



Private Henry Dunn (Regimental Number 5208) lies in Burnside Cemetery, St. Alban's, Newfoundland.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fisherman, John Thomas Maddox presented himself for medical examination at Headquarters at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on May 20, 1918*. He also enlisted - engaged *for the duration of the war* and at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 per diem – and attested, all on the same day.

He was conscripted in spite of poor vision in both eyes, apparently deemed acceptable to a country by that time crucially short of manpower.

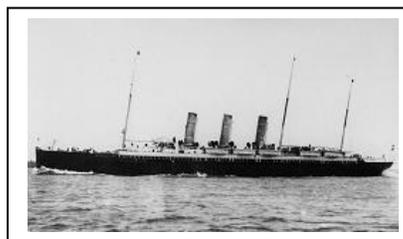
(continued)

In his defence, the examining doctor replied: *I have examined the marginally noted man and find his sight to be 6/12 both eyes, which is much better than the regulations call for.*

**This was the month during which the Newfoundland Military Service Act (conscription) came into effect. From May 11 through to the end of the War the Department of Militia called a total of 1,470 men into active service.*

Subsequent to his enlistment, Private Dunn was hospitalized twice in St. John's: on the first occasion he was admitted into an auxiliary establishment at 27, Feild Street from June 3 to 25 to be treated for mumps; then on August 29 he was forwarded to the Barracks Hospital where he remained with an apparently undisclosed complaint for a mere two days, until the 31st when he was discharged back *to duty*.

Private Dunn embarked for the passage to Halifax, Nova Scotia, on September 22. The Bowring Brothers' Vessel having been wrecked in a winter storm in February of that year, it was on HMS *Columbella* (right), an armed merchant cruiser, that his detachment of six officers, five-hundred sixty-five men and a civilian doctor sailed, weighing anchor in St. John's harbour at a quarter to five in the morning of the 23rd.



Reaching Halifax at about half-past ten in the following morning, one officer, one hundred men and the doctor disembarked. The others remained on ship in Halifax harbour and sailed for England on the 27th as one of a ten-ship convoy.

Columbella docked at Tilbury on the River Thames, London, on August 8.

In the New Year of 1918, 2nd (Reserve) Battalion had moved 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 had been finalized during the latter part of January, 1918, and it was to there that Private Dunn and the others of his draft reported upon arrival in England some eight months later.



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

The next record pertaining to Private Dunn is dated November 10th, 1918: *...the undermentioned (#5208 Pte. H. Dunn) will proceed to join the Newfoundland Forestry Corps on Monday the 18th, on probation.* Presumably the *month* of his proposed transfer was the same November.

For whatever the reason – not cited but likely to have been medical - Private Dunn was not permanently transferred to the Forestry Corps as he was reported back – or still - at Hazely Down Camp by April 10* when he was admitted for two weeks into Magdalen Camp Hospital, diagnosed as suffering from both influenza and tuberculosis. He was discharged from hospital on April 24 *to duty* where he remained until June 1 when he was again reported to be sick.

**The transfer may not even have ever transpired at all, as another file has him with 'A' Company, (Reserve) 2nd Battalion, on November 19.*



On June 24, 1919, His Majesty's Transport *Cassandra* (right) sailed from Glasgow carrying service personnel back to Newfoundland to be demobilized. Private Dunn was among those travelling. The ship arrived in St. John's on July 1, the third anniversary of the debacle at Beaumont-Hamel.

Upon arrival, Private Dunn reported to Headquarters on that same date to be forwarded to the Escasoni Hospital* where it was recommended that he remain after his discharge from the Regiment and from the Army. The discharge took place on August 1 of that same year.

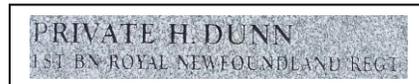
**A house and farm in St. John's were confiscated from its German owner in 1917 by the government for use as a sanatorium, the Escasoni Hospital, for returning service personnel. This institution complemented the privately-funded Jensen Camp on Blackmarsh Road already in service since the previous year. The Escasoni Hospital closed at the end of 1920 and Jensen Camp a month later due to the expansion of a third facility on Topsail Road which became the St. John's Sanatorium.*

The son of Joseph Dunn, fisherman, and Martha Dunn (née Lane) of Hollett's Tickle (today a part of Burnside), Bonavista Bay, he was also brother to two sisters, Clara and Hannah.

Henry Dunn was reported as having *died of sickness* on April 3, 1920.

His grave was not finally completed until 1927.

Henry Dunn had enlisted at the age of twenty-one years: date of birth September 13, 1896.



(Right above: *The sacrifice of Private Dunn is honoured on the Screen Wall in the Military Plot, Mount Pleasant Cemetery, St. John's. – photograph from 2011*)

Private Henry Dunn was entitled to the British War Medal for his overseas service.

