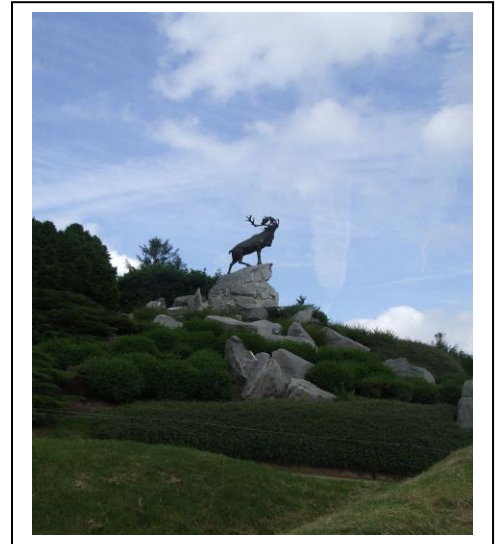




Private Edmond Lawrence Dunphy (Regimental Number 2967), having no known last resting-place, is commemorated beneath the Caribou in Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a cooper earning a daily \$2.40, Edmond Lawrence Dunphy was a recruit of the Tenth Draft. Having presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on July 15 of 1916, he then both enlisted *for the duration of the war* – engaged at the daily private soldier's rate of \$1.10 – and attested two days following, on July 17.



It was the 28th of August when Private Dunphy embarked for passage to the United Kingdom and it was on board His Majesty's Transport *Sicilian** (right) that he was to make the trans-Atlantic crossing to the United Kingdom.

This was the third such voyage that the ship was to make in 1916, the Newfoundlanders likely sharing the vessel with Canadian personnel**. Private Dunphy was a soldier of Section 16, Platoon 12, 'C' (Reserve) Company of 3rd Battalion (see *** below), and one of a draft of two-hundred forty-two personnel from Newfoundland in all.



**Some sixteen years previously - as of 1899 when she was launched – the vessel had served as a troop-ship and transport carrying men, animals and equipment to South Africa for use during the Second Boer War.*

***Sicilian had been re-fitted in 1906 to carry just under twelve-hundred passengers, thus her journey to St. John's in March of 1916 was likely followed by the short passage to Halifax to embark Canadian military personnel. Likewise, in July, she had sailed from Montreal on July 16 with Canadians to embark the Newfoundlanders awaiting passage overseas.*

****3rd Battalion was based in St. John's, whereas 2nd (Reserve) Battalion – 'E', 'F', 'G' and 'H' Companies - was stationed in the United Kingdom. 1st Battalion was the edge of the sword – 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies – and was posted to the front.*

(continued)

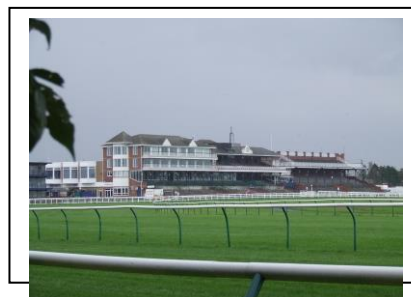
Upon arrival in the United Kingdom, the ship docked in the south-coast naval port of Devonport from where the Newfoundlanders entrained for the journey north to Scotland and to the Regimental Depot where each newcomer was delegated to one of the four resident companies - and the where the somewhat confusing title of 'C' Company was abandoned.

The Regimental Depot had been established during the summer of 1915 in the Royal Borough of Ayr on the west coast of Scotland, there to serve as a base for the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion. It was from there – as of November of 1915 and up until January of 1918 – that the new-comers arriving from home were despatched in drafts, at first to Gallipoli and later to the Western Front, to bolster the four fighting companies of 1st Battalion.



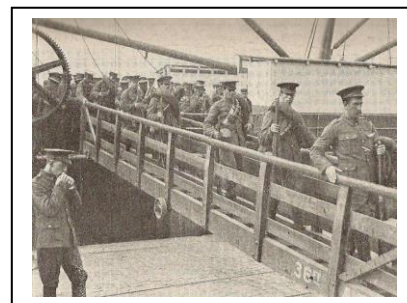
(Right above: *an aerial view of Ayr – probably from the period between the Wars: Newton-on Ayr is to the left of the River Ayr and the Royal Borough is to the right. – courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr*)

During the winter of 1915-1916 the men of the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion had been lodged in several venues, at a nearby military camp at Gales, but also as far afield as Paisley Barracks, some sixty-five kilometres distant. However, by the spring of 1916 the difficulty had been overcome by housing the men in a requisitioned school, in a tented community and in the Ayr Racecourse Grandstand, all in the district of Newton-upon-Ayr.



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

The 14th Re-enforcement Draft – Private Dunphy among its ranks - passed through the English south-coast port of Southampton on November 30 of 1916 on its way to the Continent and to the Western Front. It disembarked in the Norman capital of Rouen on the next day, December 1, and spent time at the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot located there, in final training and organization*, before making its way to a rendezvous with 1st Battalion.

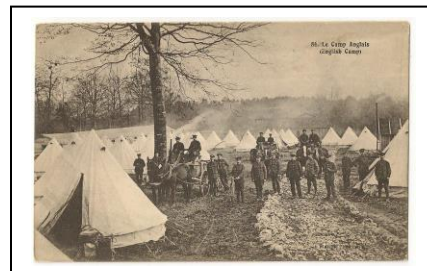


(Right above: *British troops disembark at Rouen on their way to the Western Front. – from Illustration*)

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

When that rendezvous was effected it was late in the day of December 11 – which is likely why it is recorded in the Regimental War Diary as occurring on the 12th. The parent unit had retired from the front on December 8, but many of the men had been seconded for work at Carnoy and Fricourt.

Those spared had marched on to Méricourt l'Abbé which is where the one-hundred seventy-three *other ranks* from Base Depot – Private Dunphy among that number - reported to *duty*. The newcomers were just in time for the six-week Christmas period to be spent well behind the lines in *Corps Reserve*, encamped near the city of Amiens.



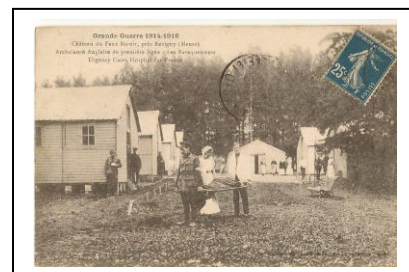
(Right: a typical British Army Camp during a winter period somewhere in France – from a vintage post-card)

During this period, the following report was included in Private Dunphy's documentation:

-23/12 Wounded in left arm with bayonet – at Amienois on Dec 23 Private Dunphy was cleaning his Bayonet. He slipped and fell, the part of the bayonet puncturing an artery in the left arm. – No action necessary

#2601 Pte C Meyers bound the wound up and took him to the RAMC

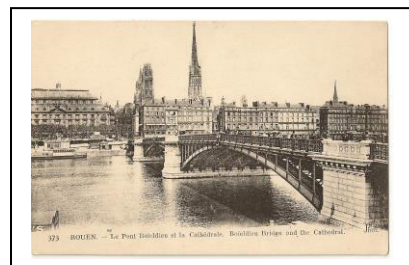
Taken by Private Meyers to the 88th Field Ambulance for medical attention, Private Dunphy was discharged back to *duty* with 1st Battalion on Christmas Day. Whether he was there in time to enjoy the turkey dinner washed down with *real English ale* is not recorded.



(Right: a British field ambulance, of a more permanent nature than some – from a vintage post-card)

Soon after this episode, and while 1st Battalion was still withdrawn and in *Corps Reserve*, Private Dunphy was again in need of medical treatment, on this occasion the first – and apparently only recorded - diagnosis being the familiar NYD (*Not Yet Determined*) for which he was sent to the New Zealand Stationary Hospital in the centre of the city of Amiens on January 9 of the New Year.

On the following day he was forwarded by the 3rd Ambulance Train to the 1st Stationary Hospital in Rouen. The next report of Private Dunphy is that he was released to *duty* to Base Depot, also in Rouen, on February 23.



(Right: the River Seine flowing through the centre of the French city of Rouen – and under the watchful gaze of its gothic cathedral – at or about the time of the Great War – from a vintage post-card)

(continued)

He re-joined 1st Battalion on the last day of March as one of a detachment of five officers and thirty-two *other ranks* from Rouen to do so on a day when the parent unit was spending two days in the village of Vignacourt undergoing final training for the upcoming British spring campaign.

(Right: *the village of Vignacourt at the time of the Great War – by courtesy of the Australian War Memorial archives*)



On March 29, 1st Battalion had begun to make its way – on foot – from Camps-en-Amienois to the north-east, towards the venerable medieval city of Arras and eventually beyond. On March 31, the day that Private Dunphy reported *to duty*, the unit had just reached the village of Vignacourt where it spent the day in training. On the morrow, April 1, the Newfoundlanders were on the march again, a trek which was to conclude on April 13 in the remnants of the village of Monchy-le Preux.



(Right above: *the rubble of the Grande Place in the city of Arras at the time of the Great War – from Illustration*)

On April 9 the British Army launched an offensive in the area to the north of the Somme battlefields; this was the so-called *Battle of Arras* intended to support a French effort elsewhere. In terms of the daily count of casualties it was the most expensive operation of the War for the British, its only positive episode being the Canadian assault of Vimy Ridge on the opening day of the battle, Easter Monday.



The French offensive was a disaster.

(Right above: *the Canadian National Memorial standing on Vimy Ridge – photograph from 2010*)

1st Battalion was to play its part in the *Battle of Arras*, a role that would begin at a place called Monchy-le-Preux on April 14 and which would finish ten days later, on April 23, perhaps a kilometre distant, at *Les Fosses Farm*. After Beaumont-Hamel, Monchy-le-Preux was to prove the most costly day of the Newfoundlanders' war, four-hundred eighty-seven casualties on April 14 alone.



(Right above: *The village of Monchy-le-Preux as seen today from the western – in 1917, the British – side of the community. The Newfoundlanders advanced, out of the ruins of the place, to the east, away from the camera. – photograph from 2013*)

(continued)

The son of Patrick J. Dunphy, master cooper with *G.M. Barr*, wholesale exporter of fish products, and Ellen Dunphy (née *Kean*) – to whom he had allocated a daily forty cents from his pay - of 31, Central Street, St. John's, he was also brother to at least John (see below) and Thomas (lost at sea in 1919).



Private Dunphy was at first reported as *missing in action* on April 14, while serving with 'C' Company during the fighting at Monchy-le-Preux. Precisely one month later, for unspecified reasons, the record of Private Dunphy was amended so as to read *killed in action 14/4/17*.

His brother, Lance Corporal John Joseph Dunphy (Regimental Number 1480), had died at Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916.

Edmond Lawrence Dunphy had enlisted at the age of eighteen years and eleven months.

(Right above: *The Caribou at Monchy-le-Preux stands atop the vestiges of a German strongpoint in the centre of the re-constructed community.* – photograph from 2009(?))

Private Edmond Lawrence Dunphy was entitled to the British War Medal (on left) and also to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).

