

The WESTERN SCOT

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AFLOAT AT LAST.

The train journey is over, the long, irksome ride across the continent complete and as we go to press H. M. Transport No. 2810 is on verge of the submarine area. What waits us? Quien sabe?

To continue where we left off last week on the morning of March the 30th. reveille was sounded at 5.30 and we awoke to find ourselves at the Broad street station, Ottawa. There the order of the day was a royal review and as the party on train No. 1 fell in on the spacious platform they found the parties from train No. 2 and from train No. 3 awaiting them. At this point we finally overtook the 61st. Battalion which left Winnipeg six hours ahead of us.

After an hours wait in the station the 61st. headed by their fine brass band, and led by Lieut. Col. Murray, moved off and we with our pipe band to the front, followed by our brass band, received the order to march from Lieut. Col. Ross a few minutes later.

The streets of the Capital City were at their worst owing to the effect of the early spring sunshine and the men deserve particular credit for the splendid showing they made under such circumstances.

After several blocks had been covered the route led us past the once stately pile of the parliament buildings now partially defaced by the ruins of the portion destroyed by fire recently. The reviewing stand was not far from here, immediately in front of the Chateau Laurier, from the steps of which the Royal Standard flew. H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught, attended by his staff, had taken post at this point and both battalions marched past smartly and soldierly, in column of route.

Continuing without a break the 61st. and the 67th. moved on to the Central Station where they were drawn up in battalion line for inspection. His Royal Highness made a very careful inspection questioning a large number of the men in the ranks. Afterwards he addressed the officers of both battalions, each of whom was presented to him and also to the prime minister, Sir Robert Borden, who attended.

In his address to the officers of the Western Scots, His Royal Highness said that the battalion had a name that connected it with the highest military ideals and gave it splendid precedents to follow. In the duties that would fall to the Western Scots in days to come His Royal Highness felt sure they would conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the high standard set by Canadians who had gone before.

At 11.30 a.m. the 67th. battalion re-entrained and continued towards Halifax. At Dorval there was a one hour wait

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and here we were transferred to the Grand Trunk Pacific tracks. We drew into Montreal at Turcot, in St. Henri, at 6.30, completing a tiresome seven hour journey that ordinarily occupies three hours.

On the morning of the 31st. we were detrained for a march at Mont Joli and at 5.40 p. m. we again detrained at Campbellton N. B. where we had a route march and received a very good reception.

Forenoon of the 1st. of April found us at Belmont N. S. where we had more time for exercise. Truro, N. S. was reached at 10.25 a. m. and we had a half hours route march. From Truro on we moved very slowly to Windsor Junction where we arrived at 2 o'clock to learn that the line ahead was blocked with troop trains. Here we waited four hours and then proceeded to Halifax, which we reached at 7.30. No. 1 train pulled into the docks at 9 o'clock and half an hour later we began to embark on H. M. Transport No. 2810 formerly of the White Star Line, one of the largest, finest ships in the world.

As the men filed on board they were met by ship guides and taken below to quarters. Coal lighters came along side and the big transport lay to until the morning of the 5 inst. At exactly 9.20 a. m. while the 67th. battalion was engaged in "physical jerks" on deck, the huge vessel got under way. There was no sound and no vibration to tell of her movement. But within an hour the shores of Nova Scotia had faded into the grey fog and the 67th. had left Canada behind.

Life on shipboard has been exceptionally pleasant. The daily routine consists of reveille at 6, breakfast for the men at 7.45, officers breakfast at 8.15, parade 8.45 until 9.35, lunch 1 o'clock, parade 1.45 o 2.35, mens' dinner 5 o'clock,

officers' dinner 7.15, lights out 9 o'clock. Owing to the large number of troops on board the decks are filled all day with men of the various units being exercised.

All ranks agree that the food supplied is plentiful and excellent and it says a great deal for the organization that such a large body of men is fed with such celerity.

Shortly after getting under way, the crew of the ship began getting the life boats swung out and overhauled and at the time of going to press, the boats are swung in readiness.

We have all had our alarms for practice and the various units can now take up their posts very smartly. All portholes are of course painted black and at night not a light shows. All ranks must at all times wear their life-belts, except when in bed, when the belts must be placed near the head.

For the first two days of the trip we were passing through dense fog, and we had little opportunity of seeing what the ship really could do.

The ship is in command of Captain Hayes, R. N. R., one of the most efficient masters afloat. His very presence inspires confidence. The various close calls of the ship on previous trooping expeditions are exciting. She seems to have had every kind of experience from being fired on by submarines to being bombarded by aeroplanes and from all of them she has emerged scathless.

In the Train Edition of The Scot reference was made to a dining car waiters allusion to the station of "Schreiber" as bearing a German name. In deference to one of our most respected officers we wish to say the name, so far as he is concerned at least goes back for several centuries in the County of Cork in that Little Bit of Heaven called Ireland.