

PROCEEDINGS

OF A

COURT OF INQUIRY,

CONVENED BY SPECIAL ORDER No. 85,

Headquarters Department of Washington,

AT THE REQUEST OF

FIRST LIEUT. GEORGE H. FELT,

FIFTY-FIFTH N. Y. S. M. AND ACTING SIGNAL OFFICER, U. S. A.



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*Recd by  
Hon. C. Sumner  
(Classy 1880.)*

[ Copy of Order. ]

HEADQUARTERS,  
DEPARTMENT OF WASHINGTON,  
May 16, 1863.

SPECIAL ORDERS, No. 85.

EXTRACT.

4. The following named officers are hereby detailed as a Board of Inquiry, to meet in Washington, D. C., on Monday, May 18th, 1863, at twelve m., to inquire into and report upon the moral character of Lieut. GEORGE H. FELT, Acting Signal Officer.

- Major G. F. MERRIMAN, 3d Batt'n, 5th N. Y. Art'y.
- Capt. W. M. McCLURE, 2d Penn. Art'y.
- “ R. B. BIDDLECOME, 10th N. Y. Art'y.
- Lieut. F. W. PAUL, 2d Penn. Art'y, *Recorder.*

By command of Major-General HEINTZELMAN.

(Signed) CARROLL H. POTTER,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

MAY 18, 1863.

The Court met pursuant to order, and having organized, adjourned to meet May 19, 1863.

MAY 19, 1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment, and Lieut. Felt being asked if he had any objection to any member of the Court, and he having replied in the negative, the Court proceeded to the trial of the case.

First witness summoned for the prosecution, Capt. LEONARD F. HEPBURN, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by the Recorder.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment?

A. Leonard F. Hepburn, Capt. Co. K, 4th Regt. N. Y. Vols., and Acting Signal Officer.

Q. What do you know of the moral character of George H. Felt?

Objected to by witness, and question withdrawn.

Q. How long have you known George H. Felt?

A. Since on or about 17th Sept., 1862.

Q. Have you during that time seen him act in a manner unbecoming an officer and a gentleman?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. State when and where.

A. As to the transaction, it occurred about Jan. 20, 1863; he returned from New York at that time; and was ordered out of the city. Under a previous order he had drawn commutation for fuel and quarters, and on receiving the order, about Jan. 20, 1863, he concealed all knowledge of it from the quartermaster, who had been paying him commutation for fuel and quarters, thereby he failed to obey the spirit of order of Jan. 20, 1863, and the letter, I may say, of that order.

Q. Do you recollect the number of the order ordering him to report to signal camp of instruction?

A. Special Order No. 7. (Capt. Hepburn then reads a copy of the order, and certifies that it is a true copy.)

Q. Did you ever see any order from the signal officer annulling any portion of Special Order No. 7?

A. I did.

Q. When?

A. It was issued five or six days afterwards.

Q. What was the nature of this order?

A. The paragraph about the rocket code, Army of the Potomac, was rescinded. (Capt. Hepburn reads the order, and certifies that it is a true copy.)

Q. Do you consider Special Order No. 9 as annulling the whole of sect. 2, Special Order No. 7?

A. No, sir; only annuls so much of it as relates to the preparation of rocket code.

Q. Is the signal camp of instruction within the limits of the city of Washington?

A. Not within the corporate limits.

Q. Leaving aside the commutation for quarters and fuel, do you consider Lieut. Felt's moral character good, bad, or indifferent?

A. I could not answer that question, as I have never had anything to do with him except of an official nature.

Q. Was Lieut. Felt sent to New York on duty?

A. I think he was by verbal order.

Q. What duty?

A. Experimenting with rockets that he claimed to have invented.

Q. Did he perform the duty on which he was sent?

A. I cannot say. Lieut. Felt returned with some rockets, but he did not make the report he was ordered to make.

Q. While in New York, did Lieut. Felt order any rockets for the benefit of the government and to be paid for by the government?

A. He did.

Q. Had he authority to order them?

A. I believe he had. I have since been so told.

*Cross-examined by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your position in the office of the signal officer?

A. Officer in charge of the stores and records, executive officer, and general business manager.

Q. Is the signal camp of instruction within the military limits of Washington?

A. I cannot say. It is within the department of Washington.

Q. What is my character as an efficient officer in the corps?

A. I cannot say, as the records of the office do not show that he has been in the field for a long time, and he never served under my command in the field.

Q. Have any reports from officers in command of the signal camp been sent to the office lately in which I am mentioned as an efficient officer and a gentleman?

A. Yes.

Q. Are those reports on record in the office?

A. Not as yet, they are only filed, but have not been entered under each officer's name, as other reports are still due.

Q. Was that verbal order the only one given me?

A. Yes, to the best of my knowledge.

Q. Did you inform me that Maj. Myer did not wish me to have an order, but I must get to New York the best way I could without one?

A. Yes, I did. I will state in connection therewith that it was done so that no mileage could be drawn.

Q. Did you give me a pass that you said would take me through the guard at the R. R. Depot?

A. Not to the best of my recollection. Lt. Felt had a pass at that time from me, that read "pass in and about Washington."

Q. What was the date of that pass?

A. I could not say.

Q. Was it not given to me when I first came to Washington, Sept. 20, 1862?

A. I could not say.

Q. Was it given to me the day I left Washington?

A. I could not say.

Q. Did you tell me to put on citizen's clothes if I could not get to New York any other way?

A. Don't think I did.

Q. Is that the pass, and is it not dated the day I left Washington?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you draw commutation for quarters and fuel for me when I was in New York, and send me on certificate to sign, stating that I was stationed in Washington?

A. I remember presenting Lieut. Felt's vouchers for commutation for fuel and quarters.

*Questions by the Court.*

Q. Were you a member of the Board of Examination before which Lieut. Felt was ordered?

A. No.

Q. Do the officers in the signal camp have fuel and quarters furnished them?

A. They do.

Q. How do you know Lieut. Felt drew fuel in camp?

A. I don't pretend to know.

CAPT. W. G. McCREARY, a witness summoned for the prosecution, was then duly sworn:

*Questions by Recorder.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment?

A. Wm. G. McCreary, Captain 102d P. R. V., and Acting Signal Officer.

Q. Were you in command of signal camp, January 20, 1863?

A. I was.

Q. Did Lieut. Felt report to you, and when?

A. He did, on or about January 20, 1863.

Q. When Lieut. Felt reported to you, did you assign him quarters in camp?

A. The order ordering him to report was different from orders usually ordering officers to report, and for a special duty. Although I had quarters in camp, I did not assign him quarters.

Q. Did Lieut. Felt have quarters outside of camp?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did Lieut. Felt while in quarters outside of camp draw fuel at all?

A. I furnished him one cord wood in the early part of February, and one cord wood last part of April.

Q. Did he state that he desired fuel ?

A. When I left fuel in April, he requested it; when I left it in February, he stated that he did not wish it. I had sole control of the camp in all respects.

Q. Did you ever see an order rescinding a portion of the order ordering him to report ?

A. Order No. 7 ordered him to report. Order No. 9 rescinded part of the order in relation to preparing a rocket code.

Q. Do officers reporting for special duty usually sleep out of camp ?

A. His was the only case reporting for special duty. One or two others have been permitted to sleep out of camp.

Q. Do the officers make a requisition and receipt for fuel drawn ?

A. No, sir.

Q. What do you consider the character of Lieut. Felt as an officer and a gentleman ?

A. I have known Lieut. Felt since August, 1861, and intimately since January, 1862. I always found him gentlemanly, and efficient and obedient.

*Cross-examined by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What was my reputation as an officer and a gentleman in my regiment ?

A. I have heard his colonel speak very highly of him as an officer.

Q. When you left the wood at my quarters in February, did I not tell you that I didn't wish it, as I had purchased wood ?

A. He told me that he didn't want it.

Q. What is my standing in regard to moral character ?

A. I know nothing against Lieut. Felt. I know him to be temperate.

Q. Did you understand when you left me the cord of wood in April, that the cord of wood left in February, and this left in April, was my allowance of wood for the month of April ?

A. Can't say that I did.

*Questions by the Court.*

Q. Had Lieut. Felt permission to occupy quarters out of camp during February, March, and April?

A. He had.

Q. Was fuel drawn for Lieut. Felt during the months of February and March, and was Lieut. Felt aware of that fact?

A. Can't say that he was aware of that fact; fuel was drawn for every officer and enlisted man in camp for February, which was enough for the month of March.

Q. Did Lieut. Felt use the cord of wood he had delivered to him in February, 1863?

A. Can't say positively; I left it at the house where he had his quarters.

Q. Did you consider Lieut. Felt on detached service by virtue of Order No. 7, and on account of his having permission to occupy quarters out of camp?

A. I did not understand the order in that light.

Q. Have you ever known Lieut. Felt to be guilty of any immoral act, unbecoming a gentleman and an officer, since he has been in the service of the United States?

A. I have not.

The Court here adjourned to May 20, 1863, at 11 o'clock, A. M.

MAY 20, 1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment, and the minutes of the day previous having been read and approved, were ordered to be recorded.

Major MORRIS S. MILLER, a witness summoned for the prosecution, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Recorder.*

Q. What is your name and rank?

A. Morris S. Miller, Major and Quartermaster, U. S. A.

Q. Did you ever pay Lieut. Felt commutation for quarters and fuel?

A. Yes, sir.



Q. For what months of 1863 did you ever pay him commutation for quarters and fuel ?

A. January, February, and to March 31, 1863, full allowance.

Q. Do you recollect by whom the order was issued on which you paid him ?

A. The order came from the signal office, and, I think, was signed by Capt. Hepburn.

Q. Is that a copy of the order on which you paid him ?

A. I presume so, but I can't say, as I have not the other to compare with it. I have not seen the order since last September.

Q. Did you ever see any order, issued in 1863, rescinding the order just shown to you ?

A. No, sir.

*Cross-examined by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. Do the limits in which you pay commutation for quarters and fuel include the Military Department of Washington ?

A. No, they do not. Many places in the department with which I have nothing to do.

Q. Is Georgetown within the limits in which you pay commutation for quarters and fuel ?

A. I do pay some in Georgetown ; some doctors in the hospital, detached from troops, I pay.

Q. Do you pay mileage to officers ordered from signal camp, Georgetown, to New York, and return ?

A. I would pay any officer with the proper order, either from the Adjutant General, Secretary of War, or any one who has no quartermaster.

*Questions by the Court.*

Q. Has Lieut. Felt been paid commutation for quarters and fuel for April, 1863 ?

A. Not that I know of, I have not paid him.

Q. Has an application for commutation for quarters and fuel for April, 1863, been presented to you ?

A. None whatever.

Q. Have you ever paid Lieut. Felt for any other months than those mentioned in your evidence, January, February and March, 1863?

A. I paid him from September 24th, 1862, inclusive to the end of the year.

Col. A. J. MYER, a witness summoned for the prosecution, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by the Recorder.*

Q. What is your name and rank?

A. Albert J. Myer, Colonel, Chief Signal Officer United States Army.

Q. Is Lieut. Geo. H. Felt in your corps?

A. Yes, as Acting Signal Officer.

Q. Did you issue any order in January, 1863, ordering him to signal camp instruction?

A. I gave directions that such an order should be issued at about that time.

Q. Is that a copy of the order you directed to be issued? (Shown Special Order No. 7.)

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you cause any order to be issued rescinding any portion of this order?

A. An order was afterwards issued, which directed that so much of the officer's duty as related to preparing a special code for the Army of the Potomac, be rescinded.

Q. Is that a copy of the order? (Shown Special Order, No. 9.)

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did you consider Lieut. Felt as entitled to draw commutation for quarters and fuel, after Special Order No. 7 had been issued?

A. No, sir, I did not.

Q. Did you know whether Lieut. Felt drew commutation for quarters and fuel after he had received Special Order, No. 7?

A. I was unofficially informed of it. I noticed Lieut. Felt's signature in the office of the quartermaster, when I went to draw my commutation for quarters.

Q. Did you ever cause an official letter demanding an explanation of this to be sent to Lieut. Felt?

A. I did.

Q. Is this a true copy of the letter?

A. Yes.

Q. Did Lieut. Felt ever give the explanation demanded?

A. No explanation that was satisfactory to me. Lieut. Felt addressed an explanatory note to the office, which was received.

Q. Is that a copy of the note he addressed, together with the endorsement?

A. Correct copy it appears to me.

Q. Do you consider the moral character of Lieut. Felt as good, bad, or indifferent?

A. As it stands in connection with this matter, I consider it *not good*.

*Question by the Court.*

Q. Do you know anything derogatory to the moral character of Lieut. Felt? If so, state the circumstances.

A. I view this transaction as derogatory.

*Cross-examined by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What position has Capt. Hepburn in your office?

A. Principal assistant.

Q. Is he the officer in charge of stores and records, executive officer, and general business manager?

A. Capt. Hepburn discharges the duties of principal assistant in charge of stores and records, under instructions from me sometimes verbal and sometimes written.

Q. Is he your general business manager?

A. Yes, I consider him so.

Q. Do you hold yourself accountable for his official acts?

A. I am responsible for his official acts.

Q. Is it usual to issue such orders as Special Order No. 7, when officers report to signal camp instruction?

A. To the best of my knowledge, it is.

Q. Is it usual in the signal corps to order any officer who has been engaged on other duty to report to any other officer, before he has completed the duties he has been employed on ?

A. If I wished to remove an officer from one duty to another, I should have no hesitation in ordering him to report to another officer.

Q. It is usual to rescind part of a paragraph of an order and leave the other part in force ?

A. I cannot speak as to the usage, as I have no instances in my recollection, but if I did issue another order, so rescinding a portion of another order, I should regard the last order as final.

Q. Please give your statements before the Examining Board which excited in their minds doubts as to my moral character.

Objected to by the Court, and objections sustained.

Q. Did you tell Lieut. Hartshorn that any officer who had been to the Canterbury Hall could not be a man of good moral character, and that this fact would be noted by the Examining Board ?

Objected to by the Court, and objection sustained.

Q. Was any officer being examined by the Board asked if he had been to Canterbury Hall, and told that it was a place of disrepute ?

Objected to by the Court, and objection sustained.

Q. Will you please state what the letters about rockets from the Examining Board have to do with my moral character ?

Objected to by the Court, and question withdrawn.

Q. Have you received reports from the officers in command of the signal camp instruction speaking of me as an efficient officer and a gentleman, and have you objected to such reports being made, and requested the officers to modify them ?

A. I have received reports from officers in command of the signal camp instruction speaking of him as an efficient officer and a gentleman; I have not objected to them, nor have I requested them to be modified.

*Questions by the Court.*

Q. Are you a member of the Board before which Lieut. Felt was ordered?

A. Yes.

Q. State what excited a doubt in the minds of the Board in regard to Lieut. Felt's moral character, and state what excited the doubt causing them to decline his examination.

A. Mainly the correspondence in regard to the commutation for quarters and fuel.

Q. Has all the correspondence in the signal office, relating to this matter, been furnished to the Court?

A. All the papers, I believe. The papers before the Court are the ones on which the Court of Inquiry was asked.

Q. Are there any imputations against the character of Lieut. Felt, in connection with the preparation or manufacture of rockets while in New York?

A. The only imputation in regard to Lieut. Felt, in connection with rockets, is, that employed as a signal officer to perfect a rocket, and with the understanding that the rocket, when perfected and approved, should be for the benefit of the United States, so far as they might wish to use it, afterward patents the rocket and notifies the office that no more can be ordered without his approval as patentee. This, in my view, is only an imputation and one from which the officer may, by the proper course, clear himself. The position of the United States and Lieut. Felt is as indicated in the foregoing part of my answer.

Q. Was Lieut. Felt engaged in the manufacture of a peculiar rocket before being ordered to New York, and was it understood that he was to receive the benefit of a patent if he succeeded in perfecting it?

A. I don't know as he was engaged in the manufacture of the rocket before being ordered to New York. It was my wish, in ordering him to New York, to give him an opportu-

nity to develop a new rocket. I regarded him as a signal officer on purely signal duty, and as not entitled to the benefit of any patent as against the United States, for any use they might wish to make of the rocket.

Q. Is it considered proper for an officer, while in the employment of the United States, to take advantage of any improvement he may make while in the discharge of his duty, and to have such improvement patented in order that he may receive greater compensation for his performance of duty?

A. It is not proper if an understanding exists that the improvement is to be for the benefit of the United States.

Q. Was there an understanding, expressed or implied, that any improvement Lieut. Felt might make of a rocket while in New York, should not be patented so that the government could not have the full benefit of such improvement?

A. Yes; a very distinct understanding that the government should have the full benefit of any improvements in signal rockets Lieut. Felt might make.

Q. You state then that Lieut. Felt did make an improvement in signal rockets, and then, contrary to an express understanding, did get it patented, in violation of such understanding?

A. I think that Lieut. Felt did make an improvement in signal rockets, and that his patenting that rocket and notifying the office that no more can be ordered without his approval as patentee, is an act in violation of the understanding.

Q. Had Lieut. Felt permission to occupy quarters outside of camp in January, February, and March? If so, who gave him permission?

A. He had no permission by my authority.

Q. Does not permission to occupy quarters outside of camp, entitle an officer to draw commutation for quarters and fuel while permitted to reside out of camp?

A. No; it does not.

*Re-examined by the Recorder.*

Q. Are those correct copies of the documents in regard to the patent?

A. I think they are.

The Court here adjourned, to meet May 21, 1863, at 11 A. M.

MAY 21, 1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment, and the minutes of the previous day having been read and approved, were ordered to be recorded.

Capt. W. J. L. NICODEMUS, a witness summoned for the prosecution, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by the Recorder.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment?

A. W. J. L. Nicodemus, Capt. 12th U. S. Infantry, commanding signal camp instruction.

Q. When did you take command of the signal camp instruction?

A. February 27, 1863.

Q. When you took command did Lieut. Felt have quarters outside of camp?

A. He had.

Q. Did you understand that he was on detached service?

A. That was my understanding.

Q. On what detached service did you consider him?

A. When I took command, the former commander, Capt. McCreary, informed me that Mr. Felt had been placed on special duty by the signal officer of the army, and I dismissed the subject from my mind, considering Lieut. Felt as not being under my orders. At the same time, as Mr. Felt had been recommended to me as the most competent person for the adjutancy of the camp, I asked Lieut. Felt if it would interfere with his duties to act as adjutant of the camp. He having replied in the negative, was appointed to that position, which he has held ever since.

Q. Did you understand when you took command of the camp whether Lieut. Felt was entitled to draw commutation for quarters and fuel?

A. As I had nothing to do with Lieut. Felt, I paid no attention to any arrangements he had made.

Q. Did any other officer of your command reside outside of the signal camp?

A. They took meals outside of camp and resided in camp, with one or two exceptions which only continued for a few days. Among the first orders of the camp was one directing all officers to sleep in camp.

Q. Could you have furnished Lieut. Felt with quarters and fuel if he had desired it?

A. Yes.

Q. Has any order been received relieving Lieut. Felt from his special duty?

A. There has been.

Q. Did you ever see a copy of special order No. 9?

A. Yes.

Q. Would you consider that order as relieving Lieut. Felt from his detached service?

A. No sir, don't think it would.

Q. Do you consider Lieut. Felt's moral character as good, bad, or indifferent?

A. Good.

Q. Have you ever known him to be guilty of any act unbecoming either an officer or a gentleman?

A. I have not.

Q. Does Lieut. Felt now have quarters outside of camp?

A. He has.

Q. About when did he report to you for duty?

A. About the middle of April.

Q. Has he been on duty ever since?

A. He has.

Q. Do you consider him an efficient officer?

A. I do.

Q. When you took command of the camp, did you understand that Lieut. Felt had permission to reside out of camp?

A. Yes. When I took command, Capt. McCreary informed me that Lieut. Felt was living out of camp by permission, and was on special duty for the Signal Officer of the Army.



Q. Do you know who gave Lieut. Felt that permission?

A. I understood from Capt. McCreary that he had given permission.

Q. Did you ever see any written permission or order allowing him to reside out of camp?

A. I did not.

*Questions by the Court.*

Q. Do you consider an officer who is assigned to a particular camp to perform special duty, and afterward given permission to reside out of camp, as entitled to commutation for fuel and quarters, if the government can furnish such?

A. I would state in reply, that if quarters and fuel could have been furnished in camp, and the duty performed there, that the officer would not be entitled to commutation for fuel and quarters.

The Court here adjourned, to meet May 22, at 11 A. M.

MAY 22, 1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment, and the minutes of the previous day having been read and approved, were ordered to be recorded.

Capt. W. M. G. McCREARY, witness for the prosecution, was recalled.

*Questions by the Recorder.*

Q. Did you give Lieut. Felt permission to reside out of camp?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was it written or verbal?

A. Verbal.

Q. Did you ever revoke the permission?

A. No, I never revoked it.

Q. Did you consider him on detached service?

A. Virtually he was on detached service, as I had no control over him, as he was assigned to camp on special duty. I

supposed when he was through with this duty, he would report to the Signal Officer of the Army, and then report to the camp.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. Did I ask you to send a telegraph machine to my room, and did you refuse until you had permission from the Signal Officer of the Army?

A. I did.

Q. Did you get such permission from the Signal Officer of the Army?

A. He gave me permission to have Mr. Felt remove one of the machines, for the purpose of examining it, and completing the duty on which he was ordered.

The case for the prosecution here closed, and the Court notified Lieut. Felt that he might rest his case there, as the prosecution had proved nothing against his moral character, which proposition Lieut. Felt declined. The Court adjourned, to meet May 23, at 11 o'clock.

MAY 23, 1863.

The Court met pursuant to adjournment, and the minutes of the previous day having been read and approved, were ordered to be recorded.

Lieut. FREDERICK HOMER, a witness summoned for the defence, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment?

A. Frederick Homer, Acting Signal Officer, First Lieutenant Co. E, 6th Reg., N. J. V.

Q. What do you know of my moral character?

A. I have known Lieut. Felt from January, 1862, and during that time have not heard a word spoken against his moral character; on the contrary, have heard him spoken of in the highest terms by every officer of the corps, connected with the Army of the Potomac.

Q. What is my efficiency as an officer ?

A. I consider him one of the most efficient and energetic officers of the signal corps.

Q. Have you ever known him to be guilty of any act unbecoming an officer and a gentleman ?

A. No, sir, I have not.

Q. How long have you known Col. A. J. Myer ?

A. Since January, 1862.

Q. Have you ever served with him, and had opportunities of judging as to his moral character as a gentleman, and efficiency as an officer ?

A. I have served under him, and have had opportunities of judging of his character.

Q. What do you consider his general reputation for truth and veracity ?

A. I consider it doubtful. His reputation for truth and veracity is doubted by all the officers belonging to the signal corps, Army of the Potomac.

Q. From your knowledge of his general reputation, would you consider him as to be believed under oath.

A. No, sir.

*Questions by the Recorder.*

Q. State on what grounds you form your opinion of Col. A. J. Myer's character.

A. I have been under him during the campaign on the Peninsula, and judging from his actions and his conduct, and the feelings of the corps, I am very much in doubt.

Q. Are those the only grounds on which you form your opinions ?

A. Yes, sir.

PETER H. NILES, a witness summoned for the defence, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment ?

A. Peter H. Niles, Second Lieutenant 23d Mass. Vols., and Acting Signal Officer.

Q. What is your position at the signal camp instruction?

A. Chief Instructor.

Q. How long have you known me?

A. I have known him ever since he reported at camp in January, 1863.

Q. What do you know of my character as an officer and a gentleman?

A. I know him to be a gentleman and an efficient officer.

Q. Have you ever known me to be guilty of any act unbecoming an officer and a gentleman?

A. Never.

Q. What is my moral character?

A. Good.

Q. Are you acquainted with the nature of the duties for which I was sent to camp?

A. I am acquainted with the nature of the duties for which I understand he was sent to camp. I never saw the order.

Q. What duty do you understand I was sent to camp for?

A. To prepare drawings and descriptions of field telegraphic machines, and rocket code.

Q. What was your occupation before you went into service?

A. Machinist.

Q. Have you ever employed draughtsmen, and are you acquainted with the nature of their duties?

A. I have employed them, and am acquainted with their duties.

Q. Could those drawings of the telegraph machine have been made in camp during the months of February and March, 1863?

A. It is very doubtful whether they could have been made in camp.

Q. What are the difficulties attending such drawing in camp?

A. The main difficulty would be that any wind would prevent any drawings of that kind from being done in camp. Another difficulty would be the constant interruption.

Q. How about the light in a tent?

A. It would require a clear day to be able to follow lines.

Q. Would the alternate shrinking and swelling of the drawing board in a tent, prevent accuracy in mechanical drawing?

A. It would.

Q. Do you know of any other officer in the corps, who could have made the drawings and the explanation?

A. I know of none.

Q. Are you generally acquainted with the officers of the corps?

A. I have an extensive acquaintance with the officers of the corps.

Q. How long have you known Col. A. J. Myer, chief signal officer?

A. I never came in contact with him but twice.

Lieut. FRED'K FULLER, a witness summoned by the defence was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment?

A. Fredk. Fuller, Second Lieut. 52d Pennsylvania Volunteers, and Acting Signal Officer.

Q. What do you know of my moral character?

A. I have been quite intimate with Lieut. Felt since January, 1862. He was in the same class with me, and my tent was two tents from his on the line, and I was with him four hours every day, in class, and spent most of my leisure time in his tent. In regard to his moral character, since I have been acquainted with him, I don't know of any officer in the corps who has sustained a better one. We then had about seventy officers in camp. I can't say that I ever heard the least insinuation against Lieut. Felt, till this case.

Q. What is my efficiency as an officer?

A. Lieut. Felt has always been considered one of the finest and most efficient officers in the corps.

Q. Have you ever known me to be guilty of any act unbecoming an officer and a gentleman?

A. No, sir.

Q. How long have you known Col. A. J. Myer, Chief Signal Officer ?

A. Since January, 1862.

Q. Have you served with him, and had opportunities of judging as to his character as an officer and a gentleman ?

A. I was with him, under his immediate command, from July 3, until on or about the time of the evacuation of Harrison's Landing, and have had opportunities of judging.

Q. What do you consider his general reputation for truth and veracity ?

A. I don't consider it good : I judge from what I have seen of Col. Myer myself, and the general feeling existing among the officers of the signal corps.

Q. From your knowledge of his general reputation would you consider him as to be believed under oath ?

A. The confidence of his officers is such that his word would be doubted under any circumstances.

*Question by the Recorder.*

Q. State on what ground your opinion of Col. Myer is formed.

A. From what I have seen from personal observation under him, and the general feeling of the officers composing the corps.

The Court here adjourned, to meet May 25, 1863, at 10½ o'clock.

MAY 25, 1863.

The Court met, pursuant to adjournment, and the minutes of the last day's proceedings having been read and approved, were ordered to be recorded.

Lieut. FRED'K FULLER was then recalled.

*Questions by the Recorder.*

Q. How do you know Col. A. J. Myer's character for veracity ?

A. From his general character toward his officers.

Q. Have you ever known him to be guilty of perjury ?

A. I never have. I never have heard his testimony under oath.

Q. Have you ever known him to tell a lie ?

A. I can't say that he ever told me a lie.

Q. Then your opinion of his veracity is formed from hearsay evidence ?

A. From conversations with officers of the corps.

Major W. R. HARTSHORN, a witness summoned for the defence, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment ?

A. William R. Hartshorn, Major 1st Pennsylvania Rifles.

Q. How long have you known me ?

A. Since some time last January.

Q. What do you know of my moral character ?

A. His moral character is good as far as I know.

Q. What is my efficiency as an officer ?

A. I have always understood him to be a very efficient officer.

Q. Have you ever known me to be guilty of any act unbecoming either an officer or a gentleman ?

A. I never have.

Q. Did you ever hear any statements made that I would not be recommended for a position in the signal corps, even if I passed my examination by the Examining Board ?

A. Never did, officially.

Q. Have you ever heard so unofficially ?

A. I wouldn't like to answer the question. I have heard it intimated.

Q. Who by, and as coming from whom ?

A. By Col. Myer himself.

Q. Did Col. Myer ever state to you, that a man that had been to the Canterbury, couldn't be a man of good moral charac-

ter, and that it would be taken into consideration by the Board?

A. Col. Myer said something of the kind, but in a sportive way, and I did not think he was in earnest.

Q. Didn't subsequent conversation make you think he was in earnest when he made this remark?

A. No, sir.

*Question by the Recorder.*

Q. On what ground have you heard it intimated that Lieut. Felt would not be recommended by the Board for a position in the signal corps?

A. I can hardly tell.

*Questions by the Court.*

Q. Did Col. Myer state any reason why Lieut. Felt would not be recommended for promotion in case he did pass the Examining Board, and if so, what were those reasons?

A. He said that some officers were not suited for signal officers, although they were educated men, and would pass the Board better than others that would be recommended.

Q. Is this the only reason?

A. He gave in regard to Lieut. Felt, that Lieut. Felt had been trying to make a number of inventions and had never succeeded in any, and he thought that he was a little insane on some subjects. He had been in New York for the purpose of experimenting and perfecting a rocket, and while there had invented a fuse, and he hadn't perfected any.

JOHN H. HUTCHINSON, a witness summoned by the defence, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment?

A. John H. Hutchinson, 1st Lieut. 3d Vt. Vols.

Q. How long have you known me?

A. Since about 22d Feb., 1862.



Q. What do you know of my moral character?

A. I always supposed it was good, never knew anything to the contrary. I have been with him considerable of the time.

Q. What is my efficiency as an officer?

A. I always considered him a very competent officer, having talents of a high order.

Q. Have you ever known me to be guilty of any act unbecoming either an officer or a gentleman?

A. I have not.

Capt. E. A. DENICKE, a witness summoned by the defence, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment?

A. E. A. Denicke, Capt. 68th N. Y. Vols., and Acting Signal Officer.

Q. What do you know of my moral character?

A. I have never had the slightest doubt of his moral character. I don't think there is any better. I have always had the profoundest respect for his character, both as an officer and a gentleman. I have known him long enough to be able to judge.

Q. What is my efficiency as an officer?

A. To the best of my knowledge it is what I would call A No. 1; I have had occasion to admire his skill in some branches pertaining to higher military knowledge.

Q. Have you ever known me to be guilty of any act unbecoming either an officer or a gentleman?

A. Never.

Q. How long have you known me?

A. Nearly seventeen months.

*Questions by the Recorder.*

Q. Have you ever heard anything derogatory to Lieut. Felt's moral character?

A. I have heard that he had been judged that way by some of his enemies, but I could never see anything.

Q. Of what nature have these imputations against Lieut. Felt's moral character been ?

A. The only one I distinctly remember, and I believe the most grievous one, is, that he had visited the Canterbury Hall. Another one, of which I have never heard the particulars, is about commutation quarters ; but as I did not believe Lieut. Felt capable of doing anything unbecoming an officer or a gentleman, I did not pay any attention to it.

*Question by the Court.*

Q. Where did you hear these statements made ?

A. Don't distinctly recollect. I know that it was some time after Lieut. Felt had demanded a Court of Inquiry. I think the statement was made by himself.

Lieut. WM. S. SIZER, a witness summoned by Lieut. Felt, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment ?

A. Wm. S. Sizer, 1st Lieut. 164th Regt. N. Y. Vols., and Acting Signal Officer.

Q. How long have you known me ?

A. About four months.

Q. What do you know of my moral character ?

A. I know nothing derogatory.

Q. What is my efficiency as an officer ?

A. Very good ; one of the best officers in the corps, I should say.

Q. What is my character as a gentleman ?

A. Don't think it can be questioned.

Q. Have you ever known me to be guilty of any act unbecoming either an officer or a gentleman ?

A. I have not.

Q. During the four months you have known me, have you been in the camp under me as adjutant of the camp ?

A. I have.

*Question by the Recorder.*

Q. Have you ever heard anything derogatory to Lieut. Felt's moral character ?

A. No ; I have not.

Lieut. WM. F. BARRETT, a witness summoned for the defence, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment ?

A. Wm. F. Barrett, 2d Lieut. 27th Mass. Vols., and Acting Signal Officer.

Q. What is your position at the signal camp instruction ?

A. Instructor.

Q. How long have you known me ?

A. I reported to the signal camp, Jan. 31, 1863 ; have known him ever since.

Q. What do you know of my moral character ?

A. I have been more intimately acquainted with him than probably any officer in camp. I believe him to be thoroughly moral and a thorough officer, and eminently qualified, mentally, for any position.

Q. What is my efficiency as an officer ?

A. Thoroughly efficient.

Q. Have you ever known me to be guilty of any act unbecoming either an officer or a gentleman ?

A. I never have.

*Question by the Recorder.*

Q. Have you ever heard anything derogatory to Lieut. Felt's moral character ?

A. Nothing, that I remember of.

Lieut. JOHN E. HOLLAND, a witness summoned for the defence, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment ?

A. John E. Holland, 1st Lieut. 36th Indiana Volunteers, and Acting Signal Officer.

Q. How long have you known me?

A. Since February last.

Q. What do you know of my moral character?

A. I know of nothing that I should deem immoral.

Q. What is my efficiency as an officer?

A. I have always regarded Lieut. Felt as an officer of very high standing.

Q. What is my reputation as an officer in the signal corps, Army of the Potomac?

A. Very good, as far as my acquaintance goes.

Q. Have you ever known me to be guilty of any act unbecoming either an officer or a gentleman?

A. I have not.

*Question by the Recorder.*

Q. Have you ever heard of anything derogatory to Lieut. Felt's moral character?

A. I have not.

Lieut. S. C. TUCKERMAN, a witness summoned for the defence, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment?

A. S. C. Tuckerman, 2d Lieut. 19th Wisconsin Volunteers, and Acting Signal Officer.

Q. How long have you known me?

A. Since the first part of March, 1863.

Q. What do you know of my moral character?

A. As far as I know it has been perfectly good.

Q. What is my efficiency as an officer?

A. Very good indeed, sir.

Q. What is my reputation as an officer in the signal corps, Army of the Potomac?

A. First rate.

Q. Have you ever known or heard of my being guilty of any act unbecoming either an officer or a gentleman?

A. No, sir.

Lieut. P. A. WHITE, a witness summoned for the defence, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment?

A. Plympton A. White, 2d Lieut. 83d Pennsylvania Volunteers, and Acting Signal Officer.

Q. How long have you known me?

A. About three months.

Q. What do you know of my moral character?

A. I know nothing against it; I boarded in the same house with him three months.

Q. What is my efficiency as an officer?

A. I have always considered Lieut. Felt a very efficient officer.

Q. Have you ever known or heard of my being guilty of any act unbecoming an officer or a gentleman?

A. I have heard of his doing one thing that was considered by some as unbecoming either an officer or a gentleman.

Q. What was it?

A. Visiting Canterbury Hall.

The Court here adjourned to meet May 26, 1863, at eleven o'clock.

MAY 26, 1863.

Lieut. FRANK N. WICKER, a witness summoned for the defence, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment?

A. Lieut. Frank N. Wicker, 28th N. Y. Vols., and Acting Signal Officer.

Q. How long have you known me?

A. Since January, 1862.

Q. What do you know of my moral character ?

A. As far as I know, it is perfectly good, he having been looked up to by the officers of the corps as strictly moral.

Q. Have you seen any trial of my signal rockets ?

A. I have.

Q. Do you consider them as perfected ?

A. I do.

Q. Are you acquainted with the principles of my rocket code ?

A. I am.

Q. Do you consider that, as applied to army signals, as perfected ?

A. I do.

Q. Do you consider my method of notation, as applied to codes, an improvement on the way of putting down figures ?

A. I do.

Q. Are not the principles of that code entirely new and original ?

A. They are.

Q. Are you acquainted with my method of changing the code by daily countersigns ?

A. I am.

Q. Is there an identical method now used in the cypher code ?

A. There is.

Q. Then you consider the principles of the cypher code as identical with my code ?

A. About the same thing.

Q. Under whose name has the cypher code been issued and known ?

A. Col. Myer. I was instructed in it by Lieut. Felt, who was then adjutant of the signal camp instruction.

Lieut. NILES was then recalled.

Q. Have you seen any trial of my signal rockets ?

A. I have.

Q. Do you consider them as perfected ?

A. I consider them, from the experiments tried at that time, a perfect success.

Q. Are you acquainted with the principles of my rocket code?

A. I am.

Q. Do you consider it, as applied to army signals, as perfected?

A. I consider that all messages sent by his rockets can be readily interpreted by his code.

Q. Do you consider my method of notation as applied to codes an improvement on the way of putting down figures?

A. I consider that it is an improvement.

Q. Are not the principles in that code entirely new and original?

A. As far as my experience goes, they are entirely new.

Q. Are you acquainted with my method of changing the code by daily countersigns?

A. I am.

Q. Is there an identical method now used in the cypher code?

A. There is a method that has been shown me, that is identical with the one that he originated.

Q. Under whose name has this identical method been issued and known?

A. The method that was shown me, I understood to be Col. Myer's code.

Q. When was this code issued by Col. Myer?

A. Some time during the month of April, '63.

Q. When did I perfect my code?

A. During the month of February the original code was shown me.

Q. By what means can messages be sent by my code?

A. By every means that is at present known by the corps.

Q. Is it not the only code that can not be discovered by the enemy?

A. As far as my experience goes, it is the only one.

Col. GEO. THOM, a witness summoned for the defence, was then duly sworn.

*Questions by Lieut. Felt.*

Q. What is your name, rank, and regiment?

A. Col. Geo. Thom, aide-de-camp, corps of engineers.

Q. Are you president of the Examining Board for Signal Officers?

A. I am.

Q. Were statements made before that Board of Examination reflecting on my moral character?

A. Statements were made in this way: certain correspondence between the Signal Officer and Lieut. Felt was laid before the Board, which correspondence threw some doubt on the minds of the Board upon the moral character of Lieut. Felt.

Q. Were not statements explanatory made?

A. Statements were made to a certain extent explanatory.

Q. What were those statements?

A. The statements were these, as far as I can recollect, that the Signal Officer having ascertained that Lieut. Felt had been receiving commutation for fuel and quarters in Washington city, from Maj. Miller, Q. M., U. S. A., while he, Lieut. Felt was on duty in the signal camp, near Georgetown, and was not authorized by the orders received from the signal office to receive that commutation for quarters and fuel, he, the Signal Officer, called upon Lieut. Felt for an explanation of the matter, which call and explanation were furnished to the Board in this correspondence, a copy of which correspondence was furnished to Lieut. Felt.

Q. Were any statements made in regard to rockets referred to in this correspondence?

A. There was something said about rockets.

Q. Of what nature were these statements?

A. The substance was this, that Lieut. Felt was instructed to go to New York to prepare, as an acting signal officer of the army, a code of signal rockets, under the authority and with the assistance of that department; that he was absent in New York on that service a period of two or three months; that when ordered to return to Washington and make a report on what he had done, he informed the Signal Officer that he intended to get out a patent for the rockets, and that the



signal department must first purchase the patent right to use them before their being introduced into the service.

Q. Who made these statements?

A. These statements were made by then Major A. J. Myer, Signal Officer of the Army, to the Board.

Q. Did he state that I refused to allow any more rockets to be manufactured until such patent right was purchased?

A. I did not understand that he made any such statement. He may have made it.

Q. Did you not tell me, on or about May 1st, that such statements had been made before the Board, reflecting on my character as a gentleman and efficiency as an officer and my moral character, that the Board declined to examine me?

A. I had an unofficial interview with Mr. Felt, and then informing him that it was unofficial, did make this statement, in order to give him an opportunity to make his record right before being called upon by the Board to be examined, as he had not then been called upon by the Board, but would be allowed any reasonable time to thus prepare himself.

Q. Did you not inform me that the Board were unwilling to pass by any officer without giving him an opportunity to be heard in his defence, and would give me an opportunity at some future time to make my defence?

A. This whole interview was totally unofficial, and out of delicacy to him, I said that these matters were on record against him, and that if he could come prepared to explain them it would save him and the Board any further trouble.

Q. Did I have an opportunity of presenting my letters and papers before the Board?

A. Lieut. Felt informed me that in two or three days he would be prepared with such papers, all he would need, and the Board were disposed to bring Lieut. Felt before it for an examination; but he, Lieut. Felt, chose to regard this unofficial interview as an official one, and called upon the Board, requesting to be furnished with a copy of this correspondence referred to, which it appeared to the Board, to which his letter was referred, on further considering the matter, that the only proper course for them to take would be to suggest to Lieut.

Felt, who was then called before them, to furnish the Board with the proceedings of a Court of Inquiry in his case, the Board thinking that the whole matter should more properly come before a Court of Inquiry, than be investigated by the Board.

Q. Were any statements made that during my stay in New York I had done nothing, and since my return I had done nothing, thus attacking my efficiency as an officer?

A. The statement was made that he had been called upon to make a report about what he had done in New York and since his return from New York, and the result of this to the Court showed that he had accomplished very little except what he claimed the benefit of himself.

Q. Was the doubt excited in the minds of the Board of Examination in relation to my moral character, caused by the correspondence in the signal office, and statements made in relation thereto, alone?

A. It was caused by correspondence furnished by the Signal Officer, together with the explanations given by the Signal Officer of such correspondence, a copy of which correspondence was furnished Lieut. Felt.

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*Final statement of Lieut. Geo. H. Felt, before the Court of Inquiry.*

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE HON. COURT:

When I consulted the Judge Advocate about this trial, I was advised, that many of my brother officers whom I wished to summon as witnesses, being engaged in active duty, in the field, could not be brought before you. I should have been pleased to lay their evidence before you, not only to establish my own character, but to prove the general reputation of some parties whose evidence has been here produced. I, however, make use of such evidence as I have at my command and await the issue.

When I received the order to appear before the Examining Board for the signal corps, May 1, 1863, I was told by Col

Thom, President of the Hon. Board, that such statements had been made before them as to my character as a gentleman, my efficiency as an officer, and my moral character, that, until I could prove these statements to be untrue, they did not think it worth while to examine me as an applicant for admission into the signal corps. He told me that the Board were not willing to dismiss an officer in this manner without giving him an opportunity to be heard in his defence, and that I would be allowed the necessary time to get together my evidence, and that then the Board would hear what I had to say in my defence.

On application I was furnished with a copy of my record, from the office of the Signal Officer of the Army which is attached and marked A.

May 7, 1863, I appeared by order before the Hon. Board, and was told that doubts as to my moral character had been excited in their minds by the correspondence, and my record in the office of the Signal Officer of the Army; that the Board were not competent to decide, but that they would furnish me with a copy of such correspondence, and that I could then call a court of inquiry. I told the Hon. Board that I had made an application for my record, and finding nothing therein reflecting on my character either as an officer or a gentleman, I wished a copy of the correspondence therein referred to, and such verbal statements as had been made before the Board against me. I was furnished with the correspondence referred to, which is now in your possession, but I have not been able to get from the Hon. Board a copy of the verbal statements made before them.

In regard to my character as a gentleman and an efficient officer before I was sent to the signal corps, I refer you to the accompanying letter of my Colonel (marked B), and to the testimony of Capt. McCreary, witness for the prosecution, and since I have been attached to the corps, I refer you to all the evidence that has been adduced before you by both the prosecution and defence. If there had been the slightest circumstance reflecting on me, it is but reasonable to suppose that the prosecution would have availed themselves of it. I also refer you to testimonials marked C, D, E, F, G, from officers

with whom I have served. The character of the duty that I have been placed upon, ever since I came into the corps, is of itself a proof that I was recognized as an efficient officer and additional proof is to be found in the evidence adduced.

In regard to the general reputation of one of the witnesses of the prosecution as an officer and a gentleman, or for truth and veracity, I wish to call your attention to the evidence of Lieuts. Homer and Fuller, and I regret that it is owing to the circumstance before mentioned, viz., the officers being engaged in active duty in the field, that I am unable to produce other testimony of a similar character.

In regard to my drawing commutation for quarters and fuel, I will state, that, when ordered to report to the signal camp instruction, Georgetown, D. C., by Special Order No. 7, I spoke to Maj. Myer, and told him that the duty upon which I was placed was such as could not be performed in camp. He said that he was aware of that, but I could get a room near the camp, where I could perform the duty; that there was a new code then being learned at the camp, and that he wished me to perfect myself in that, and in running the signal trains. When I reported to Capt. McCreary, at the above camp, I told him that I wished a room near camp to perform my duty, and he took me to a place where I engaged rooms and board. From his evidence (Capt. McCreary's) and the evidence of Capt. Nicodemus, you will see that I was considered to be on detached service, and not under their command; that the order ordering me to report was different from orders usually given to officers, and that I was not subject to the regulations of the camp. When I requested a telegraph machine sent to my room, that I might make a drawing of it, Capt. McCreary, in command of camp, told me that he could not allow it to be taken out of camp until he received permission from the Signal Officer of the Army, Maj. Myer.

Referring you to the evidence of Capt. McCreary, Maj. Myer gave him permission to allow me to remove one of the machines for the purpose of completing the duty on which I was ordered, thus proving that I was in quarters outside of camp with his knowledge, and that he knew it was necessary

for me to occupy quarters outside of camp to perform such duty.

*(Evidence, Capt. McCreary.)*

Question by Lieut. FELT. Did I ask you to send a telegraph machine to my room, and did you refuse until you had permission from the Signal Officer of the Army?

A. I did.

Q. Did you get such permission from the Signal Officer of the Army?

A. He gave me permission to have Mr. Felt remove one of the machines for the purpose of examining it, and completing the duty upon which he was ordered.

I also refer you to the evidence of Lieut. Niles as exhibiting the reasons why such duty could not be performed in camp.

As to the cord of wood that Capt. McCreary states that he left at my quarters about the first of February, 1863, I will refer you to his evidence in which he states that when he brought the wood he did so without being requested by me and that I told him that I did not wish it, and I had no knowledge of his ever having left it at my quarters, until I went to him in April, to draw my allowance of wood for that month, when he told me he had left me a cord of wood in February. I told him that I did not see why he had left it, when, in the first place, I did not ask him to bring it to me and had afterwards told him that I did not wish it. He said that when he left my room he found out that the men had already most unloaded the wood, and he thought it did not make any difference. I said that he might send me a cord, and that, with the cord of wood left in February, would make up my allowance, two cords, for April.

In regard to my drawing commutation for quarters and fuel from Maj. Miller, Q. M., U. S. A., as being stationed in Washington, I would state, that the camp is included within his limits (see his evidence), and that he pays officers stationed in Georgetown, as being stationed in Washington. I would also state that the Signal Officer of the Army drew for me commutation for quarters and fuel, when I was in New York, from October, 1862, to January, 1863, and sent it on to me, sending me certificates to sign, stating that I was stationed in Washington.

In regard to the understanding that is stated so positively to have existed between Maj. Myer and myself concerning the rockets, I will state the following circumstances. I was sent on signal duty to Western Kentucky and Tennessee, and there found by practical experience that being a level and thickly-wooded country, Maj. Myer's system of signalling was practically of little use; that, except in hilly or mountainous countries, it was impracticable; that it was subject to so many contingencies, that, unless these could be overcome, it would be rendered useless on many occasions at the very time when it was most needed; that when the army was in motion it was impracticable, as stations would have to be built, which would be rendered useless the next day perhaps, although constructed at the cost of weeks of labor. The communication was so liable to be interrupted by accidents of weather, the least fog or haze stopping signalling entirely, and many other objections, that it was practically useless. I invented a rocket, and when I went to New York on sick leave, had them made and showed them to Capt. Cushing of the signal corps, and then showed him my code for rockets, which is also applicable to every known means of signalling, and received from him the following letter to Maj. Myer, marked H.

When I had an opportunity of showing my code and rockets to Maj. Myer, he expressed himself as very much pleased with the rockets and code, and said that it was only necessary to get now a perfect rocket and one that would stand transportation and not be liable to the objections that the other rockets were subject to. He told me that he would give me an order to go to New York and have 200 of these rockets and 300 of the signals made, that he wanted to have them got up to stand army transportation, and wanted a perfect rocket. He said that he could not get me an order to go to New York for this purpose, as the government did not pay for experiments, but if I succeeded he would see that my expenses were paid. My idea was to make my code public and let all nations have it, so that vessels at sea could communicate at great distances, and this could be done very easily without injury to ourselves as there was an arrangement

for changing the code, so that it would be impossible for an enemy to use it against us, even if they had our code ; but he did not wish it made public, and said that until the end of the war, he thought that it would be best to keep the code, and the principle upon which it was gotten up, a secret ; for if other governments had it, it would not belong before the Confederates had it too, and could then avail themselves of its advantages against us. This was the first time that any system of signalling by rockets, except preconcerted signals, had ever been accomplished, and as it was applicable to every known method of signalling, it overcame many of the objections to his (Major Myer's) system of signalling, and by this means, messages could be sent by rockets faster than by his system of flagging and torching. In wooded countries, they could be seen above the tops of trees ; hazy weather did not stop it ; they could be seen great distances through fog, required no stations to be built, and took but very few rockets, and these were arranged so as to be more portable than the old style of rockets, and able to stand any amount of transportation.

When I applied for my order to go to New York, I was told by Captain Hepburn, Major Myer's adjutant, that he had received orders from Major Myer not to give me any order, but that I must get to New York the best way I could ; if necessary, I should put on citizen's clothes. I refused to go in this manner, and he told me that he could give me a pass that would take me through the guard at the railroad depot, if it was checked by the Provost Marshal, as one of the signal officers had one, and he used to go out of the city every Saturday night. When I first came to Washington, I was given a pass to take me about Washington, but it was not checked by the Provost Marshal ; and Captain Hepburn only gave me this pass, and told me to get it checked by the Provost Marshal, and then I could get through the guard at the railroad depot. This was given me the day I left Washington ; in proof of which, please find a letter from Captain Hepburn, dated Nov. 1, 1863, sent to me at New York (marked I).

Col. Myer's statement that he looked upon me, while in New York, as a signal officer, on purely signal duty, is rather difficult to reconcile with this way of sending me there.

I never had any understanding with Major Myer that I was not to take out a patent for the rocket, or that the patent was not to belong to me, or anything of the kind. I promised him not to offer it to any other government until the end of the present war; and he promised me such promotion as would be satisfactory to me, in case I reserved it for this government entirely; and in his letter of Nov. 17, 1862 (marked J), he sent me an assignment of my right, title, and interest in these rockets, *other* than for the benefit of the United States, not asking me to make any assignment of my right, title, and interest, as far as the United States was concerned, and the assignment specifies "until the end of the war now raging against the rebel states," showing very conclusively that there was no arrangement, as he testifies, "that I was not to take out a patent as against the United States." Only the government wants to use these rockets; they are of no account for private sale, and if they belonged to the government exclusively, what need was there of my taking out a patent at all. In my letter of Nov. 24, 1862, to Major Myer, I say distinctly, "all you want me to lend to government is in relation to signal rockets." I append the assignment referred to (marked K).

In regard to my not having perfected any of my inventions, as has been stated by Colonel Myer to Major Hartshorn, I would refer you to the accompanying letters concerning experiments with rockets (marked O, P, Q, R). I would refer to the evidence produced in respect to my code, and would ask you to look at the evidence relating to a cypher code of my invention, now in use in the United States army, under the name of Major Myer's code. I invented the rocket before I was ordered to New York by Major Myer, and all at my own expense, including expenses of patent, &c. The government did not pay a cent towards it.

Major Myer, under cover of March 4, 1863, advised Mr. G. A. Lilliendahl, of New York, the party from whom I ordered the rockets, that the order was unauthorized.

Does this look as if I was a Signal Officer on purely signal duty?

When I asked for an explanation of this letter (marked L),



I received a letter simply stating that the verbal order authorizing me to order these rockets, had been overlooked (marked M), and that was the end of it. Is it right to accuse an officer of dishonesty, and then when he asks for an explanation, simply tell him that something has been overlooked, and decline to make the retraction as public and as full as the publication?

The circumstances of my going to New York, and the purpose for which I was sent, were so well known at the office of the Signal Officer of the Army, that it could not have been overlooked.

The statement made by Col. Myer before the Examining Board (Col. Thom's evidence) that, when I returned from New York, "I informed him that I intended to get out a patent for the rockets, and that the Signal Department must first purchase the patent right to use them before being introduced into the service," is not borne out by the evidence, but the falsity of it is very plainly shown all through the evidence bearing on that subject.

Statements made before the Examining Board (Col. Thom's evidence) against my character as a gentleman, and efficiency as an officer, and my moral character, are equally clearly refuted, and not only that, but shown not to have had the slightest foundation.

Maj. Myer's assertion that even if I did pass the Board of Examination, I would not be recommended for a position in the corps (Maj. Hartshorn's evidence), in connection with these letters to New York, just referred to, the evidence of Col. Thom, showing that Maj. Myer wished me to be dismissed by the Board without giving me a chance to be heard in my defence, Maj. Myer taking my code and putting it before the corps as his invention, together with his general reputation for truth and veracity, point sufficiently plain to the reason why these statements were made before the Examining Board.

(Signed)

GEO. H. FELT,  
1st Lt. 55th N. Y. S. V. &  
Acting Signal Officer.

## A.

## RECORD OF LIEUT. G. H. FELT.

- Aug. 23, 1861. Date of commission.
- Dec. 29, " Reported for duty at Signal Camp, Georgetown, D. C.  
Recommended for signal duty by the Board of Examination.
- Feb. 5, 1862. Appointed President of a Garrison Court Martial at Signal Camp of Instruction.  
Recommended for signal duty by the Board of Examination at the completion of his course of study.
- March 16, " Relieved from duty with the army of the Potomac, and ordered to report for duty as signal officer to Major-General Halleck, headquarters St. Louis, Missouri.
- June 8, " Reported by Lieut. J. B. Ludwick as having been placed in charge of a signal party in Gen. Halleck's dept.
- Aug. 22, " Reported by Lieut. Ludwick as being sick in N. Y. city.
- Sept. 9, " Reports himself able to resume duty, and inquires where he shall report.
- " 24, " Ordered to report for duty to Capt. L. F. Hepburn, at Washington, D. C. (See Order Book, page 20.)
- Oct. 15, " Reports date of his commission.
- Jany. 20, 1863. Ordered to make an accurate report of the duties upon which he has been engaged since Sept. 24, 1862. (See Order Book, p. 47.)
- " 31, " Reported on duty at Signal Camp, Georgetown, D. C.
- Feby. 14, " Reported as above.
- " 28, " " "
- March 15, " " "

## B.

HEADQUARTERS, 38TH N. Y. VOLS.  
 IN THE FIELD, NEAR BELLE PLAIN, VA.,  
*April 23, 1863.*

LIEUTENANT: In answer to yours of April 17, I take pleasure in stating here that during the several months you have been under my command as 1st Lieut. in the 55th New York Vols., you have distinguished yourself as a good, active, and efficient officer as well as a gentleman, and I recollect with satisfaction how well you acquitted yourself of any special duty intrusted to your intelligence or energy. With hope that my testimony may be of some good influence on your career, I remain, my dear sir,

Respectfully yours,

(Signed)

R. DE TROBRIAND,

3d Corps, 1st Div., 2d Brig.

*Col. Comdg.*

Lieut. GEO. H. FELT,  
*Signal Corps.*

## C.

SIGNAL CAMP, HD. QRS. ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,  
 NEAR FALMOUTH, VA., *May 7, 1863.*

GEORGE H. FELT, 1st Lieut. 55th N. Y. V.,  
*Acting Signal Officer.*

DEAR SIR: We have at various times been associated with you, both officially and socially, and we take pleasure in stating that we have ever found you an efficient officer, a gentleman, and an agreeable companion, and we cordially express this notwithstanding our surprise at its being necessary, or rather, that the contrary should have been hinted by *any one*.

Yours, &c.

(Signed)

Frank N. Wicker, Capt. Co. H, 28th N. Y. Vols.,  
 and Actg. Sig. Officer.

P. Babcock, Jr.,	Capt. 7th N. J. Vols., and Act. Sig. Officer.
T. R. Clarke,	Capt. 6th Vt. Vols., and Actg. Sig. Officer.
B. N. Miner,	2d Lieut. 34th N. Y. Vols., and Actg. Sig. Officer.
S. C. Tuokerman, Jr.,	2d Lieut. 19th Wis. Vols., and Actg. Sig. Officer.
J. E. Holland,	1st Lieut. Co. C, 36th Inda. Vols., and Actg. Sig. Officer.
I. S. Lyon,	2d Lieut. Co. H, 11th Conn. Vols., and Actg. Sig. Officer.
W. G. Galbraith,	1st Lieut. 18th Penn. Vols., and Actg. Sig. Officer.
W. S. Stryker,	1st Lieut. and A. Adj. Sig. Corps.
L. B. Norton,	1st Lieut. and A. A. Q. M. Sig. Corps.
B. F. Fisher,	Capt. 3d Infantry, and Actg. Sig. Officer.
J. C. Wiggins,	1st Lieut. 3d N. Y. Vols., and Actg. Sig. Officer.
F. J. R. Collins,	1st Lieut. 8th Penn. Cavalry, and Actg. Sig. Officer.
F. E. Beardslee,	Capt., A. Q. M., and Actg. Sig. Officer.
A. Jerome,	1st Lieut. 1st N. J. Vols., and Actg. Sig. Officer.
F. Wilson,	1st Lieut. 5th P. R., & Act. Sig. Off.
C. F. Stone,	1st Lieut. 6th Maine Vols., and Actg. Sig. Officer.

## D.

HEAD QRS. SIGNAL CORPS,  
DEPT. OF THE CUMBERLAND,  
*April 28, 1863.*

1ST LIEUT. G. H. FELT, 55th N. Y. Vols., Actg. Sig. Officer, having served under my command in the detachment of signal corps, department of Mississippi, I take great pleasure in recommending him as an efficient and faithful officer, having discharged the various duties assigned him with credit as an officer and soldier and to my entire satisfaction. I have known him personally ever since he has been in the signal corps, has always conducted himself in a gentlemanly manner, and have never known him to be under the influence of ardent spirits. I would also recommend him as an officer of more than ordinary ability.

(Signed) J. B. LUDWICK,  
*1st Lt. 9th P. R. V., Actg. Sig. Off.*

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HEAD QRS. SIGNAL CORPS,  
DEPT. OF THE CUMBERLAND,  
*May 21, 1863.*

I, J. B. Ludwick, 1st Lieut. 9th P. R. V. C., being duly sworn, do declare and say : That the above statement is correct and true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

(Signed) J. B. LUDWICK,  
*1st Lt. 9th P. R. V., A. S. O.*

Sworn and subscribed before me, }  
this 21st day of May, 1863, }

(Signed) JESSE MERRILL,  
*Capt. 7th P. R., V. Actg. Sig. Off.*

**E.**

May 5, 1863.

DEAR FELT: I have rec'd your letter, and hurry to answer it, even during the excitement we are now having. I am very much surprised to hear that any objections have been made against your examination until you could prove yourself a gentleman. I have never seen in your conduct anything that would lead me to imagine you were not. I have met you frequently on friendly terms, have dined with you in your own house, and have seen you frequently. Your manner and bearing in society and on duty have always been those of a gentleman, and if any charges are now made against you, they must have arisen since I last saw you, as up to that time I had heard nothing to your discredit.

Yours truly,  
(Signed) SAM'L B. CUSHING.

**F.**

HD. QRS. 6TH CORPS, VA.,

May 9, 1863.

FRIEND FELT: I was very much surprised and annoyed this morning to hear that the Board of Examination had questioned your right to be considered a gentleman. The long intercourse which we have enjoyed so pleasantly, on my side at least, and the dignified manner in which you have always conducted yourself, should be sufficient evidence of the fact. Believing that when you cease to be a gentleman life will be extinct,

I remain, yours truly,  
(Signed) GEORGE J. CLARKE,  
1st Lt. & A. S. O,

Lieut. GEO. H. FELT,  
A. S. O, Washington.

## G.

NEW YORK, *May 6, 1863.*

DEAR SIR : Your favor of the 2d inst. was duly received. You state that it has been intimated in Washington that your line of conduct, while here last winter, had not been in accordance with the object for which you came, and you would, therefore, like to have a few lines from me, showing facts as to what you had done. I feel it my duty to respond cordially to your request, knowing that, notwithstanding the inclement weather we experienced while you were here, everything was carried on with more than ordinary despatch. The nature of your invention was such that it required time and good weather to test it, and I know positively that no person in the United States could have finished the experiments sooner. The Rubber Company and myself both delayed other work for the purpose of facilitating yours, and solely on the representation from you that the business required immediate attention, your time being limited. Your views relative to the manner of making the rocket and fuses were both ingenious and practical, and would have led me to believe (had I not known to the contrary) that you were a practical pyrotechnist. In every respect your conduct while here was exemplary, and I hope you will be enabled to satisfy those who have thought otherwise, that you acted throughout with consistency in this affair.

I remain, with respect, yours truly,

(Signed)

G. A. LILLIENDAHL.

Lieut. GEO. H. FELT,  
A. S. Off., U. S. A, *Washington, D. C.*

## H.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *Oct. 14, 1862.*

SIR : While in New York, Lieut. Felt, 55th N. Y. Volunteers, exhibited to me a code of rocket signals, which I take

pleasure in presenting to the favorable notice of the Department. The principle upon which it is based is very simple and ingenious, and readily admits of such changes as will perfectly prevent it from being rendered useless, should treachery place the key in the hands of the enemy.

The rockets which he proposes to use with the code are also constructed upon a new principle, and the experiments I witnessed with them, were of the most satisfactory character. I would therefore respectfully urge the attention of the proper authorities to this code, as I think that the signal service might be in many cases benefited by the use of this system, particularly under circumstances where rockets are indispensable.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed)

S. T. CUSHING,

*Capt. 2d Infantry, & A. S. O.*

Maj. ALBERT J. MYER,

*Signal Officer, U. S. A.*

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I.

OFFICE OF THE SIGNAL OFFICER,

WASHINGTON, Nov. 1863.

LIEUT.: Herewith please find enclosed your commutation of quarters, also photograph of Lieut. L. M. Bergan. The former perfect (by signing both certificate and receipt) and return to this office accompanied by an order (separate) authorizing the payment to me, when I will forward you the money. Looking for an early answer,

I remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed)

L. T. HEPBURN,

*Capt. and A. S. O.*

To Lieut. G. H. FELT, A. S. O.



J.

OFFICE OF THE SIGNAL OFFICER,  
WASHINGTON, Nov. 17, 1862.

SIR: Your letter of the 7th inst. is at hand and contents noted. Herewith I transmit you a letter stating that you are an acting Signal Officer, together with assignment of your right, title, and interest in these rockets, other than for the benefit of the United States. Such the Major assures me is the understanding existing between you and him.

Hoping that you will successfully experiment,

I remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed)

L. F. HEBURN,

*Capt 4th N. Y. V., A. S. O.*

To Lieut. GEO. H. FELT, A. S. O.

---

K.

ASSIGNMENT.

Whereas, I, Geo. H. Felt, 1st Lieut. 55th N. Y. Volunteers, and Acting Signal Officer, U. S. A., did obtain letters patent of the United States of America, for certain improvements in Signal Rockets, which letters patent bear date the        day of        eighteen hundred and sixty       , and are numbered.

And whereas, the United States of America is desirous of acquiring an interest therein :

Now, this indenture witnesseth, that, for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar, to me, the said First Lieutenant George H. Felt, in hand paid, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I have assigned, sold, and set over, and do hereby assign, sell, and set over, unto the said United States of America, all the right, title, and interest, which I have in the said invention, as secured to me by said letters patent. The same to be held and enjoyed by the said United States of America until the end of the war now raging against the rebel states, for their own use and behoof, and for the use and be-

hoof of their legal representatives, to the full end of the said war, as fully and entirely as the same would have been held and enjoyed by me, if this assignment and sale had not been made.

In testimony whereof, I hereunto set my hand and affix my seal this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ eighteen hundred and sixty-

[L. s.]

Sealed and delivered in presence of \_\_\_\_\_

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*MUNN & CO., Solicitors of American and Foreign Patents, and Publishers of the Scientific American, 37 Park Row, N. Y.*

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**L.**

SIGNAL CAMP OF INSTRUCTION,  
GEORGETOWN, D. C., *April 10, 1863.*

CAPTAIN: I have the honor to inform you that I have received a letter from G. A. Lilliendahl, N. Y. City, stating that you advised him, under cover of the 4th inst., that my order for signal rockets was unauthorized. As this statement is directly opposed to the spirit of all my orders from your office, I am led to believe that there is some misunderstanding in the matter, and would most respectfully ask an explanation at your earliest convenience.

Your obedient servant,

(Signed)

GEO. H. FELT, A. S. O.

To CAPT. L. F. HEPBURN,

*Signal Officer, Washington, D. C.*

**M.**

OFFICE OF THE SIGNAL OFFICER,  
WASHINGTON, D. C., *April 10, 1863.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your communication of this date, and in reply, am directed to state,

that, at the time of writing Mr. Lilliendahl, the verbal order authorizing the manufacture of two hundred (200) rockets was overlooked.

Hereafter, all rockets ordered under this order, the letter so ordering said rockets from the manufacturer must be submitted to this office for approval; and until said approval is added, the order to the manufacturer will be considered invalid and not binding.

The manufacturer has been so notified.

I remain, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,

(Signed)

L. F. HEPBURN,  
*Captain and S. O.*

To Lieut. G. H. FELT,  
*Acting Signal Officer.*

Through Capt. W. J. L. NICODEMUS,  
*Comdg. Signal Camp.*

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N.

SIGNAL CAMP OF INSTRUCTION,  
GEORGETOWN, D. C., April 11, 1863.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of yours of the 10th inst., and in reply, would remark, that the circumstance of my going to New York, and the purpose for which I was sent, were perfectly well known to every person in your office, as well as the verbal order, and everything connected therewith, so that I am at a loss to understand how it could have been overlooked at the time of your writing to Mr. Lilliendahl. Writing Mr. L. that I had ordered the rockets without authority, is simply accusing me of dishonesty; and I would respectfully suggest that the same publicity be given to its retraction as to its publication. I ordered, as authorized by you, two hundred rockets and three hundred candles, and although only about one hundred have been delivered, the balance are manufactured, and almost ready for delivery; and if not delivered, will be a loss to the manufacturer

Orders for any more rockets will have to be sent to me for approval, as I am the patentee, and they cannot be manufactured without my consent; and until said approval is added, the order will be of no use.

I remain, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed)

GEO. H. FELT,

*First Lieut. and A. S. O.*

To Capt. L. F. HEPBURN,

*Signal Office, Washington, D. C.*

Through Capt. NICODEMUS,

*Comdg. Comp.*

**O.**

FORT WASHINGTON, *March 21, 1863.*

CAPTAIN: Lieuts. Felt and Wicker reported to me last night in accordance with your order. Their experiments with rockets were of the most satisfactory character. Notwithstanding its being a very thick night and a very high wind blowing, the rockets attained a very great elevation, and the colors of the rockets sent from Georgetown in answer to those fired from this post were perfectly plain and distinguishable with the naked eye. Not being in direct communication with the surrounding defences, I would suggest that a Signal Officer and a supply of rockets be sent to this post as soon as practicable.

CHAS. S. MERCHANT,

*Col. 4th Artillery Commanding.*

Capt. W. J. L. NICODEMUS,

*Comdg. Signal Camp, Georgetown D. C.*

**P.**

FORT WASHINGTON, MARYLAND,

*March 21, 1863.*

*Captain Commanding Signal Corps, Georgetown, D. C.:*

From the experiments of last evening by Lieuts. Felt and Wicker, with their signal rockets, I take pleasure in attesting

to their entire efficacy for the purposes for which they were invented. The rockets were promptly answered from Georgetown, and their lights were plainly discernible at this post. These rockets, I believe, would attract the attention of a sentinel on duty at the distance of fifteen miles.

Respectfully,

C. R. DEMING,

*1st Lieut. and Comdg. Battery.*

P. S. I would respectfully suggest that a Signal Officer with the necessary equipments be detailed for duty at this post.

Respectfully,

C. R. DEMING,

*Lieut., Comdg. Battery.*

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Q.

SIGNAL CAMP INSTRUCTION,  
GEORGETOWN, D. C., *March 23, 1863.*

CAPTAIN: In pursuance of instructions received from Lieut. Geo. H. Felt, I fired seven (7) rockets at this camp on the night of March 20, 1863, in answer to rockets fired at Fort Washington. Notwithstanding the very unfavorable night, the weather being very thick, and, as we supposed, impossible to distinguish any lights at that distance—eighteen (18) miles—even with the aid of a glass, the rockets were very distinctly visible with the naked eye, and messages sent by them could have been seen at a much greater distance. It would have been impossible to have seen a torch that night at a distance of four (4) miles, with our most powerful glasses. I consider these rockets a very valuable acquisition to our present means of signalling, as it becomes available when every other means of communication fails.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

PETER H. NILES,

*2d Lieut. 23d Mass. Vols.*

& A. S. O.

Capt. W. J. L. NICODEMUS,

*Commanding Camp.*

R.

SIGNAL CAMP INSTRUCTION,  
GEORGETOWN, D. C., *March 23, 1863.*

CAPTAIN: We have the honor to report, that in accordance with Special Order No. 1, we proceeded, March 20th, to Fort Washington, for the purpose of experimenting with signal rockets. At 10 P. M. we commenced firing the rockets, which were immediately answered from Georgetown. We fired seven (7) rockets, all of which were promptly and correctly answered, the answering rockets being distinctly visible with the naked eye. The night was very hazy and thick, and atmosphere filled with snow; so bad a night that it would not have been possible to read a torch at a distance of five (5) miles, besides a very high wind blowing, which prevented the rockets from attaining their highest elevation.

We wish to return our thanks to Col. Merchant, commanding the post, and the officers under him, for the courtesies extended to us. We would respectfully suggest that a signal officer stationed at that post would render valuable service (they having no means of direct communication), as he would be in immediate communication with the whole chain of defences. Very respectfully, your obedient servants,

(Signed)

GEO. H. FELT, A. S. O.,

*Lieut. 55th N. Y. S. V.*

FRANK N. WICKER,

*1st Lieut. 28th N. Y. Vols., and A. S. O.*

Capt. W. J. L. NICODEMUS,

*Commanding Camp.*

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I made application for a certified copy of the proceedings of the Court, and of the decisions which they had given in my case, but have never been able to get it. I had an opportunity of reading it, however, in the office of the Judge Advocate General, Col. Holt, Washington, and as near as I can recollect, it was as follows:

The Court was at a loss to determine what the nature of the charges were against Lieut. Felt's moral character, as a

great deal of correspondence had been furnished which evidently had nothing to do with the case. At last they concluded that the only imputation against Lieut. Felt's character was the question of drawing commutation for quarters and fuel

In regard to the above, it was shown by the evidence adduced that he, Lieut. Felt, was placed upon duty that could not be performed in camp, that he was ordered to report to the camp on special duty, that he was not subject to the rules of the camp, but was considered as on detached service, that the commandant of the camp procured the rooms out of camp for him, and that Major Myer knew that he was occupying such quarters outside of camp, and that it was necessary that he should occupy these quarters to perform the duty on which he had been ordered.

In regard to the cord of wood left at his quarters by Capt. McCreary, there was evidence to prove that it was left against Lieut. Felt's wishes and orders, and there was no evidence to prove that he had used the wood or knew of its having been left at his quarters.

The court therefore found that "all imputations against Lieut. Felt's moral character have been fully refuted."

(Signed)

F. W. PAUL,  
*Lieut. and Recorder.*

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I append copy of a letter to Col. Thom in relation to this Court of Inquiry, the only official record of the action of the court I have been able to obtain.

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF WASHINGTON,  
*June 11, 1863.*

COLONEL. I have the honor to inform you that the Board of Inquiry in the case of Lieut. Felt, convened by special orders from these Headquarters, to inquire into and report upon the

moral character of Lieut. Felt, found "that all imputations against Lieut. Felt's moral character were fully refuted."

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed)

LEAVITT HUNT,

*Major and A. A. A. G.*

Col. THOM, *President Board Ex. of S O.*

June 21, 1863.

Official.

(Signed)

LEAVITT HUNT,

*Major and A. A. A. G.*

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SIGNAL CAMP INSTRUCTION,  
GEORGETOWN, D. C., May 8, 1863.

BRIG. GEN. L. THOMAS, *Adj. Gen. U. S. A., Washington, D. C. :*

I have the honor to inform you that I was ordered to appear before the Examining Board, U. S. signal corps, for examination on May 1, 1863, and again by order, May 5, 1863. I was told by the President of the Board that doubts had been excited in the minds of the Board, as to my moral character, and on application was furnished with the following correspondence on file in the Signal Office. I would respectfully ask for a Court of Inquiry to investigate the charges therein conveyed, and I would urge that such court may be granted without delay.

Very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed)

GEO. H. FELT,

*Lieut. and A. S. O.*

Through Capt. W. J. L. NICODEMUS.

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WASHINGTON, D. C., May 7, 1863.

SIR: In compliance with your request, I transmit herewith an extract from the proceedings of the Signal Examining Board in your case, together with official copies of the papers on file in the Signal Office, referred to therein.

I remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed)

GEO. THOM,

Ten (10) enclosures. *Col. A. D. C., President of Ex. Board.*

First Lieut. GEORGE H. FELT, *Acting Signal Officer.*

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(Extract.)

SEVENTH DAY.

TUESDAY, May 5, 1863.

\* \* \* \* \*

First Lieut. George H. Felt, of the 55th New York State Militia, aged 32 years, a native of the state of Massachusetts, appeared before the Board.



The applicant was educated in the select schools of New York city, and previous to his connection with the military service was engaged in the manufacture of paper.

The correspondence on file in the Signal Office having excited a doubt as to the moral character of the applicant, the Board, in obedience to the requirement of section third, par. 7, of the approved rules for "Examining Boards," decline further examination in his case until this doubt is removed.

\* \* \* \* \*

Copy furnished for the information of Lieut. Geo. H. Felt.

Official.

(Signed)

G. CHAPIN,  
Capt. Inf. and Recorder.

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OFFICE OF THE SIGNAL OFFICER,  
WASHINGTON, D. C., April 2, 1863.

SIR: Information has reached this office that you have drawn commutation of fuel and quarters for the months of January, February, and March, 1863.

Referring you to the first paragraph of Special Orders, No. 7 (C. S.), this office, I am directed to request from you a statement in writing as to how you reconcile the drawing of commutation for fuel and quarters for the above mentioned period with the spirit of said paragraph of said order.

I have further to request that the statement you may have to submit be handed in within twenty-four hours from this date.

I remain very respectfully your obedient servant,

By order.

(Signed)

LEONARD F. HEPBURN,  
Capt. and Signal Officer.

Lieut. GEO. H. FELT, A. S. O.,  
Camp of Instruction, Georgetown, D. C.

Through Capt. W. J. L. NICODEMUS,  
Commanding Camp, Georgetown, D. C.

A true copy.

(Signed)

LEONARD F. HEPBURN,  
Capt. 4th N. Y. V. & Signal Officer.

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SIGNAL CAMP OF INSTRUCTION,  
GEORGETOWN, D. C., April 2, 1863.

SIR: Your favor of this date is received and contents noted. I have the honor to submit the following facts in regard thereto:

When I reported from New York, I was placed upon duty that could not be performed in camp. I mentioned this to Major Myer, and he told me that he did not wish me to remain in Washington, but I could get a place near the camp, where I could attend to such

duty. Since I arrived here, I have furnished my own quarters and fuel, and that is the reason why I have drawn commutation.

Very respectfully your obedient servant,

(Signed)

GEO. H. FELT,  
*Lieut. and A. S. O.*

To LEONARD F. HEPBURN, *Capt. and A. S. O.*

Through W. J. L. NICODEMUS,  
*Capt. Commanding Camp.*

A true copy.

(Signed)

LEONARD F. HEPBURN,  
*Capt. 4th N. Y. V. and Signal Officer.*

SIGNAL CAMP OF INSTRUCTION,  
GEORGETOWN, D. C., *April 11, 1863.*

CAPT.: I have the honor to inform you that I have received a letter from G. A. Lilliendahl, Esq., New York, stating that you advised him under cover of the 4th inst., that my order for signal rockets was unauthorized. As this statement is directly opposed to the spirit of all my orders from your office, I am led to believe that there is some misunderstanding in the matter, and would most respectfully ask an explanation at your earliest convenience.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed)

GEO. H. FELT,  
*1st Lieut. & A. S. O.*

Capt. LEONARD F. HEPBURN,  
*Signal Officer, Washington, D. C.*

OFFICE OF THE SIGNAL OFFICER,  
WASHINGTON, D. C., *April 10, 1863.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your communication of this date, and in reply am directed to state that, at the time of writing Mr. Lilliendahl, the verbal order authorizing the manufacture of two hundred (200) rockets was overlooked.

Hereafter all rockets ordered under this order, the letter so ordering said rockets from the manufacturer must be submitted to this office for approval, and until said approval is added the order to the manufacturer will be considered invalid and not binding. The manufacturer has been so notified.

I remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

By order.

LEONARD F. HEPBURN,  
*Capt. & Signal Officer.*

To 1st Lieut. GEO. H. FELT, *Acting Signal Officer.*

Through Capt. W. J. L. NICODEMUS,  
*Commanding Signal Camp, near Georgetown, D. C.*

SIGNAL CAMP OF INSTRUCTION,  
GEORGETOWN, D. C., April 11, 1863.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of yours of the 10th inst., and in reply would remark that the circumstances of my going to New York, and the purpose for which I was sent, were perfectly well known to every person in your office, as well as the verbal order, and everything connected therewith, so that I am at a loss to understand how it could have been overlooked at the time of your writing to Mr. Lilliendahl.

Writing to Mr. L. that I had ordered the rockets without authority is simply accusing me of dishonesty, and I would respectfully suggest that the same publicity be given to its retraction as its publication. I ordered, as authorized, by you two hundred rockets and three hundred candles, and although only about one hundred have been delivered, the balance are manufactured and almost ready for delivery, and if not delivered will be a loss to the manufacturer. Orders for any more rockets will have to be sent to me for approval, as I am the patentee, and they cannot be manufactured without my consent; and until said approval is added, the order will be of no use.

I remain, very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,  
(Signed) GEO. H. FELT,

*1st Lieut. and Acting Signal Officer.*

CAPT. LEONARD F. HEPBURN,  
*Signal Officer, Washington, D. C.*

Through W. J. L. NICODEMUS,  
*Captain commanding Camp.*

Official copy.

(Signed)

LEONARD F. HEPBURN,  
*Capt. 4th N. Y. V. and Signal Officer.*

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OFFICE OF THE SIGNAL OFFICER,  
WASHINGTON, January 20, 1863.

SPECIAL ORDER No. 7.

I. First Lieut. Geo. H. Felt, Acting Signal Officer, having returned from duty in New York City, will report without delay to Capt. Wm. G. McCreary, Commanding Signal Camp of Instruction, Georgetown, D. C.

II. Lieut. Felt's duties, while remaining in that camp, will be the careful preparation of drawings representing the Field Signal Telegraph Train, and of all rockets, etc., he may have perfected while in New York city. He will also devise a rocket code especially adapted to the use of the Signal Corps, Army of the Potomac.

By order of Major A. J. MYER.

(Signed)

LEONARD F. HEPBURN,  
*Captain and Signal Officer.*

A true copy.

(Signed)

LEONARD F. HEPBURN,  
*Capt. 4th New York Vols., and Signal Officer.*

OFFICE OF THE SIGNAL OFFICER,  
WASHINGTON, *January 21, 1863.*

(Extract.)

SPECIAL ORDER No. 9.

I. So much of Special Order, No. 7, issued from this office, January 20, 1863, as relates to the preparation, by Lieut. Felt, of a rocket code, especially adapted to the use of the Signal Corps, Army of the Potomac, is hereby rescinded.

II. Lieut. Felt is hereby ordered to make without delay an accurate report of the duties upon which he has been engaged since September 24, 1862.

By order of Maj. A. J. MYER.

(Signed)

LEONARD F. HEPBURN,  
*Capt. and Signal Officer.*

A true copy.

(Signed)

LEONARD F. HEPBURN,  
*Capt. 4th N. Y. V. and Signal Officer.*

SIGNAL CAMP OF INSTRUCTION,  
*May 5, 1863.*

SIR: Lieut. George H. Felt reported to me on or about the 21st day of January, 1863, pursuant to Special Order No. 7, Office of the Signal Officer of the Army. His duties were defined in this order, but somewhat modified in a subsequent order. On reporting to camp he requested permission to obtain a room in the neighborhood, and sleep out of camp in order that he might be more retired, and stating that he was not furnished with requisite blankets, &c. This privilege was granted him the more readily, as all the officers were boarding out of, but occupying quarters in the camp.

Lieut. Felt was furnished with an army stove, as the fireplace in his room was not sufficient to keep it warm. At the 1st of February, on making out my requisitions for fuel for the camp, I included Lieut. Felt in the number of officers entitled to fuel, and on its arriving in camp furnished him with one cord, and which was the one half his monthly allowance for that month. During the month of March he was not furnished with any additional fuel, nor was any drawn for the camp for the reason that the amount allowed in regulations for one month was always ample for two. About the first of April he was furnished with a cord at his own request. As acting Quartermaster, I was prepared to furnish him with quarters and fuel if he requested it.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed)

W. G. MCCREARY,  
*Capt. and Acting Signal Officer.*

To Col. A. J. MYER, *Signal Officer of the Army,*  
158 F st., Washington, D. C.

A true copy.

(Signed)

LEONARD F. HEPBURN,  
*Capt. 4th N. Y. Vols. and Signal Officer.*

OFFICE OF THE SIGNAL OFFICER,  
WASHINGTON, Nov. 17, 1862.

SIR: Your letter of 7th inst., is at hand and contents noted. Herewith I hand you a letter stating that you are an acting Signal Officer, together with assignment of your right, title, and interest, in these rockets other than for the benefit of the United States. Such, the major assures me, is the understanding between you and him.

Hoping that you will satisfactorily experiment,

I remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed) LEONARD F. HEPBURN,

*Capt. 4th N. Y. Vols., and Signal Officer in charge.*

Lieut. GEO. H. FELT,

*Acting Signal Officer,*

*Care Willard Felt & Co., New York City.*

OFFICE OF THE SIGNAL OFFICER,  
WASHINGTON, Nov. 17, 1862.

To all whom it may concern :

This is to certify that the bearer hereof, Geo. H. Felt, First Lieut. 55th Regiment New York State Militia, is an Acting Signal Officer in the United States Army.

The rocket for which he claims a patent is manufactured for the use solely of the Signal Corps United States Army. Witness accompanying assignment to that effect.

(Signed)

ALBERT J. MYER,

*Signal Officer, Major U. S. A.*

Official Copy.

(Signed)

LEONARD F. HEPBURN,

*Capt. 4th N. Y. V., and Signal Officer.*

NEW YORK, November 7, 1862.

I tried the cases for rockets made of gutta-percha, but find that they will not answer. The choke does not burn out as I expected would be the trouble, but the gutta-percha softens by the heat and bursts. I find, however, that a case made of paper and covered, with gutta-percha, will possess the advantage of both, and will make a very superior case, and am now having the cases made in that manner. Covering with gutta-percha will make the cases a little more expensive, but the cases being entirely waterproof, and not so liable to injury, will more than balance that. I went to the patent agents today, and I wish a letter from you saying that I am Acting Signal Officer, and that the rockets, etc., are intended for the use of the government, and it can be put through the Patent Office out of its regular turn. This if convenient should be approved at the War Depart-

ment. I will have the drawings and papers ready to get the patent when your letter arrives.

By paying prompt attention to this I shall feel much obliged,  
All of which is respectfully submitted.

GEO. H. FELT,

*Lieut. 55th N. Y. S. M., A. S. O.*

Maj. A. J. MYER, *S. O., U. S. A.*

Official copy.

(Signed)

• LEONARD F. HEPBURN,

*Capt. 4th N. Y. V., and Signal Officer.*

Finding it impossible to obtain an examination before the Hon. Board, or even an answer to my letters, from them, I preferred the following charges against Col. A. J. Myer, S. O. U. S. A., which, however, have not as yet been acted upon.

GEORGETOWN, D. C., *Aug. 14, 1863.*

GENERAL: I have the honor to enclose charges and specifications against Col. Albert J. Myer, Signal Officer, U. S. A. I am perfectly well aware of the serious nature of the charges therein conveyed, but as they have already been proven in the proceedings of the Court of Inquiry, convened by Special Order No. 85, Headquarters, Department of Washington, to which I respectfully refer your attention, I would urge that they might be acted upon with as little delay as possible.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. H. FELT,

*Lieut. and A. S. O.*

To Brig. Gen. L. THOMAS,  
*Adj't Gen. U. S. A., Washington, D. C.*

SIGNAL CAMP INSTRUCTION,

GEORGETOWN, D. C., *July.*

*Charges and Specifications preferred against Col. Albert J. Myer, Signal Officer, U. S. A., by First Lieut. Geo. H. Felt, 55th N. Y. S. V., and A. S. O., U. S. A.*

CHARGE 1st.—Conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.

**SPECIFICATION 1ST.**—In this that he, Col. Albert J. Myer, then Major and Signal Officer U. S. A., being a member of the Board of Examination for Signal Officers, did make false statements before that Board of Examination, in regard to the character and reputation as a gentleman and an efficient officer, of the above-named Geo. H. Felt, Lieut. and A. S. O. ; all this at the office of the Signal Officer, Washington, D. C., on or about May 1, 1863.

**SPECIFICATION 2D.** In this that he, Col. Albert J. Myer, then Major and Signal Officer U. S. A., being a member of the Board of Examination for Signal Officers, did make false statements before that Board of Examination, in regard to the moral character and reputation of the above-named Geo. H. Felt, Lieut. and A. S. O. All this at the office of the Signal Officer, Washington, D. C., on or about May 1, 1863.

**SPECIFICATION 3D.** In this that he, Col. Albert J. Myer, then Major and Signal Officer, being a member of the Board of Examination for Signal Officers, did make false statements before the said Board of Examination, in regard to the said Geo. H. Felt, Lieut. and A. S. O., having drawn commutation for quarters and fuel for the months of January, February, and March, 1863. All this at the office of the Signal Officer, Washington, D. C., on or about May 1, 1863.

**SPECIFICATION 4TH.**—In this that he, Col. Albert J. Myer, then Major and Signal Officer, being a member of the Board of Examination for Signal Officers, did make false statements before the said Board of Examination, in regard to the relation existing between the United States government and the said Lieut. Geo. H. Felt, A. S. O., concerning signal rockets of the invention and patent of the said Geo. H. Felt. All this at the office of the Signal Officer, Washington, D. C., on or about May 1, 1863.

**SPECIFICATION 5TH.**—In this that he, Col. Albert J. Myer, then Major and Signal Officer, U. S. A., being a member of the

Board of Examination for Signal Officers, did make false statements before the said Board of Examination, in regard to the manner in which I had performed the duty for which I was sent to New York, and the nature of the duty for which I was sent there. All this at the O. S. O., Washington, D. C., on or about May 1, 1863.

**SPECIFICATION 6TH.**—In this that he, Col. Albert J. Myer, then Major and Signal Officer, U. S. A., being a member of the Board of Examination for Signal Officers, did make false statements before the said Board of Examination, that I had refused, to allow any more rockets, of my invention and patent, to be manufactured for the use of the United States government, until the government should first buy my patent for the said rockets. All this at the O. S. O., Washington, D. C., on or about May 1, 1863.

**SPECIFICATION 7TH.**—In this that he, Col. Albert J. Myer, Signal Officer, U. S. A., did make false statements before the Court of Inquiry, convened by Special Order No. 85, Headquarters Department of Washington, in regard to the said Lieut. Geo. H. Felt, A. S. O., drawing commutation for quarters and fuel, for the months of January, February, and March, 1863. All this at the city of Washington, D. C., on or about May 20, 1863.

**SPECIFICATION 8TH.**—In this that he, Col. Albert J. Myer, Signal Officer, U. S. A., did make false statements before the above-named Court of Inquiry, in regard to the nature of the duties for which I was sent to New York, and the manner in which I had performed said duty. All this at the city of Washington, D. C., on or about May 20, 1863.

**SPECIFICATION 9TH.**—In this that he, Col. Albert J. Myer, Signal Officer, U. S. A., did make false statements before the above-named Court of Inquiry, in regard to the relation existing between the United States government and the said Geo. H. Felt, Lieut. and A. S. O., concerning signal rockets of the invention and patent of the said Geo. H. Felt. All this at the city of Washington, D. C., on or about May 20, 1863.