

458. Were you present with your corps at the camp at Newtown Park in June last?—I was.
459. How many did you take into camp?—Fifty men and four officers.
460. How many tents had you?—Four for the men and one for the officers.
461. Had you sufficient straw in the tents?—After the first two days we had.
462. Can you tell us anything about the rations issued to the men: what about the meat?—The meat itself was good enough, but it was not cooked. I inspected the rations every day, and I do not think there was a solitary occasion on which the meat was sufficiently cooked.
463. Was it sufficient in quantity?—I believe it would have been if well cooked.
464. And the small things, such as chops, sausages, and so on: were they cooked?—I do not remember any sausages.
465. What about the vegetables?—There were hardly any, except on a couple of occasions. I remember seeing cabbage on one occasion; at other times I only saw potatoes.
466. Had the men potatoes every day?—No.
467. Were they cooked?—Well, after a fashion; insufficiently, certainly.
468. What about the bread and butter?—The bread was good, and I believe there was butter. I certainly heard no complaints about it.
469. What about the tea and coffee?—That was mostly non-existent, and if there was any it was unfit for the men to drink; but I would like to say that I did not blame the cooks for that, because they were working under very serious difficulties on account of the very inadequate water-supply.
470. In what way was the water-supply bad?—There was an inch main, which ran from the street through the grounds to the horse-trough, and when it arrived there it was reduced to half or three-quarters of an inch, and from there it branched off to the cooking-trench. That was all the cooks had; and, in addition, the pipe leaked frightfully, and most of the time of the officer of the day was taken up trying to patch the leak.
471. Did you see what the conveniences for cooking were?—Yes; they consisted of a trench and a shed with three sides. There was no cover for the cooking-trench, and the men had not a fair chance to cook the stuff on account of the rain spoiling everything. There were no tarpaulins put up, or anything of that kind. It appeared to me, also, that there were far too few cooks. As far as I remember, there were only six cooks altogether. I remember counting them more than once, and I never saw more than six cooks there.
472. Would there have been any difficulty in detailing cooks from the various corps?—On the contrary, I offered to do it.
473. To whom?—Before the camp started I wrote down to Captain Loveday, asking whether we should bring our cooks, and stating that I could bring two good men.
474. You did not offer to do it in camp?—No.
475. Do you know whether Captain Loveday communicated that to any other official?—I do not know. I got his reply to the effect that I could leave the men behind, because the rations were going to be supplied cooked.
476. Supposing shelter had been erected for the kitchens, would that have overcome the difficulty so far as cooking the rations was concerned?—No, because it was impossible for the number of cooks in camp to properly cook the rations. If they had been given the necessary time they would have about finished breakfast at dinner-time.
477. In your opinion, they wanted additional cooks and shelter?—It was want of time more than anything else. With more cooks I do not see any reason why the rations should not have been well cooked and made fit for consumption.
478. How about the fodder for the horses?—I had reason to complain about the quality of the chaff. That supplied to us was musty.
479. Do you know what that arose from?—No, except that it must have been a bad quality, or chaff that had been in a damp store.
480. Where was the chaff issued from?—A marquee or forage-tent.
481. Was it all issued from there?—No; after the first few days the fodder arrived late in the day, and then it was issued as the carts arrived.
482. Was it issued or did the men take it?—No; it was issued by the quartermaster.
483. Did you or any one on behalf of your company make any complaints to any one on account of the rations?—Yes, every day.
484. To who?—Acting Battalion-Commander Winter.
485. He was commanding your company before you went there?—Yes.
486. Are you aware whether he made any complaint to any one?—Yes.
487. To whom?—Colonel Sommerville.
488. What was the nature of his complaint?—The complaint embraced more than the rations. It embraced the condition of the camp, the position of the tents, the impossibility of retaining the tents on account of the mud there, and the rations. I noted that Colonel Sommerville went round and personally inspected the rations, and said that, with regard to the tea and coffee, they were not fit to drink.
489. But did he do anything?—I believe he did. He said he was going to town to have the thing remedied; but we saw no improvement.
490. Can you say on how many occasions Captain Winter complained to Colonel Sommerville?—I could not state definitely how many times, but I believe he did so every day.
491. Was there any improvement from day to day in consequence of those complaints?—No, there was not.
492. Was anything remedied?—Yes; the shortage of forage, about which we complained, was remedied, and there was plenty afterwards.
493. Was it brought to Colonel Sommerville's notice that there were insufficient cooks?—I did not do it personally, but I have no doubt it was done, because Captain Winter spoke to him