

(a photograph of the grave of Private Colbert as yet unavailable)

Private Ronald Colbert (Regimental Number 5188) is buried in the Roman Catholic Cemetery in the community of Bay de Verde.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fisherman, Robert Colbert presented himself for medical examination at Headquarters at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on May 18 of 1918\*. He also enlisted - engaged *for the duration of the war* at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 per diem – and attested on the same day.

*\*This was the month during which the Newfoundland Military Service Act (conscription by another name) came into effect. From May 11, 1918, through to the end of the War, the Department of Militia called a total of 1,470 men into active service.*

On June 3, not quite three weeks after his enlistment, Private Colbert was admitted into the Barracks Hospital in St. John's, diagnosed as suffering from *La Grippe* – influenza. He was then transferred into the General Hospital on June 5, having by then contracted pneumonia and was reported as *spitting blood every morning*.

(continued)

The son of John Colbert, fisherman, and Catherine Colbert (née *Hatch*) of Red Head Cove, Bay de Verde, he was also brother to at least William, John-Francis, Richard, Leo and Joseph(?)\*.

Private Colbert was reported as having *died of sickness, of Left Lobar Pneumonia accompanied with marked exhaustion and Toxemia*, in the same General Hospital only two days later, on June 7, 1918.

*\*Church of the Assumption (Bay de Verde) Parish Records.*

His remains having been embalmed and cofined by Mr. A. Carnell, undertaker, they left St. John's for the journey home on the express train of the evening of June 8.

The Commonwealth War Grave headstone was not shipped and delivered until June of 1923 – apparently it was promised for 1921 - at which time the work on Private Colbert's grave was completed.

Ronald Colbert had enlisted at the age of twenty-one years.

(Right and right just below: *The sacrifice of Private Colbert is honoured on the Screen Wall in the Military Plot, Mount Pleasant Cemetery, St. John's. – photograph from 2011*)



D O Mía  
St. John's N.F.L.D.

Red Head Cove  
Jan 9<sup>th</sup> 1919

Dear Sir

I reply to your request of 2<sup>nd</sup> Inst. and give you particulars of Pte Ronald Colbert No 5788

1 Location of grave

Roman Catholic Cemetery Bay de Verd

2<sup>nd</sup> Just temporarily marked with small wood cross that is no headstone erected yet parents not in position to do so that's they particulars of they 2<sup>nd</sup> Inst

From they father  
of Pte. Ronald Colbert  
5788