

65. And he made no complaints?—No.

66. Do you believe that the blankets were clean when they were issued?—As far as I know, they were. I have no reason to believe otherwise.

67. Did you ever hear of the ship being completely lousy—the bedding and the bunks?—No.

68. You did not hear it in South Africa as one of the things that happen?—Never, when they were embarking.

69. How soon after leaving Durban did you first hear of the blankets being lousy?—I never heard of the blankets being lousy.

70. It was never reported to you that they were lousy?—No.

71. If they had been lousy, could means have been taken to clean them?—Yes, I believe so; but if all the blankets were lousy it would be a very different affair. But I have no experience of that sort of thing.

72. Could they have been cleaned by placing them on a steam chest, or by disinfectants of any kind, or was it practically impossible?—Well, if I had heard they were lousy I would certainly have done my utmost to see that they were cleaned, but I never received any report that they were lousy.

73. Then, you are unable to give us any information as to whether they were very lousy?—I do not know that they were at all.

74. You never heard they were lousy, and there were no steps ordered by you or suggested to you for cleaning them?—I never heard the thing raised at all.

75. Now as to the matter of keeping 'tween decks clean, what course was adopted?—Fatigues were detailed every morning to attend to this. I had the two New Zealand regiments and an Australian detachment on board, and they were detailed by the officers commanding.

76. Could you give us the names of these officers?—Lieut.-Colonel Chaytor; Captain Polson, D.S.O.; and Major Haytor.

77. Do you know what methods were taken by the fatigue parties to keep the decks clean?—The decks were washed pretty frequently and sanded. They were not washed every day. We found it not advisable to wash daily the 'tween decks, as coming back in winter weather they did not dry quickly.

78. But in your opinion they were sufficiently scrubbed and attended to?—Yes, and kept very clean.

79. Were they holystoned, or scrubbed with sand?—They were never holystoned once. They were scrubbed and rubbed over with mops, and then gone over with a squeegee. But we did not do this more than was necessary because of the cold weather, but they were perfectly clean.

80. You are satisfied that every effort was taken on board ship to keep her in a thoroughly clean condition?—Quite satisfied.

81. You believe that it resulted in the ship being kept clean?—I am quite satisfied that the ship was clean.

82. In the matter of accommodation for the men, did they have proper messing-tables?—Yes, sir.

83. Sufficient to seat everybody?—Yes.

84. Were they supplied with spoons, forks, &c., by the ship?—Yes.

85. And they were in sufficient quantity?—Yes.

86. You had no complaints about this?—No.

87. What was the dietary scale for the soldiers on board the transport?—I am sorry that I have not got it. The captain of the ship has the transport regulations with him. He gave me a bill of fare of the rations that the troops were getting, and the rations that were given were very greatly in excess of the transport regulations.

88. Could you procure the dietary scale, do you think?—Only from the ship. I do not know of any in New Zealand.

89. Could you get this?—No, unless we can get hold of an old one, and I do not know that it would apply to the present time.

90. Was there any difference in theory, at any rate, between the rations supplied to colonial and Imperial soldiers?—I could not say.

91. But, in any case, I understand that you and your men were Imperial soldiers, and not colonial soldiers?—Yes; we were paid by the Imperial Government.

92. Did the men get the regulation ration?—I know the men got a great deal more than the regulation ration supplied to the Imperial soldier. For instance, I could mention one thing that I remember of the difference between the bill of fare and in the transport regulations. In the transport regulations men get fresh bread twice a week, on the troopship they got fresh bread every day and an unlimited supply of biscuits.

93. Have you any list of what rations were supplied daily?—No; I am sorry I have not the bill of fare.

94. Was there a variety of rations?—Oh, yes.

95. Can you give us at all from memory what the men received in the way of dietary?—They had boiled mutton and roast beef. They had sufficient meat all the time. They had a certain amount of tinned meat, but they had frozen meat, I think, every day.

96. What had they for breakfast?—I am afraid I cannot remember that; but you will be able to get that from the quartermaster exactly.

97. Was there an officer present each day at the issue of rations?—Yes, several. The details of duties was posted in my brigade office on board, but there were several orders that applied. In connection with the issue of rations, I found that the regiments were interfering with one another to get to the galley, so I issued the following to avoid confusion: "To avoid confusion in future the bugle-calls for the troops' breakfast, dinner, and tea will be sounded as follows: At 6.50 a.m.,