

I wish to explain how it was that I had these cigarettes which I have pleaded guilty to dealing in, with respect to those in the first charge, they were cigarettes which were sent from 48 GST Coy for distribution to the PI stationed in the Hague and for Personnel at the Hook of Holland.

First of all I would observe that the handling of cigarettes within the Coy was very laxly controlled. We drew cigarettes whenever a vehicle happened to be going to Germany if there was an issue available. No one signed for the cigarettes which were sent to us and no proper books had ever been set up. There were not even an account books for the regimental funds in Germany until a later time than this episode. When cigarettes arrived at the unit word was usually also sent as to how much the issue was. We usually received a few more issues of cigarettes than our actual strength at day of issue. This is explained by the fact that our strength in Holland was always fluctuating. The extra issues were turned over to the mess to buy extra messing and for general mess purposes.

During the first weeks in July 1946 an issue of cigarettes came from Germany. The bill with it showed 95 issues of 900 cigarettes, and chocolate bars and other items. Therefore without counting or checking they were given out at the rate of 900 per man. Some of the men apparently received 940. This was due to the fact that Sgt Perry did not realize that a new sized sort of British Cossack contained 240 cigarettes. He thought they were 200s and issued them accordingly.

I believed we had received 92200 or 85,000 cigarettes altogether. There were 70 men in The Hague who received cigarettes, a total of 63000. There were 11 in the Hook who received 9900. Three or four men were in hospital and another 2700 or 3100 cigarettes were set aside for them. We turned over to the mess mess 8500 cigarettes and set aside a further 3000 for the mess for the following week.

That accounts for a total of 82100 or 83000 cigarettes depending on what was set aside for men in hospital.

In addition to this we found after completing the issue that many men had received an extra 40 cigarettes each so that taking into consideration all the cigarettes which Sgt Perry and I believed we should have received were accounted for.

In completion of the distribution it was discovered that 1 case of cigarettes was left untouched and there were a few cartons besides. The case held 24000 sigs. All the cigarettes I know anything about is approximately 25000 which were in Sgt Perry's room. I do not know where any cigarettes could have come from to make up the 29000 mentioned by Pte Stoney and Shelhorn. However as the biggest cases in which cigarettes are received contain 24000 even two full cases would only be 48000. I know there was only one full case and a few extra cartons. Pte Stoney says the cigarettes were in the cases and does not say whether or not they were full. I believe therefore that he must be very mistaken as to the number or others were added before they were loaded. All his dealings were with Sgt Perry apart from my original talk to him. I was not present when he received the cigarettes or paid over the money. These cigarettes seemed to be completely Buckhies. No one had signed for them and no records were kept by the Coy. So far as I am concerned the men had been issued with the number of cigarettes to which they were entitled and the surplus to account for the total number of cigarettes received was disposed of in a proper manner. Sgt Perry and I considered that somewhere someone had made a mistake in counting the cigarettes sent to us and since we were not asked to account for them we decided to sell them. Frankly I admit it was the wrong thing to do but I wish to impress on you Gentlemen that at no time had I any intention of depriving the men of cigarettes to which they were legally entitled.

So far as the 25000 cigarettes in the other charge are concerned they were my own personal cigarettes which I had accumulated over a period of time. They had been issued to me or I had obtained them from other officers and men in the bar. During the time I was on the continent I collected war souvenirs as souvenirs. These included enemy Officer's dress daggers and swords, Hitler youth knives, 50 to 60 medals and Medallions and several illustrated books on the life of Hitler and the rise of the German nation.