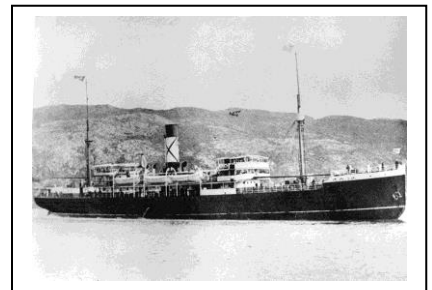




**Private Joseph Wellington Evans (Regimental Number 181) is buried in Hawthorn Ridge Cemetery Number 1, Auchonvillers – Grave reference B. 47.**

**His occupation previous to enlistment being recorded as that of a fireman (of a steam locomotive perhaps, for example) working for a weekly wage of \$7.50, Joseph Evans was a recruit of the First Draft.**

**He enlisted on September 5, 1914, engaged at the daily private soldier's rate of \$1.10. He then attested on October 1 and embarked on October 3 onto the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel* (right – courtesy of *Admiralty House Museum*). On the following day the ship sailed to rendezvous with the convoy which was transporting the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division overseas.**



**In the United Kingdom Private Evans trained with the Battalion: firstly in southern England and then in Scotland at Fort George (right), at Edinburgh Castle, and at Stobs Camp (far right) near the town of Hawick, before final weeks at Aldershot in that summer.**

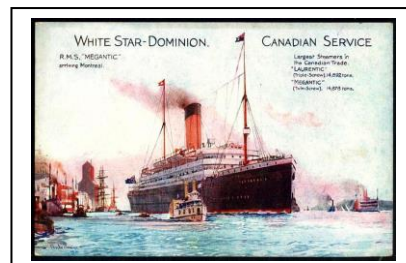


(Far right preceding page: *The Newfoundland Regiment parades at Stobs Camp and is presented with its Colours on June 10, 1915.* – courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo)

It was during his last week during that final training at Aldershot, on August 13, that Private Evans was prevailed upon to re-enlist *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 Evans embarked onto the requisitioned passenger liner *Megantic* (right above) for passage to the Middle East and to the fighting on the Gallipoli Peninsula where, a month later – two weeks of which having been spent at the British barracks at Abbassia, on the outskirts of Cairo, the Egyptian capital - on September 20, as a private of 'B' Company, he disembarked with 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion at Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli Peninsula.



(Right: 'Kangaroo Beach', where the men of 1<sup>st</sup> 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: 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: a century later, the area, little changed from those far-off days, of the Newfoundland positions at Suvla, and where Private Evans served during the fall of 1915 – photograph from 2011)



On the night of December 19-20, the British abandoned Suvla – the Newfoundlanders, the only non-British unit to serve there, formed a part of the rear-guard – and 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was transferred two days later to Cape Helles on the western tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula.

(Right: *Cape Helles as seen from the Turkish positions on the misnamed Achi Baba, positions which were never breached. The Newfoundland positions were to the right-hand side of the picture.* – photograph from 2011)





(Right: 'W' Beach at Cape Helles as it was days before the final British evacuation – from *Illustration*)



(Right below: 'W' Beach almost a century after its abandonment by British forces and by the Newfoundlanders, rear-guard also on this second occasion: vestiges of the wharves in the black-and-white picture are still to be seen – photograph from 2011)



(Right below: The British destroy their supplies during the final evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Newfoundlanders, employed as the rear-guard, were among the last to leave on two occasions. – photograph taken from the battleship *Cornwallis* from *Illustration*)



When the British evacuated the entire Gallipoli Peninsula in January of 1916, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had been sent to Alexandria, arriving there on the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month. From there the Newfoundlanders were transferred, almost immediately, south to Suez. To that point it seems that the theatre of the future posting of 29<sup>th</sup> Division was still uncertain.

(Right adjacent: Port Tewfiq before the Great War – from a vintage post-card)



On March 14, the officers and men of 1<sup>st</sup> 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 port of Marseilles, en route to the *Western Front*.

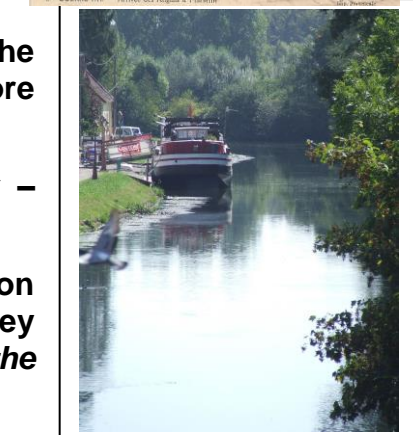
(Right: British troops march through the port area of the French city of Marseilles. – from a vintage post-card)



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

De-training at the station at two in the morning the Newfoundlanders still had a long march ahead of them before they would reach their billets at Buigny l'Abbé.

(Right: the Somme as seen from the bridge at Pont-Rémy – 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 passed on their way from the station. Some three months later *the Somme* would be a part of their history.

On April 13, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion entered into the village of Englebelmer – perhaps some fifty kilometres in all from Pont-Rémy – where it was billeted, received re-enforcements and, after two days, was introduced to the British lines of the *Western Front*, there to be set to work to improve the communication trenches.



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

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

The son of Jethro Evans, labourer, and Lydia Evans – to whom he had allotted a daily sixty cents from his pay - of 41, John Street in St. John's, he was reported on July 1, 1916, as *missing in action* at Beaumont-Hamel, while serving with 'B' Company during the fighting of the first day of *the Somme*.

However, his death *in action* was confirmed on October 7 of that same year in a subsequent report submitted by the Officer Commanding 51<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigade. It was much later again, on September 13, 1924\*, that Private Evans' family was advised of his final resting-place, in Hawthorn Ridge Cemetery.



Joseph Wellington Evans had enlisted at the age of twenty-six years.

*\*His remains were re-interred to where they rest today at or about this time. The headstone was added later again, replacing the original wooden cross.*

(Right above: *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 from 2009*)



(Right: *a grim, grainy image purporting to be Newfoundland dead awaiting burial after the action at Beaumont-Hamel – from ...*)

(Right: *A family monument in the General Protestant Cemetery in St. John's commemorates the sacrifice of Private Evans. – photograph from 2011*)



(continued)

**Private Joseph Wellington Evans was awarded the 1914-1915 Star, as well as the British War Medal (centre) and the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal) (right).**

