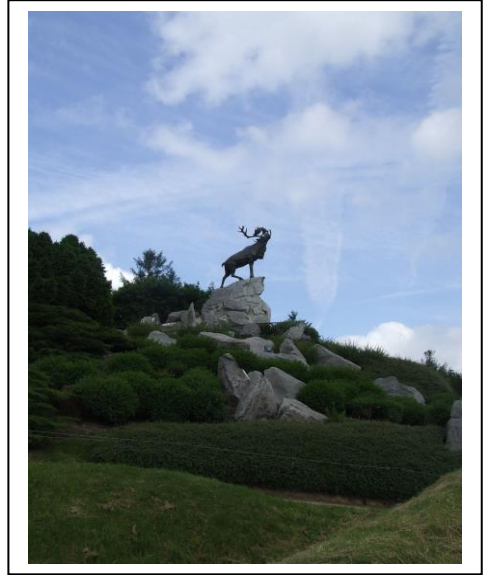




Private Frederick Dawe (Regimental Number 3334), having no known last resting-place, is commemorated beneath the Caribou in Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fisherman and miner, Frederick Dawe was a recruit of the Eleventh Draft. Having presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury on Harvey Road in St. John's on December 14, 1916, he then enlisted – *for the duration of the war* and at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 per diem – and also attested on that same December 14.



Private Dawe was to be one of the contingent of one-hundred four *other ranks* to leave St. John's on March 17, St. Patrick's Day of 1917, for the journey to Halifax. The means of their departure, however, is not clear: in one source, *The Fighting Newfoundlander*, the claim is that it was on board the Bowring Brothers vessel *Florizel*; the files of the soldiers themselves record that it was... *Embarked S.S. Train to Halifax 17/3/17...* presumably via Port-aux-Basques and thence by ferry and train again to Halifax. Other sources have not proved helpful.

It was from Halifax that the detachment made its trans-Atlantic crossing in the company of Canadian troops on board His Majesty's Transport *Missanabie* (right), sailing from Nova Scotia on March 28. Thus this draft was to reach the United Kingdom two weeks or so before the ill-fated *Windsor Draft*\* which had left Newfoundland at the end of January, some ten weeks earlier.



*\*This was the name given to the draft of about three-hundred twenty all ranks which had left St. John's on January 31, 1917, en route to Halifax from where they were to sail to the United Kingdom. This contingent would eventually make that voyage, but about thirteen weeks later than envisaged. They were quarantined at Windsor as the result of a measles and mumps epidemic that claimed two of their number – and maybe a later third. In the meantime, 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion at Ayr was running low on man-power.*

*Missanabie* having docked in Liverpool on April 6, the Newfoundland 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 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment for two years.

(continued)

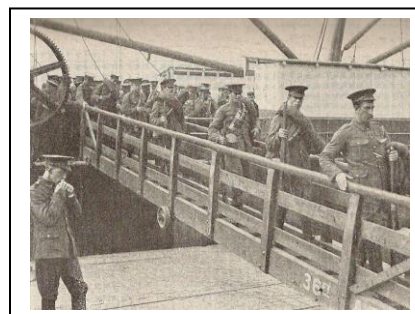
It was from here – since November of 1915 and up until January of 1918 – that the new-comers from Newfoundland were to be despatched in drafts, at first to Gallipoli and later to the Western Front, to bolster the four fighting companies of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.



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

(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*)

On June 11, 1917, the 25<sup>th</sup> Re-enforcement Draft – Private Dawe among 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 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.

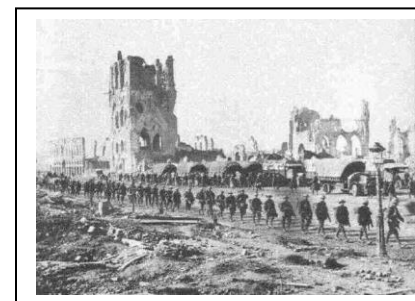


(Right above: *British troops disembark at Rouen on their way to the Western Front. – from Illustration*)

*\*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, 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 Dawe'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 – 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion supplied working parties for road-mending and for the construction of infantry tracks. For that purpose, several of the Newfoundlanders were attached temporarily until July 20 to the 173<sup>rd</sup> Company of the Royal Engineers.

Only days before, at the end of June, the Newfoundlanders of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had once again moved north into Belgium and once again to the area of Ypres. 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*)

Only eight days after the arrival of Private Dawe at the front, on July 10, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was in positions on the east bank of the Yser Canal to the north of Ypres, the Regimental War Diarist making note of just a single casualty, wounded.

On the evening, however, of the day before, the 9<sup>th</sup>, the same writer had made mention of the following... *At about 11.30 pm, Germans open a heavy Barrage on Trout & Support Trenches and Canal Bank Total Killed 6 wounded nineteen* The casualties were undoubtedly left un-noted, given the late hour, until the following day, the 10<sup>th</sup>, on which day that single *wounded* was also recorded.



(Right above: *the Yser Canal to the north of the city of Ypres (today Ieper) – In July of 1917 the Newfoundlanders were stationed near to this spot, ‘A’, ‘C’ and ‘D’ Companies in the front line and the immediate reserve on the east bank (to the right in the photograph), with ‘B’ Company and HQ on the western side. – photograph from 2013)*

The son of Ambrose Dawe, carpenter, and Jane Dawe (also née *Dawe*) of Kelligrews, he had married Gracie (née *Tilley*) – on February 16, 1917 – to whom he had allocated a daily sixty cents from his pay (and who was to pass away in 1920, on February 9). He was also brother to Solomon, William, Mary-Jane and Kenneth.



Private Dawe was reported as having been *killed in action* on July 10, 1917, while serving with ‘D’ Company at the Yser Canal. It was the Reverend Canon Colley who was requested to bear the news to his family.

Frederick Dawe had enlisted at the age of twenty-five years and three months.

(Right above: *Bard Cottage Cemetery lies on the western bank of the Yser Canal where ‘B’ Company and Headquarters of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion were stationed on July 10, 1917, to the north of Ypres. – photograph from 2010)*

(The photograph of Private Dawe is by courtesy of *Branch 50, the Royal Canadian Legion, Kelligrews.*)



Private Frederick Dawe was entitled to the British War Medal (on left) and also to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).

