



Private Frank Smart (Regimental Number 3578) is interred in Fort Massey Military Cemetery, Halifax, Nova Scotia: grave reference, S.E.G. 77..

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a *fisherman* earning a monthly twenty-five dollars, Frank Smart was a volunteer of the Fourteenth Recruitment Draft. He presented himself for medical examination on April 10, 1917, at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland. It was a procedure which was to pronounce him as...*Fit for Foreign Service*.**

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

It was to be on the day of that medical assessment, April 10, and at the same venue, that Frank Smart would enlist. He was thus 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.

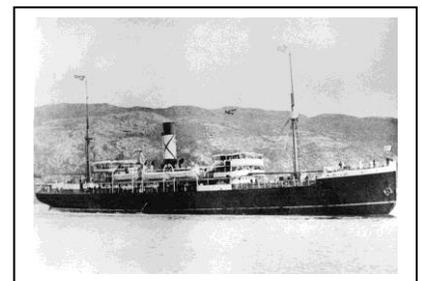
****At the outset of the War, perhaps because it was felt by the authorities that it would be a conflict of short duration, the recruits enlisted for only a single year. As the War progressed, however, this was obviously going to cause problems and the men were encouraged to re-enlist. Later recruits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

Only some few hours were now to follow before there then came to pass, while still at the *CLB Armoury* on Harvey Road, the final formality of his enlistment: attestation. On that same tenth day of that month of April he pledged his allegiance to the reigning monarch, George V, whereupon, at that moment, Frank Smart became...*a soldier of the King.*

There were now to pass five weeks and four days after his attestation before Private Smart, Number 3578, was to leave Newfoundland for *overseas service*. How he was to spend this prolonged interval after his attestation appears not to have been documented. It may be that he was to return temporarily to work and was perhaps to spend time at his home at Alexander Bay in the District of Bonavista, although of course this is only speculation and he may well have chosen – or more likely *been* chosen - to remain in barracks in St. John's, even though there was apparently little in the way of military training to be undertaken*.

****A number of the recruits, those whose home was not in St. John's or close to the capital city, or those who had no friends or family to offer them board and lodging, were to be quartered in the curling rink in the area of Fort William in St. John's, a building which was at the time to serve as barracks.***

Those five weeks since attestation having passed, Private Smart was to be one of a contingent of three officers and one-hundred eighty-two *other ranks* – a draft to which had been appended ninety-nine recruits of the newly-formed Newfoundland Forestry Unit - which sailed from St. John's on May 19 having embarked onto the Bowring Brother's vessel *Florizel*, to reach Halifax some two days afterwards.



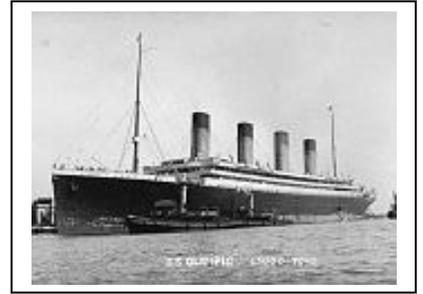
(Right above: The image of 'Florizel' at anchor in the harbour at St. John's in October of 1914 is by courtesy of Admiralty House Museum.)

From Halifax the Newfoundlanders were to traverse the Atlantic on an unspecified ship*, although it may well be that the transport in question was to be one of the largest ocean-going vessels of its day: *Olympic* (see below).

(continued)

**It could just also have been – both sailed on May 21 – either Tunisian or Missanabie.*

(Right above: *The White Star liner Olympic – sister ship to the ill-starred Titanic and also Britannic which, as a hospital ship, had been sunk in November of 1916 – had been requisitioned to serve as a troop transport during the war. She sailed on this occasion on June 2 from Halifax with as many as six-thousand Canadian military personnel on board and as there appear to have been no other departures on or about this date, she may also have accommodated the Newfoundland contingent. – from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site)*



When that time came, however, Private Smart was no longer among their number.

Telegram to St. John's from Major Carty in Halifax, received May 22, 1917:

Doctor first time called to Smart at 11 last night found unconscious having convulsive movements. Had him admitted immediately Hospital, died at 1 a.m. from heart failure due to uræmic poisoning. Everything possible done. No post mortem. Funeral tomorrow unless you order otherwise.

Carty

The son of Samuel Smart (deceased of pneumonia on November 18 of 1910) and of Fannie Smart (née Dovey*) of Saunders' Cove, Alexander Bay – she soon afterwards of Salvage Bay - he was one of several siblings: a letter dated 1917 from his sister Mary – she at the time in service at Clarke's Beach, Conception Bay, and to whom he had allotted a daily sixty cents from his pay - cites two brothers at home, one aged sixteen, the second fourteen, as well as a further sister aged eight.

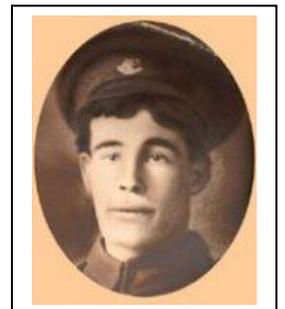
There appear to have been two more brothers: Edward who by that time had died while serving in the Naval Reserve** (also see below), and Walter-Dovey, born in 1895.

**The couple was married in the community of Glovertown on December 24, Christmas Eve, of 1892.*

(Right above: *The War Memorial in Glovertown honours the sacrifice of both Seaman Edward Smart and Private Frank Smart. – photograph from 2013)*

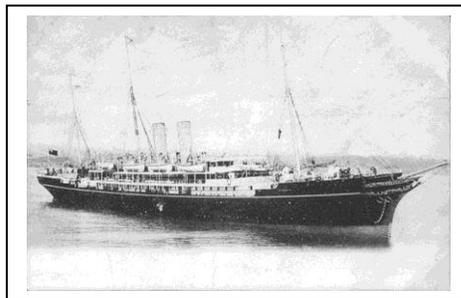
Private Smart was buried on May 23, 1917, with full military honours, the firing party and band provided by the 63rd Regiment, Halifax Rifles.

At home, it was the Reverend R.C. White of Glovertown who was requested to bear the news to his family.



(Preceding page: *The photograph of Private Frank Smart was found on the Canadian Virtual War Memorial to which it had been donated by Norman Smart of Glovertown.*)

****Edward Smart (#1227x, seaman), departed from St. John's on Franconia on the night of November 5-6, 1914, for overseas service. He died on January 13, 1915, lost with the sinking of HMS Viknor (Armed Merchant Cruiser) – the vessel shown here to the right – she having likely struck a mine in the North Atlantic.**



A more complete version of Seaman Smart's story is to be found elsewhere among these files.

Frank Smart had enlisted at the *declared* age of eighteen years and four months. Thus far the exact date of his birth has proved to be elusive.

Private Frank Smart was entitled to the British War Medal for his overseas service – Canada at the time was of course a foreign country.



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 – March 11, 2023.

