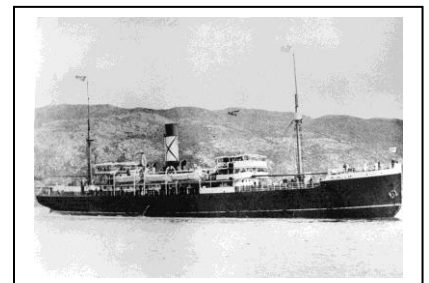




Private Samuel Sherwin (Regimental Number 3206) is buried in Dozinghem Military Cemetery – Grave reference IV. B. 12.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of butler of four years' service at *Government House*, St. John's, earning a monthly \$25.00, Samuel Sherwin 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 26, 1916, he then both enlisted – *for the duration of the war* and at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 per diem – and attested twelve days later, on November 7.

Private Sherwin 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.



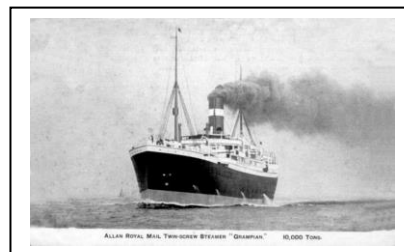
(continued)

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.

In fact, Private Sherwin was one of those to become a patient in the Military Hospital at Windsor, in his case from February 27 until March 10, after having fallen victim to the aforesaid mumps virus.

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 Sherwin 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.



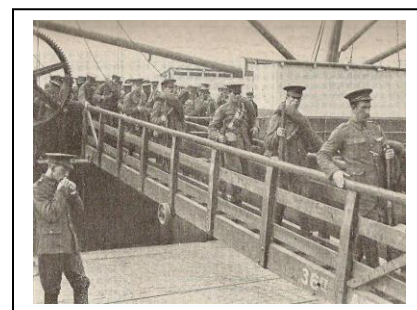
Arriving in England the contingent entrained for the west coast of Scotland. By this time, the Regimental Depot at Ayr had already been in existence to serve as the base for the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment for two years. It was from here – since November of 1915 and up until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



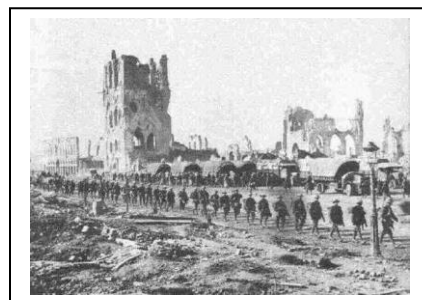
(Right above: *British troops disembark at Rouen on their way to the Western Front. – from Illustration*)

(continued)

**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.*

The records show that was on July 2 – the Regimental War Diary says, in fact, on the day before - that Private Sherwin'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 Sherwin'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*, taking that name from a small village on a ridge that was one of the British Army's objectives.



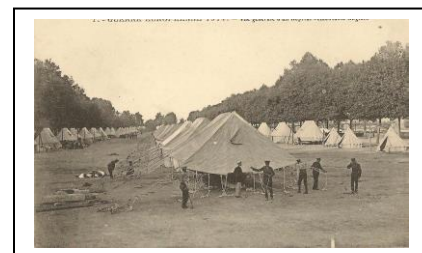
(Right above: *Troops file through the rubble of the medieval city of Ypres on their way to the front in the late summer of 1917. – from Illustration*)

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*)

On that August 16, Private Sherwin was wounded – no further details seem to be recorded - while serving with 'C' Company at the *Steenbeek*. He was evacuated from the field to the 61st Casualty Clearing Station at Lozinghem.



(Right: *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*)

Born in Alvaston - a suburb of Derby, England - the son of Samuel Sherwin, worker at *Rolls-Royce*, and Agnes Sherwin – to whom he had allocated a daily forty cents from his pay - of 41, Harrington Street, Allentown – another suburb of Derby – he also had four siblings, two brothers and two sisters.



Private Sherwin was reported as having *died of wounds* on August 18, 1917, at the same 61st CCS.

Samuel Sherwin had enlisted at twenty-six years of age.

(Previous page: *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*)

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



The Will of Private Samuel Sherwin:

The best of mothers that God could ever give to children. May God bless and comfort her. I hope he will, for I feel I could go happier if I thought my little mother would not grieve. I shall be watching.

In the event of my death I leave all I possess to my dear mother Agnes Sherwin and what money is due to me by the Regiment is to go toward a piano so that it will help just a little to alleviate the little parting. The money is to be given to my darling mother.

Signature S. Sherwin

I received with great sorrow from you a copy of my dead son's will, Pte. S. Sherwin, 3206, 1st Newfoundland Reg't., and write to ask if I am not entitled to a little recompense. Before joining the army he was four years butler to the Governor of Newfoundland, Sir Walter Davidson, previous to that five years foot-man to Lady Davidson's mother, Louisa Fielding, London.

(continued)

All this time my son has allowed me one pound a month and he has always helped us. I am not a widow, but my husband is only a labourer, 63 years of age, and if his work was not a light one, he would be able to do very little. My boy was noble and brave and gave up his previous young life. Hoping, Sir, you will see to this.

Yours respectfully
(Sgd) Agnes Sherwin

P.S. I received the sum of two pounds six from you which my son allotted to me.