



**Corporal Robert George Joseph Good - A. on monument (see above) and *Joseph* or also *John* in other sources in lieu of *George* - (Regimental Number 219) lies buried in Lambeth Cemetery, London: Screen Wall reference W. 3. 18.**

**His previous occupations recorded as those of *steward*\* and *labourer* earning a wage of five hundred dollars per annum, Robert Good presented himself for medical examination at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury* in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland, on August 29, 1914, four weeks less three days after the *Declaration of War*.**

The examination having pronounced him as...*fit for foreign service*...he then enlisted seven days afterwards – engaged at the daily private soldier’s rate of \$1.10 (this included a ten-cent Field Allowance) - on September 5.

Robert Good was a recruit of the First Draft.

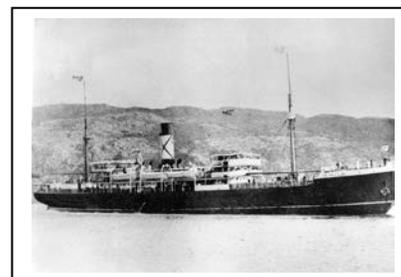
*\*The 1913 St. John’s Business Directory records Robert Good’s occupation as that of... steward, HMS Sirius. Sirius was an elderly British cruiser of the reserve which had been taken out of retirement and was subsequently used during the Great War – although Newfoundland is not documented as her port at any time. She served ultimately as a block-ship deliberately scuttled during the raid on Ostend in April of 1918.*



Robert Good had had prior military experience: he had been a Royal Marine for twenty-one years and had served in the South African War of 1899-1902 - for which he had been awarded the Queen’s South Africa Medal (right above) - and also during the Boxer Rebellion (see further below).

(Right above: *The image of HMS Sirius is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site.*)

There was now to be a wait of some five weeks – although training was to be ongoing - before Private Good was attested on October 1. He then embarked on October 3 with the others of the *First Five Hundred* onto the Bowring Brothers’ vessel *Florizel* awaiting in St. John’s Harbour.



The ship sailed on the morrow to its rendezvous off the south coast of the Island where she was to join the convoy transporting the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division across the Atlantic.

(Right above: *The image of Florizel at anchor in the harbour at St. John’s is by courtesy of Admiralty House Museum.*)

In the United Kingdom Private Good trained with the Newfoundland contingent: firstly in southern England on the Salisbury Plain; then in Scotland at Fort George – on the Moray Firth close to Inverness; at Edinburgh Castle – where it provided the first garrison from outside the British Isles; and later again at the tented *Stobs Camp* near the town of Hawick to the south-east of Edinburgh.



(Right above: *Fort George, constructed in the latter half of the eighteenth century, still serves the British Army to this day. – photograph from 2011*)

(continued)

(Right below: *The Newfoundland Regiment parades at Stobs Camp, about to be presented with its Colours on June 10, 1915* – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo)

At the beginning of that August of 1915, the four senior Companies, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', were then sent south to undergo a final two weeks of training, as well as an inspection by the King, at Aldershot; meanwhile the two junior Companies, the later-arrived 'E' and 'F\*', were sent to Scotland's west coast, to Ayr, where they were to provide the nucleus of the newly-forming 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion.



(Right: *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)



\*On July 10, 1915, 'F' Company had arrived at Stobs Camp from Newfoundland, its personnel raising the numbers of the unit to battalion establishment strength, and thus permitting it to be ordered to active service. The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Newfoundland Regiment, comprising those four Companies, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', was thereupon attached to the 88<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 29<sup>th</sup> Division of the (British) Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.

It had then been during the period spent at Aldershot that Private Good of 'A' Company – he was not alone in doing so - had been 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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, in peace-time a 'White Star Line' vessel, is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site.*)



On August 20, 1915, Private Good 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 two weeks billeted in British barracks in the Egyptian capital, Cairo - on September 20, he disembarked with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion at *Suvla Bay* on the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.

By this time, perhaps in deference to his age (see further below) – or perhaps simply because he was good at it – Private Good was by this time being employed as a cook.

(Right: *Kangaroo Beach, where the officers and men of the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 below: *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 below: *This appears to be Suvla Beach in August of 1915 when the British disembarked. The Turks had not reacted to the landing at this point which explains all the activity in the open. Suvla was the only beach to resemble this one, the others all being little more than sandy and gravelly strips. The Newfoundlanders arrived at the farther end of the area – at Kangaroo Beach - perhaps as far as two kilometres to the right, and they arrived on the night of September 19-20. – from Illustration*)



Not only the landing at Suvla Bay but the entirety of the *Gallipoli Campaign* was to be a debacle: Flies, dust, disease, frost-bite, floods – and 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 it would be decided to abandon not only *Suvla Bay* but the entire *Gallipoli* venture.



*\*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.*

(Right above: *A century later, the area, little changed from those far-off days, of the Newfoundland positions at Suvla, and where Private Good was to serve in the fall of 1915 – photograph from 2011*)

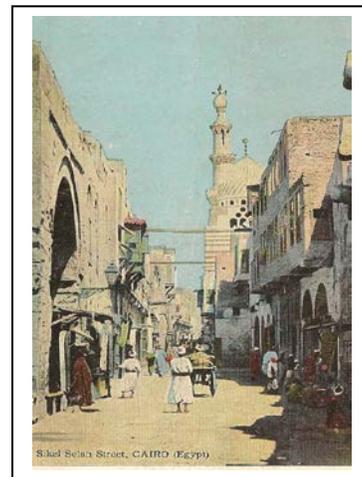
\* \* \* \* \*

Barely more than two weeks after having landed at *Suvla Bay*, on October 5, 1915, Private Good reported to the 26<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station, suffering from diarrhoea. The problem was soon to be diagnosed as pyrexia (*a high fever*) due to dysentery and enteritis.

From Gallipoli he was evacuated to an unidentified hospital ship and, five days following, on October 10, was to be admitted into Kasr-el-Aini Hospital in Cairo. From there, on an unspecified date – but likely towards the end of December\* - Private Good was forwarded further up the River Nile, to the Convalescent Depot at Luxor.

(Right: *A street in Cairo at or about the period of the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)

Private Good was discharged from convalescence at Luxor on February 3 of 1916, to return to duty with 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion at Suez four days later, on February 7.



*\*Sufferers from enteritis were usually assigned six weeks convalescence after treatment.*

\* \* \* \* \*

During his absence due to his medical problems and some eleven weeks after Private Good and the Newfoundland Battalion had landed there, 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 was 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 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was 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*)



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



The British and the *Anzac* forces – the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps also served at *Gallipoli* – were by then only marking time until a complete withdrawal of the *Peninsula* was undertaken. The operation took place on the night of January 8-9, the Newfoundland Battalion providing some of the rear-guard for this second occasion as well\*.



*\*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.*

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

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

When the British evacuated the entire *Gallipoli Peninsula* in January of 1916, the Newfoundland Battalion was shipped to the Egyptian port-city of Alexandria, arriving there on the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month. The Newfoundlanders were then immediately transferred southward to Suez, one of the ports at the southern end of the Canal which bears the same name, there to await further orders as, at the time, the subsequent destination of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion's 29<sup>th</sup> Division had not yet been decided\*.



*\*Bulgaria had entered the conflict in October of 1915 on the side of the Central Powers and Salonika was soon to become a theatre of war.*



The period at Suez, as previously noted, was, of course the time during which Private Good was to report back to the Newfoundland Battalion.

(Right: *Port Tewfiq at the south end of the Suez Canal 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 postcard*)

After a two-month interim, on March 14, the Newfoundlanders embarked onto His Majesty's Transport *Alaunia* at Port Tewfiq, also at the southern end of the *Suez Canal*, for the French port of Marseilles, and disembarked there on March 22, en route to the *Western Front*.



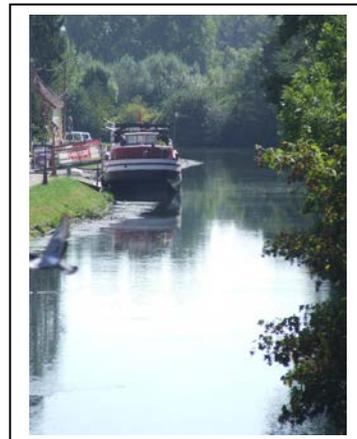
Some three days after the unit's disembarkation on March 22, the Newfoundland Battalion's train arrived at the small provincial town of Pont-Rémy, a thousand kilometres to the north of Marseilles. It had been a cold, miserable journey, the blankets provided for the troops having travelled unused in a separate wagon. De-training at the local station at two in the morning, the Newfoundlanders still faced a long march ahead of them before they would reach their billets at Buigny l'Abbé.

(continued)

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

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 were marching on their way from the station. But some three months later *the Somme* would have become a part of their history.

On April 13, Private Good's 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion paraded into the village of Englebelmer – perhaps some fifty kilometres in all from Pont-Rémy. There its personnel would be billeted, would receive reinforcements and, in two days' time, would be introduced into the trenches of the *Western Front*.



For the remainder of the spring of 1916, the Newfoundlanders were to be preparing for the British campaign of that upcoming summer, the battles to be fought on the ground named for that languid, meandering river flowing through the region, and over which the parent unit of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had marched only weeks previously at Pont-Rémy: *the Somme*.

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

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.*

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 killing of *the Somme* was to continue for the next four and a half months.



(Right above: *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*)

(continued)

***\*On July 1, 1916, the Y Ravine had formed a part of the German front-line defences and its machine-gunners had played havoc with the approaching attackers silhouetted against the sky-line.***



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

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

***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.***



Private Good was, in fact, recorded as having been on the nominal roll of the Newfoundland Battalion on July 1, 1916, the first day of *the Somme*, but he was not to figure in the attack of that morning. His name is recorded on the list of those of the ten per cent reserve – this was a normal practice - of fourteen officers and eighty-three *other ranks* to be held back in Louvencourt on that day, and of those serving in capacities other than the assault. The reserve contingent was to arrive on the field later in the day when the fighting had all but subsided.

***\*The well-known roll-call of July 2 of those who survived the battle unscathed was not officially recorded until two days later. The roll call of those who had been in the ten per-cent reserve of fourteen officers and eighty-three men held back for most of the day at Louvencourt and those serving otherwise, was apparently also recorded only days after the fact. Thus the inscription ‘With Battalion 4/7/16’ on certain individuals’ records.***



***(Right above: another part of the reconstituted battlefield, here showing the British front lines, in the Newfoundland Park at Beaumont-Hamel: today the wire serves only to keep the tourists out of the trenches. – photograph from 2010(?))***

Unfortunately, Private Good’s record for the succeeding six months, although brief, is a contradictory one – or at best, incomplete: one source records that on July 4 he was evacuated to the 14<sup>th</sup> Corps Rest Station because of rheumatism, there to remain until discharged on December 17; a second document reports his entry into the same 14<sup>th</sup> CRS for the same reason, but not until December 10, to be released back *to duty* one week later, thus on the same December 17.

There appear to be no other documents in his dossier pertaining to that period.

If the second version of the above events, being perhaps the more likely, is the correct one, then Private Good was to continue to serve with the Newfoundland unit during the upcoming weeks and months.

On July 27-28 of 1916, the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment - still well under establishment battalion strength\* at just some fifty per cent, at five-hundred fifty-four strong even after re-enforcement - moved north 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 re-enforce and to re-organize.



Even though *the Salient* proved to be relatively quiet during the time of the Newfoundlanders' posting there, they nonetheless incurred casualties, a number of them – as many as fifteen - fatal.

*\*The trench strength of a British battalion was approximately one thousand plus HQ staff.*

(Right above: *The entrance – unsurprisingly re-constructed since those days - to 'A' Company's quarters in the ramparts of Ypres when it was posted there in 1916 – photograph from 2010*)



(Right: *The battered Belgian city of Ypres towards the end of the year 1915 – and some eight months before the Newfoundlanders were to be posted there for the first time – from a vintage post-card*)

On October 8, after its posting of ten weeks in Belgium, the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was ordered to move south, back to France and back to the area of – and the battle of – *the Somme*.

Four days after that return to France from Belgium, on October 12, 1916, the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment was to be again ordered to the offensive; this 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 would prove to be another costly affair – two hundred and thirty-nine casualties all told - for little gain.

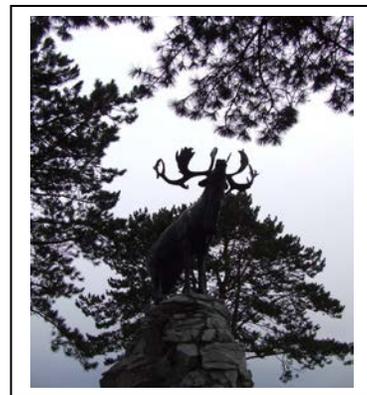
(Right: *This is the ground over which the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion advanced and then mostly conceded at Gueudecourt on October 12. Some few managed to reach the area where today stand the copse of trees and the Gueudecourt Caribou, on the far right horizon. – photograph from 2007*)



(continued)

After Gueudecourt, the Newfoundland Battalion was to continue its watch in and out of the trenches of *the Somme* – not without casualties – during the late fall and early winter, a period to be broken only by the several weeks spent in *Corps Reserve* during the Christmas period. It was a time during which the Regimental personnel was to be encamped well behind the lines and in close proximity to the city of Amiens.

(Right: *The Caribou at Gueudecourt stands at the furthest point of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion's advance of October 12, 1916.* – photograph from 2012)



(Right below: *A typical British Army Camp during a winter period somewhere on the Continent* – from a vintage post-card)

Whether having been sent to the 14<sup>th</sup> Corps Rest Station on July 4 or December 10 (see further above), Private Good was to report back *to duty* on December 17, during the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion's Christmas respite. Ten days later, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of that month, he was granted leave from France to return to the United Kingdom, being hospitalized – neither the name of the institution or the dates involved appear among his papers - while there and subsequently posted to 'H' Company at the Regimental Depot on January 10.



The Regimental Depot had been established during the late summer of 1915 in the Royal Borough of Ayr on the west coast of Scotland to serve as a base for the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment. It was from there – as of November of 1915 up until January of 1918 – that the newcomers from home were to be despatched in drafts, at first to *Gallipoli* and later to the *Western Front*, to bolster the four fighting companies of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.



(Right above: *An aerial view of Ayr – probably from the period between the Wars: Newton-on Ayr, where the 'other ranks' were to be quartered, is to the left of the River Ayr and the Royal Borough, where lived the officers, is to the right.* – by courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr)

Not long after Private Good's arrival at Ayr, the resident Medical Officer recommended his posting to the Depot back in St. John's, Newfoundland, on the grounds that... *Private Good Joseph No. 219 is unlikely to be fit for Service with the Expeditionary Force for six months, on account of rheumatic arthritis.* On January 26, 1917, Private Good embarked at Liverpool on board the SS *Scotian* in transit back home to Newfoundland, there to be attached to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion strength in St. John's on March 10.



(Preceding page: *The image of Scotian is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries.*)

Governor Davidson now lent his influence to Private Good in writing the following to the...*Officer Commanding, Headquarters: Major Sullivan applies for the transfer to Forestry Company A of Pte. J. Good, a returned Soldier said to be unfit for further active service, but a good Cook.*

*He would be useful to go as Cook with Company A by next S.S. Florizel.*

*Please arrange transfer, if I am correctly informed.*

On May 18 of 1917 Private Good was transferred to the Newfoundland Forestry Corps, re-enlisted (#8176), was promoted to the rank of corporal-cook of 'A' Company a day later, May 19, and on that same day, sailed on the aforesaid *Florizel* for Halifax.



The military contingent for the voyage comprised one-hundred eighty-two *other ranks* destined for the Newfoundland Regiment as well as the first Newfoundland Forestry Unit detachment of ninety-nine *other ranks* bound for Scotland. Corporal Good and company then sailed from Halifax – the vessel not identified - for the United Kingdom on May 28; the Foresters' destination was Dunkeld, Scotland.

(Right above: *Little Dunkeld Churchyard – just across the River Tay from Dunkeld - wherein lies Private Selby Taylor, also of the Newfoundland Forestry Corps – photograph from 2011*)

Discharged from the Forestry Corps as *medically unfit for duty* on February 23, 1918, - having by then been diagnosed as with pulmonary tuberculosis - Corporal Good, having embarked as a soldier of the 57<sup>th</sup> Repatriation Draft in Liverpool on the same February 23, sailed for Newfoundland via Halifax, to arrive home on March 26, where his discharge was confirmed on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April.

His service story, however, did not end on April 11, 1918: Corporal Good, having re-attested on September 8, was not finally de-mobilized until a year later.

By that time he and his wife had moved - or were in the process of doing so - to 10 Bartley Street, Buxter's Hill, London, where his well-being was undertaken by the Pension Commissioner and Militia Department. Because of his honourable discharge for medical reasons, Corporal Good was now eligible to receive the Silver War Badge (right).



The husband of Elizabeth (Lizzie) Good (née *Hallihan*) of 9, Dammerill's Lane, then by 1917, of 31, Lime Street in St. John's, he and his wife had been married since December 14 of 1905. The son of Robert George and Elizabeth Good of Brixton, London, England, where he was born, he passed away in the South-Eastern Hospital on July 24, 1921, from pulmonary tuberculosis, aged forty-seven.



Robert Joseph Good had enlisted at or about the age of thirty-nine years.

*(The photograph of Private Good on the previous page is from the Provincial Archives.)*

Corporal Robert Joseph Good was awarded the 1914-1915 Star, as well as the British War Medal (centre) and the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal) (right).



Robert Joseph Good had also been previously awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal (see second page) and the Queen's China Medal (right), awarded to British and Imperial land and sea forces who fought during the Boxer Rebellion of 1900.

