

Dunbar Rowland

### LETTER FROM VAL YATES.

Queenstown, Ireland,  
November 28th, 1918

Dear Mr. Ferris:  
I received today the first lot of mail I have had since I have been on this side and among it were copies of all the Beacons since I left New York on September 15th, so you can imagine about how I feel tonight. I notice in several of the Beacons letters from a number of the boys over here, and from different army camps in the states, so thought I'd tell you a little about my trip across and what we are doing, as it is a little different from the experiences of the other boys. We got in yesterday from a five day's crews, and the first news we heard was that the censorship had been lifted, and you never heard such a yelling and carrying on in all your life as the boys did when they found out that their letters wouldn't have to be censored any more.

I left Newport September 5th, for Philadelphia and only stayed there five days before I was transferred to the New York receiving ship at New York City, where I spent three days before leaving the good old U. S. A. They gave us liberty two nights in New York, and believe me I had some time as one of the boys in our bunch lived there and could show us around over the city. He carried me out to supper and after supper got out his car and took around sight-seeing. I left New York Sept. 14th on the U. S. S. Culgoa, a supply ship, and after being on the water for 17 days arrived safely in Southampton, Eng. Wish you could have seen our convoy the day we pulled out. There were forty-five ships in all and they were all loaded with supplies for the army and navy boys on this side. The Culgoa had three million dollars worth of sugar, coffee, flour, meat, etc., on it and still it was a very small ship in comparison with some of the others in the convoy. We had six destroyers, five sea planes and two balloons with us the first day we pulled out, and they stayed with us until we got passed the danger zone.

Then we had other destroyers, planes and balloons to meet us about a thousand miles out of Southampton, and they succeeded in getting us safely over the war zone on this side. After staying at Southampton a week I was transferred to the Naval Training barracks here at Queenstown, which is a base for Uncle Sam's submarines and submarine destroyers. About two days later I was placed on one of the destroyers, the "Rowan," and am still with her. We have had lots of fun chasing the German subs. around in the Irish sea and the English channel, but I guess all our fun is over now as Germany has called in all of her sea-pirates, and most of our subs. are anchored here in the harbor. They are peculiar looking things and it is very interesting to go through one and see how it operates.

I don't know how many subs. there are here, but we have 25 destroyers and about fifty or more submarine chasers. Our work consists mostly of convoy duty. About five or six of the destroyers go out after a convoy at a time and convoy it through the war zone in to what ever port it is bound for and then we return to our base here at Queenstown. I've had some awful nice trips and seen lots of the world since I've been over here, as we take in all the English, Irish and French ports. I was in Liverpool last week, London week before last, and have made several trips to Brest, France. I don't think, though, we're getting anything we don't deserve for the destroyer life is a miserable one while out at sea, and that's where we spend most of our time.

I noticed in one of the papers tonight a letter from Davis St. John, and was amused at what he said about how the transport rocked. He said it came over on rocked. He said it "rocked like a tomato can on the water." Well, if he could make just one trip out at sea on a destroyer, he would think that a transport rode like Pullman car on the M. & O. All we do is rock. At times I have seen the Rowan go clear out of sight under water just as though we were a big fish. We don't dare do any work at sea or we would lose half our crew over-board. One can hardly eat and sleep, much less work. When meal time comes we all get a bowl and go up to the kitchen (or galley) as we call it, get our rations and then sit on the deck to eat. We don't dare set table at sea or the dishes would be scattered from one end of the ship to the other. We sleep in bunks instead of hammocks, and have to tie ourselves in to keep from being thrown on our heads. The other night

coming back from Portsmouth, Eng., the water was a little bit calmer than usual so I didn't tie myself in, and about an hour or two after I woke up and found myself on my back in the middle of the deck, so didn't take any more chances but crawled back in my bunk and tied myself in. It's an awful life to live but we fellows know its all for "The Flag" and the good old U. S. A. So we smile and make the best of it, hoping that it won't be long before we will all be back home again.

I've certainly seen some horrible things since I've been over here yet lots of interesting things too. You would be surprised to see some of the old men over here in uniform. They are so old they can hardly get about and lots of young kids that don't look to be more twelve or fourteen years old. There are some soldiers here at Queenstown, both English and American, but the ones I had reference to were some I saw at Brest, France and Southampton, Eng. Queenstown is a very disagreeable place itself and none of the boys like it here, but Liverpool is paradise. I never did see such weather as we have here in Queenstown. It's awful damp and rains all the time. I think it has rained every day since I've been here and I'm surprised we haven't all died with pneumonia. Am standing it pretty well myself, though, and the navy is certainly agreeing with me, as I have gained forty pounds since I enlisted.

We have a nice club here for the enlisted men and officers; moving pictures every night and lots of good music by the band. They have a dance hall here and several picture shows but they have all been closed up for the past two weeks on account of the flu. In fact, everything has been closed, including schools and churches. It's all over the country and around on most of the ships. Seventy-two men died on one ship coming over and there was quite a lot of it on the Culgoa, but I have escaped it so far.

From the papers it seems that the boys in the army are having quite a bit of luck in running into home boys but I haven't had any such luck since I left Tom Tyson and Gene Murphy at Newport Training station. I don't know of but one boy here that is even from Mississippi, and he is on the same ship with me. His name is Pruitt and he is from Columbus. We have a mutual acquaintance with a number of people around Macon and Brooksville and have some jolly good time talking about home and wishing we were back again.

The victims of the Lusitania are buried here in Queenstown and I was out to see their graves not long ago. I have some pictures of them to bring home and will show you when I get back. The pictures were taken as they were being covered up and instead of digging a separate grave for each one they just dug one big grave and piled them in on top of each other. We convoyed the Levithian the largest ship afloat into Liverpool about ten days ago and I wish you could have seen it. My! but it was immense. She had twelve thousand five hundred soldiers aboard besides a crew of two thousand five hundred men, and even at that wasn't filled up as she is built to carry eighteen thousand men. You just can't imagine such a boat as that. It's 250 feet long, has 13 decks and five elevators on it, and still some of the boys got sea sick coming on a boat like that. They don't know what sea sickness is until they take a trip on a destroyer. We have men on the Rowan that have been in the navy twelve and fifteen years that get sick every trip out. The last trip out I saw seven men "Feeding the Fish at One Time," officers included the same, as enlisted men. I've been fortunate enough not to get sick so far and hope I will continue to keep it up, for they all say its an awful feeling. Some of the boys stay out four and five days and don't eat a thing, but they sure make up for it when they get into port.

One boy on the Kimberly (another destroyer) was sent back to the states because he couldn't stand this kind of life. He would get sick every trip out and would have to have a doctor with him until he got back to port.

I wish you could come aboard one of these destroyers and look it over. They are certainly fitted up for submarines and they are wise in keeping out of our way. We have five 4-inch guns, three anti-aircraft guns twelve torpedo tubes, each eighteen feet long, quite a number of small guns and Fifty Depth Charges. So you see a sub. would have to be

pretty nery to bump into all of that. By the way a depth charge exploded on one of the destroyers the other day and blew the ship all to pieces. Happened not to kill any body, but ruined the ship. There was another bad accident not long ago. It was a foggy night and awful dark, two of our boats had the misfortune of running into each other and of all the wrecks I never saw the like. The Shaw was cut right half in two, just as if it had been done with a saw. It was hit right where the crew and officers were sleeping and twelve men including two officers were thrown out of their bunks into the water and have not been seen nor heard of yet. Lots of the others were injured and some died later. There is hardly a trip out to sea that some one don't have an accident, as we are not allowed to burn any light whatever after dark.

I guess you understand what I meant by the depth charges I spoke of above. They look like a tin can only they are much larger and are placed in a kind of gun that throws them out from the ship. They are filled with all kinds of powder and explosives and are dangerous things to have around. In case we sight a German sub. and see it submerge, we would follow it up and drop these depth charges over it, and then it would be good bye to it and all its crew. We passed one spot on the Irish coast last week where 300 ships have been sunk since the war first started. I felt a little bit shaky at first, but we got by all right.

I forgot to say that the speed of one these destroyers is 32 knots, which is about 36 miles an hour, so one can imagine what a collision it would cause when two of them run together.

I don't know just when we are coming back to the states. Some think we are coming real soon, and others say we will be here a year or more yet. Of course they don't know—that's just their opinion of it. I didn't realize I had written so much, but there is so much to tell it is hard to stop when one gets started. My best regards to all my friends, and with the season's best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all, I am

Very truly yours,  
VAL YATES.

### LETTER FROM LT. CHAS. JONES

Demevre, France, Nov. 25, 1918.

My Dear Father—The last letter I wrote to you was on the 9th instant telling you that I had been ordered back to the front. We started next morning at 2 o'clock. We marched twenty-five miles, reaching the front about 1 o'clock p. m. on the 10th. We took battle formation to go forward. I will never forget that afternoon and night of November 10th. Night found us in support of Company D of the 34th infantry and the side of a hill in the Bois de Grand Fontain, (Grand Fountain Woods) while the shells did not give us much to worry about it was so terribly wet and cold, and we suffered from hunger, having not had anything to eat since the night before, and had no blankets to cover with; strange though, there was not a murmur made; they were all MEN and determined to make the Hun pay for it all, and they did. The next day at 11 o'clock when the order came to cease firing, every man turned and looked at each other, wondering if it could be true. The German troops, only about fifty yards in front of us came out in the open with their full faces on, and one of them who spoke English, said, "Don't shoot us, Americans, we are going home." The last we saw of them they were going down the other side of the hill, singing and cheering. My company was ordered to fall back and take quarters in the woods about a mile to the rear. We remained there until Friday and then came here. We are training in the different infantry arms here, but the rumor is that our division, 7th, will be ordered soon to leave here for America. We can hardly wait for the time to come, since we were fortunate enough to get into the third army, and have a chance to go into Germany. We were very much disappointed for we were only a few miles from Metz, and wanted to go in and help occupy that city. I was on the firing line October 5th and remained to the last minute.

If you have a map of France, and will find St. Mihiel, Pont a Mousson, Thiaucourt, you can get an idea where we did our fighting. I have lots to tell you when I get home. Have some souvenirs which I will take home when I go. One is a very fine automatic pistol taken from a German machine gunner.

Well I am glad and happy the war is over, and I was fortunate enough in being safe. It seemed a great miracle that I was not among the many casualties. Am thankful that I was not. With much love,

Your devoted son,  
CHAS. W. JONES.

### FAST IN HOLD, SAVED SHIP.

Mount Vernon Firemen's Gallantry Told at Kiwanis Club

How the firemen and stokers of the torpedoed transport Mount Vernon saved the vessel and crew by consenting to be locked in under the hold by watertight doors was told by Captain Douglas E. Dismukes, U. S. N., in his speech yesterday to members of the Kiwanis Club. "Some of the heroes below were drowned when the water rushed in," he said, "but every passenger and wounded man that the Mount Vernon carried reached Brest alive." Captain Dismukes mentioned C. P. O'Connor, a water tender, and Patrick Fitzpatrick, of the crew who distinguished themselves for bravery when the torpedo was struck.—Philadelphia phone.

### When Horses Were the Victims

About forty years ago an epidemic of grip swept over the world that found its victims not among human beings but among animals, chiefly horses. Great numbers of horses died of it in this country—a far more serious matter than it would be today, inasmuch as at that period the equine brute furnished almost the only means of traction in cities and rural districts.

Strictly speaking, an epidemic concerns human beings only. When a plague of disease attacks animals it is an "epizootic." By the people at large, however the latter term was accepted as the name of the new and mysterious horse malady. They commonly spoke of it as "the epizootic," in four syllables instead of five. It was apparently nothing in the world but influenza—a term which by the way, is of Italian origin, signifying a rapidly spreading infectious disease of the respiratory organs.

Several houses containing good lumber for sale. Lumber suitable for repair work. W. L. FEATHERSTON.

We wish every body  
**A Merry Christmas**  
and a  
**Happy and Prosperous**  
New Year  
A. Klaus & Co.

## JUST ARRIVED

# Mares and Mules!

Two Cars nice well broken  
**MARES and MULES**  
just received at  
**Shannon's Stable**

We have a lot of nice young stuff---  
the good kind --- at the right price

Also a complete line of  
**Wagons, Truggies and Harness**

A look will convince you that our  
prices will **SAVE YOU MONEY**

GIVE US A CALL!

## W. L. SHANNON

LOST—On Monday, Dec. 16th, either on the levee or on the streets of Macon, a purse containing some small change, a pair of glasses and two Crochet hook. Reward will be paid if returned to the undersigned or left at Beacon office.

MRS. I. FULTON.

LOST—On Fairfield road between Bryson hill and Plum creek bridge on

December 17th, a suit case, made of Manila straw. Had ladies laundry in it. Will pay reward if returned to Beacon office.

The government desires to have new quarters for the postoffice. A ten-year lease preferred. For particulars apply to

POSTMASTER,  
Macon, Miss.