

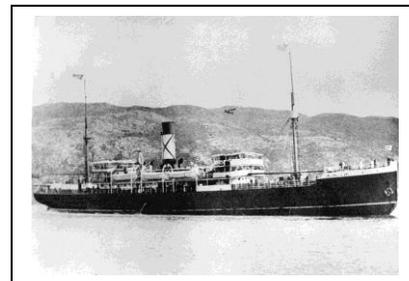
Lance Corporal Cecil J. Hunt (Regimental Number 3384) is buried in Glasgow Western Necropolis – Grave reference P.2375.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a clerk and earning \$9.50 per week, Cecil Hunt was a recruit of the Thirteenth Draft. Having presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on December 5, 1916, he then enlisted – *for the duration of the war* and at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 per diem – and also attested, a month later, on January 4 of the New Year, 1917.

It was not until more than three months later that (acting) Lance Corporal Hunt departed St. John's for overseas service. He had received promotion on April 5, only two days prior to his departure from Newfoundland.

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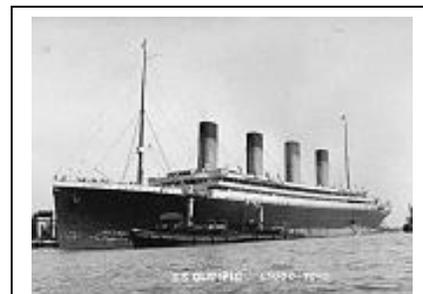
It was on April 7 of 1917, that Corporal Hunt boarded either the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel* (right) for Halifax, or a train* in St. John's for the cross-island journey to Port aux Basques from where a ferry and another train would have transported Corporal Hunt and his co-travellers to the Nova Scotian capital – the files are contradictory. Apparently it had been hoped that the fifty personnel of this draft would be joining the *Windsor Draft*** on April 16 or 17 when it was to board one of the three transports awaiting in Halifax harbour and sail.



**The records of Corporal Hunt and other personnel cite... 'Embarked St. John's S.S. Train to Halifax 7/4/17' ...while other sources hint that the passage to Nova Scotia may have been by ship: nevertheless, a personal memo of a Private Yetman mentions the Florizel.*

***This was the name given to the draft of about three-hundred twenty all ranks which had left St. John's on January 31, 1917, en route to Halifax from where they were to sail to the United Kingdom. This contingent would eventually make that voyage, but about thirteen weeks later than envisaged. They were quarantined at Windsor as the result of a measles and mumps epidemic that claimed two of their number – and maybe a later third. In the meantime, 2nd (Reserve) Battalion at Ayr was running low on man-power.*

This plan, however, was not to be, for whatever the reason – perhaps lack of space as the ships were carrying Canadian reinforcements overseas - and it was not until the final day* of the month that this small contingent – Private Corporal Hunt still one of its number - finally sailed from Halifax. They may, in fact, have embarked onto His Majesty's Transport *Olympic* (right) – sister-ship of *Titanic* – which sailed at that time from Halifax with Canadian troops to the United Kingdom.



**If it were on Olympic that the contingent embarked – she appears to have been the only ship sailing on or about that time - then the Newfoundlanders sailed from Halifax on April 29 to arrive in Liverpool on May 7.*

Having arrived 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 some two years. It was from here – since November of 1915 and up until January of 1918 – that the new-comers from home were being despatched in drafts, at first to Gallipoli and later to the Western Front, to bolster the four fighting companies of 1st Battalion.



(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)

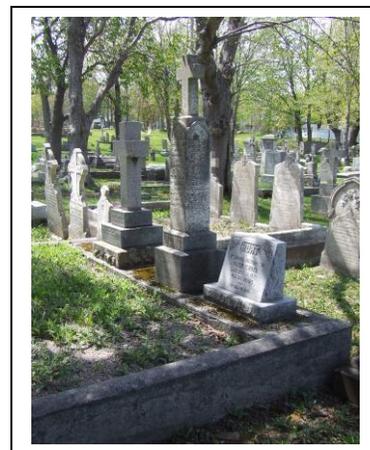
Lance Corporal Hunt, unfortunately, was not to experience the attractions of Scotland for long: on May 17, he was admitted into the County Hospital, Ayr, and there diagnosed as suffering from vascular disease, from myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscles), and from chronic laryngitis.

The son of James Gill Hunt (*of J.G. Hunt, Commission Agents & Brokers, deceased by the time of enlistment*) and Mary Julia Hunt (deceased April 23, 1919) – to whom he had allocated a daily sixty cents from his pay - of 88, Barnes' Road in St. John's, he was also brother to Charles E. Hunt and likely to Nicholas.



Lance Corporal Hunt died in hospital on June 7, 1917, the immediate cause of death being cited as syncope (a sudden loss of consciousness and cerebral function due to a malfunctioning heart). He was buried on June 15.

(Right: A family memorial – centre of photograph - which stands in the Old Anglican Cemetery on Forest Road in St. John's, commemorates the sacrifice of Private Cecil J. Hunt. – photograph from 2015)



(Right above: the High Street in Ayr, the buildings little changed, except cosmetically, from a century ago, and the imposing Wallace Tower still keeping watch – photograph from 2012)

Cecil Hunt had enlisted at the age of nineteen years and seven months (born in May of 1898).

Private Cecil J. Hunt was awarded the British War Medal for his services overseas.

