

Is that the word - "dehusked" as applied to rice.

We had now rations for weeks and the chaps had now got the state that every time one stood up everything went black for a while. It was felt that something must be done as hippo meat, unga and rice was not altogether a suitable diet for men putting up with the conditions that we had to. Apart from starving we were suffering from bouts of fever and here we lost our Sgt. Major du Toit through Black Water. This I believe is the result of constant attacks of Malaria. Our doctor, I believe said he would be duty bound to put many of the chaps off duty unless something was done. From some where they unearthed some dog biscuits, those hard square tiles, and we were issued with four each. I, as did most of the chaps got stuck in and ate at least three straight away. I know I kept one until the morning and sorry I was too as on breaking it I found it alive with little white maggots. Well we made the best of them, boiling them gogos and all and they tasted a bit musty but did not kill. It is said what does not kill fattens.

A few days later the Indians and West African natives turned up under their General Shepard who never moved unless there was food for his troops all the time. Perhaps he got rid of some of his biscuits as his Indians do not eat meat. THE Nigerian troops wore Khaki Uniforms with shorts and green jelly bag caps. They all certainly looked very well and fit and ready for the fray and after a few days drove the enemy out with cold steel. We certainly were not in a fit state to have carried out a bayonet charge.

We were now taken back to Morogora in mule drawn vehicles, a trip which took two days. Our horses had of course by this time all died. During the stop on the first day on that long uphill road, the Colonel told us that he had just received a message to say that a number of the S.A. Troops were to be repatriated. There was great speculation as to the number and when this was to take place.

On arrival in Morogora we were put under canvas, the first we had since Arusha, issued with full rations and given a few shillings to spend as there were a few shops open and even a restaurant. After a week we were paraded as probably the authorities wanted to see how fit we now were. It was as a matter of fact that as, the next trip was to be a long one down to Iringa, about 150 miles, they wanted to see how many were fit for this next move. The move was to join up with General Northey who was making his way from Northern Rhodesia. Well we were all medically examined and classified, many being unfit. When it came to my turn the doctor said I was fit and asked what I thought about going on for apparently if you did not sound too keen he failed you. For the feeling was, I think, what is the good of keeping a man who is no longer keen. I said "All I want is a good pair of boots as these are finished. A new overcoat and a good horse". He made a note and sure enough I was well equipped in a very short time.

However, as of the 3rd. Horse there were only about a hundred or so left, we were drafted into the 4th. under Colonel Denys Reitz, who had been our enemy during the Anglo Boer War and during which he was taken prisoner and sent to Ceylon. He vowed he would never return to South Africa and it was only after Mrs Smuts had written to him and said "If South Africa is good enough for the General and myself then it is good enough for you. To that he returned. He later commanded an Imperial Unit - Scottish - in France.

I was now promoted to the rank of Corporal.

How different was the difference with regard to rations in the first war compared with those of the second, where we received fresh meat and bread every day in the line.

During the whole of my service in East Africa I received one letter and wrote one on a piece of cardboard. This my Mother received and kept for years.

Eventually, we were remounted and equipped and set off for Kilosa about 300 strong under Colonel Deneys Reitz.

We did not go as far as Kilosa for before reaching there we turned

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