

889. Fourteen basins for five hundred men?—Yes; and we had the North Island men often down.

890. Your principal complaint is that the water was turned off too soon to enable the men to have a wash. Could you get a wash at another time in the day?—I went two or three times, and I could not, unless I went before breakfast.

891. Did you ever see men washing after 8 o'clock?—Only with the water they could get out of the water-tap.

892. Do you know there was an order they could wash after that hour?—I did not know there was an order. We used to get our meals from the saloon galley by paying for them.

893. Did you buy meals for yourself?—I had to.

894. Was that general amongst the men?—Yes. We used to get coffee there at night.

895. Did you buy it from the seamen?—At the first part of the voyage we did; but gave that up, and got it from the cooks.

896. Do you think the men had sufficient meat issued to them?—I think there was sufficient in that way.

897. If the quality was all right, and the cooking all right, and the quantity all right, then what was there to complain about?—There was only once that it was short, and if we complained to the officer of the day we got a little more.

898. We can take it that the men had enough food?—Yes. The bread was a little short, but you could make it up.

899. Always plenty of biscuits?—Yes.

900. And they could help themselves?—Yes.

901. *The Chairman.*] Could you give us any idea of how many bought food every day from the cooks?—I could not say.

902. Twenty?—More than that.

903. Fifty?—Between fifty and a hundred.

904. All the voyage?—Yes, from the start.

905. What did you pay for a meal?—A shilling.

906. Then the cooks would get £4 or £5 a day?—More than that, because they could make cakes and charge extra for them.

907. What did you pay for a cake?—For the smaller ones I paid 6d.

908. It was a sort of regular confectioner's shop?—It was only at certain times that you could get anything there, chiefly at night.

909. Why did you not buy a singlet and shirt for yourself?—Because I had no money.

910. How long were you at Newcastle?—About three days.

911. Could you not have bought them?—I had no money till we got to Newcastle, but we left next morning and I never went into the town.

912. *Colonel Davies.*] You were in South Africa about six weeks?—Yes.

913. Where did you enlist, in South Africa or in New Zealand?—In New Zealand.

914. *Captain Lewin.*] When you were at Albany did you get served out with a dungaree frock and singlet?—No.

915. Did you ever ask the quartermaster for anything?—I went to our own quartermaster, and he said he could not get anything for me.

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FRIDAY, 22ND AUGUST, 1902.

Captain HECKLER sworn and examined. (No. 22.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your name, please?—Henry Thackeray Heckler.

2. To what contingent did you belong?—I belonged to the Fourth previously, sir, and the Seventh, and went back with the Tenth.

3. Did you return in the troopship "Britannic"?—Yes, sir.

4. What rank were you?—Captain, sir.

5. Did you come voluntarily before the Commission?—Yes, sir; knowing that some of my men were giving evidence, I volunteered.

6. What troop did your command?—Altogether, eighty-six men of the Tenth. We were sent for to fill up the boat.

7. It will be best if you make any statement you choose to the Commission as to the comfort on board, or the lack of comfort, and conveniences generally?—Well, in the first place, measles and influenza were amongst my men before we left Newcastle—amongst the Tenth. In my own squadron I had as many as twenty-two on the sick-list at one time, principally through measles and influenza. This was at Newcastle. My men came away short of clothing. We only had half an hour's notice to entrain, and our kits were stationed at Maritzburg. We could not get our kits. I spoke to the R. S. O. at Maritzburg about our kits, but we could not get them. They are coming on, I believe, by the "Montrose." I reported my men short of clothing to the quartermaster, Captain Lewin, and he spoke to Colonel Davies about it, with the result that Colonel Davies advised me to get them some clothes at Albany. They got a pair of socks, a jersey, and a pair of slat trousers, so that they could wash their others. During the voyage, as orderly officer, I inspected the rations—all issues of rations. Only on one occasion did I complain—about the tea. There was not sufficient sugar in it. I tasted the tea myself, and I asked the cook's man to put more sugar in it, which he did, I believe. The only complaint I had from my men was one day they came to me with a leg of mutton. It was not quite cooked. That is the only complaint I had from my men. I may say that some of the men were not fair to their officers in this way: they would not complain to their own officers.