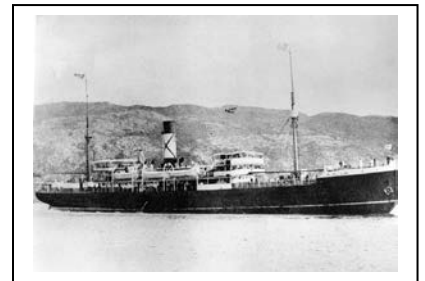




Private William Patrick Dohaney (elsewhere *Doheney* as on a family memorial, see below) (Regimental Number 496) lies in Knightsbridge Cemetery – Grave reference C. 42.

His occupation previous to military service recorded as that of a plumber working with *Moore & Co.* for a weekly \$10.00 wage, William Patrick Dohaney was recruited during the First Draft.

He enlisted at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on September 14 of 1914 – engaged at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 a day. Attesting more than two weeks later, on October 1, Private Dohaney embarked on October 3 onto the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel*. On the following day the ship sailed to its rendezvous off the south coast with the thirty-one-ship convoy carrying the 1st Canadian Division across the Atlantic.



(continued)

(Preceding page: *The photograph of Florizel in the harbour at St. John's is shown by courtesy of Admiralty House Museum.*)

In the United Kingdom Private Dohaney trained with the Newfoundland contingent*: firstly in southern England on the Salisbury Plain; then in Scotland at Fort George; at Edinburgh Castle; and for three months at *Stobs Camp* near the Scottish town of Hawick.



(Right: *Fort George stands on the Firth of Moray to guard the town of Inverness and its well-known Loch – photograph from 2010*)

**Technically, the Newfoundland force was not yet of battalion strength and would not be so until the arrival of 'F' Company.*



(Right: *The Newfoundland Regiment parades at Stobs Camp and is presented with its Colours on June 10, 1915. – courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)

At the beginning of August, Private Dohaney was transferred with the four senior Companies, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' – now collectively the 1st Battalion, Newfoundland Regiment, to southern England, to Aldershot, for some two weeks of final training and a royal inspection in preparation for *active service* at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, at Gallipoli.

'E' and 'F' Companies, the most recent arrivals, were instead ordered to the new Regimental Depot being established at the Royal Borough of Ayr, on Scotland's west coast. There they were to form the nucleus of the newly-formed 2nd (Reserve) Battalion.



(Right: *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 likely while at Aldershot that, on August 14, Private Dohaney was prevailed upon to re-enlist, on this occasion for the *duration of the war**.



**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.*

On August 20, 1915, Private Dohaney took ship on board the requisitioned passenger-liner *Megantic* for passage to the Middle East and to the fighting in Gallipoli.

(Preceding page: *The image of the passenger-liner Megantic in peace-time livery is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site.*)

A month later – of which two weeks had been spent billeted at the British barracks at Abbassia, near the Egyptian capital, Cairo - on the night of September 20, 1915, the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment landed on the beach at Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

(Right above: *Newfoundland troops on board a troop-ship anchored at Mudros, either Megantic on August 29, Ausonia on September 18, or Prince Abbas on September 19 – Whichever the case, they were yet to land on Gallipoli. – from Provincial Archives*)

(Right adjacent: *'Kangaroo Beach', where the men of the 1st Battalion landed on the night of September 19-20, 1915, is in the distance at the far end of Suvla Bay. The remains of a landing-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 Dohaney served during the fall of 1915 – photograph from 2011*)

On November 25, Private Dohaney was taken to the 26th Casualty Clearing Station stationed at Suvla Bay, then evacuated on board His Majesty's Hospital Ship *Lanfranc*, having been diagnosed as suffering from jaundice. Transferred to Egypt, he was admitted into the 21st General Hospital (*Nazarieh Schools*) in Alexandria on December 2.

(Right above: *The image of HMHS Lanfranc is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site.*)

Private Dohaney is reported as having re-joined his unit at Suez on January 26 of the New Year, 1916. He had by then likely been discharged from treatment and convalescence to *duty* to the Sidi Bishr (British) Base Depot in Alexandria.

In the interim the British had evacuated the entire Gallipoli Peninsula in early January of 1916, and the 1st Battalion had been sent to Alexandria. From there, on January 15-16 the Newfoundlanders had been transferred, almost immediately, southward to Suez where they were to await further orders and, as it happened, the return of Private Dohaney.

(continued)



(Preceding page: *The British destroy their remaining supplies during the final hours of the evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Newfoundlanders were among the last to leave on two occasions, from both Suvla Bay and Cape Helles. – photograph taken from the British battleship HMS Cornwallis as published in Illustration*)

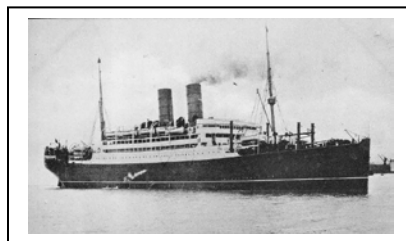
To that point it appears that the theatre of the future posting of 29th Division of which the Newfoundland Battalion was a unit was still uncertain*.

**In fact, a re-enforcement draft was sent from Scotland to Egypt, only for it then, upon arrival, to be ordered back to France. On its way out, it had passed the ship transporting the parent Battalion from the Middle East to Marseille.*



(Right above: *Port Tewfiq at the south end of the Canal at some time just 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 Mediterranean port of Marseilles, en route to the *Western Front*.



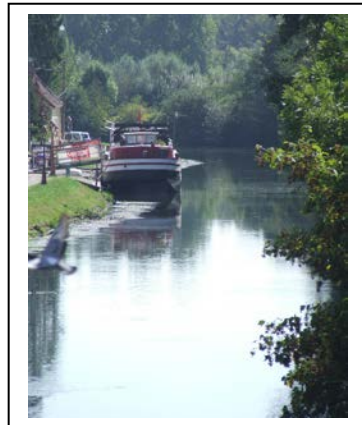
(Right above: *The photograph of Alaunia is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries: Launched in 1913, the ship was to sink after hitting a mine on October 19, 1916.*)

(Right: *Led by an officer in tropical uniform, British troops march through the port area of the French city of Marseille. Once in Gallipoli, neither the uniforms nor those who wore them were to remain smart for very long. – from a vintage post-card*)



Some three days after the unit's disembarkation on March 22, the Battalion's train arrived at the small provincial town of Pont-Rémy. For the Newfoundlanders it had been a cold, miserable journey, the blankets provided for them travelling undistributed and unused in a separate wagon.

De-training at the railway-station in Pont-Rémy at two in the morning, the troops still had a long march ahead of them along deserted country roads before they were to reach their billets at Buigny l'Abbé.



(Right above: *The River Somme as seen from the bridge at Pont-Rémy as it flows through the community towards the sea – 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 crossed on their march from the station. Some three months later *the Somme* was to have become a part of their history.

On April 13, the 1st Battalion marched into the village of Englebelmer – perhaps some fifty kilometres in all from Pont-Rémy - where the Newfoundlanders were billeted, where they welcomed re-enforcements on the 15th and, on the evening of that same day, were introduced into the British lines of the *Western Front*, there to be immediately set to work to improve the communication trenches.



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

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

(Right: *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 taken in 2009*)



(Right above: *Wounded at the Somme being transported in hand-carts from the forward area for further medical attention – from Le Miroir*)



The son of Thomas Dohaney, a cooper with *J. Baird Ltd., General Merchants*, and of Elizabeth – she signed her letters either *Helena* or simply *E - Dohaney* of 21, Prospect Street in St. John's – she later moving to 137, Gower Street - he was also brother to Margaret (*Maggie*) and May.

Private Dohaney was reported as having been *killed in action* on July 1, 1916, while fighting with 'A' Company at Beaumont-Hamel on the first day of *the Somme*. Buried on that same day by the Reverend H. S. Reid, attached to 87th Brigade, he shares a headstone with Private Stewart Stanley Pinsent, also of the 1st Battalion, Newfoundland Regiment.



William Patrick Dohaney had enlisted at a declared age of twenty-three years.

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

(Right above: *A grim, grainy image purporting to be Newfoundland dead awaiting burial after July 1, 1916, at Beaumont-Hamel – from ...*)



(continued)

(Right: A simple commemoration attached to a family grave in Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Cemetery in St. John's honours the sacrifice of Private Dohaney (but here spelled Doheney). – photograph from 2015)



Private William Patrick Dohaney (Doheney) was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, as well as to the British War Medal (centre) and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal) (right).



(Right below: Beaumont-Hamel is a commune, not a village. – photographs from 2010 & 2015)

In fact, Beaumont-Hamel was a commune – it still exists as such today – at the time and comprised two communities: Beaumont, a village on the German side of the lines, and Hamel, which was behind the trenches of the British front.

No-Man's-Land, on which the Newfoundland Memorial Park lies partially today, and where the action of July 1 was fought, was on the land between Beaumont and Hamel, land which today is still part of the commune.



