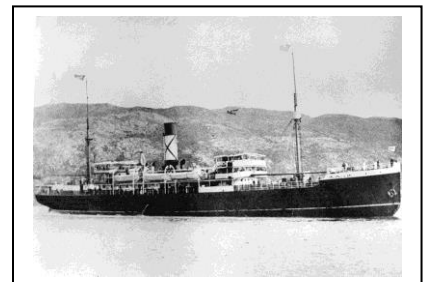




Corporal James Joseph Daly (Regimental Number 3141) is buried in Ingoyghem Military Cemetery – Grave reference B. 12.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of an office clerk and earning a weekly \$4.00, James Joseph Daly was a recruit of the Twelfth Draft. Having presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on October 7 of 1916, he then both enlisted – *for the duration of the war* and engaged at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 per diem – and attested two days later, on October 9.

Private Daly was one of the approximately three hundred twenty *all ranks* to leave St. John's for *overseas service* on the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel* (right), bound for Halifax, on January 31, 1917, from there to take ship to the United Kingdom.



(continued)

Immediately upon its arrival in Nova Scotia, however, this detachment was forwarded to accommodation in the town of Windsor where it was soon to be quarantined because of an epidemic of measles and mumps.

It was not before a lapse of some two-and-a-half months after its arrival that transport could be arranged for the trans-Atlantic crossing to the United Kingdom for the so-called *Windsor Draft* – minus the twenty-five or so personnel still unable to travel.

On April 17, Private Daly embarked onto His Majesty's Transport *Ausonia* (right), one of three ships carrying the Newfoundlanders to sail on the next day in a convoy from Halifax. The vessels were also carrying Canadian reinforcements to the English west-coast port of Liverpool, where the ships docked on April 29.



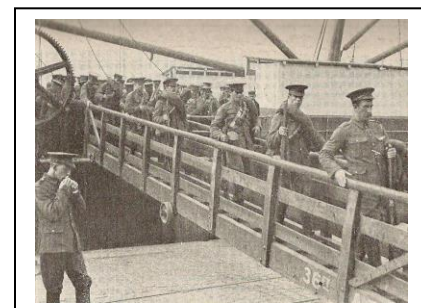
Arriving in England the contingent entrained for the west coast of Scotland. By this time, the Regimental Depot at Ayr had already been in existence to serve as the base for the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment for two years. It was from here – since November of 1915 and up until January of 1918 – that the new-comers from Newfoundland were to be despatched in drafts, at first to Gallipoli and later to the Western Front, to bolster the four fighting companies of 1st Battalion.



By the time that the Windsor Draft arrived at the Regimental Depot, 2nd (Reserve) Battalion was becoming critically short of personnel.

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

On June 11, 1917, the 25th Re-enforcement Draft – Private Daly in its ranks - passed through the English south-coast port of Southampton on its way to France. On the following day, June 12, the contingent disembarked in the Norman capital, Rouen, where time was spent at the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot, to be organized and to undergo final training* before moving onward to its eventual rendezvous with 1st Battalion.

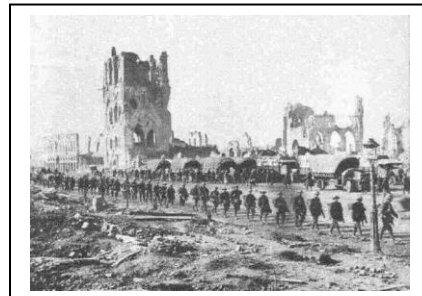


(Right above: *British troops disembark at Rouen on their way to the Western Front. – from Illustration*)

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

The records show that it was on July 2 – the *Regimental War Diary* says, in fact, on the day before - that Private Daly's contingent of two-hundred fifty *other ranks* reported to duty at Caribou Camp, behind the lines near Woesten in Belgium. For the next few days – and nights – 1st Battalion supplied working parties for road-mending and for the construction of infantry tracks.

Only days before, at the end of June, the Newfoundlanders of 1st Battalion had once again moved north into Belgium 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*)

1st 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*)

From September 25 to 29, 1st Battalion served in front-line trenches to the east of Elverdinghe - and also to the east of the Yser Canal.

A great deal of aerial and artillery activity – including gas shells – was reported during that time, as were a number of casualties: seven killed and twenty-seven wounded. Private Daly was one of those to have been wounded.



(Right: *the Yser Canal to the north of the city of Ypres (today Ieper) – In September of 1917 the Newfoundlanders were stationed near to this spot, the entire 1st Battalion on the east bank (to the right in the photograph). – photograph from 2013*)

Wounded on September 27, he was at first evacuated to the 87th Field Ambulance and, on the same day, relayed into the 61st Casualty Clearing Station at Lozinghem*. From there he was apparently immediately forwarded to the 55th General Hospital at Boulogne. He had suffered *slight* injuries due to gun-fire to his right foot.



(continued)

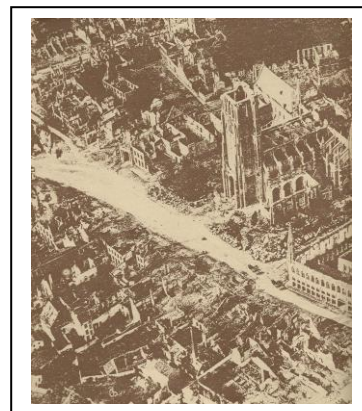
(Page preceding: *transferring sick and wounded from a field ambulance to the rear through the mud by motorized ambulance and man-power – from a vintage post-card*)

**Several names such as Mendinghem, Bandagehem and Dozinghem were invented by the British troops as they resembled the Belgian and northern-French fashion of naming villages. These sites were occupied by medical facilities only – and the inevitable cemeteries which today remain. But Lozinghem seems to be an exception in that it is a real place – however much the name lends itself to the morbid spirit of the British soldier.*

Private Daly's next stop was on October 10: at the 1st Convalescent Camp. Following that it was at the 10th Convalescent Camp on October 18. Forwarded to the 3rd Corps Rest Camp on October 24, he was discharged to duty to the 29th Division Base Depot at Rouen on November 28. He re-joined 1st Battalion on December 12 at a time when the Newfoundlanders were withdrawn – after the exertions of the *Battle of Cambrai* - well behind the lines at Humbercourt, between Doullens and Arras.

Private Daly was one of a small detachment of fourteen *other ranks* from Rouen to report to *duty* on that day.

At the close of the *Battle of Cambrai*, 1st Battalion – once again badly under-strength due to the heavy casualties incurred – had been withdrawn from the area of the front lines to re-enforce and to re-organize. The following weeks were spent at first to the south-west of the city of Arras, at Humbercourt and then at some distance to the north-west, at Fressin. The weather obliged and allowed the Newfoundlanders some snow, a bit too much at times, apparently.



At the beginning of January of 1918, and after that snowy Christmas period spent to the west of Arras and withdrawn from the front, the Newfoundlanders of 1st Battalion returned to Belgium, to the *Ypres Salient*, for a third time.

There, like the other British and Empire troops in the area, they were to spend much of their time building and strengthening defences.

(Right above: *an aerial view of Ypres, taken towards the end of 1916 – from Illustration*)

While the Allies built their defences, by the beginning of 1918 the Germans were preparing for a final effort to win the War: the Allies were exhausted and lacking man-power after their exertions of 1917 - the British had fought three campaigns and some units of the French Army had mutinied - and the Germans had available the extra divisions that their victory over the Russians in the East now allowed them.



It was expected that the Germans would launch a spring offensive. While they were waiting, the Newfoundlanders continued to dig.

(Preceding page: countryside in-between Zonnebeke and Passchendaele (today Passendale) in the vicinity of where the Newfoundlanders were stationed in March and early April of 1918 – photograph from 2011)

Then the Germans did as was expected of them. Ludendorff's armies had already launched a powerful thrust on March 21, striking at first in the area of *the Somme*, overrunning the battlefields of 1916 and beyond; for a while the advance seemed unstoppable.



Then a second offensive, *Georgette*, was launched in the northern sector of the front, in Flanders, where the Newfoundlanders were stationed: the date was April 9. Within two days the situation of the Allies was desperate.

(Right above: *British troops on the retreat in Flanders in April of 1918 – from Illustration*)

On, April 10, the day after the first heavy bombardments, as the Germans approached the towns of Armentières and Nieppe, troops were deployed to meet them. The Newfoundlanders, due at the time to come out of the line and move back to *the Somme* to stem the German flow there, boarded buses at three o'clock in the afternoon but then were suddenly directed southward, towards Nieppe. They were in action, attempting to stem this latest offensive, three hours later.



(Right above: *the area of La Crêche - the buildings in the background - where the Newfoundlanders de-bussed on April 10 to meet the Germans in the area of Steenwerck and its railway station – photograph from 2010.*)

The British were pushed back to the frontier area of France and Belgium. On the 12th of April 1st Battalion, fighting in companies rather than as a single entity, was making a series of stands.



(Right: *ground just to the east of Bailleul where 1st Battalion fought during the period April 12 to 21 – photograph from 2013*)

On April 13, during the defensive confrontation near the De Seule crossroads on the Franco-Belgian border, one platoon of 'C' Company was obliterated while trying to check the German advance. The remainder of 'C' Company took up defensive positions along a light railway line and, with 'A' Company, stopped a later enemy attack. 'B' and 'D' Companies – in a failed counter-attack on that evening - were equally heavily involved.



(Preceding page: *These are the De Seule crossroads, lying astride the Franco-Belgian frontier, also the scene of fierce fighting involving 1st Battalion on April 12 -14, 1918. Today there are several houses and a convenience store. – photograph from 2009(?)*)

What exact role Private Daly played is not known (but see immediately below) - it is only recorded that he was a soldier of 'C' Company - but from April 10 to 21 was to be a difficult eleven days for all of 1st Battalion's personnel. Nevertheless, somehow, the German breakthrough never materialised and the front finally stabilised.

The Regimental War Diary cites *...the remainder of 'C' Coy. under Capt. Paterson, M.C. and Hqrs. took up a position along a light railway line and prepared to fight to a finish. ...there can be no doubt that it was Hqrs., 'A' & 'C' Coys. that by their resistance saved what would have been at least a very serious position for the whole 34th Division**.

**1st Battalion had been temporarily seconded from 29th Division to the 34th during this period of crisis.*

It was immediately after the holding and ultimate repulse of the German spring offensive that Private Daly, on April 25, received a first promotion, to the rank of lance corporal - on the occasion of a farewell parade complete with speeches from Brigadier-General Freyberg, Commanding Officer of 88th Brigade.

On only the preceding day, April 24, and 1st Battalion had *officially* said farewell to its comrades-in-arms of 88th Brigade and 29th Division: the parade of the 25th marking that occasion. 1st Battalion would later be deployed to another unit, but for the summer of 1918 it was to move a world away from Flanders where it had just fought during the crisis of the German spring offensive, to be stationed on the west coast of France. On April 29, the Newfoundlanders took train in Belgium for Étapes on the French west coast, where they arrived at eleven o'clock in the late evening.

The entry in the *Regimental War Diary* for May 13, 1918, reads... *Draft 6 O. R. arrived. Very fine day.* There is no mention, of course, of Lance Corporal Daly who, on that day, was admitted into the 1st British Red Cross Hospital at Le Touquet suffering from a common problem, PUO (*Pain of Unknown Origin*). The problem was presumably not too serious and no further diagnosis appears among his files: he was back with his unit a week later, on May 21. On this occasion his presence was noted by the Regimental Diarist: *Draft of 60 OR arrived. Temperature still very high.*

The summer of 1918 was to pass peaceably enough for most of the personnel of 1st Battalion. For the months of May, June and until early July, the unit was posted to Écuire, to the Headquarters of Douglas Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force in Europe.

(Right: *Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force at the time of the Battalion's posting to GHQ. – from Illustration*)

The cosmetic honour of this new role, however, masked the reality that the 1st Battalion of the recently-proclaimed *Royal Newfoundland Regiment* was no longer capable of serving in the field.



****Although few at home cared to admit it publicly, the problem was that 1st Battalion had run out of reserves and was unable to continue as a fighting entity. It was to be September before even a battalion of reduced strength could return to active service. At home, mandatory military service was initiated – conscription by another name – but with limited results.***

The posting to Écuire completed, for most of July and all of August the Newfoundlanders were encamped in much the same area, close to the coastal village of Équihe – itself not far removed from the large Channel port of Boulogne – and far to the rear of the fighting, of which there had been plenty elsewhere.



(Right above: a view of the sparsely-populated coastal community of Équihe at or about the time of the Great War – from a vintage post-card)

The Newfoundlanders returned to the fray on Friday, September 13, as one of the three battalions of the 28th Brigade of 9th Scottish Division. 1st Battalion was once more to serve on the Belgian front where, some six weeks later, having advanced out of the *Ypres Salient*, it was to finish its war on October 26 at a place called Inghoyghem (today *Ingoogem*).



(Right: British troops and German prisoners in Flanders during the Hundred Days – from Illustration)

On September 28, the Belgian Army and the 2nd British Army broke out of their positions, overrunning the enemy lines. It was the start, for them, of the *Hundred Days Offensive**. On the following day, the Newfoundlanders were fighting at the Keiberg Ridge. After almost four years of stalemate, it was once again a conflict of movement.

****This offensive would prove to be the final campaign of the Western Front and would terminate with the Armistice of November 11. It had begun further to the south on July 18 on the French front on the River Marne, followed on August 8 by an onslaught by British and Empire troops near Amiens in what would also become known as 3rd Somme.***

Just days after 1st Battalion's posting to the 9th Division, there had been a further promotion for Lance Corporal Daly, as on September 15 he was awarded his (acting) corporal's stripe.

The advance, despite fierce resistance at times, was relentless. On the night of October 19-20, 1st Battalion crossed the Lys Canal under fire just to the east of Courtrai – today Kortrijk - on barrel bridges and on the morrow was advancing towards the village of Vichte.



(continued)

(Previous page: *the Lys – both canal and river – at a point not far from the crossing-place – right to left - of October 19-20, 1918 - The Harlebeke Caribou stands about one hundred metres behind the camera. – photograph from 2010*)

The son Lawrence Daly, former shoemaker, then with *His Majesty's Customs*, and Catherine Daly of 182, Gower Street in St. John's, he had allocated a daily sixty cents from his pay and had bequeathed his all to them.

Corporal Daly was reported as having been *killed in action* on October 25, 1918, while serving with 'C' Company during a final advance between the villages of Vichte and Inghoyghem. On the following day the Newfoundlanders marched away from the front line for the last time. The news of his death was not received at home until November 9.



James Joseph Daly had enlisted at the age of eighteen years and four months.

(Right above: *The Caribou at Harlebeke – commemorates the crossing of the Lys Canal and the sacrifices of the last campaign of the War. – photograph from 2012*)



(Right: *This family monument which stands in Belvedere Cemetery in St. John's commemorates the sacrifice of Private Daly. – photograph from 2015*)

Private James Joseph Daly was entitled to the British War Medal (on left) and also to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).

