

259. Was that always the case?—I did not notice it at first. I did not look closely into them; but in the last barrel I noticed them, and the men noticed them.

260. When was that—just before you arrived in New Zealand?—About a week before.

261. That was the only barrel you noticed it in?—Yes, the only barrel.

262. Then, generally, on the trip across were the biscuits good or bad?—Well, I did not notice the insects prior to a week before we got to New Zealand. They may have been in before, but I did not notice them myself.

263. You say the soup was fair?—Yes.

264. And the vegetables were hard?—Yes, they were hardly cooked.

265. How often did that happen?—Nearly every day. They did not use fresh vegetables; they used preserved ones, and they need a lot of soaking.

266. You say the potatoes were growing: do you think that could have been helped?—Well, there was a fatigue party told off to wash the potatoes, and I think they might have picked off these growths. They were fully 3 in. long.

267. Who was to blame for this, do you think?—The chief steward, I think.

268. Could he help them growing?—No, not at that time of the year he could not.

269. The coffee, you say, was bad: was it the quality—was it not strong enough, or what?—It was very black, something like ink to look at, and the taste was not very nice at all. It tasted as if it had been stewing all night.

270. Did it look clean?—It was that dark you could not see what was wrong with it.

271. That was the principal fault—the darkness of the coffee?—Yes.

272. You were satisfied with all the jam except the rhubarb?—Yes.

273. How much jam did you get at all?—Well, for sixteen men we got a soup-plate full.

274. How often?—Once a day, I think. It depended whether we got cold meat for tea. If there was only cold meat we got jam.

275. Was the jam enough to go round?—Just enough for a taste round, sir. There was not too much.

276. You said that there were not enough hooks for the hammocks?—Yes.

277. Were all the hooks occupied?—They were on our deck, sir.

278. And the men had to sleep on the floor?—Some men preferred sleeping on the floor.

279. Was there a hook for them if they liked to use it?—I do not think there was.

280. I would like you to be clear on that subject?—I could not say positively as to the number of hooks.

281. Were the hooks unoccupied at any time? Had every hook a hammock on it?—On some occasions every hook was occupied.

282. Then how many would be on the floors?—I could not say exactly; there were so many lying all over the place.

283. Was there hammock accommodation for them all?—I do not think there was for them all.

284. Was there hammock accommodation for three-quarters of the men?—Yes, I suppose there would be for about three-quarters and no more.

285. When the bath was removed, did the men endeavour to get the hose played on them?—Not to my knowledge.

286. Would that have been allowed, do you think?—I think the officers of the ship would have allowed it.

287. The men could have got a hot-water bath had they chosen to get it?—I suppose they did not think of that.

288. When the blankets were served out to you, did you notice anything wrong with them?—No, I did not.

289. Did they look clean?—Fairly clean.

290. How soon after you received them were you conscious they were lousy?—A day or two afterwards. I myself could not sleep because of the lice on the blankets.

291. Were any steps taken to clean them?—No, sir.

292. Was it possible to take any steps to clean them, do you think?—No, sir, they were rolled up every morning and packed away.

293. Supposing there had been complaints made, was there any possibility of cleaning the blankets do you think?—No, sir.

294. Did you see any drunkenness on board the ship?—There were one or two on the deck intoxicated.

295. Often?—Very seldom, sir; twice a week, perhaps.

296. Have you any idea how they got drunk?—Through drinking too much beer.

297. How did they get the quantity?—Some men at the table were teetotalers, and they gave their issue to the men who were fond of it.

298. You say there was not sufficient to eat?—Yes, sir.

299. Do you know how much meat was issued at all?—I do not know exactly, sir. Dinner was the best meal of the day. They had not much to complain about the dinner. We had plenty of meat at dinner.

300. Fairly cooked?—Yes. For breakfast there was hardly enough to eat. When bacon was issued you would get a small slice four inches long for each man. It was hardly enough for grown men.

301. Did the men get meat three times a day?—Yes, sir.

302. But not enough to satisfy hunger?—Not at breakfast. At dinner they were fairly well satisfied.

303. Do you know what weight of bread they got a day?—No, sir.