

TRANSCRIPTION

*Travelling with the 196th battalion from Halifax to Liverpool on the SS Southland*

Friday Nov. 10th 1916

Dear Mother: -

Well we are getting pretty close to Liverpool now. We expect to get in tomorrow morning. We sighted Ireland this morning at 11.15, the first land we had seen since last Wednesday night when it became dark. We left Halifax Wednesday afternoon at 4.55. on the Southland. There were these other transports with us, the Lapland, the Enforcer of Britain and I think the Corona. There was also an auxiliary cruiser. Say but I'm glad I got into the Red Cross when I did. We were put into second class cabins, four to a cabin. We got nice bunks with a mattress. There were two washbowls with running water & a writing table. It's the best place I've struck since leaving home. The only thing is, we get awful meals though they say we will get worse in England. They are not so bad now but at first some of the stuff was rotten. The rest of the battalion, except the bands & signalers & machine gun section are away down in the hold in an awful hole, one floor below steerage. They just go down there to sleep and some don't even sleep there but go up on deck or in the passageways up higher. I haven't been down there but they say it stinks & is infested with rats. I was sick for the first two days and my cough got a little worse & I wasn't feeling well even after I got over seasickness. & my cough is practically better now though & I'm feeling in pretty good shape. We had pretty rough weather for a couple of days but not too awfully bad. The waves broke over the decks several times & wetted some of its fellows but that's all. We picked up a destroyer each late last night & then our little fleet broke up and each boat beat it for Liverpool as hard as it could go. I expect we will get in last because we have got the slowest boat. Our boat was torpedoed once in the Mediterranean and had to have a new hull. I think we are pretty safe this trip though. We have had life boat drill pretty nearly every day. I haven't been getting up till about nine, this morning 11.30, and I have been sleeping a good part of the afternoon usually. I have just read two books since I left Wpg. And got started on another. Well I don't think there is any more news just now.

John