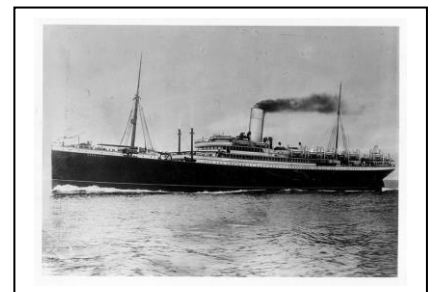




Private Martin Patrick Farrell (Regimental Number 1798) is interred in Serre Road Cemetery No. 2 – Grave reference XXIX. D. 2.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fisherman, Edward Martin Patrick Farrell was a recruit of the Sixth Draft. Having presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on August 31, 1915, he then both enlisted – engaged at the daily private soldier's rate of \$1.10 – and attested on that same day.

Private Farrell and the other personnel of 'G' Company – apparently in the company of several naval reservists and also some German prisoners (these latter presumably to remain in Canada) - left St. John's by train on October 27, to cross the island to Port aux Basques. The contingent then traversed the Gulf of St. Lawrence by ferry, and proceeded by train from North Sydney to Quebec City.



(continued)

At Québec the Newfoundlanders boarded His Majesty's Transport *Corsican* (previous page) for the trans-Atlantic passage to the English south-coast naval establishment of Devonport where they arrived on November 9.

By the morning of the 10th the new arrivals had travelled by train and had gone north to Scotland. There they had been billeted in huts in a military camp at Gales, not far removed from the new Regimental Depot where accommodation for the contingent was as yet not available.

That new 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 and up until January of 1918 – that the new-comers arriving from home were sent in drafts, at first to Gallipoli and then subsequently to the Western Front, to bolster the four fighting companies of 1st Battalion.

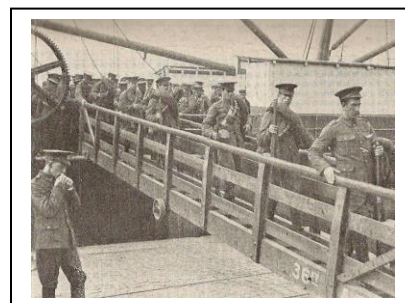


(Right above: *an aerial view of Ayr – probably from the period between the Wars: Newton-on Ayr is to the left of the River Ayr and the Royal Borough is to the right. – courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr*)

It was during this posting to the Regimental Depot that, on April 5, and only three days before his departure to France on *active service*, Private Farrell 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 April 8, Private Farrell, as a soldier of the 4th Re-enforcement Draft from Ayr, passed through the English south-coast port of Southampton on his way to report to 1st Battalion on the Continent. Arriving on that same day, the 8th, in Rouen, capital city of Normandy and site of the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot, the Draft was posted there for several days of final training and organization* before it was to set out to rendezvous with the parent unit.



(Right above: *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.*

(continued)

A contingent of a single officer and forty-one *other ranks* from Rouen, Private Farrell one of that number, joined the parent unit on April 26. At the time all four companies of 1st Battalion were in the throes of a first tour in the front-line trenches, not far from the villages of Englebelmer and Mailly-Maillet.

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



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 that flowed – and today still flows - innocuously through the southern part of the region to which it lends its name, *the Somme*.

(Right: *the Somme as it still flows today between the town of Albert and the city of Amiens – photograph from 2009*)



The son of John (of Martin) Farrell and Mary Farrell – to whom he had allocated a daily allowance of sixty cents from his pay, and to whom he had willed his all - of Marystown on the Burin Peninsula, he was also brother to Richard, Beatrice and five other siblings – a second site cites a *total* of five Farrell children.

Private Farrell was as first reported as *missing in action* at Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916, while serving with 'B' Company during the fighting of the first day of *the Somme*.



However, a subsequent letter – but not a burial report - from the Officer Commanding of 2nd Battalion, of the Yorks & Lancs Regiment dated September 9, 1916, resulted in his being thereupon recorded as having been *killed in action*. The Reverend Wilson of Marystown was requested to bear the news to the family.



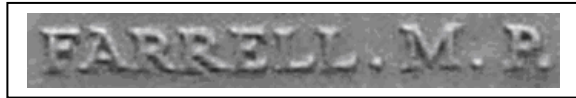
Martin Patrick Farrell had enlisted at the age of eighteen years.

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

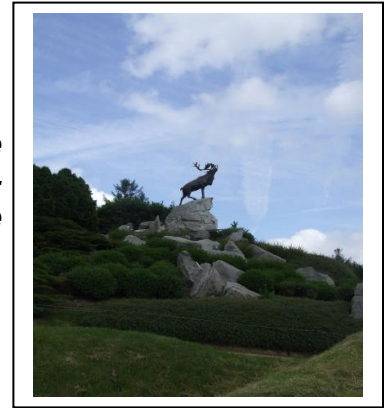
(continued)

Since the remains of Private Farrell were identified well after the cessation of hostilities, his name is also found on the Beaumont-Hamel Bronze beneath the Caribou as being one of those recorded as missing in action - presumed dead.



(Right: The sacrifice of Private Martin P. Farrell is honoured on the War Memorial in the community of Marystown. – photograph from 2015, with thanks to Cyril Bennett)

The photograph of Private Farrell is from the Royal Canadian Legion publication *Lest We Forget*.



Private Martin Patrick Farrell was eligible for the British War Medal (on left) and also the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).

