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A DAY ON BOARD A TRANSPORT.

WITH THE BENDIGO AND NORTHERN DISTRICT BOYS.

By our Special Correspondent, Alan N. Hyett, LL.B.

Life on board is supposed to begin each morning at reveille, that is at 6 a.m., but long before that some of the men, formerly "cockies" are up and moving about, generally making a nuisance of themselves. So soon as reveille blows and the lights are switched on each man has to take down roll, and stow his hammock. This is done in quick time as by morning the air in our troop deck is not of the best and the sooner we get on deck the better. After a wash we are ready for breakfast. A week's respite was given us to get over our sea sickness. On the second day out one of the boys was heard to remark, as he was gazing over the stern of the ship, that if Moses would only open up the sea he would walk every inch of the way to Bendigo. Drill now occupies our time from 9 a.m. until noon, also for two hours after dinner. There is not much deck space, but we make the most of what we have. Physical jerks keep us fit and the rest of the time is occupied with rifle exercises, semaphore signalling and lecturettes. The canteen is open at certain hours and it contains a fair assortment of things. There is always a crowd round the doors and you have to take your turn in the queue. Only a certain amount is brought up from the hold each day. The drinks and tinned fruit are usually sold out long before the canteen is closed. Then we have the inevitable bottle-oh. He stands outside the canteen ready with a corkscrew to open your bottle and also to collect it when empty. Today two "bottle-ohs" they usually work in pairs, collected 38 dozen bottles, and as they get 1/ a dozen for returns it is rather a profitable business. Dinner is at noon, the meat, and in fact the whole food, has been very good. Bully beef has been issued several times and the men seem to like it although it is a bit salty. For recreation after drill we have boxing gloves, skipping ropes and quoits. We had a medicine ball and it was first favourite but unfortunately it was thrown overboard. The band plays every evening on No. 3 hatch and generally livens things up. With the help of a good gramophone and a game or two of cards the evenings rapidly pass and before we know where we are, it is time to sling our hammocks and prepare for bed. At 9 p.m. "Lights Out" is blown, and thus ends a day on board.