

74. I believe it would. We shall be able then to see exactly which officers deal with particular classes of work?—It is the same all the world over. The general headquarters is under the Commandant. His headquarters have three branches: the Chief of the General Staff, the Quartermaster-General, and the Adjutant-General. The Commandant is directly responsible to the Minister for the carrying-out of the policy laid down with regard to the defence of the country and all military arrangements. He looks to the Chief of the General Staff for all matters of training, intelligence, assisting him in the preparation of schemes for defence operations, information from other countries, and generally the military working, efficiency, preparedness, and the training of the troops who take the field. It is the duty of the Adjutant-General to attend to all matters of military law, discipline, casualties, dealing with the sick and wounded on the field, the collection and burial of the dead, the sending of reports regarding them, and medical services. The Quartermaster-General, in conjunction with these two officers—of course, they are always in close co-operation—is responsible for the whole of the equipment, ordnance, the general arrangement of camps, barracks, barrack-construction, transport by land and sea, and the carrying-out of the movement of encampments. In New Zealand we have no construction branch of the service. Then there is a further subdivision of the Quartermaster-General's department. [Statement put in.]

75. For our purposes, at any rate, the Quartermaster-General is the one that is responsible for the laying-out of the camp?—Yes.

76. It is under the Adjutant-General's department that the medical services come?—Yes, sir.

77. I understand that up to May the accommodation in the Trentham Camp was in tents?—Yes, up to about that time.

78. And then in May huts began to be ordered?—Yes, at the end of May.

79. What I want to get now is the history of the hutments—why they came to be put there, and so on?—It began some time before that. It was probably in December that we started talking about them. At that time I was governed not so much by the severity of our winter as by the fact that we would be sending away our tents and equipment with the Forces, so that wherever they landed abroad they would be self-contained. That, of course, depleted us to a great extent of tent equipment, and we could see facing us in the near future a great shortage of tentage. Our idea was to so equip our Forces going to the front that they would be able to house themselves independently even of the Home authorities. As it happened, the idea turned out right, because our men had the tents to pitch where they disembarked. That depleted our stores of tents, because you must remember that, even with the reinforcement work on our hands, we had to keep faith with the training under the Defence Act of the country, and to carry out the camps in the various parts of the Dominion. Then, again, I foresaw the difficulty of keeping men under tents by reason of the wear-and-tear of the tents, and that was really at the bottom of the thought regarding the huts. Knowing that Canada and the Home-country had put some of their men into huts, one did not wonder at it, with their severe winters.

80. So that the notion of the huts began in December owing probably to the shortage of tentage, and you had not in view the inclemency of the winter?—Not so much.

81. And you had to provide oilcloths?—Yes; it is expensive, but we were prepared to pay anything that had to be paid for it.

82. They had to be provided for the men to go away?—Yes.

83. But would it be necessary in connection with the huts?—No, not on boarded floors.

84. So that you would effect a saving there?—Yes.

85. And this idea originated in December; then plans were prepared, I think?—Yes; we had some plans prepared in our own office.

86. The Quartermaster-General's office?—Yes.

87. These were referred by the Minister to a Medical Board appointed?—Yes; the Minister did not feel inclined to allow us to go on until the plans were submitted and approved by the Board.

88. That Board consisted of Drs. Elliott, Holmes, and Purdy?—That is right.

89. There were two plans put forward—alternative plans: you recognize these as the plans [indicated on file]?—Yes.

90. These plans were prepared by whom?—By our own draughtsman.

91. The original plans were produced by the Quartermaster-General's department?—Yes, sir.

92. These plans were submitted by the Minister to the Board consisting of the gentlemen I have named?—Yes.

93. Do you recognize this as their report: "Alternative plan ought not to be considered. The double bunking is very bad from a sanitary point of view. The floor-space, about 23 ft. per man, is not sufficient. The ventilation is insufficient: there are too many men to each hut. The No. 1 proposal is approved of by the Board, except that it is thought the floor-space, about 36 ft. per man, is not quite sufficient. The huts are blocked, and would perhaps be better *en échelon*. The ventilation by the eaves is thoroughly satisfactory and by far the best method. This mode of ventilation should be adopted in the huts for officers also. Louvred vents are most unsatisfactory. With regard to the general sanitation, especially the drainage, the Board is of opinion that Major Morton, of Wellington, should be consulted in the matter. It is thought an absolutely satisfactory drainage scheme could be devised at very slight cost.—J. S. ELLIOTT, Major; MATTHEW HOLMES, Major; JAMES R. PURDY, Colonel"?—Yes.

94. And in consequence the alternative plan was rejected?—Yes.

95. Under this alternative plan, which was rejected, how many men were to go into a hut?—I do not remember.

96. At any rate, your proposal from the outset was to have a hut to accommodate fifty men?—Yes.