



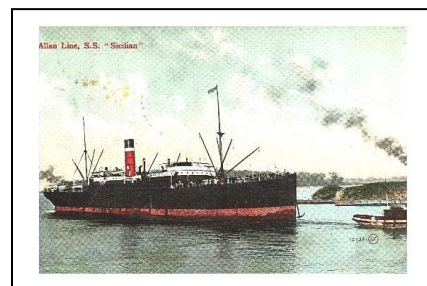
Private John Edgar Stanley Bugden (Regimental Number 2815), having no known last resting-place, is commemorated beneath the Caribou in Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fisherman, Stanley Bugden was a recruit of the Tenth Draft. Having presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on May 11, 1916, he also enlisted *for the duration of the war* – engaged at the daily private soldier's rate of \$1.10 – on the same May 11, but did not attest until almost three weeks later, on May 30.



It was the 28<sup>th</sup> of August when Private Bugden embarked for passage to the United Kingdom and it was on board His Majesty's Transport *Sicilian*\* (right) that he was to make the trans-Atlantic crossing to the United Kingdom.

This was the third such voyage that the ship was to make in 1916, the Newfoundlanders likely sharing the vessel with Canadian personnel\*\*. Private Bugden was a soldier of Section 5, Platoon 10, 'C' (Reserve) Company of 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion (see \*\*\* below), and one of a draft of two-hundred forty-two personnel from Newfoundland in all.



*\*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.*

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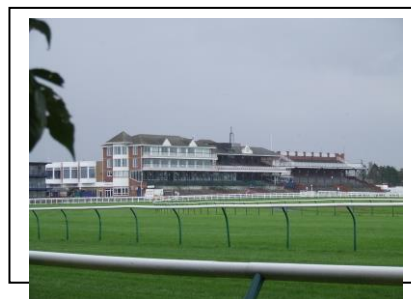
Upon arrival in the United Kingdom, the ship docked in the south-coast naval port of Devonport from where the Newfoundlanders entrained for the journey north to Scotland and to the Regimental Depot where each newcomer was delegated to one of the four resident companies - and the where the somewhat confusing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



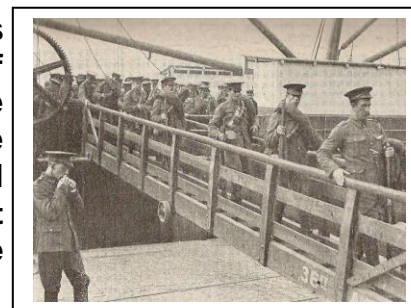
(Right above: *an aerial view of Ayr – probably from the period between the Wars: Newton-on Ayr is to the left of the River Ayr and the Royal Borough is to the right. – courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr*)

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 Bugden 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.

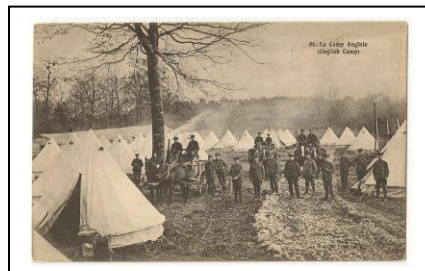


(Right above: *British troops disembark at Rouen on their way to the Western Front. – from Illustration*)

*\*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.*

When that rendezvous was effected it was late in the day of December 11 – which is likely why it is recorded in the Regimental War Diary as occurring 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 Bugden among that number - reported to *duty*. The newcomers were just in time for the six-week Christmas period to be spent well behind the lines in *Corps Reserve*, encamped near the city of Amiens.



(Right: a typical British Army Camp during a winter period somewhere in France – from a vintage post-card)

After that Christmas respite, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion *officially* returned to *active service* on January 23 of the New Year, 1917, although they had already been back in the trenches for several days and had suffered their first casualties – and fatality – of 1917. The next five weeks were no different: in and out of the trenches, the occasional dead, wounded and ill, and the occasional cold winter's day with its snow and ice - which did not seem to bother the Newfoundlanders. Anything was better than rain and mud.

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.



(Above right: *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 the infantry affair at 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, 1<sup>st</sup> 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, on to the village of Monchy-le-Preux.



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(Preceding page: *the remnants of the Grande Place in the city of Arras in early 1916 – 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.

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

1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was to play its part in the *Battle of Arras*, a role that would begin at a place called Monchy-le-Preux on April 14 and which would finish ten days later, on April 23, perhaps a kilometre distant, at *Les Fosses Farm*. After Beaumont-Hamel, Monchy-le-Preux was to prove to be the most costly day of the Newfoundlanders' 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, to the east, away from the camera. – photograph from 2013*)

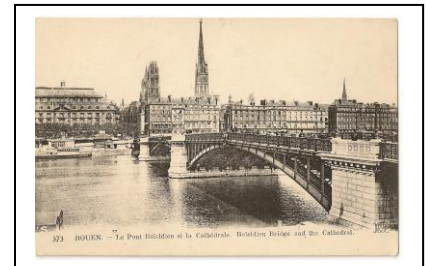
It was at Monchy-le Preux on April 14 that Private Bugden was wounded, incurring gun-shot injuries to his left buttock. Admitted on that same day into the 87<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance he was soon after transferred by ambulance train to the 6<sup>th</sup> Stationary Hospital at Frévent for further treatment. Having spent April 26 and 27 at the 6<sup>th</sup> Convalescent Depot at Étaples, on April 28 he was considered well enough to be discharged to Base Details – then to Base Depot on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

(Right above: *a British field ambulance, of a more permanent nature than some – from a vintage post-card*)

Private Bugden re-joined 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion *in the field* more than a month later, on June 7, being one of a draft of fourteen officers and ninety-two *other ranks* to report *to duty* at Bonneville from Rouen on that day.

(Right above: *the River Seine flowing through the centre of the city of Rouen – under the watchful eye of its venerable gothic cathedral – at or about the time of the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)

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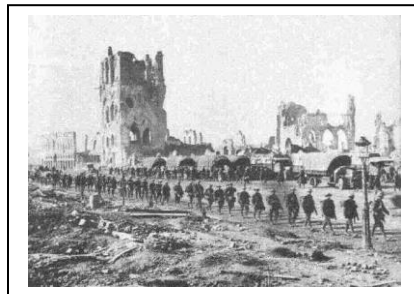
In contrast to the hard fighting at Monchy-le-Preux in April, May of 1917 had been a period when the Newfoundlanders had been ordered hither and thither on the Arras front, in and out of the trenches. Apart from the ever-present artillery, had been little infantry activity – except for the marching.

(Right: *Newfoundland troops on the march in the community of Berneville in early May of 1917 – from *The War Illustrated**)



At the beginning of June, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion retired from the line to Bonneville and was there to spend its time re-enforcing – as witness the arrival of Private Bugden's draft - re-organizing and training for the upcoming British offensive of the summer – and as it transpired, the autumn as well.

The Newfoundlanders of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion were once again ordered north into Belgium – at the end of June - 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**)

1<sup>st</sup> 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: *an unidentified – perhaps unidentifiable – part of the Passchendaele battlefield in the autumn of 1917 – from *Illustration**)



A week after the encounter of October 9 at the *Broembeek*, the Newfoundlanders were withdrawn from the *Passchendaele* campaign in order to prepare for yet another upcoming offensive: *Cambrai*. They were ordered back south from Belgium into northern France on October 17 to re-enforce, to organize and to train in the vicinity of Berles-au-Bois, a small rural community a dozen or so kilometres to the south-west of Arras.

The so-called *Battle of Cambrai* was to officially last for just two weeks and a day, from November 20 until December 4, the Newfoundlanders directly involved at all times during that period.

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The battle began well for the British who used tanks on a large scale for the first time; but opportunities were squandered and by its close the British had relinquished as much territory as they had gained. 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was again dealt with severely, at Marcoing and at Masnières - where a Caribou stands today: of the total of five-hundred fifty-eight officers and men who went into battle, two-hundred forty-eight had become casualties by the end of the second day.



(Right above: *the Canal St-Quentin at Masnières, the crossing of which and the establishment of a bridgehead being the first objectives for the Newfoundlanders on November 20, the first day of the Battle of Cambrai – photograph from 2009*)

The son of Henry Phillip Bugden, fisherman – to whom he had allotted a daily fifty cents from his pay - and Elizabeth (*Bessie*) Bugden (*née Gosling*, deceased October(?), 1919) of Epworth on the Burin Peninsula, he was also brother to May, to Louis-Haddon, to Preston-Henry, to Benjamin-Harold and to Reuben-Norman.

Private Bugden was reported as having been *killed in action* on November 20, 1917, while serving with 'D' Company in the fighting near the villages of Marcoing and Masnières.



Back at home, it was the Reverend A. Norman Janes who was requested to bear the news to his family.

John Edgar Stanley Bugden had enlisted at the age of eighteen years and six months.

(Right above: *The Caribou at Masnières stands on the high ground to the north of the community. The seizure of this terrain was the final objective of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion on November 20; however, whether this was ever achieved is at best controversial. – photograph from 2012*)

**Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>. Private Bugden was a Battn. Hqrs. sniper and was engaged clearing the enemy out of ammunition pits in front of Marcoing when he was killed.**

**I think he was buried by another Regt. Who was near us, but I am not certain of this.**

**(Sd.) R. H. Tait**

**Capt. & Adj.**

The photograph of Private Bugden is from the Provincial Archives.

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Levi Marks had enlisted at the age of nineteen years and eight months.

His brother, Private Chesley Marks (Regimental Number 1950), also *died in service*, from blood-poisoning, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> London General Hospital, on July 31, 1918. He lies in Brookwood Military Cemetery in the county of Surrey, England.



(Right above and right: *The War Memorial which stands in Ship Cove honours the sacrifice of Private John Edgar Stanley Bugden... as also does the one in nearby Epworth. – photographs from 2015*)

Private John Edgar Stanley Bugden was entitled to the British War Medal (on left) and also to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).

