

the men that I was prepared to see that any just complaints were dealt with, but that they well knew that that was not the way to behave, and told them to go down off that deck, which they immediately did, after a small attempt at a cheer. The officer commanding the Australians said he was sorry for what had happened, and the next morning, on my inspection, the two Australian men came to me voluntarily and begged my pardon, saying they had not intended to come to me, but they were looking for their own officer, &c., and that the other men followed "for a lark," on which I freely forgave them and asked if they were satisfied now. They said they were quite satisfied, and I never had to complain again.

In conclusion, I beg to inform you that all the Eighth Contingent were fully paid up before arrival in Wellington, and cheques prepared on board for the war gratuities and leave pay. Also discharges and railway and steamer passes were prepared on board, so that there need be no delay on arrival.

I have, &c.,

R. H. DAVIES, Colonel,
O.C. Troops, H.M. Transport "Britannic."

The PRINCIPAL MEDICAL OFFICER to the OFFICER COMMANDING, H.M. Transport "Britannic."
5th August, 1902.

SIR,— I have the honour to report as follows on the hospital and sick men on board the troopship "Britannic":—

As regards the hospital staff, it was thoroughly efficient, and the men were well attended to. They consisted of three medical officers in addition to myself, four dispensers, a hospital sergeant, and three hospital orderlies. In addition to this, two orderlies were told off as mess orderlies, and three men attended alternately from each regiment to clean up the wards.

There were thirty-two beds, some of them swing-cots, and as soon as these became full additional accommodation was made in the adjoining troop-deck: part of it was barricaded off and ten more cots erected. The accommodation in hospital was ample till the day before we landed, when I had to place some of the men in hammocks for one night.

The food was good, and plenty of it; and I had not the slightest trouble in obtaining anything extra. The chief steward did everything in his power to assist me.

The night we came alongside the wharf Surgeon-Captain Eccles took charge, and I went down the following morning early to personally attend to the disembarkation of the men. The Hospital authorities would only admit ten, so I picked out the worst cases and put them in cabs and the only available ambulance-van. Every man had a glass of brandy given to him before leaving the boat. The remaining cases were then put on the tug alongside and taken over to Somes Island, attended by Dr. Purdy.

The average daily number of men in hospital till we arrived at Melbourne was about fifteen. After that measles rapidly spread, and in two days every bed was full; and I then had the ten additional cots erected. Two Australian nurses came with us as far as Melbourne, but not on duty, though they offered to assist me at any time. However, the illness was easily coped with by the ordinary hospital staff as far as Melbourne, so that I did not consider it necessary to call in their services. The chief illness on board at first was pneumonia, this being due, in my opinion, to men leaving a dry climate and open-air life and then coming rather suddenly into a damp and cold latitude. The measles were contracted in South Africa, but till I arrived in Melbourne only about three cases were treated.

In conclusion, I may say that I am perfectly satisfied with the way the whole of the medical and hospital staff worked for the good of the patients.

I am, &c.,

WALTER R. PEARLESS, P.M.O.,
Major, 8th N.Z.M.R.

Officer Commanding, Eighth New Zealand Mounted Rifles.

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