

8-9 GEORGE V, A. 1918

Q. You must answer that question "yes" or "no".—A. Will you kindly repeat the question.

Q. In your opinion there is not sufficient evidence in the reports to justify the conclusion that Colonel Labatt was perfectly sound at the time of enlistment?—A. I do not think—

Q. Answer that "yes" or "no".—A. Well,

Q. "yes" or "no"?—A. That is all very well—

Q. I want the question answered "yes" or "no".—A. I do not think anybody could state positively one way or the other.

Q. That is all I want.

*By Mr. Redman:*

Q. There is nothing in the evidence to show there was anything wrong with him at the time of enlistment?—A. Nothing that I see at all.

*By Mr. Nickle:*

Q. Then you would differ from the conclusion of Col. McGillivray and Col. Connell?—A. I do not know what they said.

Q. They said that when he became a member of the C.E.F. the probabilities were, in their opinion, that he was not perfectly sound at the time he became such a member.—A. I do not think anybody is perfectly sound at 50 years to do active service, otherwise they would increase the age limit. I did not declare myself as in one of the three classes of liars or experts, but I will tell you honestly these are the facts of our trip up there, and any fellow who goes through that without previous training—I know when I started golf this year I felt it going up the short hills.

Witness retired.

Commander J. K. L. Ross, *recalled.*

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Will you read the letter which Mr. Stevens sent to the Committee?—A. I know of this letter. I have now read it.

Q. I wish to ask you, in connection with the granting of the pension to Col. Labatt what have you to say with reference to the suggestion that possibly some influence was used in connection with it?—A. First of all, Mr. Chairman, I do not want to hide behind ignorance. I did not know until I returned from England that Col. Labatt was in receipt of a pension, but the Pensions Board pride themselves that they are not influenced by anybody in the granting of pensions. We try to grant pensions on the evidence we receive, and no influence to my knowledge to date has ever been brought to bear to affect us one way or the other in granting or not granting a pension, and what Mr. Stevens is trying to deduce here is entirely wrong. I have not seen Col. Labatt's file in regard to the pension but from what I have been told about it and what I have read in the evidence—and if it had come up before me with the medical board—I would not hesitate in granting Col. Labatt a pension. I may say that few worked as Col. Labatt did, and being in touch with him for two years I consider Col. Labatt, from what I know of him personally, has a very large disability, and he has worked on the Pension Board conscientiously and put forward the best that was in him and done excellent work and I would not ask for a better colleague to work with, or a more honest and straightforward colleague, and one not affected by influence, and a thoroughly capable business man. This talk which has been going on is most unfair to a man who has given so much of his life and time to his country.

Q. Who was present at the time Col. Labatt was granted a pension?—A. I could not tell you.

[Commander J. K. L. Ross.]