

Postcard from Frank, August 15th, Holyhead:

Arrived this morning. 'Quite safe'. Going off this morning into the unknown. Settled in till about midnight and everyone was very tired and hungry. Managed to get a sort of meal off bloater paste and dog biscuits. You have no cause for anxiety and we aren't so very uncomfortable and very lucky to have got across without delay or losing anything except indeed the poor little mare. She is so associated in my mind with you and it is dreadful to think of all the fright and indignities she had to put up with. It seems such ages since we parted and you are in another world to which I long to get back. In the afternoon Sandys and I went on the Backs which were looking lovely. I thought so much of you and the time we sat there on the seat together. Went to tea at Buol's, another of our old haunts.

August 18. We went ... to the meeting of the SSFA at the Strand Barracks, held in an upper room looking across to Arthur's Quay and so associated with Frank and happy days that I nearly wept. It looked so lovely, the still reflections in the water, but no one saw it.

(The SSFA was an organization which helped the families of Soldiers and Sailors.)

Letter from Frank, September 10th, St. Nazaire, France:

Our arrival was very amusing. The ship had to go through a narrow channel, right through the middle of the town, this was lined with a crowd, very enthusiastic, partly composed of the seediest-looking French soldiers I ever saw. When our men threw them coppers and hat-badges etc the sentries deserted their posts and scrambled with gamins on the quay for them. The men sang what now seems to be the National Anthem, 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary'.

September 15. Roden House soon after breakfast. Wrote letters in the Verandah keeping an eye on the men. One big van filled by dusk.

September 18. Furniture all out last night. The King to give the royal assent to the passing of the Home Rule Bill today, which we concluded he did, from the shouting in the late evening.

September 21. Very smooth crossing - my twenty-first! The Allies seem to be holding their own and the dreadful casualty lists keep appearing. Frank's Mother, Richard and Nurse met me at Stockport.

(This was the day Frank's unit reached the front. They were in trenches near the village of Vailly on the Aisne for the next three weeks.)



A turn of the century picture of the Royal George Hotel.