

38. Was that due to the night-pans?—No, all round. The mud got generally tramped in, and there was a smell from that all over the camp.

39. *The Chairman.*] Did you suffer from having wet blankets or wet coats?—I had a wet overcoat at times in the hut.

40. Had you any means of drying them?—There was supposed to be, but I never made use of it. I could not find where it was. I have seen in the papers that there was supposed to be a marquee there, but no one knew about it.

41. What do you mean by that?—I read in the newspapers that Colonel Potter said there were marquees for drying.

42. But you do not remember them in your time?—No. There was one time, for about four or five days, we were told that nothing at all was to go on to the shelves, and when the men came in with their wet overcoats they would have to go on the ground-sheets, and later on the order came that we could hang them on the rafters.

43. Why were you not allowed to put them on the shelves?—I could not say.

44. *Dr. Martin.*] Was it wet weather at that time?—Yes. They put the blankets on the palliasse, and then the oil-sheet, and then the wet clothing.

45. Was there any complaint?—There were a few complaints about putting the wet overcoats on the blankets.

46. Did they complain to you as sergeant?—No, not to me, but in my hearing.

47. You do not know why the order was given?—No. We made the complaint to the company commander and he carried the complaint on, and in a few days we had orders that we could hang them on the rafters in the ceiling.

48. *Mr. Salmond.*] Was it at Trentham that the sole of your boot came off?—Yes, at Trentham—the outer sole.

49. How long did you go with the sole off?—About a fortnight.

50. Did you ever on any occasion except the one you have mentioned ask for another pair of boots?—I spoke to the company quartermaster-sergeant. First I spoke to the company commander, and he said the quartermaster-sergeant was to take me round and get me a pair; but I could never get the quartermaster-sergeant free when I was free, and he never got me a pair.

51. Who was it you first spoke to?—Lieutenant Cowles.

52. Who is the quartermaster-sergeant?—Smith.

53. What did Captain Simeon have to do with it?—I spoke to him about it. He said it was too trivial, and I never got the boots.

54. How did you manage to get them in the end?—There was a second issue, which was really my first issue. I was in the hut when they came round, and I got a pair that fitted. In our hut there were a lot of men who could not put on the boots. Some of the boots were inspected by the doctor, who condemned them. The back of the boot shaped out instead of into the foot, and the doctor condemned them all. Some men signed for them on the second issue.

55. Did you get two pairs of boots at the time you mentioned before leaving?—No; I have had one pair since coming from Samoa.

56. And when you arrived here that pair of boots was six months' old?—Yes.

57. In regard to the bread, it was carried for a squad of twelve men?—The arrangement was that six men carried it for the whole hut, but the huts were overcrowded. Six men carried it for a platoon.

58. Were you going about Trentham with wet feet?—I was for a couple of days, and then I wore private boots. They were not so thick, and would only last a day. I got a friend of mine at the cookhouse to dry my boots for me.

59. *Mr. Ferguson.*] In regard to the sole of your boot coming off, did you examine the under-sole and see how it was secured? We have heard that the under-sole was screwed with brass screws, and the upper sole stitched on?—I could not say; I did not notice it. We had the same style that we had when we went to Samoa; it was O'Brien's first issue. They took practically three pairs of boots for every man, and I got two pairs at the start. I had plenty of boots in Samoa; but when I came back I had one pair of good boots which I took to Trentham, but by that time they were beginning to wear.

60. And what you have seen of the boots issued lately, they are not nearly so good as the boots issued to the troops who went to Samoa?—They would cripple any troops, some of them.

61. Badly cut?—Yes.

62. *Mr. Gray.*] Do you know where the ill-fitting boots came from?—I do not. I think some of them were a "Standard" make.

63. Where would they be made?—I could find out.

64. Where were the boots issued the sole of one of which came off?—Those were the ones brought back from Samoa.

65. When you went to Captain Simeon about it he turned you down because he was busy?—Yes; and I could not see him again.

66. It was an accident that you did not have an opportunity of seeing him again?—Yes, on account of his duties and my duties not coinciding.

67. You did not suppose there would have been any difficulty of getting a new pair of boots if you had had the opportunity of speaking to him?—I think I could have got the boots; it was just bad luck.

68. In regard to the hut being very crowded, did that continue until the time you left the hut?—We still had over the number in the hut: we had over fifty. I could not say how many were on sick-leave, but we had over our number.

69. Do you know what the state of the huts on either side of you was?—On one side the Public Works carpenters had possession.