

134. Who gave you permission?—Dr. Rogers.

135. Was there always a smell at the hospital?—Not for the first two days. I was pretty bad then. When I was getting better I noticed it.

136. Did you not notice there was a bad smell when the men had to use bed-pans?—I should say the hospital authorities could not help it, sir.

137. *Captain Lewin.*] Did you use the same blankets all the time on board the ship?—Yes, sir. I put a brand on them, and put a brand on my hammock.

138. *Mr. McNab.*] Do you remember if your own accommodation before you went into the hospital was fresher than the hospital? Were the surroundings pleasanter than in the hospital?—I rather liked where I was. It was close to a porthole, and near to a windsail, where there was plenty of air.

139. Were your quarters that you were in fresher and sweeter than the hospital?—I should say they were. There were occasional times when they had to shut the portholes, and it would be a bit stuffy.

140. So you went from your own fresh quarters into quarters that were not so fresh in the hospital, and after you had been two days in the hospital you began then to detect a smell?—Yes, sir.

141. Then, you did not detect it when you went from your own fresh quarters at first?—I was pretty bad. I was suffering with my back, and I was too ill to notice anything for the first two or three days when in hospital.

142. *Colonel Davies.*] You state that you caught cold in the hospital through the draught?—Yes, sir.

143. In the hospital?—Yes, sir; it was about the second day I was in. I was all right until then.

144. And then you say that you slept near a porthole and a windsail?—Yes; but the draught used to come over to my feet, not to my head. I was just inside the hospital-door, and the draught used to come in.

145. You think you caught the cold in the hospital?—I never had a cold until I went into the hospital. It was caught about three days after I went in.

146. *The Chairman.*] Do you know what was the matter with your back?—I ricked it. I fell and they carried me down to the hospital.

147. Were the doctors attentive?—Yes, sir.

148. You had no fault to find with their attention?—No, sir.

Sergeant GEORGE E. BARNES sworn and examined. (No. 31.)

149. *Mr. McNab.*] What is your name in full?—George Ernest Barnes.

150. Your rank?—Sergeant.

151. What squadron?—H squadron.

152. You desired to give evidence before the Commission regarding the food and accommodation and other things on board the "Britannic," did you not?—Yes, sir.

153. The Commission would be pleased if you would make a statement embodying the matters you wish to bring before them, and then perhaps we will ask you a few questions?—Regarding the food and accommodation, and promenading and troopers' exercise—

154. You may state your complaint about the food and accommodation first?—Well, I am prepared to answer any questions. I have no complaint to make.

155. What, then, is your opinion about the food and accommodation?—Well, there is no doubt that sometimes the meat was bad and the potatoes were bad; on two or three occasions they were not eatable. But that is on a few occasions; on other occasions it was right enough.

156. When the food was not eatable were complaints made to the officers?—Yes; complaints were made to the officers of the day.

157. Did you ever make any complaint?—No, sir. Of course, in the sergeants' mess we might have got a little better than the rest, although when they got bad meat we got bad meat too; it was the same meat.

158. Did your mess make any complaint at any time?—Not the sergeants' mess.

159. Were you present when any of the men made complaint?—I was orderly sergeant, and heard three complaints made.

160. Do you remember your orderly officer?—Well, no, I could not recall him to mind just at present.

161. Was it before you came to Albany?—Yes, it was, because I was not orderly sergeant afterwards.

162. What was the nature of these complaints?—One was about the tea, and another was about the meat, and another as to the shortness of fish. Fish and tea were issued in the mornings. There was no tea for dinner. I might say the tea was always bad—it was never good. It was always hardly drinkable.

163. These complaints regarding the three things: did the officer take any steps?—Yes.

164. What did he do?—He sent the table orderly up to get more fish in place of it.

165. Regarding the other matters, what did he do?—As for the meat and potatoes, I could not say. He put in a written order, I think, and it was supposed to be rectified; but not being orderly sergeant next day I could not say anything about it.

166. *The Chairman.*] Did he put in a written order for more food?—Yes; for more potatoes and for the meat being bad. He told me that he would put it in the order.

167. *Mr. McNab.*] You state the tea was always bad: what was wrong with it?—I think it was the fault of the cooks, because they used to stew it. It was never made properly. They used to have it made three or four hours before it was used, and whether they mixed the old tea with the fresh I could not say. There were many times I would not drink it. The coffee was always good. You could always get a good drink in the morning.