

Private Stephen Fallon (Regimental Number 1191), having no known last resting-place, is commemorated beneath the Caribou in Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park.



His occupation previous to his military service recorded as that of a fisherman working for a monthly(?) \$50.00, Stephen Fallon presented himself for medical examination in Harbour Grace on March 8, 1915. Having travelled to the capital city, he then enlisted at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's – engaged at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 per diem - on March 12, before attesting four days later again, on March 16.



Private Fallon of 'E' Company embarked in St. John's on board the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Stephano* (right above – from the *Provincial Archives*) a further five weeks later, on April 22, 1915.

The ship sailed to Halifax where his contingent took ship on His Majesty's Transport *Missanabie* (right) – likely with Canadian troops - for the crossing to Liverpool – the ship departed Halifax on April 25. From Liverpool the Newfoundlanders travelled by train to Edinburgh where they arrived on May 2. 'E' Company was to have but a few days to savor the charms of the Scottish capital.



Only nine days later, on May 11, the entire Battalion was posted for training from Edinburgh to a tented Stobs Camp near the Scottish town of Hawick.

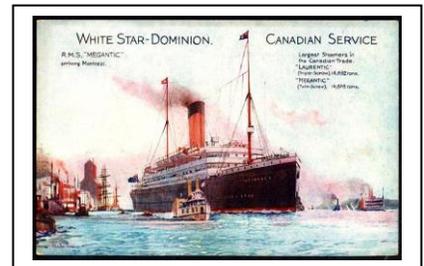
(Right: *the Regiment on parade at Stobs Camp on June 10, the day it received its Colours* – courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo)



From Stobs, some thirteen weeks later again, in early August, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', the senior Companies now become 1st Battalion, the Newfoundland Regiment, were transferred to Aldershot in southern England. There they were to undergo final preparations – and a royal inspection – before departing on active service to the Middle East and to the fighting on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

'E' and 'F' Companies – the latter having arrived at Stobs Camp on July 10 - were to be posted to the new Regimental Depot and were to form the nucleus of the newly-formed 2nd (Reserve) Battalion.

When he was apprised of his transfer seems not to be recorded, but Private Fallon was one of the few from 'E' Company who were to swell the ranks of the units posted to Aldershot - thus he became a soldier of 'A' Company. It was during the period while he was at Aldershot, and as was the case with the great majority of the Newfoundland troops, that Private Fallon was prevailed upon to re-enlist *for the duration of the war*. This he did on August 15*.



**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 Fallon took ship on board the requisitioned passenger liner *Megantic* (right top) for passage to the Middle East and to the fighting in Gallipoli where, a month later – of which two weeks had been spent billeted at the British barracks at Abbassia, near the Egyptian capital, Cairo - on September 20, 1st Battalion landed on the beach at Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli Peninsula.



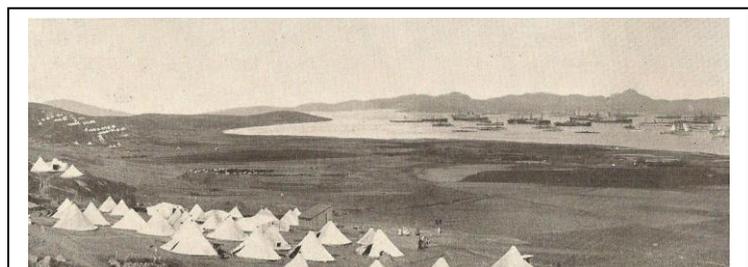
(Right above black & white: *Newfoundland troops on board a troop-ship anchored at Mudros, either Megantic on August 29, Ausonia on September 18, or Prince Abbas on September 19 – Whichever the case, they were yet to land on Gallipoli. – from Provincial Archives)*

(Right above: *'Kangaroo Beach', where 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 visible in the foreground on 'A' Beach. – photograph from 2011)*



(Right: *almost a century later, the area, little changed from those far-off days, of the Newfoundland positions at Suvla, and where Private Fallon served during the fall of 1915 – photograph from 2011)*

On December 1, Private Fallon was evacuated to the 26th Casualty Clearing Station at Suvla suffering from frostbite. On the following day the records show him being admitted into the 3rd Canadian General Hospital at Mudros on the Greek island of Lemnos.



(Previous page: *By the end of the year 1915, Mudros Bay and its minuscule harbour had been almost completely encircled by Allied medical establishments, the majority of them under canvas. – from Illustration*)

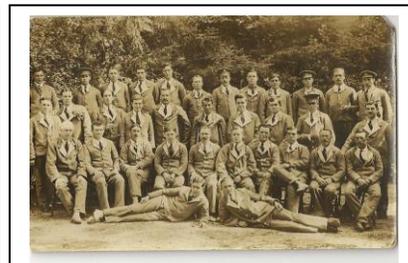
Private Fallon is documented as having been discharged on December 15 to the Lowland Convalescent Camp at Mudros, and then ten days following, on Boxing Day, he is recorded as being placed on board His Majesty's Hospital Ship *Aquitania* for passage back to the United Kingdom.

(Right: *some of the peace-time facilities on board Aquitania in use as war-time hospital wards – copy of an original photograph from the Cunard Archives*)



Once disembarked in England, Private Fallon was immediately admitted, on January 3 of the New Year, 1915, into the 3rd London General Hospital in the Borough of Wandsworth.

(Right: *The main building of what became 3rd London General Hospital during the Great War was opened, on July 1st, 1859, as a home for the orphaned daughters of British soldiers, sailors and marines. – photograph from 2010*)



(Above far right: *Newfoundland patients, unfortunately unidentified, convalescing at the 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth – courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)

From March 3 to 11 Private Fallon was granted the customary ten-day furlough allowed military personnel upon discharge from hospital. He was then immediately posted to the Regimental Depot where he reported *to duty* on the 13th. He was to be stationed there for only a mere two weeks.

The Regimental Depot had been established during the summer of 1915 in the Royal Borough of Ayr on the west coast of Scotland to serve as a base for the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion. It was from there – as of November of 1915 up until January of 1918 – that the new-comers from home were sent 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*)

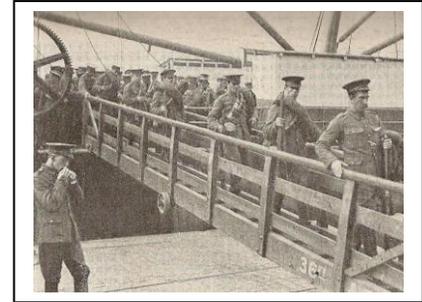
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Private Fallon was a soldier of the 3rd Re-enforcement Draft from Ayr which passed through the English south-coast port of Southampton on March 28 of 1916, to board His Majesty's Transport *Archangel* (right) en route to the Western Front. On the following day, the 25th, the contingent landed in Rouen, capital city of Normandy and site of the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot. The Newfoundlanders proceeded to the Depot for several days of final training and organization*.



(Right: *British troops disembark at Rouen en route 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.*



On April 15, a detachment from Rouen of two-hundred eleven other ranks – accompanied by two officers – reported to duty with 1st Battalion already billeted in the village of Englebelmer some three kilometres behind the lines of the *Western Front*. Private Fallon was among that number.

Only two days prior, on April 13, 1st Battalion had *itself* marched into the village of Englebelmer – thus completing a month-long transfer from Egypt – where it was billeted, welcomed those re-enforcements of the 15th, and, on that same day, was sent – along with the new-comers - to work in the communication trenches not so very far away.

The Newfoundlanders were also soon to be preparing for the British campaign of that summer, to be fought on the ground named for the meandering river flowing through the region, *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(?)*)

Care of one's equipment was one of the pillars of army life and negligence was frowned upon. On May 11, while his unit was billeted at Louvencourt, Private Fallon, having lost his gas-helmet, was ordered to pay for the replacement of the same*.

**A soldier's equipment was not 'his' but only entrusted 'on loan'. On the other hand, quite often, officers paid for their own equipment and uniforms: then again, they were also granted allowances.*

(continued)

The son of John Fallon, shoemaker, and Susie (Susannah) Fallon – to whom he had allotted a daily allowance of seventy cents from his pay - of Cochrane Street, Harbour Grace, he was also brother to Luke, Christopher, Mary, David and John. Private Fallon was reported as having been *killed in action* at Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916, while serving with ‘A’ Company during the fighting of the first day of *the Somme*.



Stephen Fallon had enlisted at eighteen years of age.

(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 taken in 2009*)



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

Private Stephen Fallon 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).

