

**THE REAL DOPE.  
ILLUSTRATED BY MAY  
WILSON PRESTON  
AND M.L. BLUMENTHAL**

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**RING W. LARDNER**

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**THE REAL DOPE**

# THE REAL DOPE

*By*

RING W. LARDNER

AUTHOR OF

GULLIBLE'S TRAVELS, MY FOUR WEEKS IN FRANCE  
'TREAT 'EM ROUGH, ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY

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# THE REAL DOPE

## CHAPTER I

AND MANY A STORMY WIND SHALL BLOW

*On the Ship Board, Jan. 15.*

**F**RRIEND AL: Well Al I suppose it is kind of foolish to be writeing you a letter now when they won't be no chance to mail it till we get across the old pond but still and all a man has got to do something to keep themself busy and I know you will be glad to hear all about our trip so I might as well write you a letter when ever I get a chance and I can mail them to you all at once when we get across the old pond and you will think I have wrote a book or something.

Joking a side Al you are lucky to have an old pal thats going to see all the fun and write to you about it because its a different thing haveing a person write to you about what they see themself then getting the dope out of a newspaper or something because you will know that what I tell you is the real dope that I seen myself where if you read it in a newspaper you know its guest work because

in the 1st. place they don't leave the reporters get nowhere near the front and besides that they wouldn't go there if they had a leave because they would be too scared like the baseball reporters that sets a mile from the game because they haven't got the nerve to get down on the field where a man could take a punch at them and even when they are a mile away with a screen in front of them they duck when somebody hits a pop foul.

Well Al it is against the rules to tell you when we left the old U. S. or where we come away from because the pro German spy might get a hold of a man's letter some way and then it would be good night because he would send a telegram to where the submarine is located at and they wouldn't send no 1 or 2 submarines after us but the whole German navy would get after us because they would figure that if they ever got us it would be a rich haul. When I say that Al I don't mean it to sound like I was swell headed or something and I don't mean it would be a rich haul because I am on board or nothing like that but you would know what I am getting at if you seen the bunch we are taking across.

In the 1st. place Al this is a different kind of a trip then the time I went around the world with the 2 ball clubs because then it was just the 1 boat load and only for two or 3 of the boys on board it wouldn't of made no difference if the boat had of

turned a turtle only to pave the whole bottom of the ocean with ivory. But this time Al we have got not only 1 boat load but we got four boat loads of soldiers alone and that is not all we have got. All together Al there is 10 boats in the parade and 6 of them is what they call the convoys and that means war ships that goes along to see that we get there safe on acct. of the submarines and four of them is what they call destroyers and they are little bits of shafers but they say they can go like he—ll when they get started and when a submarine pops up these little birds chases right after them and drops a death bomb on to them and if it ever hits them the capt. of the submarine can pick up what is left of his boat and stick a 2 cent stamp on it and mail it to the kaiser.

Jokeing a side I guess they's no chance of a submarine getting fat off of us as long as these little birds is on watch so I don't see why a man shouldn't come right out and say when we left and from where we come from but if they didn't have some kind of rules they's a lot of guys that wouldn't know no better then write to Van Hinburg or somebody and tell them all they know but I guess at that they could use a post card.

Well Al we been at sea just two days and a lot of the boys has gave up the ghost all ready and pretty near everything else but I haven't felt the least bit sick that is sea sick but I will own up I felt