

753. Do I understand you to say that you believe the meat was not passed by any person representing the contingents?—I had better say I did not see it passed. I was never in the butcher's shop.

754. You say the food was disgraceful. I want to find out whether a responsible officer took steps to see whether it was good meat or not?—As far as I know, I never saw them examine it, but all the same I believe Captain Young, the veterinary officer, did examine it. I believe he did although I did not see him.

755. Was it possible for him to have seen it although you did not?—Oh, yes; anybody in the butcher's shop would see it.

756. You say the mutton was practically not boiled at all?—Yes.

757. How often?—Several times.

758. How often a week did you get boiled mutton?—Quite twice a week.

759. You say the fish and the meat was left on the decks so that the dogs could make water on it?—Yes.

760. Was that often?—I only saw it on one occasion.

761. Were there many dogs on board?—A good few; six or seven.

762. What did you get in the way of puddings?—There were plum-puddings and rice and prunes and stewed apples.

763. Was the rice often filled with maggots?—No; only on one occasion.

764. Were the plum-puddings fair?—Well, a fair weight.

765. Were they bad to eat?—Yes.

766. What ship did you go out in?—In the "Cornwall."

767. Did you live well there?—Yes; like kings.

768. You say there was not a day that a complaint was not made until the end?—No.

769. To whom were the complaints made?—To the officer of the day; and on one or two occasions the men paraded on the deck and made their complaint.

770. Did you ever make a complaint?—No. I paid for my meals as I came over, because I could not eat the rations. I could not get my meals until after the officers had theirs.

771. Why did you not make a complaint?—I simply had nothing to do with it. I was not made a non-commissioned officer until I was coming over; but whenever the men made a complaint I went with them.

772. When was a complaint made and no notice taken of it?—I cannot remember the day or date.

773. Give us some glaring case of no notice being taken of a complaint?—On one occasion the troopers paraded to Captain Fookes, and the captain said he would see what he could do, and the consequence was the trooper threw the mutton over the side.

774. Did the trooper go to a non-commissioned officer and make his complaint in a proper way?—I think he went to Sergeant Greig.

775. What was the name of the trooper?—Mulhern.

776. Was no notice taken of the complaint?—Captain Fookes said he would see what he could do.

777. And nothing came of it?—Nothing whatever.

778. You say the tea was made in the same boiler that the meat was boiled in?—Yes.

779. Was there ever an attempt to clean the boiler?—Not after the meat was taken out and the water for the tea put in. One night I went to the cook and asked him for some hot water. I was not very well, and I asked him for some. He said, "What do you want it for?" And I said, "To make a drink of tea." He gave me the water, and there was an inch and a half of grease on top of it.

780. Do you mean to say there was an inch and a half, or even an inch, of grease on top of the water?—Well, I dipped my pannikin in and there was three parts of the pannikin of grease.

781. You say the men could not wash except between 6 and 8 o'clock in the morning?—I am not quite sure of the exact hours.

782. Before 9 o'clock, at any rate?—Yes.

783. Was that a hardship?—Half the men could not get time to wash, there was such a crowd; and the breakfast was before that.

784. Did you manage to get a wash?—Yes, generally.

785. Most men could have got a wash if they tried?—I could generally get a wash when the men were at breakfast, because I got my meals from the officers' galley.

786. Enough water to drink?—Yes, always sufficient.

787. In any quantity?—As much as they liked to drink at the tub.

788. You say there were a hundred and fifty men too many on board: how do you arrive at that calculation?—You hung your hammocks over the tables. There were ten or twelve men at each table, and you would be sleeping very close.

789. Do you know how many the ship would carry, and if she had more than the transport regulations would allow?—The transport regulation as to the "Britannic" is 1,084, I think.

790. You gathered that from the newspapers?—Yes.

791. How many were there on board?—I do not know, but, judging myself, and seeing the men on the ship, I think there were too many.

792. But that would not lead one to suppose there were a hundred and fifty too many?—That is quite right.

793. Then, what do you mean?—I mean that if there were a hundred and fifty less the men could sleep more comfortably, but then not too comfortably.

794. Were all the hooks filled up?—If all the hooks were filled up the men could not sleep at all.