

31. And you proceeded by day labour?—Almost immediately.
32. *Mr. Ferguson.*] On what date were the tenders received?—8th April.
33. And on what date were they declined?—On the 15th April I was notified that it had been decided to decline all tenders and carry out the work by day labour.
34. *The Chairman.*] When did you begin with the day labour?—I commenced to order material straight away—the next day.
35. And when did they start work?—I think we started within a couple of days—two or three days.
36. Was any time appointed within which they were to be finished?—We were instructed to proceed with them as quickly as possible.
37. How many hutments were you to put up then?—I think about thirty-four for men and eleven for officers.
38. When did you finish them?—They are not completed yet. The thirty-four have been completed.
39. *Mr. Salmond.*] How many are complete altogether?—About forty.
40. *The Chairman.*] I suppose they were completed one by one, or were the different parts of a number proceeded with simultaneously?—Yes, that is so.
41. When did you get the first lot completed?—I think we erected them nearly at the rate of one every two days at first.
42. The point is this: delay is suggested. We want to know what delay there was?—There was no delay.
43. What time was allowed when tenders were called for?—I have not the tenders here.
44. I should like to get that information. Will you let us have it, please?—Yes, sir.
45. *Mr. Salmond.*] You have there a plan, I believe, showing the huts—those already built and those still to be completed?—Yes. [Plan produced.]
46. *The Chairman.*] Is this a plan of the whole of the building that was undertaken?—That shows the whole of the buildings to be erected, including the additional huts. There are fifty-five huts altogether.
47. You are erecting at the rate of one every two days?—Something like that.
48. That would be fifteen in a month. In three months, at that rate, you would have erected forty-five?—We have forty erected and complete now.
49. *Mr. Salmond.*] I think I am right in saying that all on the plan are completed with the exception of seven?—Yes.
50. *The Chairman.*] With the outside offices and everything—latrines, and so on?—They are not all completed. I can give you the exact number.
51. Let us have particulars, and the dates when they were completed. Does your assistant recollect the time that was allowed for tenders?—I do not think so.
52. Have you not got the specification?—I have not got it here. On the 8th July there were forty-three completed, including the sample hut. We knocked off work on the next day. One was completed with the exception of shelving; one with the exception of shelving and flooring; and one with the exception of shelving, flooring, and windows.
53. Three in course of construction?—Practically there were forty-four completed and seven in course of construction: that makes fifty-one.
54. Did you receive instructions to hurry on with the work at any time?—I think so. It was understood—
55. I mean, after you had started did you receive instructions to hurry on—make faster progress?—I have no doubt I received instructions. I could not say from memory; but I have been urged to push on by the military authorities and others.
56. What did you do then to meet the urgency?—I got all the men and all the material that I could get.
57. Had you any difficulties with regard to men or material?—We had considerable difficulties in regard to material; in fact, I think the merchants supplied nearly all the corrugated iron that was available in the city, and we had to send to Melbourne for some. There was difficulty in getting glass, and seasoned timber for the flooring; and we had difficulty in getting felt for the roofs.
58. Did those difficulties cause delays that otherwise would not have taken place?—They caused a certain amount of delay.
59. What about the men?—We got men from all over the country. The Labour Department got some from Auckland, and I think some from as far as Dunedin.
60. Could you have used more men if you could have got them?—Towards the end the men became rather frightened, and a number of them left. They became afraid of sickness in camp.
61. When do you mean when you say “towards the end”?—Towards the 8th July.
62. Did any leave before the 30th June?—I think the overseers could tell you that better than I can.
63. I suppose the pay-sheets will show the number of men?—Yes, they will show everything. I did not complete the list of buildings. There were fourteen officers’ huts in addition to the others.
64. In addition to the forty-three?—Yes. The Army Service Corps building was completed; a power-house, with engine and foundations, completed; a considerable amount of electric wiring done; five cookhouses completed, and one with the exception of the floor: that would be six. Of the ablutions, six were completed, and fourteen in course of construction.
65. *Mr. Salmond.*] Are all these buildings shown on the plan?—I think so. Wash-ups—four completed and two partly completed; latrines—two: that makes ninety-three erections in all.