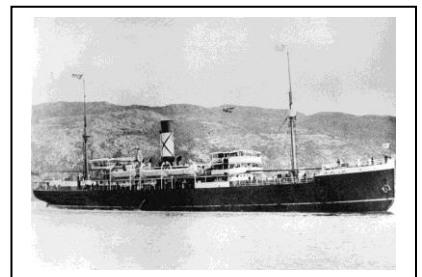




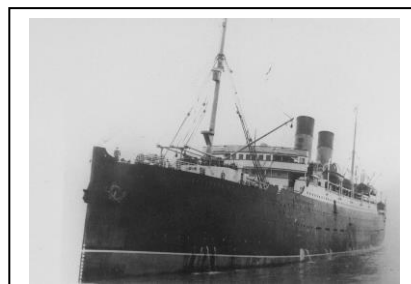
Private Zacharia Blake (Regimental Number 4055) lies in Magdalen Hill Cemetery, Winchester – Grave reference Newfoundland Plot 6 NP.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a labourer, Zacharia Blake was a recruit of the Seventeenth Draft. Having presented himself for medical examination in Grand Falls on October 30, 1917, he then enlisted - engaged *for the duration of the war* at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 per diem – on that same day. On the following day, October 31, he attested.



Private Blake did not embark for overseas service until some six weeks later again, the date December 11, when he boarded the Bowring Brothers' Red Cross Line vessel *Florizel* (right above) en route for Halifax.

But it was not from Halifax that Private Blake sailed on His Majesty's Transport *Missanabie* (right) to the United Kingdom. The draft embarked in the port of St. John, New Brunswick, on or about December 18 before departure on the morrow. *Missanabie* then docked in Glasgow on December 31, New Year's Eve.



Having disembarked in Scotland, the Newfoundland contingent entrained for the short journey to the Regimental Depot. By this time, the Depot at Ayr had already been in existence serving as the base for the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment for well over two years, with a temporary move to the town of Barry in the summer of 1917. Private Blake was to be in Ayr for just some two weeks longer before being transferred southward to another camp.



(Right above: *an aerial view of Ayr – probably from the period between the Wars: Newton-on Ayr is to the left of the River Ayr and the Royal Borough is to the right. – courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr*)

Early in the New Year of 1918, 2nd (Reserve) Battalion moved quarters from the Royal Borough of Ayr in Scotland to southern England, to Hazely Down, Hampshire, not far distant from the cathedral city of Winchester. This transfer was finalized during the latter part of January, 1918, and it was from there that Private Blake might well have been ordered to join the British Expeditionary Force, and 1st Battalion of the by-then Royal Newfoundland Regiment, on the Continent.



(Right above: *a bleak-looking Hazely Down Camp at some time during the winter of 1918 – from The War Illustrated*)

However, this was not to be. He was admitted on January 25 of 1918 into the Military Hospital at Chiseldon Camp to undergo treatment for venereal disease. On February 13 – or 16 – he was released to become an outpatient until April 11. When eventually discharged to duty, Private Blake was seconded to the 616th Employment Company at Chiseldon. However, during this period he was hospitalized again, into Hazely Down Camp Military Hospital from March 3 until March 22, suffering from an unrecorded complaint.

On May 21, Private Blake was sent to Hazely Down Hospital once more, the complaint on this third occasion diagnosed as *pterygium*, a problem of the cornea. He was forwarded on the next day to the Military Hospital at Winchester where he remained for a week – until the 28th - before being transferred to the Royal Victorian Hospital at Netley (right). There he remained until August 5.



(continued)

Having then re-joined 2nd (Reserve) Battalion, Private Blake was admitted for a final time for medical attention into Hazely Down Camp Hospital on October 16, the problem now being broncho-pneumonia.

(Right: *the Newfoundland Plot at Magdalen Hill Cemetery – photograph from 2011*)



The son of John Blake, fisherman, and Jane Blake (née Cull, deceased December 2, 1916) of Barr'd Islands in the District of Fogo, Private Blake was reported as having *died of sickness* – of pneumonia - at Winchester on November 6, 1918. He was interred three days later, on November 9.

Zacharia Blake had enlisted at the age of twenty-two years and three months.

(Right: *The sacrifice of Private Blake is honoured on the War Memorial at Joe Batt's Arm. – photograph from 2013*)



Private Zacharia Blake was awarded the British War Medal for his overseas service.

