

Our visit to Cape Town, in most cases, was not so happy, still we managed a couple of visits ashore during the week that we were there, and saw many historic places. It was while we were nearing Cape Town that we first heard the news of the death of Lord Kitchener. It stunned us, of course we all considered it at first a rumor, but the wireless soon confirmed the news.

In Table Bay we were joined by three other Australian Transports, the "Beltana," "Benalla," and "Marathon" and we left Table Bay together, H.M.S. "Kent" escorting us, and we had again to settle down to another phase of the voyage. As we went north of the African coast the heat gradually grew worse, and most fellows slept on deck, anywhere would do for a "possy." The nights began to get long on account of the "no lights on deck" order, and most went below to play cards or yarn. After Durban and The Cape, amateur photographers almost took charge of the ship. In every dark corner would be some enthusiast straining his eyes over a developing dish. It was during these hot days and nights in the tropics that one of the holds developed a decided stench. No one could discover the cause, though the "stink" was pretty well located. The only trouble was that it could not be confined to its one place, it permeated the hold and at times became unbearable. Erudite Orderly Corporals and Orderly Sergeants (walking encyclopaedia) profoundly stated their opinions, but still the smell remained. The Captain declared it was only bilgewater. The Doctor had disinfectants poured down in buckets full. Some days it was not so bad, and then suddenly it was as if all the smells from all the slaughter houses and boiling down works in the world were concentrated between decks. Upon reaching England the great mystery was solved. The stale bilge was found to be a stale little puppy, some forgotten mascot no doubt.

The submarine alarms now occupied some of our time. Large guards were posted, and at last it was decided that every man should wear a life belt. It was at this stage of our life as a Brigade that "The Yandoo" first saw light. From the first it was popular, and the first editions were much too few in number, men actually scrambled for a copy, only to read perhaps some little part "blowing them up."

We called at the French Naval Base, Dakar, where the niggers amused us diving for coins, but as we were not allowed ashore, our interest in the place was not particularly keen. At Dakar the "Kent" left us and went back to Cape Town, and H.M.S. "Swiftsure" accompanied us for the rest of the voyage.

On Sunday morning, 11th. July, we saw first the green shores of Cornwall, then of Devon, and later entered Plymouth Harbour. We had been sixty three days on board, with only a couple of days on shore to stretch our legs. It says a lot for the equable temperament of the Australian for his innate sense of humor and his power of adapting himself to any circumstances, that during the whole of that time, foul weather or fine, cold or hot, bad food or good, two thousand troops crowded aboard, there was never a fight, never a disturbance, nay, hardly so much as a petty quarrel.



Fritz's Vandalism on the Fruit Trees and Gardens. Vaulx, Somme, France.