

582. That is, after it was cooked?—Yes, after it was cooked; and I can safely say there was not 1 lb. of meat for each man, and some of it was not fit for food. Corned beef in some cases was served out for the men on account of there not being enough of the other, and even then there was not enough. As for the jam served out, I have seen Quartermaster Horne with rhubarb-jam which he would not give to the troops, it was so bad. I saw it because it was served out from our tables. He was serving out butter too, and there was no fault to be found with it, but some of the jam was so bad he would not give it. He said he would report it, but whether it was reported or not I do not know. Then, we got coffee in the morning from the boiler which had been made overnight, and there were very few at my table who would touch the coffee. It was the same with the tea, because after dinner they used the boiler in which the meat had been boiled, and the tea for the evening was made in it. Then, the fish that was served out to the men was put on the deck close to one of the men's latrines. It was about 3 ft. from the latrine, and no one would touch it. There was a grating under some of the fish and no grating at all under the rest. This fish was in sacks, and when there was room it was put on the grating, but if there was no room it was put on the deck. Then, these latrines in the evening got blocked up, and as the ship rolled the contents were washed round the fish. We also had dogs on board, and I have seen them making water on the fish. That same fish, after being there for two or three days, was sent to the troops' galley and served out to the men. When the men got the fish from the troops' galley they did not care to eat it, and the South Island men went at once and complained about it. They had to eat the fish or else go without it. Then, the A squad men of the Eighth were on the troop-deck, and there was no room to clean the deck where the men were standing about. They were in the place where the hospital was, and the men who went to see the doctor had to go through the A squad to get to the hospital. They were standing in such numbers we could not get room to wash up the deck. These were men who were going to see the doctor, and they were sitting on the tables and seats and they were spitting about the deck, and just where we wanted to clean it they were standing about. Steps were taken to have this prevented by putting canvas up, but when we arrived at Albany the canvas was pulled down, and we had to use blankets so as to keep the sick away from our tables. They had pulled down the canvas.

583. Was this all before you got to Albany?—Yes.

584. What next?—I should certainly say there was not enough space for the men to walk about on deck. There was very little water for washing, and when the water was turned on there was always such a rush to get a wash that many could not get one because the water was turned off before they could get there. I do not think there is anything else I can think of.

585. What was your occupation before going into the contingent?—A carpenter.

586. You say there were enough hooks for the sergeants but not for the men. How many men were there in A squadron?—I could not tell you.

587. About a hundred?—About a hundred.

588. Out of a hundred how many had space to hang their hammocks?—They were lying on the tables and on the deck.

589. They had no hooks?—I could see there were not enough hooks.

590. Any hooks unoccupied?—I could not say.

591. You were sixteen men in mess: out of those how many had no hooks?—Three or four.

592. You say the blankets were dirty?—Some of them were clean, and some of them were very dirty.

593. Your own?—Mine were dirty, but I thought I had better not say anything about it. I had the blankets and would have to use them.

594. When you say "dirty," what do you mean—dragged on the deck, or what?—They had been used before.

595. Were they worn-out blankets?—No.

596. How were they served out?—In twos.

597. Were they rolled blankets, or were they lying about in a heap?—They were lying in a heap.

598. Was there any other cause for the deck being wet except the washing-up water?—No, except a drop of rain now and then.

599. What deck were you on?—It was a single deck by itself.

600. Any troops below you?—No; just below was the armoury.

601. Was there any other reason for the deck being wet besides the washing-water?—Just when we washed the deck ourselves.

602. Did any of the men pump-ship in the scuppers?—No.

603. You never heard it talked about?—No.

604. How often did it happen that you got the salt water down?—Once or twice, and in some cases when we left the portholes open it came in there.

605. As a rule it did not come down?—No.

606. You did not see the meat as it came from the refrigerator?—No.

607. What was it like when it came from the cookhouse?—It was black.

608. Was this fresh beef or salt beef?—Fresh beef.

609. What makes you think there was not 1 lb. of meat served out to each man?—By the way in which it was served out; and when it was cut up, two or three of the men would have to go without meat.

610. Any meat for breakfast?—We got a little stew.

611. What did it consist of?—Potatoes and a bit of meat, and sometimes you might have a speck of vegetables; that is all.

612. For dinner?—We had meat.

613. And for tea did you have meat?—Yes.