

Only the dump grounds. There were a few shacks there.

Q.277. Did you know whether these shacks were occupied or not?  
They seemed to be empty.

Q.278. Were not occupied?

I had seen people, a man walking across there.

Q.279. You considered they were quite safe from any fire?

Well I figured with myself handling the rifle they would be quite safe sir.

Q.280. How is it you were in possession of live ammunition?

Well we have been issued with fifty rounds operational and I still had them up in the barrack room and just for the show of it I thought they might help their training, I showed them these rounds operational and a couple more extra I had.

Q.281. Was this the first occasion you had used live ammunition on training with the unit?

With the unit, yes sir.

Q.282. Were you aware of the fact that you would have to get permission for live ammunition before it was used?

Down at the school we were told we had to use, we must use it, it was absolutely necessary to be used.

Q.283. You have read your handbook on battle training of course?

Yes sir.

Q.284. What does it say there in reference to the use of live ammunition.

I can't quote the exact words. I believe it says it should be handled by a fairly good marksman who knows his rifle and knows what he is doing.

Q.285. And carefully supervised?

I am not sure of that sir.

Q.286. And you did not consider you were doing wrong by using this live ammunition without authority from your company commander or any of your superiors.

Well sir I might have been carried away from myself a little. I have been acting as a platoon commander for the last nine months now and I may have taken too much authority in my own hands.

THE PROSECUTOR (THROUGH THE COURT)

Q.287. Sgt. McNeil you have just said that at the battle drill school you were told that on returning to your unit you must use live rounds. Would you as a sergeant go ahead and use something as dangerous as live rounds when you are exercising troops without asking permission of an officer?

Yes sir.

Q.288. You have been a sergeant for quite a long time, Sgt. McNeil. Don't you think that in any action of that sort the reasonable thing to do is to obtain authority of some sort?