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WWII Veteran
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I am a veteran of World War II. I served in 'B' Wireless section of 2nd Cdn. Corps. I cannot recall walking through the shed and up the gang plank of Pier 21. I do remember the ship on which we sailed. It was called the Queen of the Pacific. I don't know whether we were told it was a cattle boat or perhaps we gave it the name. I was from central Saskatchewan and, I think, a goodly number of my comrades were from western Canada. We slung hammocks in our quarters, below decks, and below the water line. The hammocks were so close together that if one man moved then every man in the long line of hammocks moved.

This was in November of 1941 and, I think, we were convoy number 15. There were nine troop ships and the ninth ship in the line carried nurses. The first day out, just after Canada had disappeared beneath the horizon, an alarm was sounded. We were amazed to see the corvettes (or whatever they were) suddenly go darting through the convoy. We were greatly relieved to learn from the sailors that it was a drill and would be carried out every morning. We were apprehensive again though to learn that our escort would be with us to Iceland and that we would make the rest of the journey unescorted. (The Americans were not yet involved, Dec. 7th hadn't arrived.)

Sure enough, after we left Iceland (which we never actually saw) we sailed alone (with eight other troopships of course) out into the North Atlantic. The weather was dark and cold but not stormy, however the swells made we plow jockies very uncomfortable. We spent as much time as we could on the deck, although we were not allowed to smoke there, because the hold which was our stateroom was nearly unlivable. I am not sure which day it was, but we were surprised one morning when we realized that our engines were not running. Their hum was easily evident below the waterline. One of the obliging sailors, I am sure they enjoyed seeing our consternation, told us that the last ship in the line was having engine trouble and was sitting somewhere below the horizon behind us.

"We cannot move." The sailors reassured us until the last ship catches up. A convoy can only travel as fast as the slowest ship in the line. I stood with a comrade at the rail and gazed at the ocean. "I wonder", I asked, "where the closest land might be? Would it be Newfoundland or our port in Europe, wherever that might be?" "I don't know", my

comrade answered, "but I think the shortest way to land might be straight down."

We were twelve days at sea when one morning we saw a dark cloud on the horizon. "What is that?" I asked. "It must be land." Before I got an answer one of the sailors enlightened me. "That is Ireland," he said, "just keep your eyes open". Before he could finish we saw a flight of Spitfires rapidly bearing down on us. "They have come to escort us in," the sailor said.

We sailed into the Irish sea and we could see land on both sides (port and starboard) and as the scenery kept changing we realized we were circling on the Irish sea, waiting for something we didn't know what. We stayed on the water all night Friday. Then on Saturday morning we sailed into the port of Liverpool. We were due to land Friday evening at eight o'clock but at that time the enemy was bombing Liverpool so we docked at about eight a.m. Saturday morning.