

9-10 GEORGE V, A. 1919

Q. You have been with the Board ever since its organization?—A. Not since the organization of the Board. The Board was organized in September, 1916, and I was appointed secretary in May, 1917.

Q. Are you familiar with the methods adopted in the organization? Can you give us some statements as to the methods used in the organization of the Board?—A. I think so, sir.

Q. Have you a statement prepared? If so we will receive your statement first?—A. I have not a statement other than that which has been already submitted. I think you have a copy of the staff, and I have also statements in regard to various matters, which I thought probably you would ask questions about, and I could try and answer them.

Q. Tell us the general plan of organization, enumerating all branches, etc.?—A. The Board is composed of three commissioners. To assist them there is a secretary. He acts as the mouthpiece of the commission, transmits orders, and looks after, generally, any correspondence. He has charge of all the correspondence going out from the Board. There is in addition a director who has charge of the organization and of the work.

Q. Who is the director?—A. Mr. Archibald. He is legal adviser, and also acting as director at the present time. The staff is divided into branches composing the paying staff, the staff which pays the pensions, and the medical staff which looks after disability pensioners, men who have been disabled for years, and the branch which we call the Claims Branch, which looks after dependents of those who are called overseas. These branches of course are divided up again into other branches.

Q. You have some other branches; the Secretary's Branch, for instance?—A. Yes. The Secretary's Branch does the correspondence, looks after all the correspondence, under the direction of the secretary. Then we have a branch which is called the District Branch. That looks after a number of offices which are scattered through the country for the purpose of keeping in touch with the pensioners, to investigate claims and to assist pensioners in every way possible, or applicants for pension, explain regulations, and so on.

Q. These branches are officered how?—A. What do you mean by that? There is a head official in each branch.

Q. Who is held responsible?—A. Who is held responsible?

Q. For the work of the branch?—A. Of the branch concerned. He is directly responsible to the director. The director is responsible to the commissioners through the secretary.

Q. On whose recommendation, can you tell us, was this plan of organization adopted?—A. Well, last fall, the then Chairman, Commander Ross, felt that re-organization of the organization was necessary.

Q. A re-organization?—A. Yes.

Q. Can you go back and tell us about the original organization?—A. I can tell you that, sir.

Q. In the first place, was the organization of the Pension Board brought under the Civil Service?—A. No, it was not.

Q. And it was an independent organization?—A. Perhaps I had better go back and say that up till September, 1916, Canadian pensions were administered by the Pensions and Claims Board, which was a Militia Department organization. The Government apparently felt the need of creating a separate organization for looking after C.E.F. pensions, and decided on the Board of Commissioners at that time. They appointed Commander Ross, Major Todd, and the late Colonel Labatt as Commissioners in September, 1915. Commander Ross at that time brought up a gentleman called Kerr, who was a chartered accountant of considerable experience in Montreal, and he organized the Board at that time. It was very much along the lines that it is now, but it was naturally much smaller.

[Major Stanley B. Coristine.]