

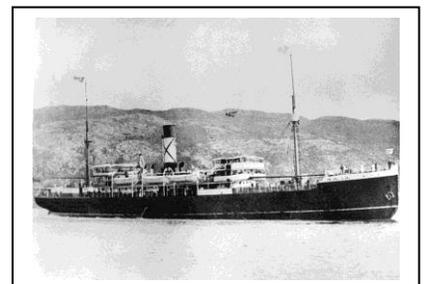


Private Martin Joseph Cahill (Regimental Number 258), is commemorated beneath the Caribou in Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park.

However, since the time of the creation and the inauguration of the bronze in Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park, his remains have been identified.

Thus today, Private Martin Joseph Cahill (Regimental Number 258) lies buried in London Cemetery and Extension, Longueval – Grave reference 6. C. 26*.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a mechanic and earning a monthly wage of \$45.00, Martin Joseph Cahill was a recruit of the First Draft. Having enlisted –



craft are still clearly visible in the foreground on 'A' Beach. – photograph from 2011)

(Right: a century later, the area, little changed from those far-off days, of the Newfoundland positions at Suvla, and where Private Cahill served during the fall of 1915 – photograph from 2011)

On the night of December 19-20, the British abandoned Suvla – the Newfoundlanders, the only non-British unit to serve there, formed a part of the rear-guard – and 1st Battalion was transferred two days later to Cape Helles on the western tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula.

(Right top: Cape Helles as seen from the Turkish positions on the misnamed Achi Baba, positions which were never breached. The Newfoundland positions were to the right-hand side of the picture. – photograph from 2011)

(Right: 'W' Beach at Cape Helles as it was days before the final British evacuation – from Illustration)

(Right below: 'W' Beach almost a century after its abandonment by British forces and by the Newfoundlanders who were the last soldiers off the beach: vestiges of the wharves in the black-and-white picture are still to be seen – photograph from 2011)

(Right below: The British destroy their supplies during the final evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Newfoundlanders, employed as the rear-guard, were among the last to leave on two occasions. – photograph taken from the battleship Cornwallis from Illustration)

When the British evacuated the entire Gallipoli Peninsula in January of 1916, 1st Battalion had been sent to Alexandria, arriving there on the 15th of that month. From there the Newfoundlanders were transferred, almost immediately, south to Suez. To that point it seems that the theatre of the future posting of 29th Division was still uncertain.

(Right: Port Tewfiq before the Great War – from a vintage post-card)

On March 14, the officers and men of 1st Battalion embarked through Port Tewfiq at the southern end of the Suez Canal onto His Majesty's Transport *Alaunia* for the voyage to the French port of Marseilles, en route to the *Western Front*.



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

(continued)

Some three days after the unit's disembarkation on March 22, the Battalion's train arrived at the small provincial town of Pont-Rémy. It had been a cold, miserable journey, the blankets provided for them travelling unused in a separate wagon. De-training at the station at two in the morning the Newfoundlanders still had a long march ahead of them before they would reach their billets at Buigny l'Abbé.

(Right: *the Somme as seen from the bridge at Pont-Rémy – photograph from 2010*)

It is doubtful that any of those tired soldiers paid much attention to the slow-moving stream flowing under the bridge that they passed on their way from the station. Some three months later *the Somme* would be a part of their history.

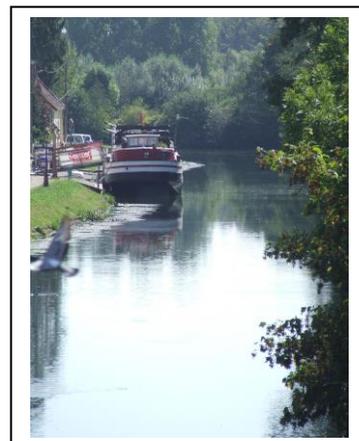
On April 13, 1st Battalion marched into the small village of Englebelmer – perhaps some fifty kilometres in all from Pont-Rémy – where it was billeted, received re-enforcements and, after two days, was introduced into the British lines of the *Western Front*, there to be put to work to improve the communication trenches.

The Newfoundlanders were also soon to be preparing for the British campaign of that summer, to be fought on the ground named for that same meandering river, *the Somme*.

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

The son of John Cahill and Mary Cahill (*Mrs. Michael Sweeney* by the time of her son's enlistment) of Bell Island, it would appear that he had a brother, John, who also served in the Newfoundland Regiment, Number 2081. John Cahill survived the war.

Private Cahill was originally reported as *missing in action*, while serving with 'B' Company during the fighting at Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916, the first day of *the Somme*.



(Right above: *Beaumont-Hamel* - looking from the British lines down the hill to Y Ravine Cemetery which today stands atop part of the German front-line defences - The Danger Tree is to the right in the photograph. – photograph from 2009)

However, due to a subsequent report submitted on September 29 of 1916 by the Commanding Officer of the 71st Infantry Brigade, his record was amended so as to read *killed in action 1/7/16*. It was on October 7 that the London Office apprised the local authorities of the news; on that same day it was the Reverend J.J. McGrath of Bell Island who was requested to inform Private Cahill's family.

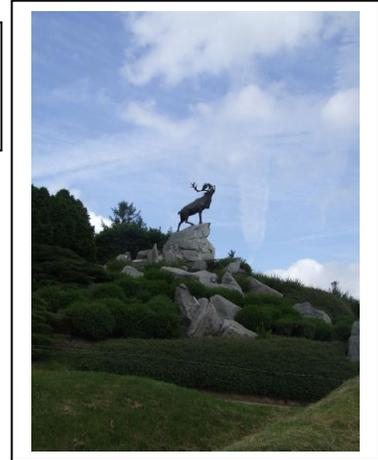
Martin Joseph Cahill had enlisted at the age of twenty-two years.

(Far right: a grim, grainy image purporting to be Newfoundland dead awaiting burial after the action at *Beaumont-Hamel* – from ...)

(The photograph of Private Cahill is from the Provincial Archives.)



(Above and right: *The sacrifice of Private M.J. Cahill remains honoured also upon the Beaumont-Hamel Caribou*. – photographs from 2010)



Private Martin Joseph Cahill was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, as well as the British War Medal (centre) and the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal) (right).

