

Voucher 273, for £72 11s. 7d.: These are miscellaneous payments made by Major Pilcher, being chiefly advances to members of New Zealand contingents whose accounts had been settled up before the debits were entered, and they appear to be irrecoverable except at considerable expense.

It would be hard to call on Major Pilcher to refund these amounts, and I would suggest that they be written off and Major Pilcher's account credited accordingly.

Of the total amount of vouchers, £1,310 18s. 5d., for which your approval is requested, the sum of £626 15s. 5d. is at credit of "Deposits, Miscellaneous," leaving a balance of £684 8s. to be borne by the colony.

T. F. GREY,  
For Under-Secretary Defence.

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No. 2.

The Paymaster-General.

HAVE you any remark to make in respect to these matters, or papers bearing on subject?

R. J. S. 14/4/06.

Hon. Minister of Defence.

No papers. Several efforts have been made to square up Pilcher's accounts, but absence of receipted vouchers and other causes have presented grave difficulties. I think the course suggested by the Under-Secretary is correct and should be acted on, and Major Pilcher's account closed.

JAS. B. HEYWOOD.  
17th April, 1906.

Write off as recommended, and credit Major Pilcher's account accordingly.

R. J. S. 17/4/06

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No. 3.

RECEIPTED vouchers are necessary to the passing of such claims to credit by an imprestee.

J.K.W., C. & A.-G. 27/6/06.

Hon. Defence Minister.

In view of Audit objection dated 27th June, 1906, I recommend the attached memorandum to the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer be signed by you.

T. F. GRAY,  
For U.-S. Defence. 11/7/06.

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No. 4.

Defence Minister's Office, Wellington, 13th July, 1906.

Memorandum for the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer.

THE Minister of Defence has the honour, with reference to the queries of the Audit Department dated the 27th June, and to the Defence Minister's direction of the 17th April last, in connection with unvouched expenditure by Major Pilcher, to inform the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer that it is regretted receipts were not obtained by Major Pilcher for the expenditure, and, it being impossible at this date to obtain them, the Defence Minister would refer the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer to a previous occasion on which the Audit Department passed similar unvouched expenditure for credit of Major Pilcher on account of the exceptional nature of the circumstances which surround the payments made, almost at the seat of war.

The Defence Minister would request that the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer would under the circumstances resubmit the accounts to Audit under the conditions set forth, and on the assurance that the Department is quite satisfied with the nature of the payments, and to request that they be passed accordingly.

ALBERT PITT,  
Minister of Defence.

Secretary for the Treasury.—W.H.J. 17/7/06.

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No. 5.

The Audit Office.

WILL you kindly reconsider the matter, and under the exceptional circumstances which were occurring at the time the expenditure took place you may see your way to pass the unvouched disbursements.

JAS. B. HEYWOOD, Secretary.  
18th July, 1906.

If the proposal of the Government that this expenditure should be passed without the receipted vouchers is subject to the condition of a report of the matter to Parliament, if I think it necessary, no objection will be raised by the Audit Office.

A simple statement should be furnished, showing in one column the amount of account to be passed, and the total amount of all.

J. K. WARBURTON, C. & A.-General.  
21/7/06.