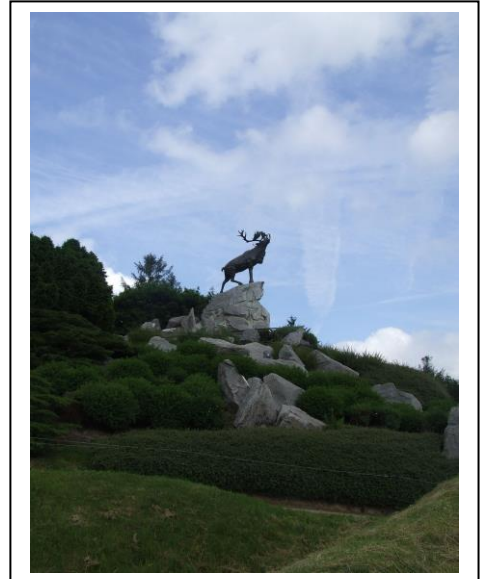




Private Victor Adrian Carew (Regimental Number 1560), having no known last resting-place, is commemorated beneath the Caribou in Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park.

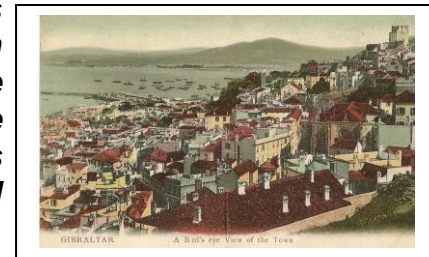
His occupation previous to military service recorded as that of a fisherman – supplying bait to other fishing vessels - earning an annual \$300.00, Victor Carew was a recruit of the Fifth Draft. Having presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on May 21 of 1915, he then enlisted – engaged *for the duration of the war* and at the private soldier's daily rate of \$1.10 – and also attested on the following day, the 22<sup>nd</sup>.



Private Carew embarked on board His Majesty's Transport *Calgarian* (right - from *The Fighting Newfoundlander*) on June 19-20 in St. John's Harbour and sailed (almost\*) directly to the United Kingdom. He was one of the two-hundred forty-two officers and *other ranks* of 'F' Company and eighty-five naval reservists to take passage on that day.

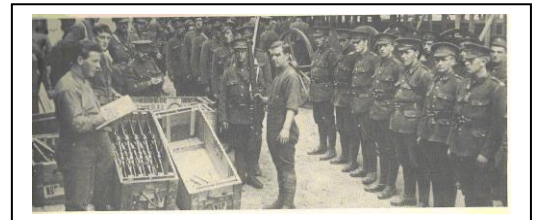


*\*Apparently the ship took nineteen days to make what was usually the journey of about a week. Not only was Calgarian escorting three submarines, but she sailed by way of the Portuguese Azores and then Gibraltar – some of the Newfoundlanders apparently even having the time to cross the straits to spend a few hours in North Africa. She reached Liverpool on July 9.*



(Right above: *Gibraltar in pre-War days: The Spanish mainland is in the background. – from a vintage postcard*)

'F' Company reported *to duty* at Stobs Camp near the Scottish town of Hawick on July 10. It was an important moment: 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment, now counted fifteen hundred personnel, was therefore at fighting strength and could be posted to *active service*.



(Right above: *The men of the Regiment await their new Lee-Enfield rifles. – original photograph from the Provincial Archives*)

(continued)

In August the senior companies, 'A' 'B', 'C', and 'D', now designated 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, were sent south from Stobs to Aldershot and thence to the Middle East and Gallipoli. Those having arrived later – 'E' and 'F' Companies, Private Carew among their numbers - then were posted to the new Regimental Depot as part of the Regimental Reserve, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. The Depot was to be home to him for the next seven months.

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 the base for the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion. It was from there – as of November of 1915 up until January of 1918 – that the new-comers from Newfoundland were despatched in drafts, at first to Gallipoli and then 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*)

It was not until March 13 of the following year, 1916, that Private Carew, as a soldier of the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 2, some six weeks before his departure from there\*\*.

*\*At the time there was some confusion as to whether 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion would stay in the Middle East or not, and this draft set sail for Egypt at the same time that 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was embarking in Egypt for passage to France. The two ships carrying Newfoundlanders, going in opposite directions, presumably passed each other in the Mediterranean Sea.*

*\*\*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.*

(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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

(continued)

Five days later, on April 13, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion marched into the village of Englebelmer where it was billeted, received reinforcements and, after two days, was sent to work in some of the communication trenches of the *Western Front*.

(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 to which it lends its name, *the Somme*.

Private Carew is documented officially as being *with Battalion* on July 4, 1916, a report which confusingly gives the impression that he – and many others reported thus – were not serving on July 1, the first day of *the Somme* or on the succeeding days.

This is far from so: the probability, since he is not reported as being elsewhere, is that Private Carew was one of the ten per cent reserve of fourteen officers and eighty-three *other ranks* held back in Louvencourt on that date, a contingent which was called to the field at about two o'clock in the afternoon when the fighting was abating.

(Right: *a further part of the re-constituted battle-field in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel* – photograph from 2007(?))



His personal file next records that on July 24 Private Carew was under arrest awaiting trial by Field General Court Martial. The charge was theft and on July 26, two days later, he was found guilty and... *sentenced 90 days FP (Field Punishment) No 1. Remitted 62 days authority G.O.C. 29<sup>th</sup> Division, 29.7.16*

During the period while he was serving his sentence, Private Carew encountered a medical problem recorded in his file as '*Septic Legs*'. For this he had been sent to the 9<sup>th</sup> Divisional Rest Station on August 5, to be returned *to duty* on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of that same month. He was not, however, to re-join 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion *in the field* in Belgium until he had finished serving his sixty-two-day sentence.

Meanwhile, on July 27-28 of 1916, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had 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 re-enforce and to re-organize. Relatively quiet during the time of the Newfoundlanders' posting there, the *Salient* nonetheless imposed casualties, some of them fatal.



(continued)

On October 8, after ten weeks in Belgium, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion moved south back to France and back to the area of – and the battle of – the Somme.

(Previous page: *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 the Newfoundlanders' return to France, on October 12, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was ordered once more to the offensive at a place called Gueudecourt, some dozen or so kilometres to the south-east of Beaumont-Hamel. 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 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion advanced and then mostly conceded at Gueudecourt on October 12. Some few managed to reach the area where today stand the copse of trees and the Gueudecourt Caribou, on the far right horizon. – photograph from 2007*)



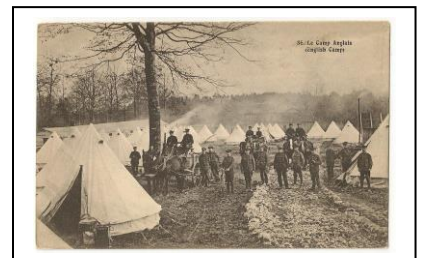
It was on October 12 at Gueudecourt that Private Carew was wounded, incurring injuries by gun-fire to his right leg. Where he was taken for preliminary treatment seems not to be documented but by October 18 he had been admitted into the 9<sup>th</sup> General Hospital in Rouen. Only two days later he was forwarded to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Convalescent Depot where he was to remain for some four weeks.



On November 17 he was discharged from there to the Divisional Base Depot, also in Rouen, before being returned to duty with his unit eleven days later, on November 28. On that date 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was relieving the 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Fusiliers in the trenches in front of the village of LesBoeufs, but whether or not Private Carew was immediately despatched to the front seems not to be recorded.

(Right above: *the River Seine flowing through the centre of the French city of Rouen – with the spires of the venerable gothic cathedral showing – at or about the time of the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)

On or about December 11, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion retired from the front but two-hundred sixty *other ranks* remained behind, seconded for work at Carnoy and Fricourt. Those spared marched on to Méricourt l'Abbé to begin a six-week Christmas period which was to be spent in *Corps Reserve*, withdrawn from the front area and close to the city of Amiens.

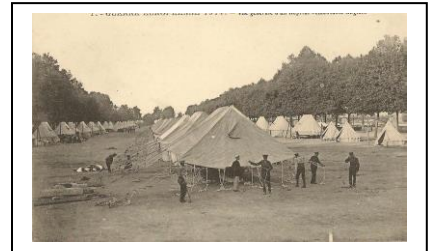


(continued)

(Previous page: *a British Army camp somewhere in France during the time of the Great War and in what appears to be wintry conditions – from a vintage post-card*)

The Newfoundlanders officially returned to active service on January 23 of the New Year, 1917, although they had already been back in the trenches and had suffered casualties. The next five weeks were no different: in and out of the trenches, the occasional dead, wounded and ill, and the occasional *real* winter's day which did not seem to bother the Newfoundlanders. Anything was better than rain and mud.

However, Private Carew was to spend very little of this time in service with 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion: perhaps six days at the most. On January 29 he was admitted into the 34<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station – recorded as being at Boulogne at this time - suffering from ICT (*Inflammation of the Connective Tissue*) of the legs. Two days later, he was forwarded to the 10<sup>th</sup> General Hospital in Rouen where he apparently was to spend the succeeding seven weeks.



(Right above: *a British casualty clearing station – the one pictured here under canvas for mobility if and when the necessity arose – being established somewhere in France during the early years of the War – from a vintage post-card*)

It was not until March 20 that he was released to duty at the 29<sup>th</sup> Division Base Depot there at Rouen and almost a further eight weeks again before he was ordered to re-join 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion *in the field*, which he did on May 13.

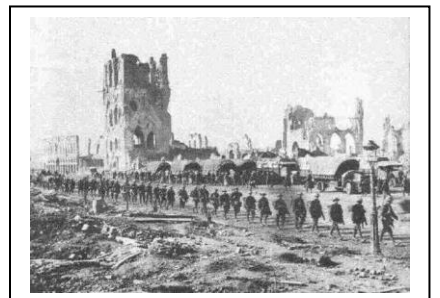
In the meantime, May of 1917 was a period when the Newfoundlanders were ordered hither and thither on the Arras front, in and out of the trenches. While there was the ever-present artillery, there was little infantry activity – except for the marching.



At the beginning of June, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion retired from the line to Bonneville and spent its time re-enforcing, re-organizing and training for the upcoming British offensive of the summer – and as it transpired, the autumn as well.

(Right above: *Newfoundland troops on the march in the community of Berneville in early May, perhaps the 7<sup>th</sup>, of 1917 – from *The War Illustrated**)

The Newfoundlanders were once again to move 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 designated as the *Third Battle of Ypres*, the campaign came to be known to history as *Passchendaele*,



adopting 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 – some personnel even having been granted at the time a ten-day furlough back to the United Kingdom.

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.

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.



(Above right: *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 youngest son of Henry J. Carew and Esther Carew (née *Morey*) – to whom he had allotted a daily fifty cents from his pay and also to whom he had willed his all - of Shore's Cove, Cape Broyle, he was also brother to Thomas-Joseph, Henry-Ernest, Arthur-Francis, Anne-Josephine, Augustine, John-Henry, Gertrude-Irene (Eileen?), Clara-Isabella, Arthur-Leo, Mary-Margaret and to Vincent-Morey\*.

Private Carew was reported as *missing in action* on November 20, 1917, in the fighting close to the villages of Marcoing and Masnières. Some thirty weeks later, on June 18 of 1918, he was officially *presumed dead*.

(continued)

Victor Adrian Carew had enlisted at a *declared* twenty-one years of age (although parish records give his date of birth as April 17, 1893)

*\*His brother, Private Vincent Morey Carew, Regimental Number 3140, had died just four months previously, on July 10, while serving in the area of the Yser Canal to the north of Ypres (see elsewhere in these documents).*



(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)

Private Victor Adrian Carew was entitled to the British War Medal (on left) and also to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).



**Havre  
Newfoundland 1**

**20<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1917**

**5<sup>th</sup> June: 1918  
Carew V. No. 1560**

**I saw him lying beside a sunken road on the Cambrai Front. I went up and took his paybook from him and gave it to the Company Officer – I believe the Officer was Lieut. Clewitt. Carew had dark hair, clean shaven, tall – nearly six feet – I should think – broad in proportion, about 29”**

**Inf: Pte. T. Hancock, No. 2378  
Newfoundland 1. D. XV  
No. 14 Convalescent Depot  
Trouville**