

ARTHUR EDWARD WHYTE sworn and examined. (No. 43.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position, Mr. Whyte?—I am secretary to the Wellington Racing Club.

2. How did the buildings and grounds of your club come to be occupied for camp purposes at Trentham?—In the first place, when the camp was originally established in October we granted the Defence Department the use of 60 acres of ground for manœuvring or erecting camps.

3. Was that voluntarily?—Yes, without request. We also granted them the use of the centre of the racecourse for parading purposes.

4. *Mr. Ferguson.*] That 60 acres is not included in the Racing Club's buildings?—No; alongside the camp at the back of the racecourse, where the Artillery camp is situated.

5. *The Chairman.*] This ground is separate from the actual course?—Yes; they had another 44 acres granted to them for drilling purposes about a quarter of a mile away; in all they have the use of 100 acres, and the centre of the racecourse additional.

6. Granted for camping and manœuvring?—Yes.

7. And the centre of the course for parading purposes?—Yes.

8. And they took advantage of that offer?—Yes; they have been in occupation of all that space ever since. The buildings were taken over, I think, on the 13th June. Dr. Valentine arrived at the gate with some motor-cars full of sick patients, and was given admission to the trainers' accommodation-house. There was a big storm on at the time, and there was no time to communicate with anybody. The caretaker gave them leave to go in without referring to the committee.

9. Or any authority?—No. I heard about this in the evening, and went out to Trentham on the following day. I saw Dr. Valentine, and suggested to him that he should remove the patients to the tea-kiosk, as it was more suitable. There was lavatory accommodation there, and no occasion for the men to go outside; the men could be removed from the horse-boxes. He took advantage of that offer, and subsequently put the patients in the tea-kiosk. There was sanitary accommodation in the tea-kiosk. There have been some remarks made about the horse-boxes. They are floored with pressed clay. They are done up after each meeting, when the mangers are disinfected and the whole of the boxes are perfectly cleaned.

10. *Mr. Ferguson.*] They have not concrete floors?—No, hard clay, rolled, and perfectly dry.

11. Are there any drains to them?—No; there is no occasion for a drain, because the floor is always lifted after each meeting. Later on the club offered the Health authorities the use of the members' luncheon-room in the grandstand. It is a large sunny room, with several water-closets attached, and a suitable room is adjacent for the nurses. That was also availed of for patients.

12. That was offered?—Yes, and accepted; it would hold about forty beds.

13. What date would that be occupied?—On the 5th July, I think. I saw the Hon. Mr. Rhodes, and offered to attend to the kitchen arrangements for them, because we had made all our arrangements for the race meeting. The staff and labour was engaged for the meeting, but the Defence people did not appear to wish to depart from their usual practice of running their arrangements themselves. They, however, took the whole of our plant—crockery and plate and kitchen utensils. A further room was fitted up by the club as a sitting-room for the men, and fires provided for the purpose of drying their clothes. They are now in occupation there. Some remarks have been made about the drainage and the mud surrounding the camp. It might be of interest to the Commission to know of the method adopted by the Racing Club for draining its property. It is practically the same class of subsoil as at the camp. Our experience is that it is practically dry to 30 ft. below the surface; after that the wells tap a good water-supply. We have provided for our drainage by digging a pit 20 ft. deep by 10 ft. wide. It is loosely bricked without any plaster, with weep-holes left in the bricks, and a concrete roof. A ventilating-pipe is fitted. That pit has proved eminently satisfactory for the last ten years. It has carried away the whole of the sewage of the racecourse from thirty-seven patents and the kitchen drainage.

14. The drainage of a race meeting?—Yes, lasting for three days at a time. I have been down the pit and seen it after a meeting, and it has been quite dry. The ground is absolutely porous, and there is nothing left. The drainage of the racecourse itself has been conducted in a similar manner, with the exception that the soak-pits were filled with stones instead of being left hollow. This has not been so satisfactory. Water has been inclined to bring in silt, and the pit has got clogged, but where the pit is left hollow the soakage is very good.

15. There is sand instead of stones in the pit, and the stones are less satisfactory?—Yes. The surface ground all round there is exceptionally dry.

16. Your knowledge of these matters extends over how many years?—Ten years.

17. And you believe that that ground is absolutely suitable for a camp?—Yes, undoubtedly.

18. *The Chairman.*] It is easily sanitated?—Yes.

Brigadier-General ALFRED WILLIAM ROBIN sworn and examined. (No. 44.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your proper title?—I am temporarily commanding the New Zealand Forces, and Quartermaster-General of the Forces.

2. You must help us by volunteering anything that you consider material to our inquiries. We would be glad to have the history of the camp, as it were, from the time you took charge of it at the beginning of the war, stating what reinforcements went in, and so on. When did you first take possession of the ground at Trentham to make a camp there?—The first use of