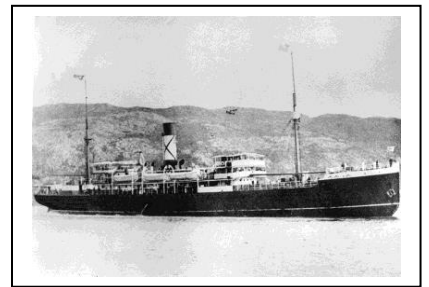




Lance Corporal John William Devereaux (Regimental Number 3152) is buried in Holy Trinity Cemetery in Ferryland.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a tailor earning a monthly \$16.00, John Devereaux was a recruit of the Twelfth Draft. Having presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on October 13 of 1916, he then enlisted – engaged *for the duration of the war* at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 per diem – and attested three days later, on the 16th.

Private Devereaux was one of the approximately three-hundred twenty *all ranks* to leave St. John's for overseas service on the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel* (right – courtesy of *Admiralty House Museum*), bound for Halifax, on January 31, 1917, to take passage to the United Kingdom.



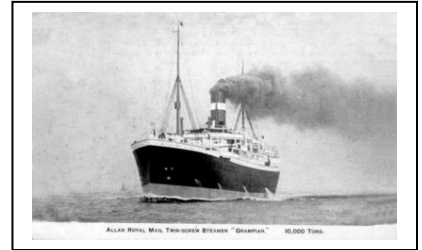
**While awaiting passage overseas he boarded for a brief period – from January 5 to 12 - with a Mrs. Picco in the City, for which she charged him \$5.00 for both board and lodging.*

Immediately upon its arrival in Nova Scotia, however, this detachment was forwarded to accommodation in the town of Windsor where it was soon to be quarantined because of an epidemic of measles and mumps.

(continued)

It was not before a lapse of some two-and-a-half months after its arrival that transport could be arranged for the trans-Atlantic crossing to the United Kingdom for the so-called *Windsor Draft* – minus the twenty-five or so personnel still unable to travel.

On April 16, Private Devereaux embarked onto His Majesty's Transport *Grampian* (right), one of three ships carrying the Newfoundlanders to sail two days later, in a convoy from Halifax. The vessels were also carrying Canadian reinforcements to the English west-coast port of Liverpool, where the ships docked on April 29.



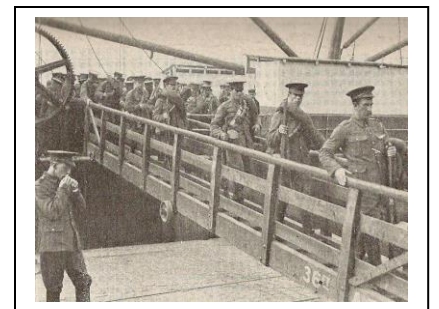
Arriving in England the contingent entrained for the west coast of Scotland. By this time, the Regimental Depot at Ayr had already been in existence to serve as the base for the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment for two years. It was from here – since November of 1915 and up until January of 1918 – that the new-comers from Newfoundland were to be despatched in drafts, at first to Gallipoli and later to the Western Front, to bolster the four fighting companies of 1st Battalion.



By the time that the Windsor Draft arrived at the Regimental Depot, 2nd (Reserve) Battalion was becoming critically short of personnel.

(Right above: *the new race-course at Ayr – opened in 1907 – where men of the Regiment were billeted and where they replaced some of the turf with a vegetable garden; part of the present grandstand is original – photo from 2012*)

On June 11, 1917, the 25th Re-enforcement Draft – Private Devereaux among its ranks - passed through the English south-coast port of Southampton on its way to France. On the following day, June 12, the contingent disembarked in the Norman capital, Rouen, where time was spent at the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot, to be organized and to undergo final training* before moving onward to its eventual rendezvous with 1st Battalion.



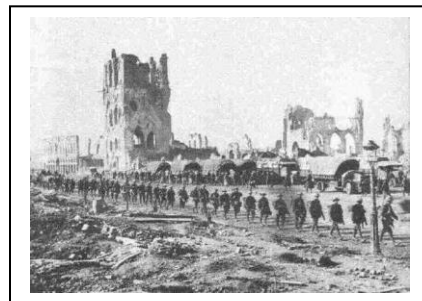
(Right above: *British troops disembark at Rouen on their way to the Western Front. – from Illustration*)

**Apparently, the standard length of time for this final training at the outset of the war had been ten days – although this was to become more and more flexible as the War progressed - in areas near Rouen, Étapes, LeHavre and Harfleur that became known notoriously to the troops as the Bull Rings.*

(continued)

The records show that was on July 2 – the Regimental War Diary says, in fact, on the day before - that Private Devereaux's contingent of two-hundred fifty *other ranks* reported to duty at *Caribou Camp*, behind the lines near Woesten – to the north-west of Ypres - in Belgium. For the next few days – and nights – 1st Battalion supplied working parties for road-mending and for the construction of infantry tracks.

Only days prior to Private Devereaux's arrival, at the end of June, the Newfoundlanders of 1st Battalion had once again moved north into Belgium and once again to the area of *the Ypres Salient*. This had been selected by the High Command to be the theatre of the British summer offensive of 1917. Officially named the *Third Battle of Ypres*, the campaign came to be known to history as *Passchendaele*, adopting that name from a small village on a ridge that was one of the British Army's objectives.



(Right above: *Troops file through the rubble of the medieval city of Ypres on their way to the front in the late summer of 1917. – from Illustration*)

1st Battalion remained in Belgium until October 17, a small cog in the machinery of the British Army which floundered its way across the sodden countryside of Flanders. Notably it fought in two major engagements, at the *Steenbeek* on August 16, and at the *Broembeek* on October 9.

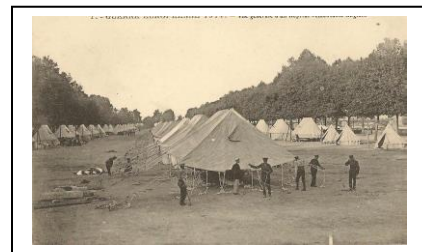


(Right above: *an unidentified – perhaps unidentifiable – part of the Passchendaele battlefield in the autumn of 1917 – from Illustration*)

It was during the action at the *Steenbeek* that Private Devereaux was wounded. Having incurred injuries inflicted by gun-fire to his left shoulder, he was evacuated from the field and taken to the 4th Casualty Clearing Station at Lozinghem*, being admitted there on the 17th.



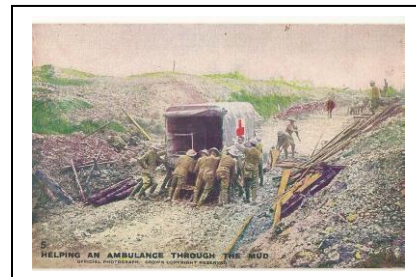
(Right above: *This is the area of the Steenbeek – the stream runs close to the trees - and also close to where 1st Battalion fought the engagement of August 16, 1917. It is some eight kilometres distant from a village called Passchendaele. – photograph from 2010*)



(Right above: *a British casualty clearing station – the one pictured here under canvas for mobility if and when the necessity arose – being established somewhere in France during the early years of the War – from a vintage post-card*)

(continued)

***Several names such as Mendinghem, Bandagehem and Dozinghem were invented by the British troops as they resembled the Belgian and northern-French fashion of naming villages. These sites were occupied by medical facilities only – and the inevitable cemeteries which today remain. But Lozinghem seems to be an exception in that it is a real place – however much the name lends itself to the morbid spirit of the British soldier.**



(Right above: transferring sick and wounded from a field ambulance to the rear through the mud by motorized ambulance and man-power – from a vintage post-card)

On the following day again, Private Devereaux was forwarded to the 32nd Stationary Hospital (*Australian Voluntary Hospital*) at Wimereux for further treatment. He was to remain there for another eleven days, until August 29.



(Right: the French coastal resort of Wimereux – soon to be a part of a large medical centre – at some time just prior to the Great War – from a vintage post-card)

On that August 29, Private Devereaux was embarked onto His Majesty's Hospital Ship *St. Andrew* (right) for the short crossing back to the United Kingdom. Upon his arrival in England, he was transferred to the 3rd London General Hospital in the Borough of Wandsworth to be admitted there on August 30.



(Right: The main building of what became 3rd London General Hospital during the Great War was opened, on July 1st, 1859, as a home for the orphaned daughters of British soldiers, sailors and marines. – photograph from 2010)



(Above far right: Newfoundland patients, unfortunately unidentified, convalescing at 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth – courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo)

Private Devereaux was in hospital at Wandsworth until October 26 where it had been discovered that, as the result of that gun-fire, he also had suffered fractures of the spine, scapula and upper arm. On that October day he was transferred to *Brooklands Hospital* in Weybridge for convalescence.

(continued)

He was discharged from Weybridge on November 29, ninety-one days after entering hospital, and was granted the customary ten-day furlough accorded to military personnel upon release from hospital in the United Kingdom. This period of leave was spent at the *Old Waverley Hotel* in Edinburgh from where he sent a telegram to Newfoundland to his father requesting money. A postal draft for five pounds found its way to the hotel on December 5.



(Right above: *The Waverley Hotel allowed preferential rates to serving personnel during the time of the Great War.* – image from *Wikipedia*)

Private Deveraux was then posted, on December 12, to the Northern Command Depot at the eastern England town of Ripon. He remained there until January 19 when he was transferred to the new Regimental Depot at Hazely Down.

2nd (Reserve) Battalion was at the time in the throes of moving its quarters from the Royal Borough of Ayr in Scotland to southern England, to Hazely Down, Hampshire, not far distant from the historic cathedral city of Winchester. This transfer was finalized during the latter part of January, 1918, at about the time that Private Deveraux reported to duty with 2nd (Reserve) Battalion.



It was also during the following period while stationed there, on May 2, that he received promotion to the rank of lance-corporal.

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

The next report in the records of Private Deveraux is one dated July 16. He had caught cold while at Hazely about six weeks previously and had begun coughing and spitting up blood... *his voice is husky and he is losing weight slightly. He tires quickly...* A medical report issued on that date deemed him to be *permanently unfit for Active Service* and thereupon recommended his discharge and repatriation.

Therefore, on or about July 21, Lance Corporal Deveraux embarked for the journey back to Newfoundland. Likely travelling via Halifax* he reported to *duty back* in St. John's on August 4. On the 24th the *Standing Medical Board* confirmed him as being *permanently unfit* and he was discharged on September 7 with the recommendation that he enter the Jensen Camp for tubercular patients on Blackmarsh Road.

**Perhaps on HM Transport Justicia, perhaps on HM Transport Mauretania, both of which left Liverpool on July 18, both sailing for Halifax.*

Apparently John Deveraux bowed to the wishes of his parents that he refuse the treatment offered to him and, as a result of this refusal, his pension was cut by one-third. However, he eventually decided to reverse his decision and he was admitted into the Jensen Camp on January 30, 1919.

The son of Michael Deveraux, fisherman, and Annie Devereaux (née Lovett) – to whom he had allotted a daily sixty cents from his pay - of Ferryland, he was also brother to Patrick-Osten (sic) (Austin?), to Mary-Elizabeth, to Clara-Joseph and to James-Albert.

John William Devereaux was reported as having *died of sickness*, of tuberculosis, at the Jensen Camp on April 17, 1920.

He had enlisted at nineteen years of age: date of birth, October 23, 1897.

Private John William Devereaux was entitled to the British War Medal (on left) and also to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).



Jensen Camp

To Sec. Board of Board. (sic)

Dear Sir. Would you kindly let my father (or bearer) have my back pension as he is in immediate need of it. He has been unable to do anything the past winter owing to my mother being very ill and as he has prepare for coming summer fishery you would greatly oblige me by doing all you can for him. Also kindly forward other cheques to his address. Hoping this may be satisfactory.

I remain

Yours Truly

Reg. No. John W. Devereaux (sic)