans as we received them from the Defence Department were huts for fifty, with a space between them placed end on. For economical reasons we brought the two together, having one wall. We thus saved one wall, and so the huts were twice the length that they were originally, the same width, but accommodating a hundred instead of fifty.

9. What was the object of that space between?—I suppose it was for better ventilation—for free air between the huts; but we considered that with the ventilation provided under the eaves there was no necessity for ventilation at both ends. It was a cross-ventilation from side to side, and we did not think it necessary to have ventilation from end to end. We thus saved the cost of one wall—about £40 on the total cost.

10. Did the Board consider the question from the point of view of lining or not lining?—Yes, we thought lining unnecessary.

11. Why?—Those huts were supposed to take the place of tents. It was represented to the Board that the tents were very costly: they were being constantly injured by storms and by the men, and it was costing the Defence Department many hundreds of pounds to maintain the tents. That was one reason, I believe—perhaps the chief reason—for substituting huts for tents. The tents are not lined, and we thought that hutments with iron walls would be quite as comfortable as tents—as comfortable and less draughty.

12. Do you know if any steps were taken to block up the corrugations in the galvanized iron?—The sample hut was not built on suggestions made by the Board. The reason was that the Defence Department sent on a second plan prepared by me which had not on it all the suggestions made by the Board. There was a plan submitted for criticism to the Board. There were several short notes in that plan which I made myself, the intention being to prepare further working drawings, but by some mistake of the Defence Department they sent on the second plan to the overseer builder, who was acting under our District Engineer, and some suggestions made by the Board had not been attended to. They were very simple matters and soon put right.