



Private Martin Sceviour (found more frequently as *Seviour*) (Regimental Number 5373), is interred in the Church of England Cemetery in British Harbour, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland.

His occupation prior to enlistment recorded as that of a *fisherman*, Martin Sceviour presented himself for medical examination on May 23 of 1916 at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland. It was a procedure which, on this second occasion, would pronounce him as being...*Fit for Foreign Service.***

(continued)

****The building was to serve as the Regimental Headquarters in Newfoundland for the duration of the conflict.***

It was on the day of that medical assessment, May 23, and at the same venue, that Martin Sceviour was now to be enlisted. He was engaged...*for the duration of the war**...at the daily private soldier's rate of a single dollar to which was to be appended a ten-cent per diem Field Allowance.

****At the outset of the War, perhaps because it was felt by the authorities that it would be a conflict of short duration, the recruits enlisted for only a single year. As the War progressed, however, this was obviously going to cause problems and the men were encouraged to re-enlist. Later recruits – as of or about May of 1916 - signed on for the 'Duration' at the time of their original enlistment.***

A further several hours were then to go by before there came to pass, again at the *CLB Armoury* on Harvey Road, the final formality of his enlistment: attestation. On that same twenty-third day of May* he pledged his allegiance to the reigning monarch, George V, whereupon, at that moment, Martin Sceviour became...*a soldier of the King.*

****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. However, nothing amongst his papers appears to suggest under which circumstances – as a volunteer or a conscripted man – Martin Sceviour was to be taken into service.***

Following his enlistment it is likely that Private Sceviour reported...*to duty*...to be quartered in the temporary barracks apparently established since 1915 in the St. John's curling rink and the Prince's Skating Rink in the eastern end of the city.

(Right: *This photograph of the Prince's Rink in St. John's with military personnel, apparently attired in uniforms of Great War vintage, on parade is from the Ice Hockey Wiki web-site. There appears to be no further information a propos.*)



Only a week plus a day after his attestation, on May 31 Private Sceviour, Number, 5373 was granted a ten-day home-leave furlough, from May 31 until June 9-10, at which time he was to report back...*to duty*...in St. John's. He was unable to do so for during this period of leave he fell sick with a case of the measles, as per the following evidence.

Telegraph of June 7 to Captain O'Grady from British Harbour: *Very Sick unable to report the ninth leaving when better 5373 Pte Martin Seviour (sic)*

A Dr. Barlow was summoned and on June 10 was by telegram to verify the serious nature of the situation to the Regimental Headquarters in St. John's.

The son of Ananias Sceviour, fisherman, and of Sarah Sceviour (née Carberry*) of the Trinity Bay community of British Harbour – today re-settled -, he was also brother to Urias-Waterman, Fannie, Wilfred, Elizabeth-Ann and to Frank.

**The couple had been married in the community of Trouty on January 14 of 1895.*

Private Sceviour was then reported in yet another telegram as having...*died of sickness...-measles - at home on June 16 of 1918.*

Martin Sceviour had enlisted at the *declared* age of twenty-two years. Thus far the exact date of his birth has proved to be elusive, but the *Terry's Tree Fort* web-site records the date of his christening as having been June 17, 1896.

Dept. of Minister Militia
St. John's

British Hr
June 20th, 18

Dear Sir:-

As I havn't heard anything about my sons money since his death " Pte Martin Seviour I would like to know if there is any allotment for to be sent home as I am a cripple myself & has one son left that is any support to me, as I havn't heard anything about it since my "sons" death I would like to know if there could be anything sent to me.

Trusting to hear a favourable reply

I am

Sincerely yours
Ananias Seviour

Noted on letter: Pte Martin Sceviour had no allotment

(Right: *The sacrifice of Private Sceviour is honoured on the Screen Wall in the Military Plot, Mount Pleasant Cemetery, in St. John's. – photograph from 2010*)



The above dossier has been researched, compiled and produced by Alistair Rice. Please email any suggested amendments or content revisions if desired to criceadam@yahoo.ca. Last updated – January 31, 2023.