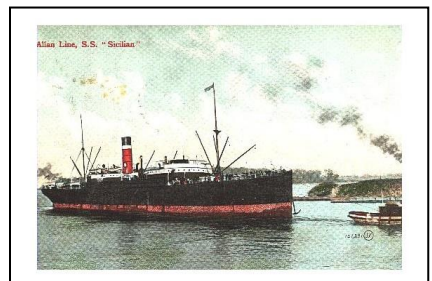




Private William Bertram Goodyear (Regimental Number 2753) lies in St-Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen – Grave reference O. 6. G. 6.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fisherman earning an annual \$800.00, William Goodyear was a recruit of the Ninth Draft. Having presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John’s on May 15, 1916, he also enlisted – engaged at the daily private soldier’s rate of \$1.10 – on the same May 15, 1916, before attesting on the following day, the 16th.

Private Goodyear sailed from St. John’s on July 19 on board His Majesty’s Transport *Sicilian (right). The ship - refitted some ten years previously to carry well over one thousand passengers - had left the Canadian port of Montreal on July 16, carrying Canadian military personnel.**



It is likely that the troops disembarked in the English west-coast port-city of Liverpool; however, it is *certain* that upon disembarkation the contingent journeyed north by train to Scotland and to the Regimental Depot.

(continued)

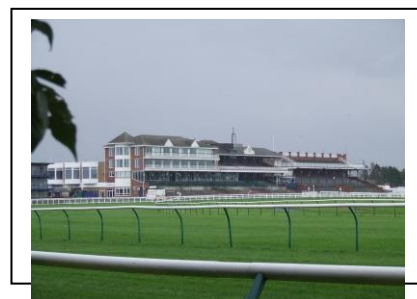
**Some sixteen years previously - as of 1899 when she was launched – the vessel had served as a troop-ship and transport during another conflict, carrying men, animals and equipment to South Africa for use during the Second Boer War.*

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 the 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 despatched 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-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)

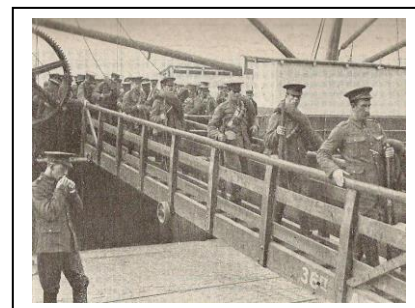
At the outset there had been problems at Ayr to accommodate the new arrivals – plus men from other regiments who were still being billeted in the area – but by the spring of 1916, things had been satisfactorily settled: the officers were in Wellington Square in Ayr itself, and the other ranks had been billeted at Newton Park School and either in the grandstand or in a tented camp at the racecourse in the suburb of Newton-upon-Ayr.



(Right above: the new race-course at Newton-upon-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 – photograph from 2012)

The 12th Re-enforcement Draft – Private Goodyear among its ranks - passed through the English south-coast port of Southampton on October 11 of 1916 on its way to the Continent and to the Western Front.

The contingent disembarked in the Norman capital of Rouen on the next day, October 12, and spent time at the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot located there, in final training and organization*, before making its way to a rendezvous with 1st Battalion.



(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.*

Private Goodyear's contingent comprised a single officer and two-hundred twenty-six *other ranks* by the time it reported to *duty* at the Bernafay Wood Camp on October 22. Still in the area of Gueudecourt, 1st Battalion had been relieved in the front line three days before, on the 19th.

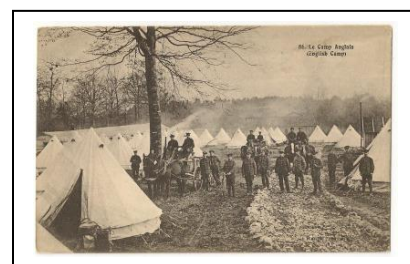


(Right: *Bernafay Wood a century later – not being close to the front lines, the wood may well have resembled what is seen here – photograph from 2014*)

For the remainder of that autumn of 1916, 1st Battalion remained in the same area of *the Somme* and was regularly into and out of the trenches. There were no infantry engagements, but the incessant artillery action ensured a steady stream of casualties.

The Newfoundlanders would be withdrawn from active service on or about December 12 and were to spend the following six weeks or so encamped well behind the lines and close to the city of Amiens.

(Right: *a British encampment somewhere on the Continent, apparently during the winter season – from a vintage post-card*)



After that welcome six-week Christmas-time respite away from the front lines, the Newfoundlanders of 1st Battalion *officially* returned to *active service* on January 23, although they had been back in the trenches already by that date and had incurred their first casualties – and fatality – of 1917.



The only infantry activity involving 1st Battalion during that entire period – from the action in mid-October of 1916 at Gueudecourt, until Monchy-le-Preux in April of 1917 – was to be the sharp engagement at Sailly-Saillisel at the end of February and the beginning of March, an action which brought this episode in the Newfoundlanders' War – in the area of *the Somme* - to a close.

(Above right: *The fighting during the time 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(?)*)

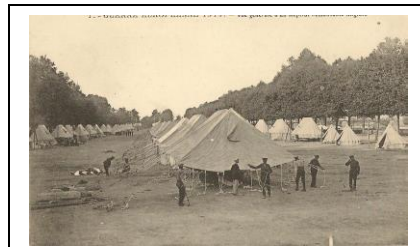
(Right: *A soldier of the Lancashire Fusiliers stands in the cold of the trenches at Sailly-Saillisel apparently enjoying a cigarette, during the late winter of 1916-1917, just prior to the arrival there of the Newfoundlanders who relieved them. – from Illustration*)



(continued)

The last day of the Newfoundlanders' involvement at Saily-Saillisel, March 3, was a difficult one: starting with a heavy enemy artillery bombardment about seven o'clock in the early light of day, the remainder of the morning and afternoon saw multiple attacks and counter-attacks. By the end of the engagement the Newfoundlanders had advanced about one hundred metres.

This was also the day on which Private Goodyear was wounded. Having incurred injuries to his left arm, including a fractured humerus, while serving with 'A' Company, he was at first evacuated on that same March 3 to the 60th Field Ambulance, being transferred almost immediately to the 55th (2/2 London) Casualty Clearing Station at Grovetown.



(Right above: a British casualty clearing station – the one pictured here under canvas for mobility if and when necessary – being established somewhere on the Continent – from a vintage post-card)

Two days later, on March 5, he was forwarded from there to the 11th Stationary Hospital at Rouen for further treatment.



(Right above: transferring wounded from a field ambulance to the rear through the mud by motorized ambulance and man-power – from a vintage post-card)

On March 12, the Newfoundland Pay & Record Office in London telegraphed his mother, informing her that Private Goodyear was *dangerously ill*. Within hours the Office was to send a second message to her and to her clergyman.

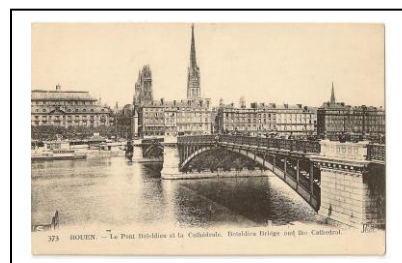
The son of Charles Goodyear and Mary Goodyear (she later *Wheaton* - also *Waighton* - deceased September 27, 1916, to whom he had allotted a daily fifty cents from his pay, and of Fredericton in the District of Fogo), he was also brother to only sister Maud and to Gordon*.

Private Goodyear was reported as having *died of wounds* in the same 11th Stationary Hospital, Rouen, on March 10, 1917.

At home, it was the Reverend Uriah Laite of Carmanville who was requested to bear the news to his family.

William Bertram Goodyear had enlisted at the age of twenty years and two months.

(Right: *The River Seine flows through the centre of the French city of Rouen – and under the watchful eye of its historic gothic cathedral at or about the time of the Great War* – from a vintage post-card)



*In a letter dated February 10, 1918, sister Maud intimates that brother Gordon has volunteered for the Regiment, calling him *Privet Gorden Goodyear*. However, no other documents seem to confirm this.

Private William Bertram Goodyear was entitled to the British War Medal (on left) and also to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).



Nov 12, 1916

Dear Sister:-

I received your kind and welcome letter, but it made me very down-hearted when I read it to hear that mother was dead. I am in the best of health. You spoke about my allotment. You can get it and give it to Eily (Eli) to get a headstone for poor mother. Don't keep it for me for it won't be any good to me. When you write to me let me know if the old man was hard to her before she died. It is a poor home, if I ever do live to come back I won't be able to stay there for I suppose it was my doings for her to be where she is. Let me know if she had the doctor before she died and what she died in. I was glad to hear that she died happy. It's all God's will and we must all part some day. When you write let me know who is doing for Gordon and where he is staying. Let me know if Israel is married yet. Let me know if the old man is better off than what he was when I left. Do ye hear from Lionel or not. Say me to Aunt Jane and all the family and tell Maud that I wrote a letter to her and got no answer. Say me to Eli. I was very thankful to him for his kindness that if I should come home he had a home for me, but I don't expect to wear out much floor. This will be the last letter for a while, but never mind, I may get home to see ye once more, let me know how they done with the fish the summer. I suppose Martin Hoff did well. Is Marten(?) Hart married yet. I think I have said all for this time.

From your loving brother
William Goodyear