



Private Chesley Gladstone Arnold (Regimental Number 1386), having no known last resting-place, is commemorated beneath the Caribou in Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a lumberman earning \$28.00 per month, Chesley Gladstone Arnold presented himself for medical examination - and also enlisted at the daily private soldier's rate of \$1.10 - at the Church lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on April 9, 1915. He then attested six days later, on April 15*.



**A second source has him attesting on the day of his enlistment.*

Private Arnold of 'E' Company embarked in St. John's on board the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Stephano* (right above - from the *Provincial Archives*) only a single week later again, on April 22, 1915.

The ship sailed to Halifax where his contingent took ship on His Majesty's Transport *Missanabie* (right) - likely with Canadian troops - for the crossing to Liverpool - the ship departed Halifax on April 25. From Liverpool they travelled by train to Edinburgh where the Newfoundlanders arrived on May 2. 'E' Company was to have but a few days to savor the charms of the Scottish capital.



Only nine days later, on May 11, the entire Battalion was posted for training from Edinburgh to a tented Stobs Camp near the Scottish town of Hawick.

(Right: *the Regiment on parade at Stobs Camp on June 10, the day it received its Colours* - courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo)



From Stobs, some thirteen weeks later again, in early August, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', the senior Companies now become 1st Battalion, the Newfoundland Regiment, were transferred to Aldershot in southern England. There they were to undergo final preparations - and a royal inspection - before departing on active service to the Middle East and to the fighting on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

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'E' and 'F' Companies – the latter having arrived at Stobs Camp on July 10 - were to be posted to the new Regimental Depot and were to form the nucleus of the newly-formed 2nd (Reserve) Battalion. The Depot was to be Private Arnold's home for the following seven months and it was there that he was prevailed upon to re-enlist in early February of 1916 – the date perhaps the 1st or the 7th – for the duration of the war.

****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.***

The Regimental Depot was being established during that summer of 1915 in the Royal Borough of Ayr on the west coast of Scotland to serve as a base for the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion. It was from there – as of November of 1915 and up until January of 1918 – that the new-comers from home were to be sent in drafts, at first to Gallipoli and later to the Western Front, to bolster the four fighting companies of 1st Battalion.

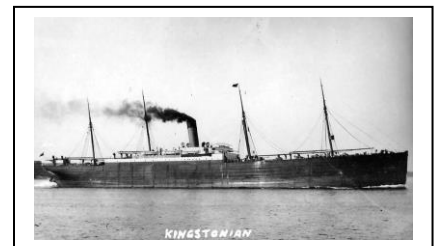


(Right above: an aerial view of Ayr – probably from the period between the Wars: Newton-on Ayr is to the left of the River Ayr and the Royal Borough is to the right. – courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr)

It was not until March 13 of the following year, 1916, that Private Arnold, as a soldier of the 2nd Re-enforcement Draft from Ayr, passed through the naval establishment of Devonport on the English south coast, en route – although no-one knew it at the time – for France. The Newfoundlanders were to travel by way of Egypt*. By that time he had re-enlisted at Ayr, on February 1, some six weeks before his departure**.

****At the time there was some confusion as to whether 1st Battalion would stay in the Middle East or not, and this draft apparently had orders to set sail for Egypt. However, there was surely a bureaucratic foul-up as 1st Battalion embarked in Egypt on only the following day for passage to France. The two ships presumably passed each other in the Mediterranean Sea, going in opposite directions.***

One can only suppose that the ship from Devonport was carrying supplies and/ or other personnel that were needed in the Middle East and could not be turned around – either that or the vessel had no radio. The 1st Draft then voyaged to Marseilles from Alexandria on HMT Kingstonian (right).



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(Right: *British troops march through the port area of the French city of Marseille.* – from a vintage post-card)



The draft of one-hundred forty *other ranks*, under the command of Captain Ledingham, having disembarked in the French Mediterranean port of Marseilles on April 3, joined 1st Battalion on April 8 in the small town of Louvencourt where the parent unit – still on its march towards the front - had already been billeted for two days.

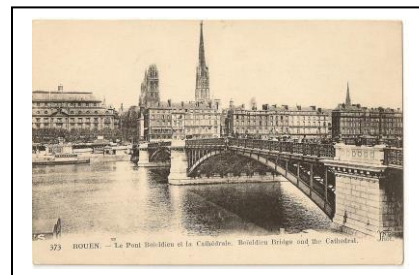
Five days later, on April 13, 1st Battalion marched into the village of Englebelmer – situated at some three kilometres behind the front - where the Newfoundlanders were billeted, welcomed re-enforcements from Rouen on the 15th and, on the evening of that day, were ordered forward into the British lines to work in some of the communication trenches.



(Right: *part of the re-constructed trench system to be found in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel* – photograph from 2007(?))

The Newfoundlanders were also soon to be preparing for the British campaign of that summer, to be fought on the ground named for the meandering river that flowed – and today still flows – innocuously through the southern part of the region, *the Somme*.

On June 6, Private Arnold was admitted into the 87th Field Ambulance, diagnosed as suffering from jaundice. He was immediately – on the same day – transferred to the 4th Casualty Clearing Station at the community of Beauval. He was from there forwarded to the 10th General Hospital in Rouen on the 13th of that same month and finally transferred to the 2nd Convalescent Depot in the same area on June 19-20.



(Right above: *the River Seine flowing through the centre of the French port-city of Rouen and past its venerable gothic cathedral on or about the time of the Great War* – from a vintage post-card)

Private Arnold was discharged *to duty* to the Base Depot at Rouen on July 2, the day after the failed British attack on *the Somme*. From there he was admitted, on the following day, to the 29th ISD – for dental work - also at Rouen.

After the debacle of July 1 at Beaumont-Hamel – and also elsewhere, the British having incurred some fifty-seven thousand casualties on the first day of *the Somme* – 1st Battalion, despite its depleted numbers, had been ordered back into the trenches. On July 17, having been relieved, the Newfoundlanders retired to the village of Acheux.

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There, on the 21st, a re-enforcement draft from Rouen, this one of one-hundred twenty-six *other ranks*, Private Arnold among that number, reported *to duty*. It was the second such contingent to arrive since July 1, yet the total strength of 1st Battalion was still less than four hundred personnel in all, compared to the full regulation battalion complement of more than one thousand.

On July 23, 1st Battalion was out of the line and in the process of marching sixteen kilometres to billets in Beauval, where it arrived in the early afternoon. No draft is reported as arriving until the 24th, the next day, when sixty other ranks showed up – which does *not* mean that it was not Private Arnold’s contingent. On the other hand, a larger force of one-hundred twenty-six other ranks had already been added to the Battalion on the 21st.

On July 27-28 of 1916, 1st Battalion moved north and entered Belgium for the first time. It had been ordered to the *Ypres Salient*, one of the most dangerous pieces of real estate on the entire *Western Front*, there to continue to re-enforce and to re-organize. The Salient was relatively quiet during the time of the Newfoundlanders’ posting there, yet they nonetheless incurred casualties, a number of them fatal. On October 8, after ten weeks in Belgium, 1st Battalion moved south back to France and back to the area of – and the battle of – the Somme.



(Right above: *the entrance to ‘A’ Company’s quarters in the ramparts of Ypres when it was posted there in 1916 – photograph from 2010*)

(Right: *the city of Ypres towards the end of 1915 – and eight months before the Newfoundlanders were posted there for the first time – from a vintage post-card*)



Four days after its return to France, on October 12, 1st Battalion went again to the attack at a place called Gueudecourt. It proved to be another costly affair – two hundred and thirty-nine casualties all told - for little gain.



(Right: *This is the ground over which 1st Battalion advanced and then mostly conceded at Gueudecourt on October 12. Some managed to reach the area where today stand the copse of trees and the Gueudecourt Caribou, on the far right horizon. – photograph from 2007*)

After Gueudecourt, 1st Battalion continued its watch in and out of the trenches of *the Somme* – not without casualties – during the late fall and early winter, a period broken only by the several weeks spent in *Corps Reserve* during the Christmas period, encamped well to the rear and close to the city of Amiens.



(Preceding page: a British camp, in not particularly clement conditions, somewhere on the Continent during a winter of the Great War – from a vintage post-card)

After their welcome six-week Christmas respite, the Newfoundlanders officially returned to active service on January 23, 1917, although they had been back in the trenches already by that date and had incurred their first casualties of 1917.

The only infantry activity directly involving 1st Battalion during that entire period – from the action at Gueudecourt in mid-October of 1916, until Monchy-le-Preux in April of 1917 – was to be the sharp engagement at Sailly-Saillisel at the end of February and beginning of March, an action which brought this episode in the Newfoundlanders' War – in the area of *the Somme* - to a close.



(Right above: *The fighting during the time of the Battalion's posting to Sailly-Saillisel took place on the far side of the village which was no more than a heap of rubble at the time.* - photograph from 2009(?))

After Sailly-Saillisel the month of March was a quiet time for the Newfoundlanders; having departed from the trenches, they now spent their time near the communities of Meaulté and Camps-en-Amienois re-enforcing, re-organizing, and training for upcoming events. They even had the pleasure of a visit from the Regimental Band, and also one from the Prime Minister of Newfoundland, Sir Edward Morris (right), the latter on March 17, St. Patrick's Day.



On March 29, 1st Battalion began to make its way – on foot – from Camps-en-Amienois to the north-east, towards the venerable medieval city of Arras and eventually beyond, their march to finish amid the rubble of the village of Monchy-le-Preux.



(Right: *the remnants of the Grande Place in Arras at the time of the Great War – from Illustration*)

On April 9 the British Army launched an offensive in the area to the north of the Somme battlefields; this was the so-called *Battle of Arras* intended to support a French effort elsewhere. In terms of the daily count of casualties it was the most expensive operation of the War for the British, its only positive episode being the Canadian assault of Vimy Ridge on the opening day of the battle, Easter Monday. The French offensive was a disaster.



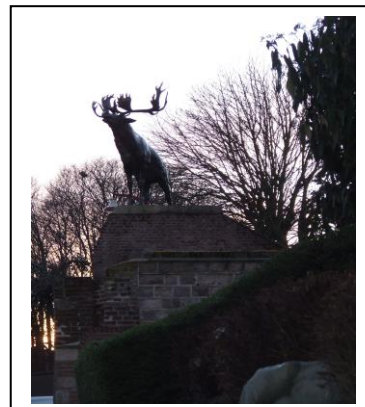
(Right above: *the Canadian National Memorial which stands on Vimy Ridge – photograph from 2010*)

1st Battalion was to play its part in the *Battle of Arras*, a role that began at a place called Monchy-le-Preux on April 14 and which finished ten days later, on April 23, perhaps a kilometre distant, at *Les Fosses Farm*. After *Beaumont-Hamel*, Monchy-le-Preux was the Newfoundlanders' costliest day of the war, four-hundred eighty-seven casualties on April 14 alone.



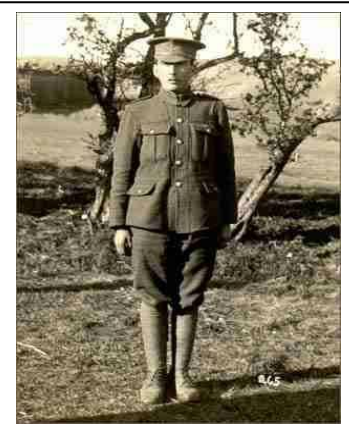
(Right above: *The village of Monchy-le-Preux as seen today from the western – in 1917, the British – side of the community. The Newfoundlanders advanced, out of the ruins of the place, to the east, away from the camera. – photograph from 2013*)

The son of William Arnold, lumberman, and Alice Mary Arnold (née *Stratton*, she William's second wife) – to whom he had allotted a daily allowance of sixty cents from his pay - of Traytown (formerly *Troytown*), Alexander Bay, Bonavista Bay, he was also brother to Hannah and Arthur – as well as step-brother to Lilly, Jabez, Richard, Bertha and Ann.



Private Arnold was reported as *missing in action* on April 14, 1917, while serving as a signaller with 'B' Company at Monchy-le-Preux during the fighting of the day.

However, a memo submitted on June 5 of that year by the General Officer Commanding 86th Infantry Brigade – presumably recording the identification and burial of his remains – resulted in Private Arnold's record being amended, as of June 14, so as to read *killed in action*. Ensign Burry of the Salvation Army in Alexander Bay was requested to bear the news to his family.



Chesley Gladstone Arnold had enlisted at the *declared* age of nineteen years: one source, however, has him born in 1893.

(Right above: *The Caribou at Monchy-le-Preux stands on top of the remnants of a German strongpoint in the centre of the community. – photograph from 2012*)

(Right above: *The photograph of Private Arnold has been donated to the Grand Banks Genealogy site by Myron Arnold.*)

(Right: *The War Memorial in Glovertown honours the sacrifice of Private Arnold. – photograph from 2013*)

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Private Chesley Gladstone Arnold was entitled to the British War Medal (left) and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).

