

former. After tea in the evenings while at anchor, we organised rat hunts. (There was no cargo work at night in those days as a rule.) Two of us had .22 Winchester rifles, and with them we accounted for a good many rats, although with a certain amount of danger to our shipmates due to ricocheting bullets. Cockroaches were more difficult to deal with, but we did manage to keep their numbers down a bit by trapping them. The method was this. A small amount of dry coffee was placed in a glass or a tin, and the inside of it was greased. Cockroaches are fond of coffee and they would get into the glass and because of the grease would be unable to climb out again. Some mornings there would be half a glass full in each of our cabins. They were emptied over the side and the trap reset. Among other annoyances on this voyage was the discovery one day that there was a fire in one of the coal bunkers, and a great deal of coal had to be shifted to get at it. After a few days we managed to put the fire out. Later, we ran aground on some rock when entering one of the anchorages. Fortunately, the *Sabine* had a bar keel, and this probably saved her from being holed. She came off quite easily under her own power.

"The Coast" was an unhealthy place in those days. It had been known as the "White Man's Grave". In our ship's company nearly all hands, at one time or another, were down with malaria.

When discharging was finished we loaded a full cargo of mahogany logs. These were rough squared and weighed from about two to four tons each. The logs were towed off from the shore in groups of about half a dozen, and were made fast alongside. We in the ship had to do the rest; hoisting them aboard and dragging them into position in the holds, with the ship rolling in the swell. We were lucky to manage it without any casualties.

This loading, at two or three places, took us about three weeks (if memory serves, which it sometimes does), and we thought it would take a similar time getting them out at our destination, which was New York. In the event the whole lot was discharged in about 48 hours, much to our disgust. From New York we returned to West Africa with a partly general cargo, but mainly case oil, which we discharged all along the coast as before. Then we loaded ground-nuts which we delivered safely at Hull in May, 1915, without any interference by the enemy.

