

"Several days after we had left New York, as a single ship and not as part of a convoy, a plane flew close overhead. We were all very apprehensive and the 'scuttle-butt' really started. All I knew for sure was that we soon changed course because the ship's wake started to make a wide curve. This did not do much to relieve the fear of a possible U-Boat attack. We learned later that the plane was British.

"After six or seven days at sea we spotted land. We sailed into a bay and landed at a port which someone said was near Glasgow, Scotland.

"I remember it took what seemed to be an awfully long time to get unloaded and onto a train. I wanted to hurry up and get started so I could see some of the countryside while it was still light. As we were being loaded onto a train, some people came by and gave us doughnuts and milk.

"Our train was a typical British one. The coaches had compartments that ran from side to side, with a door on each side. The seats were wooden and had a high, straight back. They were not the most comfortable I had ever sat on.

"When we got off the train it seemed like we had to walk for miles to our area. I don't believe I had ever been so tired of walking before." --- Frank Lankford

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"On the train from our debarkation point in Greenock, Scotland, to our staging area in England, the conductor had a pint of 'tea' in his back pocket. He wouldn't sell it." ---Chet Rutkowski

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"The night before we crossed the English Channel to France, Capt. (Michael) Heneghan assembled the Battery (B) and we were issued ammunition. I don't recall how many clips of ammo we received but when I put them on my belt, along with my canteen and first aid kit, it was so heavy I could hardly walk.

"Capt. Heneghan then told us we would soon be crossing the Channel and going into battle. I don't remember all that he said but I can still see that gathering and clearly recall his exact last words: 'May God bless each and every one of you.'"

--- Elbert Custer

Just as we were leaving New York harbor, the Queen Mary's horn let out a blast so loud it literally scared me out of my shoes.

Aboard ship I was one of the men assigned to AA duty. My position was high up on a 20mm gun turret. Every watch had a British crewman with the Americans. The one on our gun kept trying to sing like Bing Crosby. We all hoped he was a better gunner than he was a singer. Fortunately, we never got to find out. The only scare we had was the morning a plane was spotted and the battle station's horn sounded. As I recall, the plane kept between us and the sun so that we never got a good look at it. After it departed we learned that it was British. --John Hix

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