



**Private James Glover (Regimental Number 2771) is buried in the Rocquigny-Équancourt Road British Cemetery – Grave reference IV. B. 18.**

**His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fisherman earning an annual \$400.00, James Glover was a recruit of the Tenth Draft. Having presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on May 18 of 1916, he then enlisted *for the duration of the war* – engaged at the daily private soldier's rate of \$1.10 – on the next day, May 19, and also attested at the same time.**

**It was the 28<sup>th</sup> of August when Private Glover 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.**



**(continued)**

This was the third such voyage that the ship was to make in 1916, the Newfoundlanders again likely sharing the vessel with Canadian personnel\*\*. Private Glover was a soldier of Section 2, Platoon 9, 'C' (Reserve) Company of 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.*

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

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 2<sup>nd</sup> (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 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.



*(Right above: an aerial view of Ayr – probably from the period between the Wars: Newton-upon-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 2<sup>nd</sup> (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.

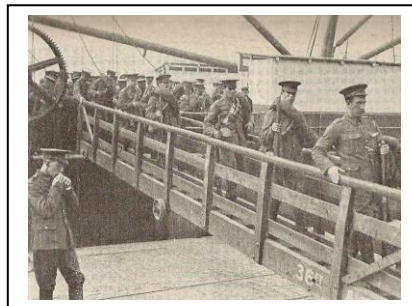


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(Previous page: *the new race-course at Ayr - opened in 1907 – where the men of the Regiment were sometimes billeted and where they replaced some of the turf with a vegetable garden; part of the present grandstand is original – photo from 2012*)

While at Ayr, Private Glover was hospitalized in Glasgow on November 29; on December 12 he was transferred to Newcastle-on-Tyne from which place he was discharged to duty only on March 3 of 1917. He had been suffering from a venereal disease.

The 22nd Re-enforcement Draft – Private Glover among that number - passed through the English south-coast port of Southampton on March 25 of 1917 on its way to the Continent and to the Western Front. It disembarked in the Norman capital of Rouen on the next day, March 26, and then was to spend time at the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot located there, in final training and organization\*, before making its way to a rendezvous with 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.



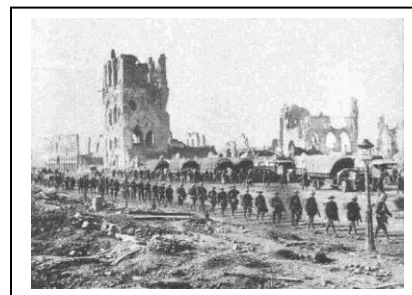
(Above right: *British troops disembark at Rouen on their way to the Western Front. – from Illustration*)

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

That rendezvous, however, was postponed for Private Glover who was *not to make his way...* being instead admitted into the 1<sup>st</sup> Stationary Hospital, at Rouen, with NYD (*Not Yet Determined*) which, when it was determined, proved to be a recurrence of the previous problem. He was released to Base Depot on June 16 and reported to 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion *in the field* on July 18 – although the *Regimental War Diary* makes no mention of any arrivals on that date. The unit had just retired on that same day from activities near to the front lines, to a new camp close to the Belgian town of Poperinghe.

In the meantime, while Private Glover was undergoing medical treatment, at the beginning of June, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion retired from the line to Bonneville and spent its time re-enforcing, re-organizing and training for the upcoming British offensive of the summer – and as it transpired, the autumn as well.

The Newfoundlanders of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion were once again ordered north into Belgium – at the end of June - and once again to the area of *the Ypres Salient*. This had been selected by the High Command to be the theatre of the British summer offensive of 1917. Officially named the *Third Battle of Ypres*, the campaign came to be known to history as *Passchendaele*, taking that name from a small village on a ridge that was one of the British Army's objectives.



(Right above: *Troops file through the rubble of the medieval city of Ypres on their way to the front in the late summer of 1917. – from Illustration*)



1<sup>st</sup> Battalion remained in Belgium until October 17, a small cog in the machinery of the British Army which floundered its way across the sodden countryside of Flanders. Notably it fought in two major engagements, at the *Steenbeek* on August 16, and at the *Broembeek* on October 9, Private Burse almost certainly serving at the latter.



(Right: *an unidentified – perhaps unidentifiable – part of the Passchendaele battlefield in the autumn of 1917 – from Illustration*)

A week after the encounter of October 9 at the *Broembeek*, the Newfoundlanders were withdrawn from the *Passchendaele* campaign in order to prepare for yet another upcoming offensive: *Cambrai*. They were ordered back south from Belgium into northern France on October 17 to re-enforce, to organize and to train in the vicinity of Berles-au-Bois, a small rural community a dozen or so kilometres to the south-west of Arras.

The so-called *Battle of Cambrai* was to officially last for just two weeks and a day, from November 20 until December 4, the Newfoundlanders directly involved at all times during that period.

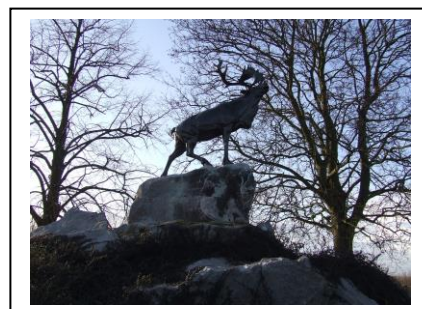
The battle began well for the British who used tanks on a large scale for the first time; but opportunities were squandered and by its close the British had relinquished as much territory as they had gained. 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was again dealt with severely, at Marcoing and at Masnières - where a Caribou stands today: of the total of five-hundred fifty-eight officers and men who went into battle, two-hundred forty-eight had become casualties by the end of the second day.



(Right above: *the Canal St-Quentin at Masnières, the crossing of which and the establishment of a bridgehead being the first objectives for the Newfoundlanders on November 20, the first day of the Battle of Cambrai – photograph from 2009*)

On November 21, the second day of the offensive, while serving with 'D' Company, Private Glover was reported as wounded – no further details seem to be recorded – and evacuated from the field to the 48<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearance Station at Ytres where he was considered to be *dangerously ill*.

The son of John Glover, fisherman, and Mary Glover – to whom he had allotted a daily fifty cents from his pay - of Bragg's Island, Bonavista Bay - or of Deer Island adjacent to it, as indicated in a second source - he was also brother to George, Tom, Silas, Jonas and apparently five un-named sisters.



Private Glover was reported as having *died of wounds* on November 22, 1917, those injuries incurred during the fighting close to the French villages of Marcoing and Masnières.

Back at home, it was the Reverend Rowland Moore of Deer Island who was requested to bear the news to his family.

James Glover had enlisted at nineteen years and one month of age.

*(Preceding page: The Caribou at Masnières stands on the high ground to the north of the community. The seizure of this terrain was the final objective of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion on November 20; however, whether this was ever achieved is at best controversial. – photograph from 2012)*

Private James Glover was entitled to the British War Medal (on left) and also to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).

