

66. *The Chairman.*] When did you first come to the conclusion that bunks would be an improvement?—I thought from the very first that men should not sleep on the floor. It would be an advantage to have them raised off the floor.

67. Did you report that?—It did not come within my province.

68. You did not give expression to that opinion to your superiors?—I do not think so.

69. *Mr. Ferguson.*] You were doing the work for the Defence people?—I was carrying out the work under instructions from the head of my Department, and I had nothing to do with the class or style of building to be erected. I was simply carrying out instructions.

70. *The Chairman.*] An executive officer?—Yes.

71. Although you thought what you have stated, you did not communicate your opinion to any one in authority?—I might have mentioned that I did make a small sample stretcher when the work was started.

72. Did you put it in the hut?—No.

73. Who saw this sample stretcher?—I do not think any of the military authorities saw it. It was in our workshop.

74. To whom did you show it?—Lately it was sent to Defence headquarters.

75. But at the time?—I did not show it to anybody that I am aware of. We had to carry out instructions. I have to do with the furnishing.

76. Why did you make the sample if it was not to be shown to anybody?—I thought it would be desirable if the question came up. I think I made one or two different sample stretchers in case they should be required. It was a very small affair and very cheap, to keep the men off the floor.

77. Were bunks ever suggested to you by the military authorities or by any superior?—No.

78. Were you present at the meeting of the committee of experts?—No.

79. Were you invited to be present?—No; nor was the Engineer-in-Chief, my superior officer.

80. *Mr. Salmond.*] The Public Works Department had nothing to do with the plans until——?—They had to do with the architectural plans, but not the engineering plans.

81. *The Chairman.*] Did any one from the Public Works Department attend this committee?—The Government Architect was a member.

82. Is he in a different Department?—A different branch.

83. Did any superior officer to you in the Public Works Department attend that conference?—I cannot say.

84. *Mr. Salmond.*] The Government Architect is connected with the Public Works Department, but is not in the same branch, I understand, as you?—Oh, yes. I carry out the architectural work and the engineering work.

85. Is he your superior?—I do not know that he is. Mr. Blow and Mr. Holmes are my superiors. I took instructions from Mr. Blow.

86. *The Chairman.*] The Architect may supply you with material, as it were, from which you work?—That is so.

87. *Mr. Ferguson.*] These huts were not designed in your District Office but in the Government Architect's office?—I believe they were designed between the Government Architect's office and the military headquarters office; and I think the Health Department had something to do with the matter?—I know that Dr. Frengley was consulted.

88. *The Chairman.*] Have you on your file letters urging you to proceed faster with the construction of these huts?—There is a lot of correspondence. It would take some time to look through it. I do not remember any particular instance. It may have been so. No doubt I have been urged. At any rate, whether I was actually instructed or not, it was always understood that we were to proceed with the work with all possible despatch.

89. Could you have employed more men if they could have been got?—I suppose we could. We employed all the men who presented themselves, I understand.

90. The Labour Department got the men for you?—We employed some direct and some through the Labour Department—wherever we could get them.

91. *Mr. Salmond.*] How many men were employed?—I suppose, on an average, a hundred carpenters.

92. *The Chairman.*] Daily?—Daily; and I think we have one hundred and thirty men altogether. And then the military assisted with fatigue parties, in such work as carrying material. The overseer can state exactly how many men he had.

93. *Mr. Salmond.*] Had your Department anything to do with building the hospital which is now in course of construction?—Yes; that is being carried out by contract.

94. From plans prepared by your Department?—By the Government Architect.

95. *The Chairman.*] When did you get your first instructions to proceed with the hospital?—The contract was let on the 27th April.

96. That is part of the same job as the hutments?—No, it was a contract. The hutments were erected by day labour.

97. When did you get the instructions for the hospital?—The contract was let on the 27th April.

98. But when did you get the instructions?—That is the instruction. I did not receive any instructions as to preparation of plans. The Government Architect would do so.

99. We should have to get the Government Architect to find out when he was first instructed about it?—Yes. I began with the contract.

100. *Mr. Salmond.*] Who is the contractor?—Mr. H. H. Knight.

101. *The Chairman.*] What does the contract provide on the subject of completion?—It provides for completion two months from the 27th April. That would be on the 27th June.