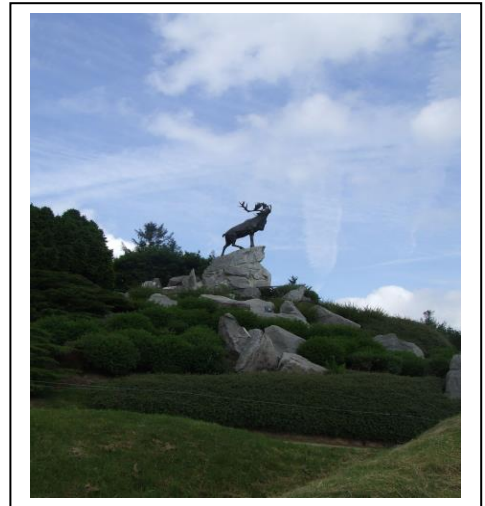




Private Arthur Badcock (Regimental Number 2314), having no known last resting-place, is commemorated beneath the Caribou in the Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fisherman, Arthur Badcock presented himself for medical examination and also enlisted *for the duration of the war* – engaged at the daily private soldier's rate of \$1.10 – at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on March 21, 1916. He then attested four days later, on March 25.



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

However, it was to be the 28<sup>th</sup> of August, more than five months after his attestation, before Private Badcock embarked on *Sicilian* for passage to the United Kingdom.

It was on His Majesty's Transport *Sicilian*\* (right) that Private Badcock was to make the trans-Atlantic crossing to the United Kingdom, the third such voyage that the ship was to make in 1916, the Newfoundlanders likely sharing the vessel with Canadian personnel\*\*. Private Badcock was a soldier of Section 1, Platoon 9, 'C' (Reserve) Company of 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion (see \*\*\* below), it being a draft of two-hundred forty-two personnel in all that was leaving for overseas service.



*\*Some sixteen years previously - as of 1899 when she was launched – the vessel had served as a troop-ship and transport carrying men, animals and equipment to South Africa for use during the Second Boer War.*

*\*\*Sicilian had been re-fitted in 1906 to carry just under twelve-hundred passengers, thus her journey to St. John's in March of 1916 was likely followed by the short passage to Halifax to embark Canadian military personnel. Likewise, in July, she had sailed from Montreal on July 16 with Canadians to embark the Newfoundlanders awaiting passage overseas.*

*\*\*\*3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion was based in St. John's, whereas 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion – 'E', 'F', 'G' and 'H' Companies - was stationed in the United Kingdom. 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was the edge of the sword – 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies – and was posted to the front.*

Upon arrival in the United Kingdom, the ship docked in the south-coast naval port of Devonport from where the Newfoundlanders entrained for the journey north to Scotland and to the Regimental Depot where each newcomer was delegated to one of the four resident companies - and the where the somewhat confusing title of 'C' Company was abandoned.

The Regimental Depot had been established during the summer of 1915 in the Royal Borough of Ayr on the west coast of Scotland, there to serve as a base for the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion. It was from there – as of November of 1915 and up until January of 1918 – that the new-comers arriving from home were 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.



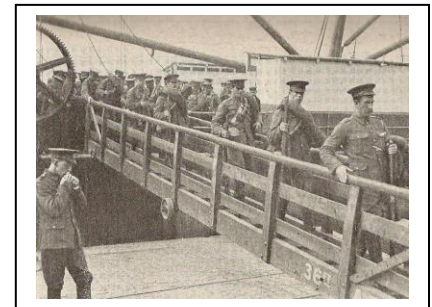
(Right above: *an aerial view of Ayr – probably from the period between the Wars: Newton-upon-Ayr is to the left of the River Ayr and the Royal Borough is to the right. – courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr*)

During the winter of 1915-1916 the men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion had been lodged in several venues, at a nearby military camp at Gales, but also as far afield as Paisley Barracks, some sixty-five kilometres distant. However, by the spring of 1916 the difficulty had been overcome by housing the men in a requisitioned school, in a tented community and in the Ayr Racecourse Grandstand, all in the district of Newton-upon-Ayr.



(Right above: *the new race-course at Ayr - opened in 1907 – where the men of the Regiment were sometimes billeted and where they replaced some of the turf with a vegetable garden; part of the present grandstand is original – photo from 2012*)

The 14<sup>th</sup> Re-enforcement Draft – Private Badcock among its ranks - passed through the English south-coast port of Southampton on November 30 of 1916 on its way to the Continent and to the Western Front.



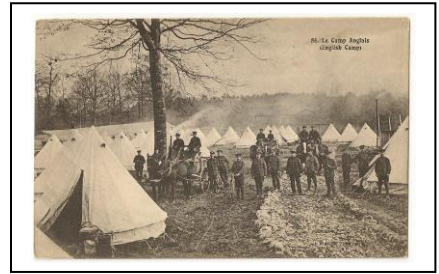
It disembarked in the Norman capital of Rouen on the next day, December 1, and spent time at the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot located there, in final training and organization\*, before making its way to a rendezvous with 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.

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

(continued)

When that rendezvous was effected it was late in the day of December 11 – which is why it is recorded elsewhere as happening on the 12<sup>th</sup>. The parent unit had retired from the front on December 8, but many of the men had been seconded for work at Carnoy and Fricourt. Those spared had marched on to Méricourt l'Abbé which is where the one-hundred seventy-three *other ranks* from Base Depot – Private Badcock among that number - reported *to duty*.



After the episode of October 12 at Gueudecourt, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had remained in the same area of *the Somme* and had been regularly into and out of the trenches. There had been no infantry engagements, but the incessant artillery action had ensured a steady stream of casualties during that autumn of 1916.

The Newfoundlanders were withdrawn from *active service* on or about December 12 – the time of Private Badcock's arrival - and were to spend the following six weeks or so encamped well behind the lines and close to the city of Amiens.

(Right above: a *British encampment somewhere on the Continent, apparently during the winter season* – from a vintage post-card)

After that welcome six-week Christmas-time respite away from the front lines, the Newfoundlanders of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion *officially* returned to *active service* on January 23, although they had been back in the trenches already by that date and had incurred their first casualties – and fatality – of 1917.

The only infantry activity involving 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion during that entire period – from the action in mid-October of 1916 at Gueudecourt, until Monchy-le-Preux in April of 1917 – was to be the sharp engagement at Sailly-Saillisel at the end of February and the 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 Newfoundlanders' 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(?))

(Right: *A soldier of the Lancashire Fusiliers stands in the cold of the trenches at Sailly-Saillisel apparently enjoying a cigarette, during the late winter of 1916-1917, just prior to the arrival there of the Newfoundlanders who relieved them.* – from *Illustration*)



The son of Richard Badcock, fisherman, and Susie (Susannah M.) Badcock - to whom he had allocated a daily allowance of seventy cents from his pay - of Bay Roberts, he was also likely brother to Walter and to Ida Lillian.

Private Badcock was reported as having been *killed in action* on March 2-3, 1917, while serving with 'B' Company during fighting at Sailly-Saillisel, in the French *Département de la Somme*. At home, it was the Reverend Sidney Bennett of Bay Roberts who was requested to bear the news to his family.

Arthur Badcock had enlisted at the age of eighteen years and two months.

(Right: *The sacrifice of Private Badcock is honoured on the War Memorial in Bay Roberts.* – photograph from 2010)

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

