

"On the steamer

12-20 June, 1918

Dear Father,

We didn't wait around long after all; the steamer pulled out at half past four. The wait was pretty beastly; lots of the Y.M. lapels got together and talked and put their names on their coat lapels and were sociable generally, but I was a little too near New York and a little too far from everybody in the world to want to talk. I hunted up my stateroom and got my bath hour fixed and found that the steamer chairs had given out so I had no abiding place and felt pretty forlorn. There was a transport next to us, loaded over the edge with troops and they sang to us and waved and shouted so it was pretty exciting. Another diversion was the variety of uniforms on deck. We have no Red Cross nurses, but a little of everything else. The Y/M's, both men and women, overrun everything else. I've not seen them all together so I've not an idea how many are on board but you can't move without stepping on their toes. There are K. of C.'s and A. W. H.'s and Y. W.'s and A. D. F.'s and Smith Units and lots of Red Crosses and A. F. F. F. W.'s (whatever that is) and Naval officers. French and American and all sorts of beautiful, detached men's – uniforms Swiss, Polish, French, and Italians. The owners aren't quite as detached but go about the deck jabbering various languages. The steerage is full of scarlet coats, Poles I have heard, who sing rather well.

As we swung out from the pier the troops cheered us and passing ferry boats waved and it was a grand hurrah boys, but I felt very small and too lumpy to get excited. If you hadn't been so grand all day, father dear, it would have been lots harder.

By and by someone came up and chattered and I had to jolly back so I felt better. My cabin is a beauty – the first one next the door on the promenade deck and so big that the three trunks and duffle bags are lost in it and there's still room to swing a full grown cat. Dr. Coffin and Mr. Sloan have its twin across the hall and when they talk loud we can overhear. I suppose that works both ways. We got the giggles last night over my life saving suit. It's a s funny as the dickens. I feel like an amateur bad-dream ghost in it. My roommates are two very young Canadian women, both married, one a widow. They are very pleasant people and I think we'll gee. We sat around in bed last night and ate Mellie's cookies and their apples and were friendly generally."e