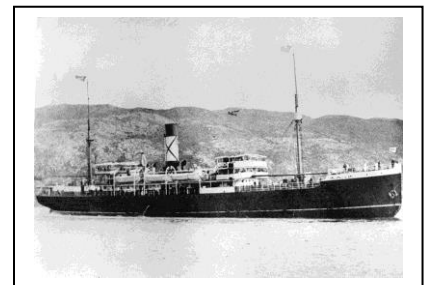




**Private Edward Sheehan (Regimental Number 3264) is buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery – Grave reference XIV. B. 7.**

**His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fireman – whether fighting fires or starting and tending them in steam engines is not specified – and earning a monthly \$60.00, Edward Sheehan was a recruit of the Twelfth Draft. Having presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John’s on May 31 of 1916, he was apparently not to enlist – which he did *for the duration of the war* and engaged at the private soldier’s rate of \$1.10 per diem – or attest until November 20 – both of which he did on that same day - almost six months later.**

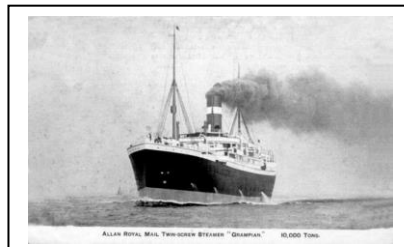
**Private Sheehan was one of the approximately three hundred twenty *all ranks* to leave St. John’s for *overseas service* on the Bowring Brothers’ vessel *Florizel* (right), bound for Halifax, on January 31, 1917, from there to take ship to the United Kingdom.**



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.

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 Sheehan 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.



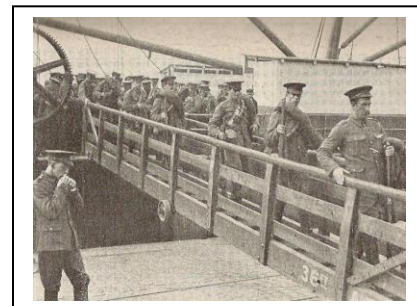
Arriving in England the contingent entrained for the west coast of Scotland. By this time, the Regimental Depot at Ayr had already been in existence to serve as the base for the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment for two years. It was from here – since November of 1915 and 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 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.



By the time that the Windsor Draft arrived at the Regimental Depot, 2<sup>nd</sup> (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 25<sup>th</sup> Re-enforcement Draft – Private Sheehan 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 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.



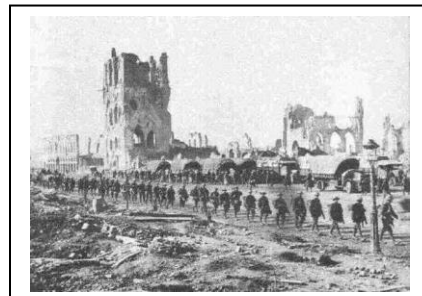
(Right above: *British troops disembark at Rouen on their way to the Western Front. – from Illustration*)

*\*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, Étaples, LeHavre and Harfleur that became known notoriously to the troops as the Bull Rings.*



The records show that was on July 2 – the Regimental War Diary says, in fact, on the day before - that Private Sheehan'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 – 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion supplied working parties for road-mending and for the construction of infantry tracks.

Only days prior to Private Sheehan's arrival, at the end of June, the Newfoundlanders of 1<sup>st</sup> 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*, taking 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*)

Six days later, on July 8, the Newfoundlanders were serving in the front-line and support trenches on the eastern bank of the Yser Canal, just to the north of Ypres. It was apparently a day of not much activity, only enough for the Regimental War Diarist simply to record... *Casualties three killed, two wounded.*

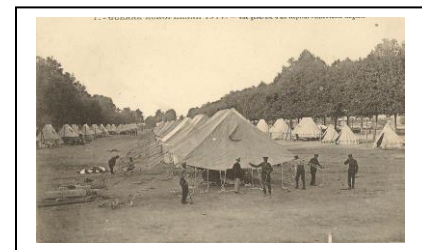
Such entries no longer were no longer anything exceptional.

(Right: *the Yser Canal to the north of the city of Ypres (today leper) – At times in July of 1917 the Newfoundlanders were stationed near to this spot, three companies, 'A', 'C' and 'D', of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion posted on the east bank towards the front lines (to the right in the photograph) with 'B' Company, in reserve, along with Headquarters on the western bank. – photograph from 2013*)



Private Sheehan, a soldier of 'C' Company, was one of those wounded and was evacuated to the 17<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station at the Rémy Siding, Poperinghe. He was suffering from injuries inflicted by a shell-blast to the arm, thigh and head.

(Right: *a British casualty clearing station – the one pictured here under canvas for mobility if and when necessary – being established somewhere on the Continent during the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)



The son of Edward Sheehan, with the *Reid Newfoundland Company*, and Margaret Sheehan (née *Sullivan*) – to whom he had allocated a daily sixty cents from his pay - of 5 Howe Place, St. John's, he was also brother Albert(?), to Michael – rejected twice from volunteering for medical reasons – to John-Joseph (see below), to Mary and to Annie-May.

Private Sheehan was reported as having *died of wounds* on that same July 8, 1917, and at the same 17<sup>th</sup> CCS.

Edward Sheehan had enlisted at the age of twenty-seven years and ten months (date of birth January 10, 1888).

*\*His brother (to be found elsewhere in these documents) John Joseph (Sergeant, Regimental Number 35) died in hospital in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on December 27, 1917 – not in November, as it is engraved on his headstone in Mount Carmel Cemetery in St. John’s.*



(Right above: *Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery not long after the Great War – from Miroir(?)*)

Private Edward Sheehan was entitled to the British War Medal (on left) and also to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).

