

*Report.*—With the exception of one occasion upon which the contractor delivered oats (some twenty bags) short of the proper quantity, there appears to have been plenty of forage for the horses, though some of the chaff was not good. Owing to some of the men having taken a quantity of hay for their tents in the absence of straw, and owing also to the want of anything like an efficient quartermaster's staff in the camp, it is impossible for us to say whether the full quantity of forage contracted to be supplied for the horses was actually delivered or not. The evidence shows that the carts were sometimes practically rushed at the gates, and no supervision exercised over the quantity taken.

The evidence satisfies us that many of the horses in camp suffered considerably from the exposure to which they were subjected there.

“ 5. The discipline and management generally of the camp.”

*Report.*—The camp organization and routine seems to have been very imperfect, though the several battalion commanders and their officers were willing and anxious to carry out their several duties. No sufficient brigade staff was appointed by the officer commanding the camp. He appointed a comparatively inexperienced lieutenant of the New Zealand Militia as staff officer, who was, according to the evidence, sometimes in mufti, but who was supposed to be carrying out the duties usually performed by a brigade major. Another officer—Lieutenant Blair—was put in orders as a staff officer, but we could not ascertain that he did any duty. The only additional staff officer was Lieutenant Thurston (U.A.L.), who was appointed in orders camp quartermaster, a position he had never occupied before, and who stated that he did not know what his duties were, and that they were not explained to him. Surgeon-Captain De Lisle was present in camp with his corps, and was the only medical officer present. He was not assigned any position in orders.

Comparatively few orders were issued, and those in no systematic manner, and in some instances were not carried out. No order-book was kept in the Brigade Office, nor by some of the battalions, and the constitution of the brigade staff, such as it was, did not appear to be generally known even to the commanding officers of the several battalions in camp.

There were seventeen corps in camp, divided into four battalions. The commands of these battalions were assigned in orders to four officers by the officer commanding the camp, and by his orders each of such battalion commanders was supposed to appoint his own battalion staff.

The defective nature of the camp organization may be judged to some extent from the fact that only one officer-of-the-day's report was sent in to the Brigade Office, and only one guard report. But, even if the camp organization and staff had been in every way perfect, they could not have brought the discomfort of the officers, men, and horses, and the inadequate cooking arrangements and bad cooking, more prominently under the notice of the officer commanding the camp than they were; and we consider that Colonel Sommerville did not represent matters forcibly enough to Colonel Newall as the officer commanding the district.

Subject to the matters hereafter mentioned, we have every reason to believe that the officers and men in camp carried out most of the orders issued to them, so far as they knew them, and allowing for their inexperience, and that there was no want of the spirit of discipline on their part. In fact, they suffered much inconvenience and discomfort comparatively uncomplainingly. Many of the officers in camp were quite inexperienced, and only ten out of forty-five of them had even passed their examination.

“ 6. The alleged breach of discipline committed by Volunteers in taking part in a procession through the streets of Wellington on the evening of the 19th June.”

*Report.*—It appears that a procession of some Volunteers in uniform paraded some streets of Wellington on the afternoon of Wednesday, the 19th June, carrying with them a long stick or pole with a board attached, and displaying some undercooked meat and a bottle of tea, and which were referred to as a sample of the rations at the camp. We could not ascertain where the procession started from, but different witnesses before us saw it in Cuba Street, Manners Street, Willis Street, Lambton Quay, and the several streets surrounding Government House. Those in the procession were singing and generally making a noise as they marched along.

Staff Sergeant-Major Healey and Colour-Sergeant Redmond in their evidence before us mention the part taken by Sergeant Rankin, of the Manawatu Mounted Rifles, in this procession. The evidence of these witnesses, in our opinion, justifies further inquiry being made by the