Mother dear,

We're here as of after so many months of anxious waiting, just when we came over, but believe me it was some trip. Had about twelve hours notice in which to prepare, and believe me, we made some preparations too. I got a hair cut, and clean shave on the night before. Rolled up my field equipment, and everything so readier for an early start. However, we had breakfast at the usual time, next morning, and after a few final touches, ate an early dinner, drew our traveling rations, and slung packs.

And oh what packs! Gee, mine was not quite as heavy as myself, but even without the odds, it came near getting the best of me. When the whistle blew, the band came out
to give us a send off. Good band too!
Among the numbers played, was the old stand by "Our Director." Right away, I was back behind the old W. O. F. B., swinging along with the Cadets. You can't imagine how that music tended to lighten our burden.
We had quite a hike, and were brought to our senses when the band would stop, and the pack would start tugging away at those shoulder straps. Don't know just how far we had to hike, but it seemed miles to me. A short ride on the railroad brought us to our port of debarkation, and we were dumped out on the dock. No one waited for us this time, on our second overseas voyage. Instead, we had a similar to those in
It seems that we were holding up the trip, for as soon as we got aboard and had our life belts adjusted, the boat moved out, and slowly, but steadily, into a heavy fog, slipped the faint
AMERICAN RED CROSS.

out line of Merry England. "Whit" and I once more together, sat on the very extreme stern and kicked our heels over the railing at casual passing craft until darkness and fog completely enveloped them. Then I went below and ate part of my ration. Savingsome, for another time. When I came out on deck again, it was so dark that I could not locate "Whit", so went up forward, and joined another party. All lights were out, on deck, and the boat was beginning to roll so that strolling about was quite a problem. Once more, we went below and this time I met Bob Lawson, who by some stroke of good fortune, (and eight shillings) had come into possession of a box of good chocolates. We squatted down, on the floor, deck, I should say, and proceeded to put them away. They were fine and before long, we were both snoozing soundly, with the back part of our life belt, for a pillow.
Something woke me up suddenly, maybe it was a passing foot, but I don't know and I thought of my air fellow. Right away, I started to dig it out of my pack when the corporal of the guard spied me and asked to take place of one of the boys who was seasick. I went, and was posted at the top of the companion way, to keep a passage open. Talk about your fun? Holy screeches! I suppose it was mean to laugh, but I had to.

The way some of those "land hoppers" came up the stairs was a joke. One hand over their mouth, and the other on their rail, three steps at a time, was the average. For two hours and a half, I helped, and fanned them out, as the case required. Sometimes that boat was on one side, then on the other, (as was I) see! but she did pitch. When I was relieved, I went out on the bow for a little rest. It was too stuffy, down on our deck. Anyway, when I thought the worst was over, I picked a coil of rope, pretty well forward and dropped it in for a few minutes. Just as I was
beginning to saw wood, we caught a big one. Some of the boys around got wet, but I just caught a little spray. We all laughed, and settled back, thinking that it was just a stray one. No one said anything we were all thinking. Suddenly a slight one rolled over and we got some more. At this, someone suggested that we move, but I said no, let's wait and see if we get another. It was great, laying up there. One minute you would be almost standing on your feet, and next, on your head. Finally she dipped deep into a big roller, and good might, we got all we wanted, below to throw out. Booh! but some of those boys were sick. One fellow said, "Oh! for a submarine," then ran for the rail. I took off my coat and belt and dropped on the deck and slept for an hour and a
half. Then a whistle blew and I woke up, looked at my watch, and found it not yet two o'clock. Well, I was not the only one who woke up, and there was quite a commotion. Further sleep was out of the question. The cooks were making coffee, and we started to get ready for breakfast. Now another guard got sick and I took his place. At about eight o'clock we were on the road. Three o'clock got dark heavily, this time and we had to halt for a rest. We had no band, but it did not matter. We were in France, and on our way further. We are now in a camp, for a while, not for long, I hope. For the quicker we get into action, the sooner we will be satisfied.

You will have to pardon the appearance of this letter for I am sitting on a real sand bag, writing on my knee.

With love and best wishes to all,

I remain Yours truly for

[Handwritten Signature]

[Handwritten Address]

2/1881-16

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