

Second Lieutenant Cyril Gardner DCM & Bar (Regimental Number 824*), having no known last resting-place, is commemorated on the bronze beneath the Caribou in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel.

**Officers who were eventually promoted from the ranks may be identified from their Regimental Number. Other officers who were not from the ranks received the King's Commission, or in the case of those in the Newfoundland Regiment, an Imperial Commission, and were not considered as enlisted. These officers thus had no Regimental Number allotted to them.*

And since officers did not enlist, they were not then required to re-enlist 'for the duration', even though, at the beginning, as a private, they had volunteered their services for only a limited time – twelve months.

His occupations prior to enlistment recorded as both those of fisherman and clerk, Cyril Gardner, was a recruit of the Second Draft. It was on December 22, in the community of Trinity, that he underwent a medical examination, a procedure which was to pronounce him as...*fit for Foreign Service.*

He was soon thereafter to leave Trinity – likely to travel by train from nearby Trinity Junction – as he is recorded as having enlisted at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury* on Harvey Road in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland – engaged at the daily private soldier's rate of \$1.10 - on December 26, 1914.

Some six weeks later he embarked via the sealing tender *Neptune* onto His Majesty's Transport *Dominion* – the vessel having anchored off Bay Bulls, a small harbour to the south of St. John's, because of difficult ice conditions. Private Gardner departed Newfoundland for overseas service with 'C' or 'D'* Company on February 5, 1915.



(Right above: *The image of the steamer Dominion is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site. An older vessel, she was to be requisitioned during the Great War as a store and supply ship. She survived the conflict to be scrapped in 1922.*)

**There appears to be some confusion as to whether these troops were 'C' or 'D' Company. Whatever the case, they were the second contingent to sail from Newfoundland, the first having gone overseas in October of the previous year, 1914.*

(Right: *The photograph of personnel of 'C' or 'D' Company on board the Neptune on the way to the harbour at Bay Bulls is from the Provincial Archives.*)



Having disembarked in the English west-coast port-city of Liverpool, the Newfoundlanders entrained for Edinburgh, the first Newfoundland Regiment contingent having by this time been posted to the historic Castle in Scotland's capital city. There they were to provide the garrison, thus being the first overseas unit ever to do so.

Private Gardner's Company reported *to duty* at Edinburgh Castle on February 16. Some three months later, during the middle of spring, the Newfoundlanders moved to Stobs Camp, all under canvas and southwards of Edinburgh, in the vicinity of the town of Hawick.



(Right: *Edinburgh Castle dominates the city from its position on the summit of Castle Hill. – photograph from 2011*)

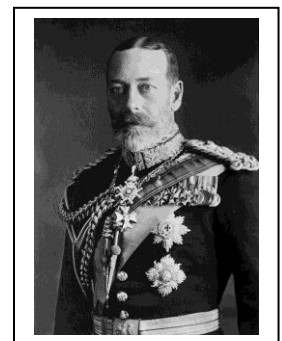
(Right below: *The Newfoundland Regiment marches past on the training ground at Stobs Camp and is presented with its Colours on June 10, 1915 – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)

It was to be at Stobs Camp that the Newfoundland contingent received the re-enforcements from home – 'F' Company which arrived on July 10, 1915 - which would bring its numbers up to that of British Army establishment battalion strength*. The now-formed 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment was thus rendered eligible to be sent on 'active service'.



***This was approximately fifteen hundred, enough to man four 'fighting' companies, two re-enforcement companies and a headquarters staff.**

At the beginning of that August of 1915, the four senior Companies, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', were then sent south from Stobs Camp to undergo a final two weeks of training, as well as an inspection by the King, at Aldershot. This force, now the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment, was thereupon attached to the 88th Brigade of the 29th Division of the (British) Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.



Meanwhile the two junior Companies, the later-arrived 'E' and aforementioned 'F', were sent to Scotland's west coast, to Ayr, there to provide the nucleus of the newly-forming 2nd (Reserve) Battalion.

(Right above: *George V, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India – photograph from Bain News Services via Wikipedia*)

(continued)

It was also to be during this period spent at Aldershot that Private Gardner of 'C' Company – he was not alone in doing so – would be prevailed upon, he on August 14, 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.*



(Right above: Some of the men of 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies of the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment at Aldershot in August of 1915 – from *The Fighting Newfoundlander* by Col. G.W.L. Nicholson, C.D.)

(Right: The image of Megantic, here in her peace-time colours of a 'White Star Line' vessel, is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site.)



On August 20, 1915, Private Gardner and his comrades-in-arms embarked in the Royal Navy Harbour of Devonport onto the requisitioned passenger-liner *Megantic* for passage to the Middle East and to the fighting against the Turks where, a month later – having spent some two weeks billeted in British barracks in the Egyptian capital, Cairo - on September 20, he disembarked with the 1st Battalion at *Suvla Bay* on the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



(Right above: *Kangaroo Beach*, where the officers and men of the 1st Battalion, Newfoundland Regiment, landed on the night of September 19-20, 1915, is to be seen 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 taken in 2011)



(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: A century later, the area, little changed from those far-off days, of the Newfoundland positions at *Suvla*, and where the 1st Battalion was to serve during the fall of 1915 – photograph from 2011)

(continued)

It was during this three-month period, on November 14, while stationed at *Suvla Bay* that Private Gardner received a first promotion, to that of the rank of lance corporal. As will be seen, more promotions were to follow.

Not only in the area where the Newfoundland Battalion was to serve but, even since the very first days of the operation in April of 1915, the entire *Gallipoli Campaign*, including the operation at *Suvla Bay*, would prove to be little more than a debacle: Flies, dust, disease, the frost-bite and the floods – and of course the casualties inflicted by an enemy who was to fight a great deal better than the British High Command* had ever anticipated – were eventually to overwhelm the British-led forces and those of the French, and it would finally be decided to abandon not only *Suvla Bay* but the entire *Gallipoli* venture.

(Right: *An un-identified Newfoundland soldier in the trenches at Suvla Bay – from Provincial Archives*)

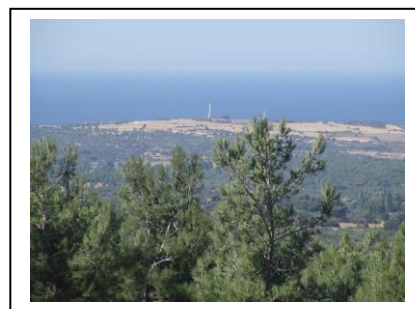


**Many of the commanders chosen were second-rate, had been brought out of retirement, and had little idea of how to fight – let alone of how to win. One of the generals at Suvla, apparently, had handed in his resignation during the Campaign and had just gone home.*

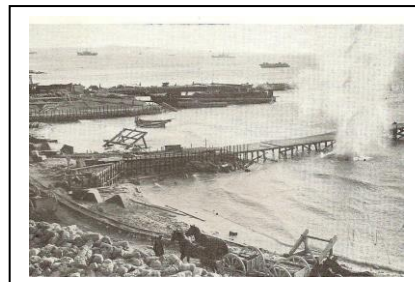
November 25 was to see a freak rain-, snow- and ice-storm strike the *Suvla Bay* area and the subsequent floods had wreaked havoc amongst the forces of both sides. For several days, survival rather than the enemy was to be the priority.

There were to be many casualties on both sides, some of them, surprised by the sudden inundation of their positions, fatalities who had drowned in their trenches – although no Newfoundlanders were to be among that number. Numerous, however, were those afflicted by trench-foot and by frost-bite.

On the night of December 19-20, the British abandoned the area of *Suvla Bay* – the Newfoundlanders, the only non-British unit to serve there, to form a part of the rear-guard. Some of the Battalion personnel were evacuated to the nearby island of *Imbros*, some to *Lemnos*, further away, but in neither case was the respite to be of a long duration; the 1st Battalion was to be transferred only two days later to the area of *Cape Helles*, on the western tip of the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



(Right above: *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*)



The British and the *Anzac* forces – the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps were also to serve at *Gallipoli* – were now only marking time until a complete withdrawal of the *Peninsula* was undertaken.

This final operation would take place on the night of January 8-9, Lance Corporal Gardner and the Newfoundland Battalion to furnish part of the British rear-guard on this second occasion also.

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

**Lieutenant Owen Steele of St. John's, Newfoundland, is cited as having been the last soldier of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force to step into the final small boat to sail from the Gallipoli Peninsula.*



(Right above: *'W' Beach almost a century after its abandonment by British forces in that January of 1916 and by the Newfoundlanders who were to be the last soldiers off the beach: Vestiges of the wharves in the black-and-white picture are still to be seen. – photograph from 2011*)

Immediately after the British had evacuated the entire *Gallipoli Peninsula* in January of 1916, the Newfoundland Battalion was to be ordered to the Egyptian port-city of Alexandria, arriving there on the 15th of that month. The Newfoundlanders were then to be immediately transferred southward to the vicinity of Suez, a port at the southern end of the Canal which bears the same name, there to await further orders since, at the time, the subsequent destination of the British 29th Division had yet to be decided*.



**Bulgaria had entered the conflict on the side of the Central Powers, and Salonika was soon to become a theatre of war.*

(Right above: *The British destroy their supplies during the final evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The men of the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment were among the last to leave on two occasions, at both Suvla Bay and Cape Helles. – photograph taken from the battleship Cornwallis from Illustration*)

It was to be now, during this time spent at Suez, that Lance Corporal Gardner was to receive further promotion. On February 27 he was appointed to the rank of corporal and would put up his second stripe.

After a two-month interim spent in the vicinity of Port Suez, the almost six-hundred officers and *other ranks* of the 1st Battalion were to board His Majesty's Transport *Alaunia* at Port Tewfiq, on March 14 to begin the voyage through the *Suez Canal* en route to France. The Newfoundlanders would disembark eight days afterwards in the Mediterranean port-city of Marseilles on March 22.



(Right above: *Port Tewfiq at the south end of the Suez Canal as it was just prior to the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)

(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 Newfoundland Battalion's train was to find its way to the small provincial town of Pont-Rémy, a thousand kilometres to the north of Marseilles. It had been a cold, miserable journey, the blankets provided for the troops having inexcusably travelled unused in a separate wagon.

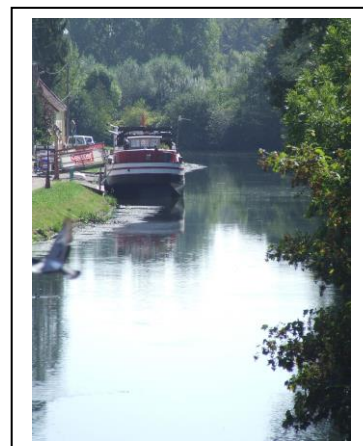


Having de-trained at the local station at two o'clock in the morning, the Newfoundlanders were now still to endure the long, dark march ahead of them before they would reach their billets at Buigny l'Abbé.

It is doubtful if many of those tired soldiers were to pay much attention to the slow-moving stream flowing under the bridge over which they had then marched on their way from the station. But some three months later *the Somme* was to become a part of their history.

(Right below: *A languid River Somme as seen from the bridge at Pont-Rémy – photograph from 2010*)

On April 13, the 1st Battalion subsequently marched into the village of Englebelmer – perhaps some fifty kilometres in all from Pont-Rémy - where it would be billeted, would receive reinforcements from Scotland via Rouen and, in two days' time, would be introduced into the communication trenches of the *Western Front*.



Just days following the Newfoundland Battalion's arrival on the *Western Front*, two of the four Companies – 'A', and 'B' – were to take over several support positions from a British unit* before the entire Newfoundland unit was to then be ordered to move further up for the first time into forward positions on April 22.

**It should be said that the Newfoundland Battalion and two-hundred men of the Bermuda Rifles who were serving at the time in the 2nd Lincolnshire Regiment Battalion, were then the only units at the Somme from outside the British Isles - true also on the day of the attack on July 1.*

The Newfoundlanders were also soon to be preparing for the British campaign of that summer, to be fought on the ground named for the languid, meandering river, *the Somme*, that flowed – and still does so today – through the region.

(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*)



If there is one name and date in Newfoundland history which is etched in the collective once-national memory, it is that of Beaumont-Hamel on July 1 of 1916; and if any numbers are remembered they are those of the eight-hundred who went *over the top* in the third wave of the attack on that morning, and of the sixty-eight unwounded present at muster some twenty-four hours later*.

**Perhaps ironically, the majority of the Battalion's casualties was to be incurred during the advance from the third line of British trenches to the first line from where the attack proper was to be made, and while struggling through British wire laid to protect the British positions from any German attack.*

(Right: Hawthorn Ridge Cemetery Number 2 in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel – photograph from 2009(?))



There are other numbers of course: the fifty-seven thousand British casualties incurred in four hours on that same morning of which nineteen-thousand were recorded as having been *killed in action or died of wounds*.

It was to be the largest disaster ever in the annals of the British Army...and, perhaps just as depressing, the butchery of *the Somme* was to continue for the next four and a half months.



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

In fact, Beaumont-Hamel was a commune – it still exists today – at the time comprising two communities: Beaumont, a village on the German side of the lines, and Hamel which was behind those of the British. No-Man's-Land, on which the Newfoundland Memorial Park lies partially today, was on land that separated Beaumont from Hamel.

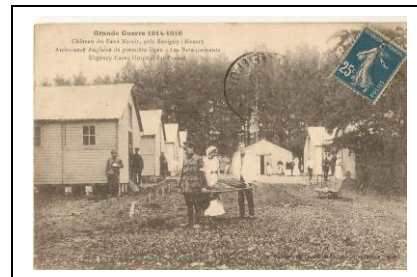
(Right: *A grim, grainy image purporting to be Newfoundland - dead awaiting burial after Beaumont-Hamel – from...?*)



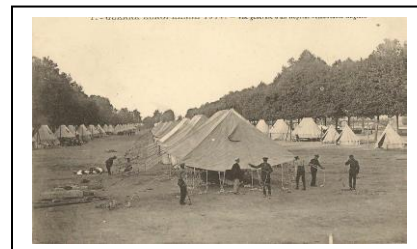
On July 1, 1916, during the fighting of the first day of *the Somme*, Corporal Gardner suffered *slight gun-shot wounds* to the right thigh. He was admitted into the 87th Field Ambulance on July 2, before then being transferred on that same day to an unspecified casualty clearing station. Almost immediately again, on July 3, he was sent on to the 25th General Hospital at Harelolot, then on to the No. 1 Convalescent Depot in Boulogne two days following.

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(Right: A *British field ambulance, this one, in northern France and perhaps later on during the war, of a more permanent nature than some – from a vintage post-card*)



(Right below: A *British casualty clearing station – the one pictured here under canvas for mobility if and whenever the necessity were to arise – being established somewhere in France during the early years of the War: Other such medical establishments were often of a much more permanent nature. - from a vintage post-card*)



Corporal Gardner was finally discharged *to duty* at the British Expeditionary Force Base Depot at Rouen on July 20 before he then reported back *to duty* with the Newfoundland Battalion on August 7.

In that period of Corporal Gardner's absence, and after the events of the morning of July 1, 1916, such had then been the dire condition of the attacking British forces that it had been feared that a German counter-assault might well annihilate what had managed to survive of the British Expeditionary Force on *the Somme*.



The few remnants of the Newfoundland Battalion – and of the other depleted British units - had thus remained in the trenches perhaps fearing the worst, and at night searching for the wounded and burying the dead. It was to be July 6 before the Newfoundlanders were to be relieved from the forward area and to be ordered withdrawn to Englebelmer.

It had then been a further two days before the unit had marched further again to the rear area and to billets in the village of Mailly-Maillet.

(Right above: *The re-constructed village of Mailly-Maillet – the French Monument aux Morts in the foreground - is twinned with the community of Torbay, St. John's East. – photograph from 2009*)

There on July 11, a draft of one-hundred twenty-seven re-enforcements – a second source cites one-hundred thirty – had reported *to duty*. They had been the first to arrive following the events at Beaumont-Hamel but even with this additional man-power having arrived, the Regimental War Diary records that on the 14th of July, 1916, the 1st Battalion still numbered only... *11 officers and 260 rifles*...after the holocaust of Beaumont-Hamel, just one-quarter of establishment battalion strength.

On July 27-28 of 1916, the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment - still under establishment battalion strength at only five-hundred fifty-four strong, even after further re-enforcement – had moved northwards by train and entered into the *Kingdom of Belgium* for the first time.

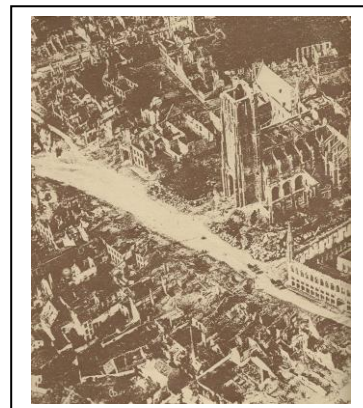
It had been ordered to the *Ypres Salient*, one of the most dangerous pieces of real estate on the entire *Western Front*, there to continue to re-enforce and to re-organize after the ordeal of *Beaumont-Hamel*.



It was thus to Belgium that Corporal Gardner would report *to duty* on that August 7 and, only seventeen days later again, that he was yet once more to receive promotion, now to the rank of sergeant.

(Right above: *The entrance to 'A' Company's quarters when it was posted there in 1916 – and obviously renovated since that time: they still exist in the bowels of the medieval ramparts of the city of Ypres. – photograph from 2010*)

(Right: *An aerial view of Ypres, taken towards the end of 1916: it is described as the 'Ville morte'. – from Illustration*)



The Salient – close to the front lines for almost the entire fifty-two month conflict - was to be relatively quiet during the time of the Newfoundlanders' posting there; yet they nonetheless incurred casualties, a number – fifteen? - of them fatal.

Then on October 8, after having served in Belgium for some ten weeks, the 1st Battalion had been ordered to return south, back into France and back into the area of – and the battle of – *the Somme*.

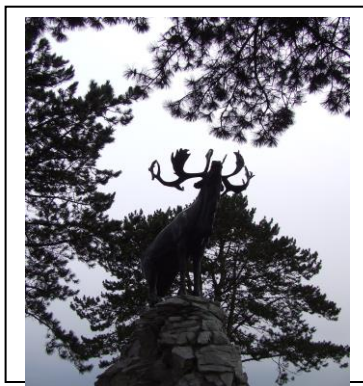
Four days after its return to France, on October 12, 1916, the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment had again been ordered to the offensive; it was at a place called *Gueudecourt*, the vestiges of a village some dozen or so kilometres to the south-east of *Beaumont-Hamel*.



The encounter had proved to be another ill-conceived and costly affair – two hundred and thirty-nine casualties all told - for little gain.

(Right above: *This is the ground over which the 1st Battalion advanced and then mostly conceded at Gueudecourt on October 12. Some few managed to reach the area where today stand the copse of trees and the Gueudecourt Caribou, on the far right horizon. – photograph from 2007*)

(Right: *The Caribou at Gueudecourt stands at the furthest point of the Newfoundland Battalion's advance of October 12, 1916. – photograph from 2012*)



It was to be for his services to be rendered during the operation at *Gueudecourt* that Sergeant Gardner became a recipient of the *Distinguished Conduct Medal*:

Action date, 12th October, 1916, Gueudecourt. For conspicuous gallantry in action. With two men he attacked a hostile bombing party, defeated them, and took one officer and fifteen men prisoner. - London Gazette 11th December, 1916



After Gueudecourt, the Newfoundland Battalion had continued its watch in and out of the trenches of *the Somme* – not without casualties – during the late fall and early winter, a period broken only by the Sergeant Gardner's elevation to the status of Company Sergeant Major on November 11, and then, beginning a month afterwards, by several weeks spent in *Corps Reserve* during the Christmas period, encamped well behind the lines and in close proximity to the city of Amiens.

(Right: A typical British Army Camp during rather inclement winter conditions somewhere on the Continent – from a vintage post-card)



After that welcome six-week Christmas respite spent in *Corps Reserve* well to the rear, the Newfoundlanders were to *officially* return to *active service* on January 23, although they had apparently already returned to the trenches by that date and had incurred their first casualties – and fatality – of 1917.

Just days after this return to the reality of war, Company Sergeant-Major Gardner later was to add a Bar to his DCM:

Action date 27th January, 1917 - Lesboeufs For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He led a party of stretcher-bearers into No-Man's-Land. Later, he succeeded in securing the surrender of seventy-two of the enemy, whom he handed over to a party of another regiment. - London Gazette, 12 March, 1917

(Right top and just below : *The Distinguished Conduct Medal** and – just below it - the ribbon which may be worn on occasion in lieu of it - the rosette shown is in lieu of a silver bar (in effect, a second DCM) which is worn on the ribbon with the medal itself.)

**Apparently, the awarding of a DCM was accompanied by a gratuity of twenty pounds.*

(Right below: *Stretcher-bearers not only shared the dangers of the battle-field with their arms-bearing comrades, but they often spent a longer period of time exposed to those same perils. – from Illustration*)

The following - perhaps somewhat embellished - account of the above incident was due to be published in the British press for a public whose knowledge of the Dominion of Newfoundland was at best scanty. At least one edited version of it was published by *Reuters*, but comprising only seventy-two words.



During the attack by 29th Division south of Le Transloy in January of 1917, the Newfoundland Battalion was on the left of the assaulting battalions but not assaulting.

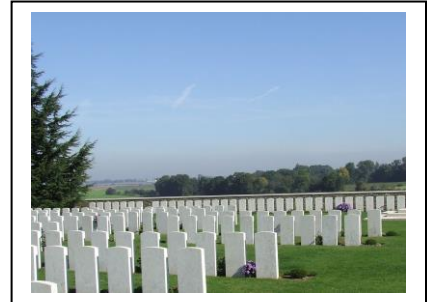
The Sergeant Major of that Battalion went out on his own initiative with some stretcher-bearers in clear daylight to help pick up our wounded.

While doing so, he saw a German officer looking over the parapet of a trench to his left front. The Sergeant Major waved to the officer and approached him carefully. Presently the officer came out and met the Sergeant Major who said: 'Come on! You're late! Everyone else has kameraded!'

The officer then returned to the trench, gave some orders and brought seventy un-armed Germans out of the trench and surrendered to the Sergeant Major. These seventy were in the total of three-hundred sixty-seven prisoners reported.

To this account may be added the following postscript: While leading the prisoners back to his own line Sergeant Major Gardner was challenged by a British officer who was preparing to fire on the group had not the Sergeant Major quickly interceded.

It would seem that a German officer in the group realised that this action had probably saved several lives, whereupon he apparently took the *Iron Cross* – a German decoration awarded for gallantry - that he was wearing and presented it to the Newfoundland non-commissioned officer.



(Right: The Guards Cemetery at Lesboeufs with the countryside in the vicinity of Le Transloy in the background: the episode described above took place in this area. – photograph from 2010)

The incident related above was not officially recognized as an infantry action concerning the 1st Battalion since the Newfoundlanders had supplied only support and stretcher-bearers services for another unit. Thus the only infantry activity *directly* involving the Newfoundland unit during that entire period – from Gueudecourt in mid-October, 1916, until Monchy-le-Preux in mid-April of 1917 – was to be the sharp engagement at Sailly-Saillisel at the end of February and beginning of March, an action which would bring this episode in the Newfoundlanders' War – in the area of *the Somme* - to a close.



(Right above: The fighting during the period of the Battalion's posting to Sailly-Saillisel took place on the far side of the village which was no more than a heap of rubble at the time. - photograph from 2009(?))

After Sailly-Saillisel the month of March was a quiet time for the Newfoundlanders; having departed from the trenches, they now spent their time near the communities of Meaulté and Camps-en-Amienois re-enforcing, re-organizing, and training for upcoming events. They were even to have the pleasure of a visit from the Regimental Band, and also one from the Prime Minister of Newfoundland, Sir Edward Morris, the latter on March 17, St. Patrick's Day.

(Right above: *The Prime Minister of Newfoundland visiting the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment, encamped at Meaulté – from The War Illustrated*)



During this time, on March 17, the day of the Prime Minister's visit, Sergeant Major Gardner received an Imperial Commission and also a promotion *in the field* to the rank of 2nd Lieutenant.

On March 29, the 1st Battalion began to make its way – on foot – from Camps-en-Amienois to the north-east, towards the venerable medieval city of Arras and eventually beyond, the march to finish amid the rubble of the village of Monchy-le-Preux.



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

(Right below: *The Canadian National Memorial which has stood on Vimy Ridge since 1936 – photograph from 2010*)



On April 9 the British Army was to launch an offensive in the area to the north of *the Somme* battlefields; this was to be the so-called *Battle of Arras*, intended to support a major French effort elsewhere. In terms of the daily count of casualties this attack was to be the most expensive operation of the *Great War* for the British, its only positive episode to be the Canadian assault of *Vimy Ridge* on the opening day of the battle, Easter Monday, 1917.



While the British campaign would prove an overall disappointment, the French *Bataille du Chemin des Dames* was to be yet a further disaster.

(Right: *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*)



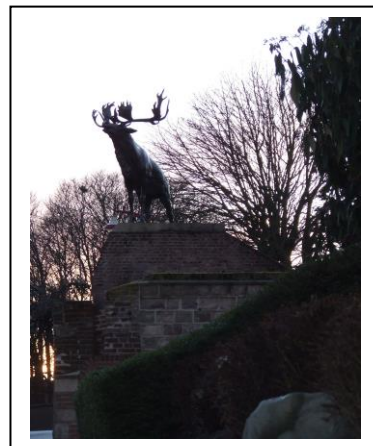
The 1st Battalion was to play its part during the *Battle of Arras*, a role that would begin at the place called Monchy-le-Preux on April 14 and which would finish ten days later, on April 23, perhaps a kilometre distant, at *Les Fosses Farm*. After Beaumont-Hamel, the ineptly-planned action at Monchy-le-Preux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

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**It was also an action in which a DSO, an MC and eight MMs were won by a small group of nine personnel of the Battalion – the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) awarded to the unit's Commanding officer. An MM for the same action was also presented to a private from the Essex Regiment .*

(Preceding page: Newfoundland troops taking their ease just after the time of Monchy-le-Preux – from The War Illustrated)

The son of Arthur Gardner, general dealer deceased on May 15, 1918, and of Mary Gardner (née Colbourne) of British Harbour in the District of Trinity, he was also brother to ten siblings: Edward-James – also died while in service (see elsewhere in these files; Ethel-Louisa; Grace – nurse at *Brighton (Kitchener) Military Hospital* and *Camp Fargo Military Hospital* on the Salisbury Plain, both of these in England, then in El Qanara, Alexandria and Cairo, all in Egypt, and Palestine (perhaps Jerusalem); John-Edgar-Colbourne; Henrietta-Mary; Theodosia-Laurenson; Victoria-Mabel; Annabella-Colbourne; Arthur and Eric-Roy.



Second Lieutenant Gardner was reported as *missing in action* on April 14, 1917, while fighting at Monchy-le-Preux during the *Battle of Arras*. Some thirty weeks later, on November 17, 1917, he was officially *presumed dead*. (A second source dated October 14, 1917, only six months after the event, has him officially *presumed dead* at that time.)

(Right above: The Caribou stands atop the vestiges of a German strong-point in the centre of the re-constructed village of Monchy-le-Preux. – photograph from 2012)

Cyril Gardner had enlisted at the age of twenty-nine years and eleven months - date of birth at British Harbour, Newfoundland, August 15, 1885.

(Right: A deserted British Harbour – the population, mostly involved in the fishery, having seen re-settled more than a half-century ago – the birth-place of Cyril Gardner – photograph from 2017)



His brother, Lance Corporal Edward James Gardner, Regimental Number 1247, had died on the first day of *the Somme*, ~~July 1, 1916~~ at Beaumont-Hamel.

(Right: The Caribou stands atop the vestiges of a German strong-point in the centre of the re-constructed village of Monchy-le-Preux. – photograph from 2012)



(The photograph of Sergeant(?) Gardner is from the Provincial Archives.)

This information was received by me from Pte. J. Squires of 1st. Newfoundland Regt. who said that he was in a hole when a shell exploded near the hole and KILLED or WOUNDED seven or eight men who were in it. He said that 2/Lieut.

Gardner was KILLED by the same shell. Pte. Squires is a prisoner in Germany at the moment. - SD. A. M. CLOUSTON - British prisoner-of-war interned at the time in Strohen

Second Lieutenant Cyril Gardner DCM & Bar 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).



The above dossier has been researched, compiled and produced by Alistair Rice. Please email any suggested amendments or content revisions if desired to criceadam@yahoo.ca. Last updated – February 6, 2023.