

31. There must have been some reason ?—I know we were not even able to put our wet great-coats on the shelves ; we had to put them on our beds.

32. That was only for a short time until the order was altered ?—Yes. On going over to the 2nd Battalion I found the place overcrowded. If you went in at night after being on leave you were liable to fall over some one who was sleeping under the tables, and so forth. You had to be very careful how you went in, because if you fell over any one he usually was not very polite. The fatigue work, in my opinion, was excessive for a soldier—that is, the roadmaking and ditch-digging. Of course, I have heard it is part of the training, and it may be.

33. You have to do a lot of trenching when you get further afield ?—Yes, that is understood.

34. You must learn to handle a shovel ?—Yes. On one occasion I had to be one of a dozen to finish a ditch. It had been raining the night before, and the place was full of mud and water. The men grumbled, and so did I. We all decided that we went there to be soldiers, and not navvies generally. The non-commissioned officer heard us grumbling, and started to talk about the Army Act and its attendant horrors. We made the best of it. Of course, our boots were wet ; and after finishing that job it was raining slightly, and we were sent over to finish a ditch further over. I found I was getting very warm, and the mud in the first place seemed to me to have a peculiar smell, and it was then I first noticed I was taken ill.

35. What part of the camp was that ?—It was just over on the outside line of the huts. There has been a row or two erected since then. I know the ditch we were digging in drained into one of the big soak-pits at the bottom. Then the warrant officer ordered us to tackle a soak-pit on top of a gravel-pit, and when we arrived we found about a foot of water in it. We thought it was a gravel-bed, but evidently it did not drain too well. We had only one pair of boots, and none of us were very keen on hopping into it and making a start, so we got buckets and started to bail the water out. The Major and Captain and another officer came along. The Major passed the remark to the Captain, "Well, how are these boys going to get on—they have only one pair of boots, you know?" The Captain grunted, and that was all the satisfaction we got. We waited some time and no developments occurred, so we thought we had better make a start. The bailing did not seem to remedy the matter, so one member hopped down and started loosening the gravel, and after a while we managed to get the water to drain. It was a good day, and we were able to carry on with the work, but on that occasion I thought we did not get much satisfaction from the officers who happened to be there. I have heard several men who had made their living by working in ditches and draining swamps remark that it was mud-fever that laid the men up. Whether that was so or not I do not know.

36. Did you drain swamps here ?—No.

37. It was digging in the soil we see about here ?—Yes. On such days as we were sent out to dig it was raining slightly, and we had to take off our overcoats.

38. Were you put to dig every day or only for so-many hours ?—Usually for a period of hours.

39. How many hours a day did you dig ?—Six hours' digging, possibly. It may last for that, or possibly only three ; it would depend upon the job. We would go on in the morning at 9 and finish at 12, and then from half past 12 and finish at 4. We would be the whole day digging.

40. How many days a week would you do that ?—Perhaps you may be only on fatigue for a week at that or only two days, and then the next day drill. It may be that the job would only last a couple of hours.

41. It was irregular ?—Yes.

42. Did you at any time while in camp do six hours per day in any one continuous week ?—Lasting a week ?

43. Yes ?—No.

44. Did you do three hours per day for three days ?—I could not exactly recall.

45. Well, on an average, would that be anywhere near it ?—I do not know about navvying and so on, but I know as regards carrying stones it lasted for a week.

46. What was that for ?—Roadmaking.

47. *Mr. Ferguson.*] How did you carry the stones ?—There were plenty of lime-sacks about, and with a couple of pieces of wood at the ends they made very fair carriers. One was not worked hard, exactly.

48. You have not seen blankets used for stone-carrying ?—No.

49. *The Chairman.*] But it was not the class of work you went out to do ?—No. Every one complained about it. Also, in some of the hutments there were no doors and windows.

50. I think you said you were ill ?—Yes.

51. When were you taken ill ?—About a month ago. I took ill about the 1st July.

52. Where were you sent to ?—I went on sick-parade and had my temperature taken by the Medical Officer, who looked at my chest. He remarked that I had measles—whether mild or not I do not know ; but my temperature was very high, and I was ordered into the hospital.

53. *Dr. Martin.*] Where did you go ?—To the Trentham racecourse.

54. *The Chairman.*] In the kiosk ?—No ; in the trainers' quarters. The next day they considered my temperature was pretty high, so I was sent into the Wellington Hospital in a motor-car.

55. Was it a closed motor-car ?—Yes. There were two others in the same car, and they were sent to Kaiwarra. I got very good treatment in the hospital. I went there on a Sunday, and the following Sunday I was discharged, having been sent in with measles, which I do not believe I had, because I could not see any. I was then sent to the Kaiwarra Hospital, and, as far as the convalescents were concerned, the place, in my opinion, was well managed. I found no fault with it. We were well fed. After twelve days there I was sent away on sick-leave for ten days.

56. You left Kaiwarra for your home ?—Yes, and returned last Monday. After having reported I expected to be able to go and join my regiment, but I was sent into the hospital as an orderly, and consequently many besides myself were very much dissatisfied with that.