

Colonel JAMES ROBERT PURDY sworn and examined. (No. 20.)

1. *The Chairman*] You are a medical practitioner: what is your military position?—I am a colonel in the New Zealand Medical Corps, and I am Director of Medical Services for New Zealand.

2. How long have you been Director of Medical Services?—I was first appointed in 1909 as Acting-Director, and in 1911, when the territorial scheme was brought into existence, I was appointed permanently. My appointment was confirmed by General Godley. Under the terms of the new scheme the appointment was for four years, so that I had to go out on the 5th May, 1913—four years from 1909.

3. What happened in 1913?—According to the regulations, if the services of an officer are satisfactory, and the General thinks fit, he can extend his appointment for one year.

4. Did he extend yours?—Yes, for one year. Then I was to go out on the 5th May, 1914. In the meantime General Sir Ian Hamilton came to the colony inspecting the troops, and it was considered advisable to further extend my appointment for another month—till the 5th June, 1914.

5. Who was appointed on the 5th June?—Colonel Will.

6. When the war broke out what happened?—Colonel Will was taken away with the main body of the Expeditionary Force.

7. Did he go with the December lot?—He went with the main body, officially supposed to leave the colony at the end of August.

8. When did it leave?—About October. After the main body was mobilized they did all their own medical work. I was called up again at the end of August (27th), and reappointed Director of Medical Services.

9. That was because of Colonel Will being attached to the main body?—Yes.

10. Are you still holding that position?—Yes.

11. Is there a salary attached to it?—An honorarium of £150 a year.

12. What are your duties as Director of Military Services?—The general duties of administration by the Director of Military Services are laid down.

13. Who lays them down?—General Robin.

14. Is this scheme the one that was in force when you were appointed?—No, sir—practically, with the exception that I had full authority over all medical arrangements for the colony.

15. What had you to do before any change was made—in August, 1914?—I was responsible for all the medical details, equipment, and appointment of officers.

16. In connection with the whole of the military Forces?—Yes.

17. Whether in training or not?—That is so.

18. And the control of camp hospitals?—Well, I had general supervision over them, of course, right throughout the colony.

19. In fact, you had to look after the health of the Army?—Yes, except that of the Expeditionary Force, which at that time had not left the colony—they did all their own medical work.

20. That was the lot that left with Colonel Will?—Yes, ten thousand men.

21. Then had you to do with every other contingent camp that afterwards went away?—Yes, sir.

22. From August to October you had practically little to do because Colonel Will was in charge?—That is so.

23. Did you appoint officers under you at that time?—I was asked to appoint officers to the Second Reinforcements—that is, the first batch of men that went away after the main body. The main body took the First Reinforcements with them. The Second Reinforcements occupied the camp at Trentham first.

24. They left in December?—The 12th December. It was mobilized about the middle of October. On the 19th October I was told that these troops were to go into camp at Trentham, and that as it was a general camp for the whole of the colony it was to be a headquarters camp. The headquarters would have charge of it, and not the district office.

25. On the 19th October headquarters gave you charge of the Second Reinforcements?—Yes. I was told that the number of men would be, I think, two thousand, and I said I wished to appoint six doctors. I notified the Adjutant-General to that effect.

26. *Dr. Martin.*] You practically set to work and asked for six doctors?—Yes.

27. *The Chairman.*] Did you get those doctors?—Yes, I started the camp with six doctors. I might explain that on the list left behind by Colonel Will, of the doctors who had volunteered, there were practically only six doctors.

28. You had a list of only six to select from handed to you?—Yes.

29. *Dr. Martin.*] Had the profession been asked by the military to come forward?—I understand so, at the beginning of the war.

30. In England when the war broke out the Medical Branch of the War Office issued an appeal to surgeons: was that done in New Zealand?—Yes.

31. What was the date of that appeal?—As soon as I found that there was only a list of six doctors available I approached the editor of the *New Zealand Medical Journal* and asked him if he would be good enough to put a notice in the *Journal* to the effect that we would be very glad to have volunteers for medical services at the front. This was done, I think, in the next issue of the *Journal*.

32. You invited medical men to offer their services: what issue was that in?—I think it was in November. It was the earliest issue after I made the request to the editor. Since that time I have never been short of officers.

33. *The Chairman.*] The notice you had put in the *Journal* was quite effective?—Very effective. That was the first and only appeal I made to the profession.