

I took no exception to them, and I do not think any man in our corps did. The remarks were not at all too strong, and I do not think any one who was not implicated in the matter could take exception to them.

261. You considered that if the men were guilty they deserved that and more?—Yes.

262. Do you think your impression was shared by the other officers in the camp, those you have conversed with on the matter?—I have not communicated with many, but I believe those I have seen look upon it in the same way.

Captain GEORGE HOWIE examined. (No. 11.)

263. *The Chairman.*] What is your name, and what corps do you command?—George Howie, Captain Commanding the Wairoa Mounted Rifles.

264. How long have you been in command of the corps?—Between five and six years.

265. You were present with your corps in camp in Newtown Park in June last?—Yes.

266. What day did you get in?—We got into camp on the morning of Saturday.

267. How many strong were you?—We brought down fifty-four, including the quartermaster.

268. How many tents had you?—Seven tents, including the officers'.

269. Had you sufficient room?—I did not hear any complaints.

270. What about straw?—We were rather short of straw considering the state of the ground.

271. Was the ground wet?—Very wet.

272. Did you get more straw?—After a few days I think we managed to get a little more.

273. What about the food supplied to the men?—It was short, and very badly cooked.

274. Was it always short?—Not for every meal, but for a great many meals it was short and badly cooked.

275. Was it always badly cooked?—Taking it all round, it was.

276. What did the men do with it: did they eat it?—Sometimes they could not eat it.

277. Then, what did they do?—They had to go down town and get a meal, and sometimes had to go without a meal at all.

278. What was the officers' mess like?—There was plenty of food, but sometimes it was not cooked.

279. Did they have to eat it?—They had either to eat it or go without.

280. Were the potatoes cooked?—Sometimes, and sometimes they were quite hard. The rice was all right when we had it.

281. What about the bread?—The bread was all right.

282. And how about the tea and coffee?—They were very wishy-washy.

283. Any milk?—Yes, I think so.

284. Did you see whether the men had milk in their tea or coffee?—I could not say.

285. How about the forage for the horses?—The quartermaster told us where the forage was, and it was very good, but sometimes there was not enough of it. One day they had no oats at all, and on two days they had no chaff.

286. Do you know what the regulations were with regard to serving out the horse-fodder?—A non-commissioned officer and two men were told-off each day to go and draw their allowance.

287. There was a marquee there for horse-fodder?—Yes.

288. Do you know whether the horse-fodder was always drawn from there?—I could not say.

289. You were in command of No. 1 Battalion?—No. 3.

290. How many companies were in it?—Only two companies really. There were supposed to be four, but the others did not come.

291. What were the two companies in your battalion?—The Eketahuna and Wairarapa Companies.

292. The Heretaungas did not go into camp?—No.

293. And although you were placed in command of that battalion, I understand that you did not really have command?—I was never on parade with them. I was put on to the 1st Battalion.

294. Captain Watt was in command of that?—He was taken off for some reason, and I had to take command of it. I had command of the 1st Battalion, consisting of the Alexandras, Wairoa, Hawera (Stratford), and Opunake (Egmont) Corps.

295. Did you work with the No. 1 Battalion in camp?—No, I was practically acting for No. 3 when there was nothing to do in the camp.

296. That was the battalion with the two companies in it?—Yes. As I belonged to No. 1 properly, they put me in charge of it.

297. In camp you were in charge of No. 3 and on parade No. 1?—Yes. I appointed an adjutant for No. 3, Captain Izard.

298. Is that all the staff you appointed?—I appointed a quartermaster-sergeant.

299. Did you appoint any staff for No. 1 Battalion?—No.

300. As an officer commanding a battalion, what brigade-staff did you know in the camp?—There was Colonel Sommerville, and he had an adjutant, Lieutenant Fitzherbert.

301. Any other staff?—The quartermaster, Lieutenant Thurston.

302. How were the orders conveyed to the battalion commanders?—Colonel Sommerville sent them by Lieutenant Fitzherbert.

303. Were they verbal or in writing?—There were no written orders.

304. You did not send your battalion orderly-sergeant for them when the bugle sounded?—Yes. At times Lieutenant Fitzherbert brought them round.

305. Did you notice the cooking-place in the camp, and inspect it?—Yes.

306. What was it like?—It was just the ordinary kind, with a trench dug out and the pots placed on top of railway iron. There was a shed there where they cut their meat.