

The following I wrote for the Souvenir copy of ship's newspaper, The Freeman's Press

## **GETTING THE MOST OUT OF AN OCEAN VOYAGE**

**By Pvt. Gus Dick Andros**

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My ship, or should I say the Army's Transport, sailed from Pier 37 in Seattle, Washington. The U.S.O. honored us with a show we would not forget. The last look of American womanhood was in our view. Their final number was the never forgetting, "Auld Lang Syne." This was something I thought only happened in the movies, because as everyone joined in the chorus the ship slowly pulled away from the dock. It was a funny feeling leaving the land of my birth for the first time. I waved good bye to the people on shore knowing no one knew me, but I felt their waves were an answer to mine. It is funny how one imagines those things when he is lonesome. You see, this was the longest distance that I had ever been from home -- home in Oklahoma.

The ship circled Puget Sound a number of times. Test of all the instruments were under way, so that we could start our long voyage. The waters of the Sound were peaceful and yet exciting.

The sun set, and the stars sparkled in all their glory. Off in the distance the bright lights of Seattle shone like diamonds hidden among rocks of coal. When I retired to my compartment, which I shared with thirty boys, we were still in Puget Sound.

I was sleeping soundly when a voice over the loudspeaker blasted, "Now hear this! Now hear this! It is six o'clock. Everybody up!" I jumped out of my sack, (a navy term for bunk) and I felt no different. That is until I started to shave. Then I knew something was wrong. Getting my balance was difficult. To finish shaving I steadied myself by grabbing a pipe with one hand.

I was anxious to see what the ocean looked like. I dressed hurriedly and climbed four flights of stairs to the main deck. I wasn't at all disappointed with the ocean. It was all I dreamed of and more. About sixty miles off starboard side, a faint glimpse of the high snow capped mountains of Canada could be seen.

I was put on the ship's newspaper staff as cartoonist and artist. I started to work the first morning at sea. We worked sixteen hours getting out our first edition. We had all sorts of trouble: our lights went out, nothing was in order, our mimeograph machine broke down and, to top it all, the operator also broke down. You see, he got seasick. He wasn't the only one. The rails were lined with boys who had the same problem. This gave me

many suggestions for my cartoons. I named my column "Having a Heaving Good Time." I didn't feel the effects of seasickness, because I kept myself so busy. There was always something to do. When you have a talent such as mine, there are posters to be drawn, off-limits signs to make, stencils to be cut, and last but not least, pin-ups for the boys. Believe me, I made many of them. I finally began to publish a few in the paper. They were appreciated by all--especially the officers!

My favorite pastime was being alone on deck watching the ocean waves breaking into a million pearly sprays that seemed to go on and on, as far as the eye could see. We have been at sea for ten days, and I still enjoy the cool breezes blowing against my face. Without any trouble I can see everything in the ocean. Its forms lend themselves to one's artistic imagination. The hues of the Pacific are something only for the magic eyes of Titian. As the water breaks and the salt foam forms a cover for the ocean, the blues which appear beneath the surface can be compared to the pigments of the blue robes of Raphael's Madonna.

I consider myself fortunate for having the experience of watching the sun sink into what seems like the edge of the world. The light of this mass of fire reflected on the clouds which were hovering low over the ocean. This picture could not be justly reproduced in all of its splendor, not even by the creative hands of the old masters.

I have taken to the sea as a lost pup finds a home among the soft clover of the meadows. How a person can say, "I have lived," without crossing the sea -- the sea that derives its name from the Spanish word meaning peaceful waters -- has yet something to look forward to. I knew as I stood looking out over the roaming forms of the deep that I had much to remember. I only hope, as this trip ends, that it will be the beginning to many such experiences. Old Father Neptune can add my name to the list of his many followers.