

43. Would not the chrome boot be made sufficiently waterproof with greasing?—No, because it is not such good-quality leather. You could wear the grain off the chrome, but not off the kip, because the grain is inside.

44. Even if it is well greased the chrome boot is unsatisfactory?—That is so, in comparison with the kip.

45. Is there any difficulty in getting kip boots?—No.

46. Then, as to the soles of the boots, you object that they were not properly put on?—I think the standard screw should be put right through.

47. Have the soles been coming off?—Yes; it is quite a common thing for the stitches to break, even in a welted boot.

48. Is this an unusual way to make a boot?—I have never seen a boot made in this way before. There are many small manufacturers who could make as good a boot as this, but they could not make this boot, because they have not the machinery.

49. *The Chairman.*] Would it be a cheaper boot?—No.

50. Evidently it is not for cheapness' sake that the stitching has been adopted?—No; I think it is more for deception, because many of these men say they have sewn boots. Many of the soldiers are convinced that it is a sewn boot, and it is not a sewn boot at all.

51. If the boots were made as you suggest, several manufacturers could make them who cannot make these boots?—That is so.

52. If it is made in your way smaller manufacturers could compete?—No, not with a standard screw. The small manufacturer would peg the sole on, as they did for the boots for the South African contingents. Those boots were equal to any used out there. In fact, I have seen men of the First Reinforcements, men who went to South Africa, and they had the kip boots. I read in the *New Zealand Times* that a committee of Palmerston North men which presented the Palmerston boys with boots turned down the chrome boot in favour of the kip boot. All the Palmerston boys were supplied with kip boots. I got that from Mr. Ward, of Messrs. Hannah and Co.'s boot-factory. That was in the *New Zealand Times*. I could send you the copy.

53. You say that the Palmerston North committee turned down the chrome boot in favour of the kip boot?—Yes.

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MAGNUS BADGER sworn and examined. (No. 24.)

*Witness.* I am a sergeant in the Field Ambulance, stationed at Trentham. I joined the Field Ambulance on the 28th June last, going on duty on the morning of the 29th. I had just entered the ward when I heard a man calling out "Badger." I turned round, and he had letters in his hand. I said, "Those are for me," and he laughed. I did not understand why, and he then told me that they were for a patient called Badger. I said, "Where is he?" I went across to where Archibald Badger was lying. I said to him, "Is your name Badger?" He said, "Yes." I said, "Do you come from Christchurch?" and he said "Yes." I said, "Are you a brother of Ronald Badger?" and he said "Yes." Then I spoke to him for a few minutes. At that time he was quite appreciative of the questions I asked him, and his answers were quite coherent.

1. *The Chairman.*] What was the time and the date?—It would be about 8.30 in the morning of the 29th June. I happened to have a knowledge of Ronald Badger.

2. He is not related to you?—No; but strange to say we come from the same stock. Owing to the similarity of the name I took particular care of Archibald Badger. I visited his bed frequently. I did everything that a man could do for another to alleviate any suffering he seemed to have. On the Wednesday he seemed to me to collapse suddenly, and he vomited a large quantity of yellowish fluid. I reported that to the nurse in charge. I personally washed his face and his hands, and cleansed the bed where any matter had been deposited, and saw him made comfortable. I would visit his bedside at least once every two hours. During the period from Tuesday to Thursday morning Dr. Ferguson must have visited his bedside at least seven to eight times. I saw Dr. Ferguson at his bedside at least seven or eight times.

3. That was on the Tuesday?—That was from the Tuesday to the Thursday. I would like to explain, sir, the difficulty regarding correspondence. The correspondence would be addressed to, say, "Archibald Badger, A Company, — Platoon," and so on. It then was, I understand, the duty of the corporal of that platoon to see that the letters were redirected to wherever that private had gone. As the private in question had been sent to the kiosk hospital it was the duty of the corporal to see that those letters were sent to the kiosk, and have an effort made to find the patient. Subsequently the grandstand was used and the buildings near the gate. It was the practice for an orderly to go round and call out the names for whom there was correspondence, but it was possible for those patients to be asleep and for the man alongside of them not to know their names. Then the corporal would attempt to find the patient in another part of the hospital. The result was that, after a great deal of wandering round on the part of the corporal, somebody would say, "Oh, he is at Kaiwarra." There seemed to be people there who could give information on any subject in the world. At Kaiwarra the letter would be marked "Unknown here." The letter would then go back to his original platoon, and the whole thing would be started over again. The difficulty in connection with the hospital itself was insurmountable owing to this fact, as I may show later: that we would have over a hundred and twenty admissions in a day, and perhaps something like sixty discharges, and it was absolutely impossible to keep a record of those names—the names of those coming in and those going out. It was an impossible task, because the work was too stupendous to permit of any officer to be set apart for that work, and it was not the duty of the hospital officials to do that: the letters should