

taken by the steamers and the one taken by sailing vessels, consequently could not expect relief from either. We trusted Captain Harvey more implicitly than ever, but we had nothing to eat but rice, pork, and occasionally a small allowance of flour, and the water we caught during the shower had begun to work in the tanks. After the water had been used out of the tanks they had carelessly been left open so that rats had gotten into them, and as they could not get out they had died there. There were thousands of rats on board burrowing among the coals in the hold, so the water we were compelled to use for cooking was filled with decomposed rats until it became nearly as white as milk. Of course the water was strained before using, but the fact could not be disguised that we were consuming dead rats. We called it "rat soup," and so great was our hunger we relished it.

The captain estimated that it would take us fifteen days to reach a port, so one-fifteenth of the water on board was issued each day for five days. We were still fifteen days from port, so water was again diminished and all given to the mess instead of using a part for cooking, as had been done before, which gave us one quart each. Rice was dealt out without stint and we abandoned the use of pork, as the salt it contained increased our thirst. What little flour was left was saved for extreme occasions, so rice was our only food, and we ground it in a coffee mill, which was kept running from daylight until dark. This meal, or flour, we dampened with salt water and baked it on a griddle, as our mothers baked buckwheat cakes. The rice was not cooked, simply crusted enough to hold together if we ate it while it was hot. Thus we lived for thirteen days, eight of which just before we landed we had but one-half pint of water each per day. The sick list grew rapidly. A lady with three children suffered the most, for the children were too young to understand why they could not have all the water they wanted, and cried from morning until night, which only tended to increase their thirst. Mr. Knox had been seasick all the way and could neither eat nor drink but little, so he and one or two others divided their ration of water with the children, while death stared us in the face. Self-preservation became the object of our lives; hope had dwindled to a very small point, and we were not certain that we had ground for any. Sixty men were added to the sick list, and the day before we made land the steward reported but two quarts of water per person left. During the night a strong wind sprang up and the old ship was tearing through the water more rapidly than before, we hoped toward shore. At daylight everybody who could get there was on deck looking for land; none in sight. The captain was on deck with his glass and seemed undecided what to do, for the course of the boat had been changed several times since daylight. We learned later that his chart of the coast was an old one and incorrect. Soon he ordered the mate to launch a rowboat; six sailors and the mate got into it and pulled away from the ship.

There was a dense fog at the time, which was soon dispelled by the sun, and land was in sight. The change from desperation to a certainty of relief was instantaneous. The sick became strong and the strong weak, while all shed tears of delight. It was not long before we saw the boat returning, and as she drew near, the mate held a bucket to his mouth and drank from it. All restraint was cast aside and everyone cheered to the extent of his ability. The sailors reported a good harbor and plenty of water, and in less than an hour we had cast anchor in the little harbor